Communal and Agentic Interpersonal and Intergroup Motives Predict Preferences for Status Versus Power

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Abstract

Seven studies involving 1,343 participants showed how circumplex models of social motives can help explain individual differences in preferences for status (having others' admiration) versus power (controlling valuable resources). Studies 1 to 3 and 7 concerned interpersonal motives in workplace contexts, and found that stronger communal motives (to have mutual trust, support, and cooperation) predicted being more attracted to status (but not power) and achieving more workplace status, while stronger agentic motives (to be firm, decisive, and influential) predicted being more attracted to and achieving more workplace power, and experiencing a stronger connection between workplace power and job satisfaction. Studies 4 to 6 found similar effects for intergroup motives: Stronger communal motives predicted wanting one's ingroup (e.g., country) to have status—but not power—relative to other groups. Finally, most people preferred status over power, and this was especially true for women, which was partially explained by women having stronger communal motives.

The motives that energize and direct social life can be organized into two broad categories: agentic and communal (Hogan & Roberts, 2000; Horowitz et al., 2006; Locke, 2015). In interpersonal and intergroup contexts, communal motives direct efforts to be supported by and supportive of others rather than guarded and competitive, and thus promote social connection; in contrast, agentic motives direct efforts to be confident and dominant rather than meek and conflict-avoidant, and thus promote social influence. Agency and communion also constitute basic dimensions of social judgment and behavior (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014).

Depicting agency as a vertical axis (ranging from decisive/effective to passive/timid) and communion as a horizontal axis (ranging from warm/engaged to cold/indifferent), these dimensions form the interpersonal circumplex, which has proven to be a useful model for juxtaposing, organizing, and integrating diverse social constructs (Gurtman, 2009; Locke, 2011; Wiggins, 2003). As Figure 1 shows, the circumplex is typically divided into eight octants, each reflecting a unique combination of the axial dimensions.

Because both status and power promote social influence, researchers have used both terms—often interchangeably—to define and describe high agency (Gurtman, 2009). However, status and power are distinct. Status derives from others respecting and admiring you because they believe you have valuable qualities or assets that you use in ways that
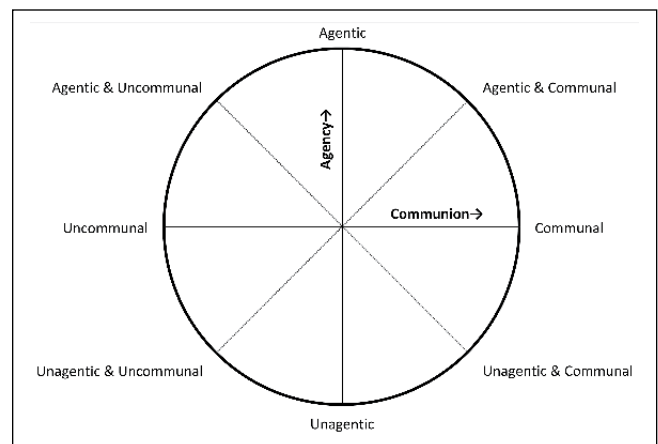

Figure 1. The interpersonal circumplex.

benefit others, whereas power derives from others believing you have asymmetric control over valuable resources that

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you may use as rewards or punishments (Flynn, Reagans, Amanatullah, & Ames, 2006; Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). In short, both status and power entail agency, but only status also entails communion.

Numerous studies support the hypothesis that power promotes agency, but not communion. Power may stimulate an approach orientation and weaken concerns about social and relational ramifications, thereby disinhibiting callous actions if those actions accord with the person's goals and dispositions (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003; Galinsky, Magee, Gruenfeld, Whitson, & Liljenquist, 2008; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). Power has thus been found to predict evaluating others more critically (Georgesen & Harris, 1998), using punishment to control others (Mooijman, van Dijk, Ellemers, & van Dijk, 2015), and viewing others only for their utility in meeting current goals (Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee, & Galinsky, 2008). Power (when experienced as legitimate) was also associated with dehumanizing judgments of low-power individuals, less interest in social engagement, less appreciation and consideration for others' perspectives and experiences, less compassion toward suffering individuals, and less willingness to help strangers (Galinsky, Magee, Inesi, & Gruenfeld, 2006; Gwinn, Judd, & Park, 2013; Lammers, Galinsky, Gordijn, & Otten, 2012; van Kleef et al., 2008). Overall, the research suggests that power strengthens personal agency, but sometimes weakens the respect accorded to the experiences and dignity of others (Williams, 2014).

Studies comparing power with status suggest that although power weakens communion, status strengthens it. For example, perspective taking was reduced by power, but enhanced by status (Blader, Shirako, & Chen, 2016). Just (fair, decent, equitable) treatment of others in various allocation and negotiation scenarios was negatively associated with power, but—when power was low—positively associated with status (Blader & Chen, 2012). Conversely, having power without status predisposed people to be confrontational and demeaning (Anicich, Fast, Halevy, & Galinsky, 2015; Fast, Halevy, & Galinsky, 2012).

People may intuitively appreciate how power and status affect communion: A study of perceptions of individuals occupying positions with power and/or status found that those who had power but lacked status were perceived as colder than those who either had status or lacked power (Fragale, Overbeck, & Neale, 2011). If people seek situations that they expect to satisfy their motives and expect more communal interactions in positions of status than positions of power, then people with stronger communal motives (e.g., to be engaged and supportive rather than aloof and tough) should prefer status than power.

Preferences for status versus power matter. People attracted to status should strive to attain and retain positions of status, whereas those attracted to power should strive to attain and retain positions of power. If their efforts fail, then they may become frustrated and disaffected. If their efforts succeed, then people attracted to status/power may differentially occupy positions status/power, where, by definition, they will have an impact on others. Moreover, being in positions of power and/or status may further amplify those individuals' communal (e.g., supportive, empathic) or uncommunal (e.g., harsh, distancing) predispositions. However, to our knowledge, the only previous article to investigate preferences for power versus status is Hays (2013), who found that women were more desirous of positions of status and less desirous of positions of power than were men.

Current Research

The current studies aim to advance the literature on power versus status in five ways. First, the current studies are the first to test whether social motives predict preferences for power versus status. Locke (2000) found that individuals with stronger agentic and weaker communal motives showed stronger *implicit* power needs (i.e., when telling "Thematic Apperception Test" stories, they spontaneously included more power themes), but Locke did not assess explicit, consciously expressed preferences for power versus status.

Second, previous studies comparing status and power only addressed interpersonal contexts. However, people perceive status and power differences between groups as well as between individuals (Fiske, 2010), and they use the same agentic and communal dimensions to conceptualize groups and intergroup motives and interactions as they do to conceptualize persons and interpersonal motives and interactions (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014; Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008; Locke, 2014). Therefore, the current studies considered both interpersonal and intergroup contexts. Studies 1 to 3 investigated preferences for interpersonal status versus power relative to others within an organization; Studies 4 to 6 investigated preferences for one's group to have status versus power relative to other groups. Across contexts, the key hypothesis remained the same: Stronger interpersonal/intergroup communal motives predict preferring interpersonal/intergroup status to power.

Third, if—over many thousands of generations—motives to compete for resources and demonstrate formidability proved more adaptive in males than females while motives to provide and share caregiving proved more adaptive in females than males, then theoretically we might expect sex differences in social motives (Buss, 1995). Indeed, research does suggest that women typically place more importance on communion and less importance on agency than men do (Gebauer, Wagner, Sedikides, & Neberich, 2013). Hays (2013) hypothesized that (but did not test if) gender differences in motives might explain gender differences in preferences for status versus power; the current studies will test this hypothesis.

Fourth, people cannot always get what they want, especially if they want limited resources such as status or power.

Table 1. Examples of Items From Each Octant of the CSIV and CSIG.

Octant	Example CSIV item	Example CSIG item
Communal	. . . I feel connected to them	. . . we appreciate what they have to offer
Agentic & Communal	. . . they respect what I have to say	. . . they listen to what we have to say
Agentic	. . . I appear confident	. . . we are assertive
Agentic & Uncommunal	. . . I keep the upper hand	. . . we show that we can be tough
Uncommunal	. . . they not know what I am thinking or feeling	. . . we keep our guard up
Unagentic & Uncommunal	. . . I not say something stupid	. . . we not trust them
Unagentic	. . . I not make them angry	. . . we avoid conflict
Unagentic & Communal	. . . they approve of me	. . . we are cooperative

Note. CSIV = Circumplex Scales of Interpersonal Values; CSIG = Circumplex Scales of Intergroup Goals.

If social motives predict desiring but not experiencing status and power, then people with strong communal and agentic motives may be prone to becoming frustrated (and perhaps eventually indignant, spiteful, alienated, or depressed). Therefore, in Study 7, we will examine whether individuals' social motives predict how much status and power they actually experience at work and how much having or lacking status and power affects their job satisfaction. Finally, by using previously validated circumplex inventories to assess social motives and using the resultant interpersonal/intergroup circumplex space to organize the findings, our studies integrate the emerging literature on status versus power with the larger circumplex literature.

In each study, we recruited approximately $n = 200$ participants, the sample size necessary to achieve at least 80% power to detect an increase in the percentage of participants preferring status to power from 60% to 70%. Such an increase reflects an odds ratio of approximately 1.56, a relatively modest effect size approximately equivalent to a Cohen's $d = .23$ (Chen, Cohen, & Chen, 2010). Because in most of our studies, we did not replace participants who failed validity checks, the actual sample sizes ranged from 181 to 200, but all samples had at least 80% power to detect what are conventionally deemed "small" changes in odds.

Study 1

Study 1 tested whether communal interpersonal motives predict preferences for interpersonal status versus power in a workplace setting, and explored the generalizability of the findings by employing both English-speaking American and German-speaking Swiss participants.

Method

Participants. American participants ($n = 46$ females, 51 males; M age = 32.1 years, $SD = 10.8$) were recruited via MTurk in exchange for US$0.15. Their self-reported ethnicities were 74.2% White/Caucasian, 6.2% Hispanic/Latino, 5.2% Asian, 12.4% Black, and 2.1% Multiracial or Other. Swiss participants ($n = 61$ females, 41 males, three missing;

M age = 33.7 years, $SD = 12.0$) with work experience were recruited via mailing lists and online platforms and were not compensated. The above samples omitted 18 respondents who gave identical answers to ≥30 items on the 32-item motive inventory (see below) or, in the U.S. sample, failed to correctly answer two validity-check questions.

Materials and procedure. Participants completed an online questionnaire presented in English to American participants and in German to Swiss participants. First, participants completed the 32-item (four items/octant) version of the Circumplex Scales of Interpersonal Values (CSIV; Locke, 2000) or its German equivalent, the Inventory of Interpersonal Motives (IIM; Thomas, Locke, & Strauß, 2012). The CSIV/IIM assesses how much respondents want experiences associated with each interpersonal circumplex octant. Table 1 shows example items from each CSIV/IIM octant scale. The instructions asked participants to indicate "When you are working with other people, in general how important is each of the following to you?" on 5-point scales ranging from *not at all important* (0) to *extremely important* (4).

To test whether the eight octant scales conformed to a circumplex model in the current data, we conducted randomization tests of hypothesized order relations using the program RANDALL (Tracey, 1997, 2000). A circular model makes 288 predictions about the relative magnitudes of correlations among eight octant scales; the proportion of predictions met minus the proportion violated yields a correspondence index (*CI*), which can range from −1.0 (all predictions violated) to 1.0 (perfect fit). For the CSIV/IIM octant scales, the number of predictions met were 270 and 267 in the United States and Switzerland, respectively, *CI*s = .87 and .85, indicating significant ($p < .001$) conformity to a circular model in both countries. The CSIV was also used in Studies 2, 3, and 7, and fit a circular model in those studies as well (*CI*s = .84, .92, and .92; ps < .001).

Because the CSIV octant scales showed a circular structure, we aggregated the octant scores into overall communion and agency motive scores (i.e., weighted vector sums) as follows (see Locke, 2011): Communal Motivation = .414 (Communal − Uncommunal + .707 [Communal & Agentic +

Communal & Unagentic − Uncommunal & Agentic − Uncommunal & Unagentic]); Agentic Motivation = .414 (Agentic − Unagentic + .707 [Agentic & Communal + Agentic & Uncommunal − Unagentic & Communal − Unagentic & Uncommunal]). The agentic score indicates the relative importance respondents place on being confident and assertive versus meek and submissive; the communal score indicates the relative importance respondents place on being supported by and supportive of others versus being wary and self-protective. The overall motive scores can range from −4 to +4. For example, a participant who judged every communal item "extremely important" (4) and every uncommunal item "not at all important" (0) would obtain an overall communal motivation score of +4. In contrast, a participant who expressed equally strong communal and uncommunal motives would obtain an overall communal motivation score of zero. Using formulas for reliabilities of weighted sums (see Markey & Markey, 2009), the overall agentic and communal score reliabilities were αs = .73 and .85 in the United States and αs = .68 and .75 in Switzerland.

After completing the CSIV/IIM, participants read descriptions of a high-status and a high-power position, along with the following instructions: "Imagine you are a manager at a medium-sized firm. Which of the following work situations would most appeal to you?" Our operationalization of status and power in all studies hewed closely to standard definitions and descriptions of status and power used in contemporary theory (Magee & Galinsky, 2008) and research (e.g., Blader & Chen, 2012, Study 2; Fragale et al., 2011, Study 2). The *high-power* position description was as follows:

> You have a great deal of power within your organization. You have an especially high level of authority and control over valued resources, even compared to other managers. Other members of your organization may be more respected and admired than you are, but because of your position and access to resources, you have considerable influence over others in the organization.

The *high-status* position description was as follows:

> You have a great deal of status within your organization. You are especially well-respected and admired by other members of the organization, even compared to other managers. Other members of your organization may have more authority and control over valued resources, but because others value your opinion, you have considerable influence over others in the organization. (In all studies, the presentation order of the high-status and high-power scenarios varied randomly across participants.)

Results and Discussion

More respondents preferred the high-status position (*n* = 92 females, 63 males) than the high-power position (*n* = 15

females, 29 males), $\chi^2(1) = 61.9$, $p < .001$. Women were more likely than men to prefer status to power: Only 14.0% of women but 31.5% of men preferred power to status, $\chi^2(1) = 8.8$, $p < .01$. Country did not predict preferences for status versus power.

We used logistic regression to predict preference for status over power from agentic and communal motives (standardized within countries and entered simultaneously). As hypothesized, communal motives predicted preference for status over power, $b = 0.67$, $SE = .20$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 11.58$, odds ratio = 1.95, 95% confidence interval [CI] = [1.33, 2.86], with the estimated odds that a participant one standard deviation above average in communal motives would prefer status to power being approximately twice that of an average participant. There was also a significant but weaker effect of agentic motives, $b = -0.46$, $SE = .19$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 5.87$, odds ratio = 0.63, 95% CI= [0.44, 0.92], with the odds that a participant one standard deviation above average in agentic motives would prefer status being approximately one third lower than that of an average participant.

To test whether gender or nationality moderated the effects of social motives, we added to the regression gender (female = −.5, male = +.5), country (the United States = −.5, Switzerland = +.5), and the two-way interactions between gender or country and agentic or communal motives. The effects of interest are the interactions, and only one was significant: Gender moderated the effect of communal motives, $b = -1.34$, $SE = .53$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 6.51$. Repeating the analysis separately for each gender, the effect of communal motives was significant among females, $b = 1.59$, $SE = .46$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 12.16$, odds ratio = 4.89, 95% CI = [2.00, 11.94], but not among males ($b = 0.32$, $SE = .24$). Because gender did not moderate the effect of communal motives in Studies 2 to 6, we will simply note this gender difference here and not discuss it further.

Finally, because females expressed stronger communal motives than males, *M*s = 0.97 and 0.58, *SD*s = 0.79 and 0.82, $t(197) = 3.34$, $p = .001$, communal motives may mediate gender differences in preferences for status. Hayes's (2012) bootstrapping procedure (with 10,000 resamples) confirmed a significant indirect effect of gender on preferences through communal motives ($ab = .34$, $SE = .14$, 95% CI = [0.13, 0.68]). The direct effect of gender was significant but reduced in magnitude: before controlling for communal motives, $c = -1.04$, $SE = .36$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 8.42$, $p = .004$; after controlling for communal motives, $c' = -0.78$, $SE = .37$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 4.36$, $p = .037$. Thus, communal motives partially explained the effect of gender on preferences for status versus power.

Study 2

Study 2 extended Study 1 in two ways. First, Study 2 participants not only completed a binary preference measure (as in

Study 1), they also rated the desirability of each of four situations created by crossing high/low power with high/low status. Using continuous rating scales can improve sensitivity, and comparing the four situations can provide information about interactive effects of having (or lacking) both power and status. Second, the descriptions of power and status in Study 1 never mentioned potential downsides or limitations. One downside of power is that it entails selectively giving or withholding valuable resources, which is apt to make some people feel disappointed, and perhaps even aggrieved and resentful. One limitation of status is that it involves others voluntarily showing you respect and appreciation, and you are apt to lose their respect and appreciation if you try to pressure them into doing what you want. In Study 2, to paint a more balanced picture, our descriptions of positions of power and status mentioned both upsides and downsides.

Method

Participants. Individuals in the United States ($n = 95$ females, 97 males; *M* age = 37.4 years, *SD* = 12.0) were recruited via MTurk in exchange for $0.20; their ethnicities were 82.8% White/Caucasian, 4.7% Hispanic/Latino, 7.3% Asian, 2.6% Black, and 2.6% Multiracial or Other. The above sample omitted 12 respondents who gave identical answers to ≥30 CSIV items or failed to correctly answer a validity-check question.

Materials and procedure. Participants completed an online questionnaire. Participants first completed the CSIV; the agentic and communal score αs were .72 and .80. Next, participants read descriptions of a high-status and a high-power position, preceded by the following instructions:

> We are interested in power and status in the workplace. By *power* we mean controlling valued resources (e.g., budgets, hiring). By *status* we mean being admired, respected, and viewed as role model. Imagine you are a manager at a medium-sized firm. Indicate which of the following work situations would most appeal to you.

The *high-power* option was as follows: "You have power. You control valued resources (e.g., budgets, hiring). However, retaining and using your power means that you cannot please all interested parties and sometimes risk making enemies." The *high-status* option was as follows: "You have status. You are admired, respected, and viewed as role model. However, retaining and using your status means that you cannot actually insist or require that others do what you think is best."

On the next page, participants rated—on *very undesirable* (1) to *very desirable* (7) scales—the desirability of four scenarios resulting from crossing high and low powers with high and low statuses. For example, the *high-power–high-status* scenario was as follows: "You have *high power and high*

status. You control valued resources (e.g., budgets, hiring), and are also admired, respected, and viewed as a role model."

Results and Discussion

More respondents preferred the high-status position ($n = 60$ females, 53 males) than the high-power position ($n = 35$ females, 44 males), $\chi^2(1) = 6.02$, $p = .014$. In contrast to Study 1, women were not more likely than men to prefer status, 63.2% vs. 54.6%, $\chi^2(1) = 1.44$, although women did report slightly stronger communal motives, *M*s = 0.91 and 0.67, *SD*s = 0.84 and 0.83, $t(190) = 2.01$, $p = .046$, and weaker agentic motives, *M*s = −0.28 and −0.02, *SD*s = 0.70 and 0.72, $t(190) = 2.46$, $p = .015$.

We used logistic regression to predict preference for status over power from agentic and communal motives (standardized and entered simultaneously). Communal motives predicted preference for status over power, $b = 0.49$, $SE = .17$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 8.48$, odds ratio = 1.63, 95% CI = [1.17, 2.27]; the estimated odds that a participant one standard deviation above average in communal motives would prefer status to power was approximately two thirds greater than that of an average participant. Agentic motives were marginally associated with preferences for power over status, $b = −0.29$, $SE = .17$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 2.98$, odds ratio = 0.75, 95% CI = [0.54, 1.04]. Gender did not moderate the effects of either agentic or communal motives on preferences, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$s < 2.

Next, we subjected the desirability ratings (of each combination of power and status) to a general linear model (GLM) analysis, with status (high vs. low) and power (high vs. low) as within-subjects variables, and agentic and communal motives and gender as between-subjects variables. There were significant effects of status, $F(1, 188) = 308.17$, and power, $F(1, 188) = 50.78$, but not the Power × Status interaction, $F(1, 188) = 0.09$: Participants judged having both status and power as most desirable ($M = 5.96$, $SE = .10$), status without power as somewhat desirable ($M = 4.66$, $SE = .12$), power without status as somewhat undesirable ($M = 3.19$, $SE = .11$), and having neither status nor power as highly undesirable ($M = 1.75$, $SE = .09$). The perceived desirability of high versus low status (essentially, the average of a participant's ratings of the two high-status positions and reverse-scored ratings of the two low-status positions) was positively related to communal motives, $F(1, 188) = 16.19$, $b = 0.24$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI = [0.12, 0.36], $p < .001$, $sr^2 = .08$. The perceived desirability of high versus low power (the average of the ratings of the high-power positions and reverse-scored ratings of the low-power positions) was positively related to agentic motives, $F(1, 188) = 9.55$, $b = 0.20$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI = [0.07, 0.33], $p = .002$, $sr^2 = .05$. No other effects were significant.

Study 3

Social motives are undoubtedly not the only individual difference variables that predict preferences for power or status.

The most commonly studied individual difference variables are personality traits, and the most commonly used trait model is the five-factor model (FFM). Two of the five factors—extraversion and agreeableness—are intrinsically interpersonal; indeed, research suggests extraversion and agreeableness are roughly 30-degree rotational variants of interpersonal circumplex agency and communion (Barford, Zhao, & Smillie, 2015; McCrae & Costa, 1989). Studies have also found associations between the unagentic–uncommunal region of the circumplex and neuroticism, particularly its anxious and depressive facets (Schmidt, Wagner, & Kiesler, 1999; Smith, Traupman, Uchino, & Berg, 2010). Research has not found robust connections between the circumplex and the other FFM factors (openness and conscientiousness). Although previous studies only examined links between the FFM and the interpersonal *trait* circumplex, because agentic and communal traits correlate with agentic and communal motives (Locke, 2000), we hypothesized that FFM traits would show similar associations with the interpersonal *motive* circumplex. If so, then agreeableness, extraversion, and neuroticism may also predict attraction to power or status in part due to their associations with social motives. The purpose of Study 3 was to provide preliminary tests of these hypotheses.

Method

Participants. Individuals in the United States or Canada (n = 112 females, 88 males; M age = 36.3 years, SD = 11.9) were recruited via MTurk in exchange for $0.20; their ethnicities were 73.5% White/Caucasian, 5.0% Hispanic/Latino, 12.0% Asian, 5.0% Black, and 4.5% Multiracial or Other. The above sample omitted 17 respondents who gave identical answers to ≥30 CSIV items or failed to correctly answer a validity-check question.

Materials and procedure. Study 3 was identical to Study 2 except that after completing the CSIV, participants also completed the Big Five Inventory–10 (BFI-10; Rammstedt & John, 2007), a popular FFM inventory that asks participants to rate 10 items (two per trait) on 5-point scales ranging from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 5 (*agree strongly*). The BFI-10 has demonstrated adequate reliability and good convergent and predictive validity (Thalmayer, Saucier, & Eigenhuis, 2011). In the current study, inter-item rs ranged from .22 to .66. The CSIV agentic and communal score αs were .70 and .80.

Results and Discussion

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations for the continuous variables. As expected, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism were the FFM traits most strongly associated with social motives. Agentic and communal motives were positively associated with extraversion and negatively associated with neuroticism. Agreeableness had a strong positive association with communal motives, but a negative association with agentic motives. These associations with agentic and communal motives roughly mirror previously reported associations between the FFM and agentic and communal interpersonal traits (e.g., Schmidt et al., 1999).

Unexpectedly, participants chose the high-power position (n = 44 females, 46 males) almost as often as the high-status position (n = 68 females, 42 males). Using logistic regression to predict preferences for status over power from social motives and FFM traits (standardized and entered simultaneously), only one effect was significant: Preferences for status over power were negatively related to agentic motives, b = −0.49, SE = .18, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 7.16, odds ratio = 0.61, 95% CI = [0.43, 0.88]. The estimated odds that a participant one standard deviation above average in agentic motives would prefer status to power was approximately 63% greater than that of an average participant. Gender did not moderate these results, although females were marginally more likely than males to prefer status, 60.7% versus 47.7%, $\chi^2(1)$ = 3.36, p = .067. Females also reported stronger communal motives than males, Ms = 0.89 and 0.63, SDs = 0.73 and 0.80, $t(198)$ = 2.37, p = .019. Gender did not predict any other personality variables (all ts ≤ 1.81). Hayes's (2012) bootstrapping procedure (with 10,000 resamples) confirmed a weak indirect effect of gender on preferences through communal motives (ab = .11, SE = .07, 95% CI = [0.01, 0.32]).

Turning to the desirability ratings, Table 2 shows that low-status positions were less desirable to individuals with stronger communal motives. Low-status–high-power positions were more desirable to less agreeable individuals. In contrast, high-status–low-power positions were more desirable to individuals lower in agentic motivation and extraversion or higher in neuroticism. To test all predictors within the same model, we subjected desirability ratings to a GLM analysis, with status (high vs. low) and power (high vs. low) as within-subjects variables, and social motives, FFM traits, and gender as between-subjects variables. As in Study 2, there were strong effects of status and power, $F(1, 191)$s = 585.01 and 127.04: Participants judged having status and power as moderately desirable, status without power as somewhat desirable, power without status as somewhat undesirable, and having neither status nor power as moderately undesirable. The desirability of status was positively associated with communal motives, $F(1,191)$ = 11.69, b = 0.22, SE = .06, 95% CI = [0.09, 0.34], p < .001, sr^2 = .05. There were also marginally significant negative effects of agreeableness and neuroticism on the desirability of power, $F(1, 191)$s = 3.43 and 3.30, bs = −0.13, SEs = .08, ps = .07, sr^2s = .02. No other effects were significant.

To summarize the FFM results, agreeableness, extraversion, and neuroticism correlated both with social motives and with attraction to status and/or power. However, the FFM traits did not explain significant variance in attraction to status or power beyond that explained by social motives. On the contrary, the FFM measure was very brief; more

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations (Study 3; *n* = 200).

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Social motives												
1. Agency	−0.11	0.64	—									
2. Communion	0.78	0.77	−.19	—								
Five-factor model traits												
3. Extraversion	2.74	1.15	.21	.15	—							
4. Agreeableness	3.63	0.88	−.20	.40	.15	—						
5. Conscientiousness	4.08	0.80	−.13	.15	.18	.18	—					
6. Neuroticism	2.72	1.10	−.23	−.17	−.28	−.32	−.36	—				
7. Openness	3.63	0.96	.04	.02	−.06	.01	.07	.07	—			
Desirability ratings												
8. High status, high power	6.01	1.30	.00	.08	.02	.00	.11	−.04	−.01	—		
9. High status, low power	4.65	1.58	−.29	.09	−.17	.05	−.14	.28	.05	−.12	—	
10. Low status, high power	3.22	1.74	.06	−.24	−.01	−.16	.00	−.05	.01	.20	−.25	—
11. Low status, low power	1.89	1.33	−.02	−.22	−.07	−.02	−.08	.05	−.06	−.40	.03	.22

Note. Correlation coefficients > |.14| are significant at *p* < .05. Desirability ratings were on 1 to 7 scales. Big-5 trait ratings were on 1 to 5 scales. Agency and communion scores reflect weighted averages of agentic, unagentic, communal, and uncommunal octant scales.

elaborate and reliable trait measures may prove more potent predictors. Moreover, even if motives are better predictors of preferences, traits may be better predictors of who actually approaches or avoids positions of power and status.

Study 4

Studies 1 to 3 tested whether interpersonal motives predict preferences for status or power relative to other individuals. Study 4 tested whether intergroup motives would similarly predict preferences for one's group to have status or power relative to other groups.

Method

Participants. Individuals in the United States (*n* = 89 females, 100 males; *M* age = 35.3 years, *SD* = 11.8) were recruited via MTurk in exchange for $0.20; their ethnicities were 70.4% White/Caucasian; 6.3% Hispanic/Latino; 9.5% Asian; 7.4% Black; and 6.3% Multiracial, Other, or no response. The above sample omitted 11 respondents who gave identical answers to ≥30 Circumplex Scales of Intergroup Goals (CSIG) items or failed to correctly answer a validity-check question.

Materials and procedure. Participants completed an online questionnaire. First, participants completed the CSIG (Locke, 2014). Like the CSIV, the CSIG contains eight 4-item scales that assess goals representing each circumplex octant, and respondents rate each goal on 5-point scales ranging from *not at all important* (0) to *extremely important* (4). The difference is that whereas the CSIV assesses goals for interpersonal interactions, the CSIG assesses goals for intergroup interactions. Table 1 shows example items from each CSIG octant scale. A randomization test of hypothesized order relations confirmed that the CSIG octant scales fit a circular model,

CI = .72, *p* < .001 (the CSIG was also used in Studies 5 and 6, and fit a circular model in those studies as well, *CI*s = .83 and .76, *p*s < .001). Therefore, the scales were aggregated into an agentic motive score indicating the relative importance respondents place on their group being confident and decisive rather than timid and conflict-avoidant (α = .67) and a communal motive score indicating the relative importance respondents place on their group being engaged and open rather than competitive and guarded (α = .89).

In the current study, the CSIG instructions stated,

> Imagine you are an employee at a campus of a large state university system with multiple campuses throughout the state. The different campuses often interact as they share and compete for funding and students with each other as well as with other universities throughout the region. For each item below, answer the following question: When your campus and campus representatives interact with others campuses, how important it is that your campus and campus representatives act or are treated in the following ways?

After completing the CSIG, participants read descriptions of a high-status and a high-power position, preceded by the following instructions: "Imagining you work for a campus of a large state university with multiple different campuses, which of the following situations would most appeal to you?" The *high-power* option was as follows:

> Your campus has a great deal of power within the university system and throughout your state. Your campus enjoys an especially high level of authority and control over valued resources compared to other campuses within the university. Other university campuses may have a better reputation, but your campus can exert considerable influence on legislators and on the university system because of its privileged circumstances and access to resources.

The *high-status* option was as follows:

> Your campus has a great deal of status within the university system and throughout your state. Your campus enjoys an especially high level of respect and admiration compared to other campuses within the university. Other campuses may have better access to resources, but your campus can exert considerable influence on legislators and on the university system because of the high value others place on the positions and actions it takes.

Results and Discussion

More respondents preferred the high-status situation (62 females, 54 males) than the high-power situation (27 females, 46 males), $\chi^2(1) = 9.8$, $p = .002$. Women were more likely than men to prefer status to power, 69.7% versus 54.0%, $\chi^2(1) = 4.9$, $p = .027$.

Logistic regression of preference for status over power on agentic and communal motives (standardized and entered simultaneously) showed a positive effect of communal motives on preferences for status over power, $b = 0.60$, $SE = .17$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 12.91$, odds ratio = 1.83, 95% CI = [1.32, 2.54]; the estimated odds that a participant one standard deviation above average in communal motives would prefer status to power was approximately 80% greater than that of an average participant. Agentic motives did not predict preferences, $b = 0.16$, $SE = .16$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 1.01$. To test whether gender moderated the effects of social motives on preferences, we added to the regression gender and the two-way interactions between gender and agentic or communal motives; neither interaction was significant, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$s < 3.

Because women expressed stronger communal motives than men, Ms = 1.71 and 1.30, SDs = 0.96 and 1.01, $t(187) = 2.80$, $p = .006$, communal motives may mediate gender differences in preferences for status. Hayes's (2012) bootstrapping procedure (with 10,000 resamples) confirmed a significant indirect effect of gender on preferences through communal motives ($ab = .21$, $SE = .10$, 95% CI = [0.06, 0.48]). The direct effect of gender on preferences was not significant: before controlling for communal motives, $c = 0.67$, $SE = .31$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 4.82$, $p = .027$; after controlling for communal motives, $c' = 0.50$, $SE = .32$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 2.44$, $p > .1$. Thus, communal motives mediated the effect of gender on preferences for status versus power.

Study 5

The intergroup context involving college campuses used in Study 4, albeit familiar to the authors of this article, may be unfamiliar to most research participants. To increase confidence in the generalizability of the results, Study 5 replicated the basic procedure of Study 4, but with a more familiar intergroup context involving interactions between countries rather than between campuses.

Method

Participants. Individuals in the United States ($n = 92$ females, 89 males; M age = 35.8 years, $SD = 11.8$) were recruited via MTurk in exchange for $0.20. Their ethnicities were 72.0% White/Caucasian; 3.8% Hispanic/Latino; 7.1% Asian; 9.3% Black; and 7.7% Multiracial, Other, or no response. The above sample omitted 19 respondents who gave identical answers to ≥30 CSIG items or failed to correctly answer a validity-check question.

Materials and procedure. Participants completed an online questionnaire. Participants first completed the CSIG; the agentic and communal score αs were .79 and .88. The instructions asked participants to indicate, for each item: "When my country's representatives or leaders interact with representatives or leaders of other countries, how important is it that we act or appear or are treated in this way?" Next, participants read the descriptions of a high-status and a high-power position, preceded by the following instructions:

> Imagine representatives of your country are attending a meeting of major industrialized countries. Another country has put forward a proposal that involves all member nations in the organization committing to a major investment of time and resources in a politically unstable region of the world. Which of the following situations would most appeal to you?

The *high-power* position was as follows:

> Your country and its representatives enjoy a great deal of *power, authority, and control* within this group of nations. Although certain other countries are said to have more status within this group, because the other members recognize your country's dominance, your country's representatives have considerable influence. Indeed, unless the other nation's proposal receives *considerable resources* from your nation, it will probably fail.

The *high-status* position was as follows:

> Your country and its representatives enjoy a great deal of *status, respect, and admiration* within this group of nations. Although certain other countries are said to have more power within this group, because the other members prize your country's leadership, your country's representatives have considerable influence. Indeed, unless the other nation's proposal receives a *clear endorsement* from your nation, it will probably fail.

Results and Discussion

More respondents preferred the high-status position ($n = 76$ females, 58 males) than the high-power position ($n = 16$ females, 31 males), $\chi^2(1) = 41.8$, $p < .001$. Women were more likely than men to prefer status to power, 82.6% versus 65.2%, $\chi^2(1) = 7.2$, $p = .007$.

We used logistic regression to predict preference for status over power from agentic and communal motives

(standardized and entered simultaneously). Communal motives predicted preference for status over power, b = 0.51, SE = .19, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 7.40, odds ratio = 1.66, 95% CI = [0.42, 0.87]; compared with an average participant, a participant one standard deviation above average in communal motives was approximately two thirds more likely to prefer status to power. Agentic motives did not predict preferences, b = −0.14, SE = .17, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 0.62. To test whether gender moderated the effects of social motives, we added to the regression gender and the two-way interactions between gender and agentic or communal motives; neither interaction was significant, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$s < 0.2.

Because women expressed stronger communal motives than men, Ms = 1.34 and 0.88, SDs = 0.82 and 0.88, $t(179)$ = 3.64, p < .001, communal motives may mediate gender differences in preferences for status. Hayes's (2012) bootstrapping procedure (with 10,000 resamples) confirmed a significant indirect effect of gender on preferences through communal motives (ab = .23, SE = .13, 95% CI = [0.05, 0.58]). The direct effect of gender was significant but reduced in magnitude: before controlling for communal motives, c = 0.93, SE = .35, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 6.94, p < .01; after controlling for communal motives, c' = 0.72, SE = .37, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 3.88, p < .05. Thus, communal motives partially mediated the effect of gender on preferences for status versus power.

Study 6

Study 6 was essentially an intergroup version of Study 2. Study 6 participants—in addition to completing a binary choice measure, as in Studies 4 and 5—rated the desirability of each of four intergroup situations created by crossing high and low powers with high and low statuses. Also, the descriptions of positions of intergroup power and status in Study 6—in addition to mentioning potential upsides of power and status, as in Studies 4 and 5—mentioned potential downsides or limitations. Specifically, because the influence derived from status is granted, it cannot be presumed or imposed; and because the influence derived from power is imposed, it can evoke negative reactions. Finally, to further explore the generalizability of the findings of Studies 4 and 5 (which were conducted in the United States), we conducted Study 6 in Germany.

Method

Participants. Individuals in Germany (n = 112 males, 77 females, M age = 35.7, SD = 11.6) were recruited via Clickworker, a platform similar to MTurk, to complete an online questionnaire in exchange for €1.50. The above sample omitted 11 respondents who either gave identical answers to ≥30 CSIG items or failed to correctly answer two validity-check items.

Materials and procedure. First, participants completed the CSIG, using the same instructions as in Study 5; the agentic

and communal score αs were .71 and .88. (For a description of the development of the German version of the CSIG, see Aydin, Ullrich, Locke, Siem, & Shnabel, 2016.) Next, we told participants that we were studying the importance people place on national power and/or status, defined as follows:

> By *power* we mean that other countries depend on your country in important global political decisions because your country possesses geopolitically important resources (e.g., natural resources, military strength). This position of power implies that your country can never please all interested parties and sometimes even risks making enemies. By *status* we mean that your country is admired, respected and taken as role model due to its behavior in world politics. This position of status implies that your country sometimes lacks convincing means to enforce its decisions.

On the next page were four questions that tested whether participants understood power and status as intended; participants unable to answer these questions correctly after two attempts did not complete the remainder of questionnaire (and were omitted from the participants section above). On the subsequent page, participants indicated which scenario they preferred for their country: low power–high status, or high power–low status. Finally, participants rated—on *very undesirable* (1) to *very desirable* (7) scales—the desirability of four scenarios resulting from crossing high and low powers with high and low statuses. For example, the *high-power–high-status* scenario was as follows:

> Your country has *high power and high status*. Other countries depend on your country in important global political decisions because your country possesses geopolitically important resources (e.g., natural resources, military strength). At the same time your country is admired, respected and taken as role model due to its behavior in world politics.

Results and Discussion

More respondents preferred the high-status–low-power position (n = 57 females, 85 males) than the high-power–low-status position (n = 20 females, 27 males), χ^2 = 47.5, p < .001. Females and males were equally likely to prefer status to power, 74.0% and 75.9%, $\chi^2(1)$ = 0.09, and also reported equally strong communal motives, Ms = 1.36 and 1.25, SDs = 0.65 and 0.86, $t(187)$ = 0.90.

We used logistic regression to predict preference for status over power from agentic and communal motives (standardized and entered simultaneously). Communal motives predicted preference for status over power, b = 0.52, SE = .18, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 8.04, odds ratio = 1.68, 95% CI = [1.17, 2.41]; the odds that a participant one standard deviation above average in communal motives would prefer status to power was 68% greater than that of an average participant. Agentic motives did not predict preferences, b = −0.06, SE = .18, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 0.12, and gender did not moderate the

effects of either agentic or communal motives on preferences, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$s ≤ 2.

Finally, we subjected desirability ratings of the four scenarios to a GLM analysis, with the status (high vs. low) and power (high vs. low) as within-subjects variables, and agentic and communal motives and gender as between-subjects variables. There were powerful effects of status, power, and their interaction, $F(1, 186)$s = 658.15, 126.96, and 10.89, respectively: Participants judged having status and power as moderately desirable (M = 5.66, SE = .09), status without power as somewhat desirable (M = 4.63, SE = .11), power without status as somewhat undesirable (M = 3.00, SE = .11), and having neither status nor power as moderately undesirable (M = 1.63, SE = .09). The perceived desirability of status was strongly positively related to communal motives, $F(1, 185)$ = 28.00, b = 0.29, SE = .05, 95% CI = [0.18, 0.39], p < .001, sr^2 = .13, but unrelated to agentic motives (b = −0.02, SE = .05). The perceived desirability of power was positively related to agentic motives, $F(1, 185)$ = 7.78, b = 0.17, SE = .06, 95% CI = [0.05, 0.29], p = .006, sr^2 = .04, but negatively related to communal motives, $F(1, 185)$ = 6.74, b = −0.16, SE = .06, 95% CI = [−0.28, −0.04], p = .010, sr^2 = .03. No other effects were significant. A curious discrepancy in these results is that agentic motives predicted the desirability of power but not preferences for power over status. Perhaps one reason for the discrepancy is that preference ratings highlighted the contrast between power and status, whereas desirability ratings highlighted the contrast between power and powerlessness.

Studies 1 to 6 Combined

To summarize and clarify the general patterns, the following analyses combined the data from Studies 1 to 6 (N = 1,153). First, we conducted a mixed ANOVA on unstandardized social motive ratings with dimension (agentic or communal) as a within-subjects variable and measure/context (CSIV/interpersonal or CSIG/intergroup) and gender (572 females, 578 males) as between-subjects variables. Participants expressed stronger social motives on the CSIG than the CSIV, $F(1, 1146)$ = 322.39, p < .001, η_p^2 = .22. More important were the effects of dimension, $F(1, 1146)$ = 256.07, p < .001, η_p^2 = .18, and the Gender × Dimension interaction, $F(1, 1146)$ = 15.16, p < .001, η_p^2 = .01. Whereas communal motives were stronger among women than men, Ms = 1.17 and 0.91, SDs = 0.86 and 0.92, $t(1148)$ = 5.06, agentic motives were stronger among men than women, Ms = 0.17 and 0.27, SDs = 0.70 and 0.68, $t(1148)$ = 2.52. Alternatively framed, people expressed stronger communal than agentic motives, and this gap between communal and agentic motives was greater for women than men. No other effects were significant.

With respect to preferences for status versus power, most participants (67%) preferred status, $\chi^2(1)$ = 132.6, p < .001. Logistic regression of preferences on social motives
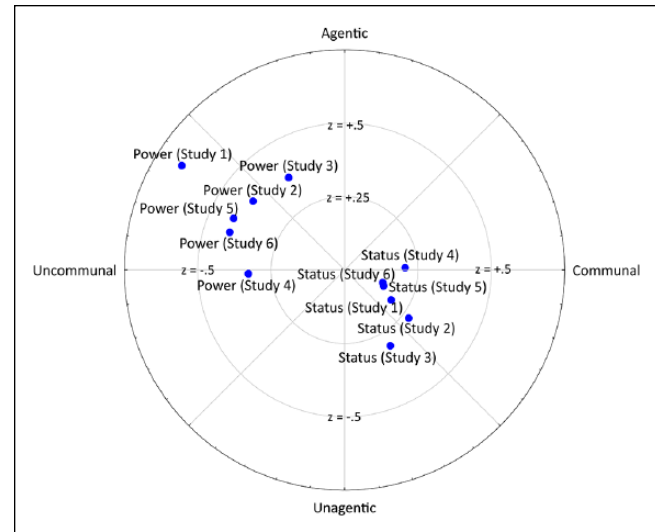

Figure 2. Agentic and communal motives of participants in Studies 1 to 6 who either preferred power to status (see points labeled *Power*) or preferred status to power (see points labeled *Status*).
Note. Agentic and communal motives were z scored within studies. Thus, groups average in both agentic and communal motives would be at the midpoint of the circle; groups average in agency but either 0.75 *SD* above average or below average in communion would be on the circumference at 0 or 180 degrees, respectively; and groups average in communion but either 0.75 *SD* above or below average in agency would be on the circumference at 90 or 270 degrees.

(standardized within studies), gender (female = −.5, male = +.5), measure/context (interpersonal = −.5, intergroup = +.5), and their interactions revealed four significant effects (ps < .005). First, gender predicted preferences: Preferring status to power was more prevalent among women (72.6%) than men (61.4%). Second, preferring status was positively related to communal motives, b = 0.45, SE = .07, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 38.71, odds ratio = 1.57, 95% CI = [1.36, 1.81]. Third, preferring status was negatively related to agentic motives, b = −0.22, SE = .07, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 10.11, odds ratio = 0.80, 95% CI = [0.70, 0.92]. Fourth, the Measure/Context × Agentic Motives interaction predicted preferences (b = 0.41, SE = .14): In Studies 1 to 3, agentic interpersonal motives predicted preferring interpersonal power, b = 0.43, SE = .10, Wald's $\chi^2(1)$ = 19.58, odds ratio = 1.54, 95% CI = [1.27, 1.87], but in Studies 4 to 6, agentic intergroup motives did not predict preferring intergroup power (b = 0.00, SE = .10). Figure 2 visually summarizes the preceding findings by plotting on the circumplex the mean agentic and communal motives of participants from each study who preferred power or status.

Finally, we conducted parallel mediation analyses to test whether agentic and communal motives mediated the effect of gender on preferences for status versus power (using Hayes's, 2012, bootstrapping procedure with 10,000 resamples). Analyzing the interpersonal data from Studies 1 to 3 revealed significant indirect effects of gender on preferences

through both communal motives ($ab = .14$, $SE = .05$, 95% CI = [0.07, 0.25], and agentic motives ($ab = .07$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI = [0.01, 0.17]). The total effect of gender on preferences before controlling for motives was $c = 0.60$, $SE = .17$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 11.88$, $p < .001$; the direct effect of gender after controlling for motives was $c' = 0.43$, $SE = .18$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 5.44$, $p = .020$. Analyzing the intergroup data from Studies 4 to 6 revealed a significant indirect effect of gender on preferences through communal motives ($ab = .18$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI = [0.09, 0.31]), but not agentic motives ($ab = .00$, $SE = .01$). The total effect of gender before controlling for motives was $c = 0.49$, $SE = .19$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 6.76$, $p = .009$; the direct effect after controlling for communal motives was $c' = 0.33$, $SE = .20$, Wald's $\chi^2(1) = 2.80$, $p = .094$. Thus, gender differences in communal motives helped explain gender differences in preferences for interpersonal and intergroup status versus power, and gender differences in agentic motives helped explain gender differences in preferences for interpersonal (but not intergroup) status versus power.

Study 7

Studies 1 to 3 showed that interpersonal motives predict attraction to status or power in the workplace. Our final study asked the following question: Do interpersonal motives also predict how much status and power people actually have at work and the effect of having status or power on job satisfaction?

Method

Participants. Individuals in the United States ($n = 89$ females, 101 males; M age = 34.7 years, $SD = 11.0$) were recruited via MTurk in exchange for $0.20. Their ethnicities were 73.2% White/Caucasian, 3.2% Hispanic/Latino, 9.5% Asian, 7.9% Black, and 6.3% Multiracial or Other. The above sample omitted 16 respondents who gave identical answers to ≥30 CSIV items or failed to correctly answer a validity-check question.

Materials and procedure. Participants completed an online questionnaire. First, participants completed the CSIV; the agentic and communal score αs were .71 and .79. Next, participants were asked whether they were currently employed with a company that had at least five employees. (The 10.4% of respondents who answered "no" to this question did not complete the remainder of questionnaire and were omitted from the participants section above.) Participants then estimated how many people worked for their company; these estimates (median = 100, range = 5-750,000) were unrelated to the other variables and will not be mentioned further

Next, participants were asked to rate "In this job, how much power do you have? That is, to what extent do you control valuable resources (such as work assignments,

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations (Study 7; $n = 190$).

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Agency	−0.13	0.69	—			
2. Communion	0.69	0.80	−.14	—		
3. Have power	2.58	1.10	.17	.06	—	
4. Have status	2.93	1.01	.16	.19	.73	—
5. Satisfaction	4.79	1.62	−.11	.23	.33	.38

Note. Correlation coefficients > |.15| are significant at $p < .05$. Satisfaction ratings were on 1 to 7 scales. Power and status ratings were on 1 to 5 scales. Agency and communion scores reflect weighted averages of agentic, unagentic, communal, and uncommunal octant scales.

purchases, or salaries)?" on a 5-point scale ranging from *I have very low power* (1) to *I have very high power* (5); and "In this job, how much status do you have? That is, to what extent are you admired, respected, viewed as role model, and your opinions are valued?" on a 5-point scale ranging from *I have very low status* (1) to *I have very high status* (5). Finally, participants rated, "How satisfied are you with this job?" on a 7-point scale ranging from *very dissatisfied* (1) to *very satisfied* (7).

Results and Discussion

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations; we will highlight four results from Table 3. First, the average satisfaction rating was above the scale midpoint of "*4: Neutral*," $t(189) = 6.71$; the modal response was "*5: Somewhat Satisfied*." Second, on average, status ratings did not significantly differ from the scale midpoint of "*3: I have neither low nor high status*," $t(189) = -0.93$, whereas ratings of power were significantly below the midpoint, $t(189) = -5.26$. Thus, participants reported more status than power, paired $t(189) = 6.17$. Third, power and status were highly correlated: People rarely perceived themselves to have power without status or status without power.

Regression of perceived power, perceived status, and job satisfaction on agentic and communal motives (with all variables standardized) showed that agentic motives predicted power ($b = 0.18$, $SE = .07$, 95% CI = [0.04, 0.33], $p = .012$, $sr^2 = .03$) and status ($b = 0.20$, $SE = .07$, 95% CI = [0.05, 0.35], $p = .007$, $sr^2 = .04$), but not satisfaction ($b = -0.08$, $SE = .07$). In contrast, communal motives predicted status ($b = 0.21$, $SE = .07$, 95% CI = [0.07, 0.35], $p = .003$, $sr^2 = .04$) and satisfaction ($b = 0.22$, $SE = .07$, 95% CI = [0.08, 0.36], $p = .002$, $sr^2 = .05$), but not power ($b = 0.08$, $SE = .07$).

Regression of job satisfaction on perceived power and perceived status showed satisfaction was related to status ($b = 0.30$, $SE = .10$, 95% CI = [0.11, 0.49], $p = .002$, $sr^2 = .04$) but not power ($b = 0.11$, $SE = .10$). To test whether motives moderated the effect of status and power on satisfaction, we added to the preceding regression the two-way interactions of power or status with agentic or communal motives.
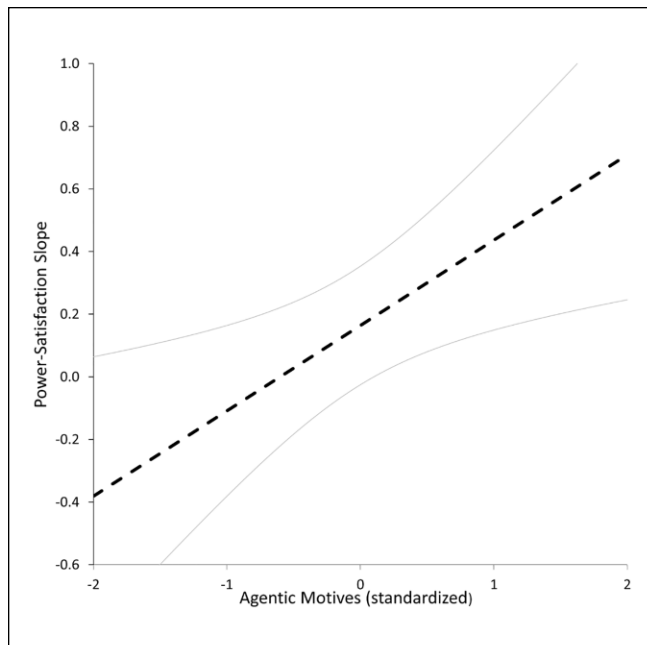
Figure 3. Association between power and satisfaction as a function of agentic motives in Study 3.
Note. At each level of agentic motives, the dark straight line shows the estimated simple slopes for the regression of satisfaction on power, and the pale curved lines show the 95% confidence bands (continuously plotted confidence intervals) around those slopes. We computed the equations for the confidence bands using formulas provided by Bauer and Curran (2005) and online utilities provided by Preacher, Curran, and Bauer (2006).

There was a significant Power × Agency interaction ($b = 0.27$, $SE = .10$, 95% CI = [0.07, 0.48], $p = .010$, $sr^2 = .03$): As Figure 3 shows, greater power only predicted greater satisfaction for people with strong agentic motives. No other interactions were significant, ps $\geq .1$, sr^2s $\leq .01$.

Finally, we tested whether gender predicted status, power, or job satisfaction, or moderated the effects of agency or communion on status, power, or job satisfaction. Gender moderated the effect of agency on status ($b = 0.33$, $SE = .15$, 95% CI = [0.05, 0.62], $p = .024$, $sr^2 = .03$): Stronger agentic motives predicted greater status among males ($b = 0.35$, $SE = .09$, 95% CI = [0.15, 0.48], $p < .001$, $sr^2 = .12$), but not among females ($b = -0.02$, $SE = .11$). No other effects involving gender were significant (ps $\geq .1$, sr^2s $\leq .01$).

General Discussion

Consistently, when forced to choose between positions of status (in which you or your group has the respect and esteem of others) and positions of power (in which you or your group has asymmetric control over valuable resources), most participants chose status. Moreover, across both interpersonal and intergroup contexts, participants judged having status to be more desirable than having power. Finally, for most people, satisfaction at work depended on how much status—not how much power—they had.

Social motives may help explain why people typically find status more attractive and satisfying than power. Agentic motives and communal motives are both fundamental: Their fulfillment and frustration are intrinsically rewarding and punishing, across cultures and across the life span (Locke, 2015). Whereas both status and power may satisfy agentic motives, status may often simultaneously satisfy communal motives, while power may leave communal motives unfulfilled. Furthermore, most participants had stronger communal than agentic motives, which—as explained below—was the mixture of motives that predicted preferring status to power.

Individual Differences in Social Motives

Consistently, across studies and across interpersonal and intergroup contexts, the stronger the individuals' communal motives, the more likely they were to perceive status as desirable and prefer status to power. People with stronger communal motives also reported having more status at work. Thus, there was a clear, robust, positive association between communal motives and attraction to positions of status.

Compared with people with weak agentic motives, people with strong agentic motives found positions of interpersonal or intergroup power more attractive, and, in the workplace, they were more likely to have power, more likely to prefer power to status, and more likely to have their job satisfaction depend on their having power. Thus, there were positive associations between agentic motives and power. However, agentic motives predicted preferring power to status only in interpersonal—not intergroup—contexts. One possible explanation is that power is particularly satisfying to people with strong agentic motives *not* to be controlled by others (Lammers, Stoker, Rink, & Galinsky, 2016), a motive that was captured by the interpersonal but not the intergroup motive inventory.

To better understand what motivated people's preferences, we conducted *t* tests comparing how people who preferred status versus power responded to each CSIV/CSIG item (in Studies 1-6 combined), and examined the items that best distinguished the groups (i.e., ts > 3).[1] The goals endorsed more by participants who preferred power (e.g., "I do better than them," "I keep my guard up," "we do whatever is in our best interest," "we are the winners in any argument or dispute") suggested that they expected interpersonal/intergroup relationships to be competitive or exploitative and therefore were determined that they or their group distance and protect themselves by securing—and warily guarding—positions of superiority and control. The goals endorsed more by participants who preferred status (e.g., "I feel connected to them," "they support me when I am having problems," "we show concern for their welfare," "we appreciate

what they have to offer") suggested that they trusted interpersonal/intergroup relationships could be cooperative and mutually beneficial, and therefore were prepared to approach others with the types of warm, friendly overtures that would invite warm, friendly responses.

In interpersonal contexts, there was evidence of the additional influence of agentic concerns, with people who preferred power emphasizing being personally in control (e.g., "I keep the upper hand," a *high-agency*–low-communion goal) and people who preferred status emphasizing being personally liked (e.g., "I get along with them," a *low-agency*–high-communion goal). Such issues were less salient in the intergroup contexts (perhaps because, in those contexts, it was not the participants but their representatives and leaders who would directly experience power or status), which may further explain why agentic motives only predicted preferences in interpersonal contexts.

Gender Differences

Replicating previous research (Hays, 2013), we found that women were more likely than men to prefer status to power (although, because this gender difference was not statistically significant in all of our studies, it may depend on exactly how power and status are operationalized). Extending previous research, we found that (a) women typically expressed stronger communal motives than men, (b) this gender difference in communal motives partly explained the gender difference in preferences for status versus power, and (c) these patterns were evident in both interpersonal and intergroup contexts. Women's typically weaker agentic interpersonal motives may have also contributed to their stronger preference for interpersonal status.

We also found that whereas men with stronger agentic interpersonal motives reported more workplace power *and* status, women with stronger agentic motives reported only more power and not more status. One explanation for these findings is that people tend to view agency (e.g., confidence, decisiveness) as less admirable and likeable in women than in men (Phelan & Rudman, 2010), and being admired and liked is a necessary condition for status (but not for power).

Traditionally, men have been more likely to pursue and retain leadership positions, perhaps because men experienced stronger power motives and because both men and women associated leadership with stereotypically masculine, agentic qualities (Schuh et al., 2014). Increasingly, however, both men and women are conceptualizing leadership as requiring both communal (e.g., sensitive, supportive) and agentic (e.g., assertive, competitive) actions (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). To the degree that expressing communion and being granted status become more integral to how people conceptualize leadership, women may become concomitantly more likely to pursue and retain leadership positions.

Limitations

Our studies were conducted in the United States, Germany, and Switzerland, which are "WEIRD" societies (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010) characterized by relatively high levels of individualism and ingroup and outgroup trust (Delhey, Newton, & Welzel, 2011). Future research in other countries or contexts (e.g., those characterized by less trust, individualism, and confidence in social institutions) might identify cultural or contextual moderators of the current findings. We did attempt to explore the generalizability of our results by conducting another study similar to Studies 1 and 2 in India, a country characterized by less generalized trust and stronger vertical collectivism (Delhey et al., 2011; Kuwabara, Yu, Lee, & Galinsky, 2016); however, because that study suffered from psychometric and sampling problems, we decided it was prudent to simply make that study available as an online supplement to the current article.

Another potential limitation is our reliance on self-report measures; thus, future research may wish to use alternative measures (e.g., implicit measures of motives, coworkers' perceptions of status, behavioral measures of preferences). A third potential limitation is that differences between status and power depend on how status and power are defined. To address this concern, our operationalization of status and power varied across studies, yet stayed close to how other researchers have defined and operationalized status and power (e.g., Blader & Chen, 2012).

A related potential limitation is that we treated status and power as distinct categories. On one hand, proponents of the dominance–prestige model of social rank have compiled compelling arguments that prestige and dominance (which resemble status and power) are evolutionarily, biologically, and psychologically distinct strategies (Cheng, Tracy, Foulsham, Kingstone, & Henrich, 2013). On the other hand, if multiple interacting continuous variables (e.g., one's agentic and communal motives, one's competencies relative to others, the perceived stability of the social hierarchy) shape the strategies people use to achieve social influence, then those strategies—although clustering in some circumplex regions more than others—may often not fit into neat, narrow, nonoverlapping categories.

Conclusion

The current studies showed how agentic and communal social motives influence attractions and reactions to status and power. One implication is that individuals with similar social motives will be attracted to similar social roles; therefore, if placed in the same group, they may compete for power or status. Public conflicts and even private disagreements over who has or deserves more status can contribute to squabbling and schisms and—among those left feeling underappreciated—sulky disengagement, all of which can undermine group cohesion and effectiveness (Bendersky &

Hays, 2012; Kilduff, Willer, & Anderson, 2016). Analogous power or status conflicts between groups may undermine intergroup cooperation. Fortunately, the results suggest that individuals with equally strong agentic motives but different levels of communal motivation can avoid such conflicts; for example, if Nico has stronger communal needs than Alex, then both Nico and Alex may be satisfied with Nico having more status ("you are the expert") and Alex having more power ("you assign the jobs").

Social motives also shape and are shaped by many other attitudes, dispositions, and circumstances. For example, the current research showed how social motives are associated with the traits of extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. To give just a few other examples, studies have found that weak interpersonal communal motives (especially when alloyed with strong agentic motives) are positively associated with Machiavellianism (Locke & Christensen, 2007), paranoid, antisocial, and avoidant personality symptoms (Locke, 2000), and—at least among males—testosterone levels (Turan, Guo, Boggiano, & Bedgood, 2014). Similarly, studies have found that weak intergroup communal motives are associated with wanting one's ingroup to be guarded (rather than open and generous) with outgroups and to use threats (rather than give-and-take negotiation) to resolve intergroup conflicts (Locke, 2014). Therefore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that preferences for power over status might also be associated with having such qualities (e.g., elevated testosterone and suspicious, cynical, or exploitative attitudes toward others or outsiders) as well as being in circumstances that tend to evoke these qualities. We hope that the preceding examples illustrate how situating power and status within the circumplex of agentic and communal social motives can help guide future investigations and ultimately facilitate a more complete and integrative understanding of these distinct forms of social influence.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Supplemental Material

The online supplemental material is available at http://pspb.sagepub.com/supplemental.

Note

1. If we use *t*s > 2.0 as the criteria, then individuals who preferred power versus status showed significant differences on half of the items measuring agentic and communal motives (i.e., 15 Circumplex Scales of Interpersonal Values [CSIV] items and 17 Circumplex Scales of Intergroup Goals [CSIG]

items). Thus, individuals who preferred power versus status differed in how they prioritized a diversity of goals reflective of agentic and communal motives (and not simply in how they answered a few idiosyncratic questions). Moreover, the CSIV and CSIG items (listed in the Online Appendix—Study Materials) reference behaviors and experiences that differ from those referenced in the outcome measures assessing preferences for status and power, with one exception: "Respect" appears both in the descriptions of status and in the CSIV item, "They respect what I have to say," and corresponding CSIG item, "They respect what we have to say." However, these items were among those that did *not* significantly discriminate between people who preferred power versus status. Specifically, in Studies 1 to 3, having others "respect what I have to say" was very important both to participants who preferred status ($M = 2.86$, $SD = 0.91$) and participants who preferred power ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 0.95$), $t(592) = 0.36$; likewise, in Studies 4 to 6, having others "respect what we have to say" was very important both to participants who preferred status ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.77$) and participants who preferred power ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.90$), $t(557) = 1.84$. Not surprisingly, therefore, eliminating these items prior to analyzing the data did not change the results.

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