Check for updates

European Journal of Social Psychology

WILEY
EASP

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Followers' Locomotion Mode Predicts Preferring Assertive Leaders: Regulatory Fit by Means of Valued Social Characteristics of Others

Magali Beylat[1,2] | Karl-Andrew Woltin[1] | Julien Barbedor[1] | Kai Sassenberg[3,4] | Vincent Yzerbyt[1]

[1]Psychological Sciences Research Institute, Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium | [2]Center for Social and Cultural Psychology (CeSCuP), Université libre de Bruxelles, Brussels, Belgium | [3]Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien (IWM), Tübingen, Germany | [4]Leibniz-Institut für Psychologie (ZPID), Trier, Germany

Correspondence: Magali Beylat (magali.beylat@ulb.be)

Received: 20 December 2023 | **Accepted:** 17 December 2024

Funding: The data collection for this research was funded by the funds of FSR2020 grant to Karl-Andrew Woltin, Université Catholique de Louvain [FSR grant].

Keywords: assertiveness | interpersonal regulatory fit | leader traits | motivation | regulatory mode

ABSTRACT

Building on prior work on regulatory fit in leader–follower contexts, the present work investigated such fit regarding followers' locomotion mode (the concern to move forward and maintain action flow) and leader assertiveness. In three studies, we recruited English-speaking employees online (N_{total} = 948) and assessed their regulatory mode. In Study 1, we then measured participants' preferences regarding characteristics their leaders ideally should have. In Study 2, participants reported perceived characteristics (ability/assertiveness/morality/friendliness) of their actual leader. In Study 3, we presented participants with a highly assertive versus highly able leader profile. Participants subsequently indicated their expected satisfaction with and motivation by these leaders. Across studies, the higher the followers' locomotion mode, the more they valued their leader being assertive. These findings show that feelings of fit can also derive from an alignment with others' characteristics and shed light on when leader assertiveness is appreciated.

1 | Introduction

Assertiveness and related concepts, such as confidence, determination or dominance, have been linked to leadership as both 'bright and dark sides' of leader traits (Judge, Piccolo, and Kosalka 2009), with assertiveness sometimes being portrayed as a crucial attribute and at other times as a problematic one (Ames 2009; Cheng et al. 2013). In this study, we investigate how a characteristic of followers may help understand when assertiveness in leaders is valued and could even prove to be motivating. Specifically, followers' regulatory mode (Kruglanski et al. 2000) defines their tendencies to be concerned primarily with staying in action and getting things done (locomotion) or with critically analysing and comparing options (assessment). These two modes influence the strategies that followers adopt when pursuing goals (Kruglanski et al. 2010). These goals often include work goals with important implications, for example, regarding burnout (De Carlo et al. 2014) or psychological adjustment at work (Bélanger et al. 2014). Moreover, followers' appreciation of leaders should at least partly depend on whether leaders' characteristics fit their predominant mode (Higgins 2005; Sassenberg and Hamstra 2017). As it turns out, the available work considered follower–leader fit in terms of sharing similar predominant modes (Benjamin and Flynn 2006; Beylat et al. 2020; Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins

© 2025 John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

2007). In the present series of studies, we instead investigated followers' appreciation of their leaders' assertiveness as a further source of fit.

The literature on social evaluation studies how people form impressions about others based on their behaviours, faces or other information available and highlights two fundamental dimensions that guide people in how they evaluate their social environment, with each dimension comprising two facets (for recent reviews, see Abele et al. 2021; Koch et al. 2021). Whereas the vertical dimension, often referred to as competence or agency, encompasses the facets of ability and assertiveness, the horizontal dimension, also known as warmth or communion, comprises the facets of friendliness and morality (Abele et al. 2008, 2016). Not surprisingly, these characteristics are also relevant in the leadership context (Derue et al. 2011). Previous empirical research reveals that high levels of competence (Capozza et al. 2017; Judge, Colbert, and Ilies 2004; Peters, Steffens, and Morgenroth 2018), friendliness (Blake et al. 2022; Judge et al. 2002) and morality (Ellemers and de Gilder 2022; Leach, Ellemers, and Barreto 2007) in leaders are associated with positive outcomes of leadership. Other work considered the vertical dimension more generally and, for instance, showed that people think of leaders as possessing primarily high levels of agency rather than high levels of communion (Koenig et al. 2011). However, this work does not differentiate between the ability and assertiveness facets. Results regarding the role of assertiveness specifically are scarcer and intricate, with some work showing that assertive leaders appear efficient and other work highlighting that they can be seen as too dominant (Ames 2009). These contradictory findings call for more attention to be dedicated to better understand the role of assertiveness in leaders. Our work intends to do so, while also considering the other facets of social evaluation to allow disentangling assertiveness and ability effects.

We posit that among the four facets, leaders' assertiveness is likely to hold particular relevance for locomotion-oriented followers. We thus predict that followers' locomotion will be associated with higher preferences for assertive traits in their leader, and—as a corollary—fit effects (i.e., higher satisfaction with and motivation by the leader) when high locomotion followers have a rather assertive leader. Indeed, assertive leaders are expected to be persistent in defending their ideas and efficient in their goal pursuit (Ames and Flynn 2007). These features should resonate with locomotors' concern to ensure movement and quick change and should thus be deemed especially relevant by them. This, in turn, should have implications for followers' motivation and satisfaction.

1.1 | Regulatory Mode and Follower–Leader Fit

Regulatory mode theory (Higgins, Kruglanski, and Pierro 2003; Kruglanski et al. 2000) posits two independent motivational orientations: locomotion and assessment mode. High locomotion entails a focus on getting things done and staying on the move, resulting in a preference for goal-pursuit strategies enabling rapid progress (Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins 2016), such as setting clear short-term goals and priorities (Amato et al. 2014). It also entails faster decision-making and task completion (Kruglanski et al. 2010; Mauro et al. 2009), less procrastination (Pierro et al. 2011) and a need for a sense of control over situations (Higgins 2012; Rehani and Bar-Kalifa 2022). In contrast, high assessment entails a focus on critically evaluating situations, people, and the self and ensuring optimal and correct choices. This results in a preference for strategies allowing thorough comparisons of possible options (Avnet and Higgins 2003), more procrastination (Pierro et al. 2011) and a need to have a sense of what is true (Higgins 2012; Rehani and Bar-Kalifa 2022).

When individuals pursue goals in a manner that aligns with their self-regulatory orientation, a feeling of 'rightness' arises that increases motivation, persistence and task appreciation—a phenomenon known as regulatory fit (Higgins 2000, 2005). Regulatory fit is not limited to strategy usage but indeed is most commonly studied by looking at how messages, products or other people that correspond to self-regulatory concerns shape attitudes or behaviour intention (Motyka et al. 2014). It is well documented for regulatory mode (e.g., Avnet and Higgins 2003, 2021). For instance, people deem messages presented in a way that fits their regulatory mode more convincing (Mannetti et al. 2010; Pierro et al. 2013). In the work domain, leaders significantly influence the strategies adopted by their followers through guidance and by serving as an example. When the evoked strategies or the characteristics of leaders are congruent with followers' regulatory mode, this likewise leads to a feeling of fit that translates into an increase in followers' satisfaction and motivation (Benjamin and Flynn 2006; for a general discussion, see Sassenberg and Hamstra 2017).

1.2 | Leader's Traits and Followers' Satisfaction and Motivation

People form impressions about others and infer characteristics based on their behaviours, faces or other available information, with certain clusters of traits influencing the overall evaluation of an individual more than others do (Asch 1946; Koch et al. 2021). Notably, social evaluation rests on two fundamental dimensions, recently labelled as the vertical dimension (traits related to how people get ahead with their goals) and the horizontal dimension (traits related to how people get along with others; Abele et al. 2021). Moreover, each dimension comprises at least two facets (Abele et al. 2008, 2016). The vertical facets are *ability*, the aspect of agency related to being intelligent and capable, and *assertiveness*, the aspect of agency related to being ambitious and self-confident (Abele et al. 2016; Carrier et al. 2014; Yzerbyt et al. 2022). The horizontal facets are *morality*, entailing benevolence in ways that facilitate correct and principled relations with others, and *friendliness*, entailing benevolence in ways that facilitate affectionate relations with others (Brambilla and Leach 2014). In this paper, we consider these four facets that can be considered traits (Abele et al. 2008, 2016), and which people attribute to others based on their formed impressions.

For three out of the four facets—morality, friendliness, and ability—the relationship with leadership effectiveness is rather straightforward, with higher levels of these characteristics correlating with greater effectiveness and success of leaders (Derue et al. 2011; Judge, Piccolo, and Kosalka 2009). However, concerning assertiveness, the message emanating from the scarce

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

literature is less clear (Ames 2009). Assertiveness is more desirable in leaders than in followers (Benson et al. 2024). Leaders' assertiveness serves their efficiency (Ames and Flynn 2007), and studies examining leadership styles characterised by a complete absence of assertiveness, such as *laissez-faire* or *passive* styles, indicate a negative association with leadership effectiveness (Judge and Piccolo 2004). Moreover, especially female (vs. male) leaders who fail to show assertiveness meet with disapproval (Bongiorno, Bain, and David 2014). Research looking at aspects falling under the umbrella of assertiveness, such as self-confidence and ambition, also points to these characteristics as being key to leadership efficiency and approval (Kirkpatick and Locke 1991). At the same time, high levels of assertiveness may compromise agreeableness and make leaders look offensive or antagonistic, which in turn is detrimental to their efficacy and image (Ames and Flynn 2007). In addition, studies on related traits like dominance show that while dominance in individuals is associated with reaching a higher position in a group, it can be detrimental to being appreciated (Cheng et al. 2013). Indeed, leaders with low levels of assertiveness are viewed as too passive, but leaders with extremely assertive behaviours come across as too hostile (Santora 2007). Clearly, assertiveness can constitute both a 'bright' and 'dark' leader trait (Judge, Piccolo, and Kosalka 2009).

Overall, compared to the other three facets, the impact of leaders' assertiveness, including on followers, is thus more complex. We suggest that the effects of leaders' assertiveness depend on followers' specific self-regulatory priorities and preferences, and, in particular, on their locomotion mode. So far, the literature on people's self-regulation and social evaluation has not been connected. However, there is evidence that leaders' assertiveness—understood as a facet of the vertical dimension in social judgement—signals determination and drive, which are both crucial concerns of locomotors and should thus resonate with followers' locomotion mode.

1.3 | The Fit Between Followers' Locomotion and Leaders' Assertiveness

Locomotion-oriented followers should experience regulatory fit with leader assertiveness for several reasons. First, followers draw inspiration from their leaders' behaviour (Bass et al. 1987; Mayer et al. 2009). When followers perceive their leader as assertive, they are likely to emulate this trait and thus adopt strategies that align with their self-regulatory preferences. Indeed, assertive leaders come across as determined to push forward and achieve their goals, which corresponds to the primary concern of high-locomotion followers for movement and swift goal attainment (Kruglanski et al. 2000; Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins 2016). Additionally, assertive leaders establish a norm whereby it is acceptable to push to reach one's goals, even if this comes at the price of thwarting agreeableness. This echoes locomotion-oriented concerns, as shown by research indicating that higher locomotion results in a greater focus on managing the most per unit of time (Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins 2016), even if this involves compromising on other aspects such as quality (Orehek et al. 2012). Adopting these strategies and priorities corresponds with locomotion-oriented followers' preferences, as they facilitate faster task completion and movement. Therefore, locomotion-oriented followers should show a preference for, be motivated by, and be satisfied with assertive leaders.

Second, perceiving assertiveness in leaders sends signals that should resonate with locomotion-oriented followers' inclinations. Assertiveness conveys a sense of confidence in progress and goal achievement that these followers should appreciate (Benjamin and Flynn 2006). For instance, higher locomotion entails a preference for receiving visible rather than invisible help, as the former conveys confidence that one will manage and move forward (Zee et al. 2018). Moreover, highly assertive leaders are seen as dominant (Ames and Flynn 2007), which presumably indicates a sense of control that is important to locomotion-oriented individuals (Higgins 2012; Rehani and Bar-Kalifa 2022). This feeling of 'rightness' should translate into greater preference for, motivation by, and satisfaction with assertive leaders.

Finally, potential negative trade-offs of high assertiveness, such as reduced agreeableness, are presumably less problematic for locomotors, who are not overly concerned about social relationships and friendly reassurance (Giacomantonio, Mannetti, and Pierro 2013; Komissarouk et al. 2019). Locomotors might be less affected by disagreeable interpersonal exchanges as they are less prone to rumination or dwelling on the past (Pierro et al. 2008) and are more willing to seek reconciliation and move on after conflict (Webb et al. 2017). What matters most for high locomotors in their social interactions is that they serve their goal progress (Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins 2016). Consequently, they see collaboration more as an opportunity than a responsibility (Scholl et al. 2021). Overall, potential negative effects of assertiveness should thus be of less concern for highly locomotion-oriented followers.

1.4 | The Present Research

Capitalising on prior work on regulatory fit effects in leader–follower contexts (Sassenberg and Hamstra 2017) and research on the role of fundamental dimensions and their facets in social evaluation (Abele et al. 2021), we investigated interpersonal regulatory fit between followers' locomotion mode and their leaders' assertiveness. In doing so, we sought to shed light on the relationships between followers' regulatory mode and their leadership preferences, thus potentially clarifying the existing divergences in the literature regarding the implications of leaders' assertiveness, which has been termed both a 'bright' and a 'dark' leader trait (Judge, Piccolo, and Kosalka 2009). This endeavour also contributes to the social evaluation literature by highlighting the benefit of focusing on the facets of social evaluation rather than on the more global dimensions (Abele 2022; Yzerbyt et al. 2022) in contexts concerning followers' evaluation of their leader.

In three studies, we tested the general prediction that leaders' assertiveness fits with followers' locomotion mode. Followers with a stronger locomotion mode should prefer more strongly, be more satisfied with and be more motivated by leaders they perceive as assertive. To test this, we recruited employees via Prolific Academic (prolific.co). In Study 1, we measured participants' regulatory mode and their trait preferences regarding ideal leaders to test the hypothesis that followers' locomotion mode is more strongly associated with a preference for leaders' assertiveness

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

than with a preference for other facets. In Study 2, we tested whether followers' locomotion mode interacts with their perception of their leaders' assertiveness to predict satisfaction and motivation. Specifically, we expected followers' locomotion mode to be more strongly associated with satisfaction with and motivation by their leader when they perceived their leader as highly assertive than when they perceived them as low in assertiveness. We therefore measured participants' regulatory mode, their perception of their current leaders, as well as their satisfaction with them and to what extent they felt motivated by them. In Study 3, we tested the hypothesis that followers' locomotion is more strongly associated with satisfaction and motivation when their leader's main strength is assertiveness rather than ability. We first measured participants' regulatory mode and then had them imagine being in a fictitious work context in which we manipulated the strength of their leaders' assertiveness and ability.

We preregistered all studies (Study 1: https://aspredicted.org/k7nb-hjr9.pdf; Study 2: https://aspredicted.org/mmm4-c2b9.pdf; Study 3: https://aspredicted.org/gt44-bdzm.pdf). In all studies, to be eligible, participants had to be between 18 and 65 years old, be English native speakers, have a minimum 97% approval rate on Prolific, be employed at least 40% part-time with a direct manager or leader supervising them and not have participated in other studies of ours on similar topics. Materials, data, analysis command files and Supporting Information detailing further results for all studies can be found on the Open Science Framework: https://osf.io/3vr7u/?view_only=626df278c0e040419563c3e61cfbba49. The research was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee of the Université catholique de Louvain (Project 2020–42).

2 | Study 1

In Study 1, we considered followers' notions of ideal leaders. We predicted that the higher the participants' locomotion mode, the more they would prefer their leader to be assertive and that the association between locomotion and preference for assertiveness would be stronger than the association between locomotion and preference for any other facet.[1]

2.1 | Method

2.1.1 | Participants

Because we could not estimate the expected effect size based on previous research, we aimed for a sample of 250 participants, which is the recommended sample size to reach stable correlation estimates (Schönbrodt and Perugini 2013). To account for the possible loss of participants due to our exclusion criteria, we collected responses from roughly 50 additional participants. As preregistered, we excluded participants who failed embedded attention checks (Oppenheimer, Meyvis, and Davidenko 2009; $n = 3$), did not indicate being at least part-time (> 40%) employed ($n = 2$) and did not indicate having a manager or supervisor ($n = 2$). The final sample thus comprised 297 participants (184 females, 111 males and 2 non-binary individuals; $M_{age} = 38.00$, $SD_{age} = 10.84$). A table describing the professional characteristics of the samples from all studies (e.g., occupation, hours of work per week) can be found in the Supporting Information on OSF. We conducted a sensitivity analysis using the G*Power app (Faul et al. 2009). We specified a linear multiple regression with 11 predictors and three predictors tested. The 11 predictors included locomotion, assessment, the three contrasts comparing assertiveness with the other traits, the interactions between locomotion and each contrast and the interactions between assessment and each contrast. The three predictors tested were the interactions of interest, that is, locomotion by each contrast. The analysis indicated that with 297 participants, we could detect an effect of $f^2 = 0.04$ (i.e., $d = 0.20$) with 80% power ($1 - \beta$) and $\alpha = 0.05$. This analysis is based on a linear regression model and does not correspond exactly to the multilevel model we ran in this study, as G*Power does not allow the specification of such models. However, it provides a close approximation for the sensitivity of our data.

2.1.2 | Procedure and Materials

The study took on average 8 min to complete and participants received £0.75 as compensation. Participants first provided their informed consent and indicated their occupation, field, hours of work per week and how long they had been working with their manager/supervisor. Next, we measured their chronic regulatory mode. Subsequently, participants reported their preferences regarding their leaders' characteristics as expressed by the four facets of social evaluation. Specifically, participants indicated to what extent they preferred their leader to be competent, assertive, friendly and moral.[2] Finally, participants answered demographic questions (age, gender, native language, nationality and level of education), before being debriefed, thanked and paid.

2.1.3 | Measures

2.1.3.1 | Chronic Regulatory Mode. To measure participants' regulatory mode, we used the two 12-item subscales (e.g., locomotion: 'When I decide to do something, I can't wait to get started'; assessment: 'I am a critical person') of the Regulatory Mode Questionnaire (Kruglanski et al. 2000). Participants indicated to what extent they agreed with different statements on a 6-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 6 = *strongly agree*). We computed separate mean scores for locomotion ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.74$; $\alpha = 0.86$) and assessment mode ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.74$; $\alpha = 0.82$).

2.1.3.2 | Leader Facet Preferences. To measure participants' preferred facet in leaders, we presented them with the 20 adjectives from Barbedor et al. (2024), with each facet represented by five adjectives (e.g., ability: '*capable*'; assertiveness: '*determined*'; friendliness: '*sociable*'; morality: '*honest*'; see the full list of adjectives in Table 1), and asked them to what extent they would like their ideal leader to possess each. Participants indicated their ratings on a 7-point scale (1 = *moderately*; 7 = *extremely*). We computed mean preference scores for ability ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 0.90$; $\alpha = 0.78$), assertiveness ($M = 5.51$, $SD = 1.34$; $\alpha = 0.86$), friendliness ($M = 4.81$, $SD = 1.20$; $\alpha = 0.83$), and morality ($M = 6.19$, $SD = 0.84$; $\alpha = 0.80$).

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

TABLE 1 | Full list of adjectives used to measure preferred facets in leaders.

Ability	Assertiveness	Friendliness	Morality
Competent	Self-assured	Friendly	Honest
Intelligent	Ambitious	Sociable	Moral
Capable	Decided	Warm	Trustworthy
Clever	Persistent	Agreeable	Sincere
Efficient	Determined	Cordial	Reliable

2.2 | Results

We wanted to test whether there is a fit between locomotion mode and assertiveness. Specifically, we expected that locomotion mode would be associated with a preference for assertiveness as a leader characteristic and that this association would be stronger than the associations between locomotion and the other facets. We ran a model with preferences predicted by the two modes (locomotion and assessment) and the facets being considered using dummy coding with assertiveness as the reference level to allow for this comparison, specifically, a contrast comparing the slopes of assertiveness and ability, a contrast comparing assertiveness and friendliness and a contrast comparing assertiveness and morality.

We conducted a multilevel model analysis and regressed participants' scores on their locomotion mode, assessment mode, the facet with four levels and the interactions between the two modes and the facet (i.e., assessment × facet; locomotion × facet) as fixed effects and participants as random effects. We examined the four-level predictor 'facets of social evaluation' using dummy coding contrasts with assertiveness as the reference level: a contrast comparing 'assertiveness' (coded 0) versus 'ability' (coded 1; with friendliness and morality coded 0); a contrast comparing 'assertiveness' (coded 0) versus 'friendliness' (coded 1; with ability and morality coded 0); and a contrast 'assertiveness' (coded 0) versus 'morality' (coded 1, with ability and friendliness coded 0). All variables were standardised in the regression analyses, such that the reported regression coefficients are standardised. To streamline this manuscript, we report only statistical results of the most relevant effects here and in the following studies. Tables depicting all results are available in the Supporting Information on OSF.

Significant effects emerged for all three contrasts: 'assertiveness' versus 'ability', $\beta = 0.89$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.79, 0.99], $t(882) = 17.54$, $p < 0.001$; 'assertiveness' versus 'friendliness', $\beta = 0.24$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.14, 0.34], $t(882) = 4.68$, $p < 0.001$; and 'assertiveness' versus 'morality', $\beta = 1.32$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [1.22, 1.41], $t(882) = 25.95$, $p < 0.001$. Participants indicated that they generally preferred ability ($M = 5.64$, $SD = 0.90$), friendliness ($M = 4.81$, $SD = 1.20$) and morality ($M = 6.19$, $SD = 0.84$) more than assertiveness ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.34$) in an ideal leader.

Beyond global preferences, we expected locomotion to predict participants' preferences for facets. Indeed, the stronger the participants' locomotion mode was, the more they valued all facets, $\beta = 0.36$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.27, 0.45], $t(294) = 7.53$, $p < 0.001$. More importantly, the interaction between locomotion and the 'assertiveness versus ability' contrast was significant, $\beta = -0.10$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.20, 0.00], $t(882) = -1.97$, $p = 0.050$[3] (see Figure 1), in that the association with locomotion was stronger for assertiveness, $\beta = 0.36$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.27, 0.45], $t(753) = 7.53$, $p < 0.001$, than for ability, $\beta = 0.26$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.17, 0.35], $t(753) = 5.43$, $p < 0.001$. The locomotion by 'assertiveness versus friendliness' contrast interaction was also significant, $\beta = -0.33$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.43, −0.23], $t(882) = -6.52$, $p < 0.001$, showing that locomotion was associated with a preference for assertiveness but not friendliness, $\beta = 0.03$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.07, 0.12], $t(753) = 0.58$, $p = 0.563$. Finally, the locomotion by 'assertiveness versus morality' interaction was also significant, $\beta = -0.20$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.30, −0.10], $t(882) = -3.86$, $p < 0.001$, revealing that locomotion was more strongly associated with a preference for assertiveness than morality, $\beta = 0.16$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.07, 0.26], $t(753) = 3.41$, $p < 0.001$.

There was no main effect of assessment, and no significant interactions involving assessment.

2.3 | Discussion

Our first study provides initial support for our hypothesis regarding a fit between followers' locomotion mode and leaders' assertiveness. Notably, the higher their locomotion mode, the more strongly followers indicated that they want their leader to be assertive. Moreover, this association was more pronounced for assertiveness than for the other facets (i.e., ability, friendliness, and morality)[4].

One limitation of Study 1 is that we solely focused on followers' preferences with respect to an ideal leader. However, if leaders' assertiveness indeed entails a self-regulatory fit with followers' locomotion, this should result in actual positive outcomes, such as satisfaction and increased motivation (Sassenberg and Hamstra 2017). We tested this in Study 2.

3 | Study 2

In Study 2, we more directly examined the fit effect by looking at the satisfaction and motivation of followers. Specifically, we predicted that followers' locomotion mode and leaders' assertiveness would interact to predict satisfaction and motivation, such that followers' locomotion mode would be more strongly associated with leader-related satisfaction and motivation when followers perceive their leader as highly assertive than when they perceive them as low in assertiveness.[5]

3.1 | Method

3.1.1 | Participants

Because we used a novel design in this study, we could not estimate the expected effect size. Therefore, we again aimed for a sample of at least 250 participants. To account for the possible loss of participants due to our exclusion criteria, we collected responses from approximately 50 additional participants. As preregistered, we excluded participants who failed embedded

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

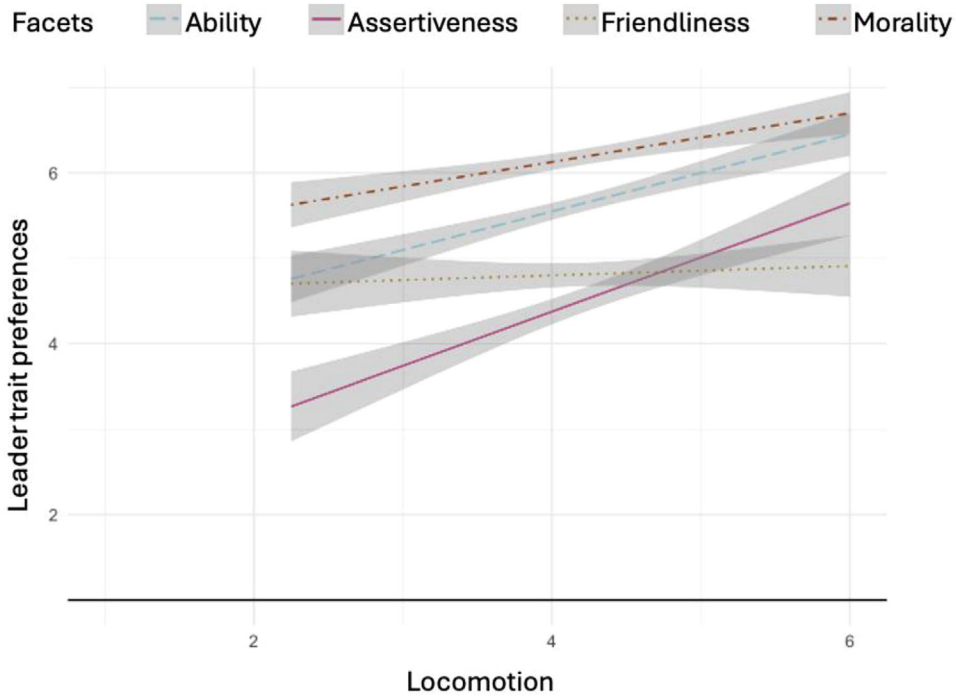


FIGURE 1 | Preferences for leader's ability, assertiveness, friendliness and morality depending on participants' locomotion (with standard error in the gray band) in Study 1.

attention checks ($n = 4$), were outliers (studentised residuals > |3|; $n = 3$), did not indicate being at least part-time (> 40%) employed ($n = 3$) and did not indicate having a manager ($n = 1$). The final sample thus comprised 292 participants (173 females, 117 males and 3 non-binary individuals; $M_{age} = 38.61$, $SD_{age} = 10.59$). Here again, we conducted a sensitivity analysis using the G*Power. We specified a linear multiple regression with five predictors and one predictor tested. The five predictors included locomotion, assessment, leaders' assertiveness, the interactions between locomotion and assertiveness and the interactions between assessment and assertiveness. The one predictor tested was the interaction between locomotion and assertiveness. The analysis indicated that with 292 participants, we could detect an effect of $f^2 = 0.03$ (i.e., $d = 0.17$) with 80% power ($1 - \beta$) and $\alpha = 0.05$.

3.1.2 | Procedure and Materials

Participants took an average of 7 min to complete the study and received £0.65 as compensation. As in Study 1, participants first provided informed consent, completed items related to their occupation and then completed the Regulatory Mode Questionnaire. Next, we measured participants' social evaluation of their actual manager on the four facets. After this, participants indicated their satisfaction with and motivation by their leader.[6] Finally, participants answered demographic questions as in Study 1, were debriefed, thanked and paid.

3.1.3 | Measures

3.1.3.1 | Chronic Regulatory Mode. We measured locomotion ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.72$; $\alpha = 0.85$) and assessment ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.70$; $\alpha = 0.78$) modes as in Study 1.

3.1.3.2 | Evaluation of Leaders on the Social Facets. We measured participants' perception of their actual leaders' facets by presenting them with the same 20 adjectives as in Study 1 (Barbedor et al. 2024) and asking them to what extent they thought the different adjectives applied to their leader on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*; 7 = *extremely*). We computed a mean score for each facet: ability ($M = 5.55$, $SD = 1.22$; $\alpha = 0.94$), assertiveness ($M = 5.41$, $SD = 1.03$; $\alpha = 0.86$), friendliness ($M = 5.41$, $SD = 1.17$; $\alpha = 0.91$), and morality ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.33$; $\alpha = 0.94$).

3.1.3.3 | Satisfaction With the Leader. We measured participants' satisfaction with their actual leader ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 1.54$; $\alpha = 0.88$) using three items adapted from Pierro et al. (2009; e.g., 'I am satisfied with my manager's/leader's leadership') to which participants replied on a 7-point scale (1 = *totally disagree*; 7 = *totally agree*).

3.1.3.4 | Motivation by the Leader. We measured participants' motivation by their actual leader ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 1.44$; $\alpha = 0.80$) using three items from the extra-effort subscale of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass and Avolio 1997; e.g., 'My leader/manager heightens my desire to succeed') to which participants replied on a 7-point scale (1 = *totally disagree*; 7 = *totally agree*).

3.2 | Results

To test our hypotheses that followers' locomotion is more strongly associated with satisfaction and motivation when they perceive their leader as highly assertive compared to when they perceive them as low in assertiveness, we conducted eight regression analyses. Specifically, we regressed participants' satisfaction or motivation on their locomotion mode, assessment mode, leaders'

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uco) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

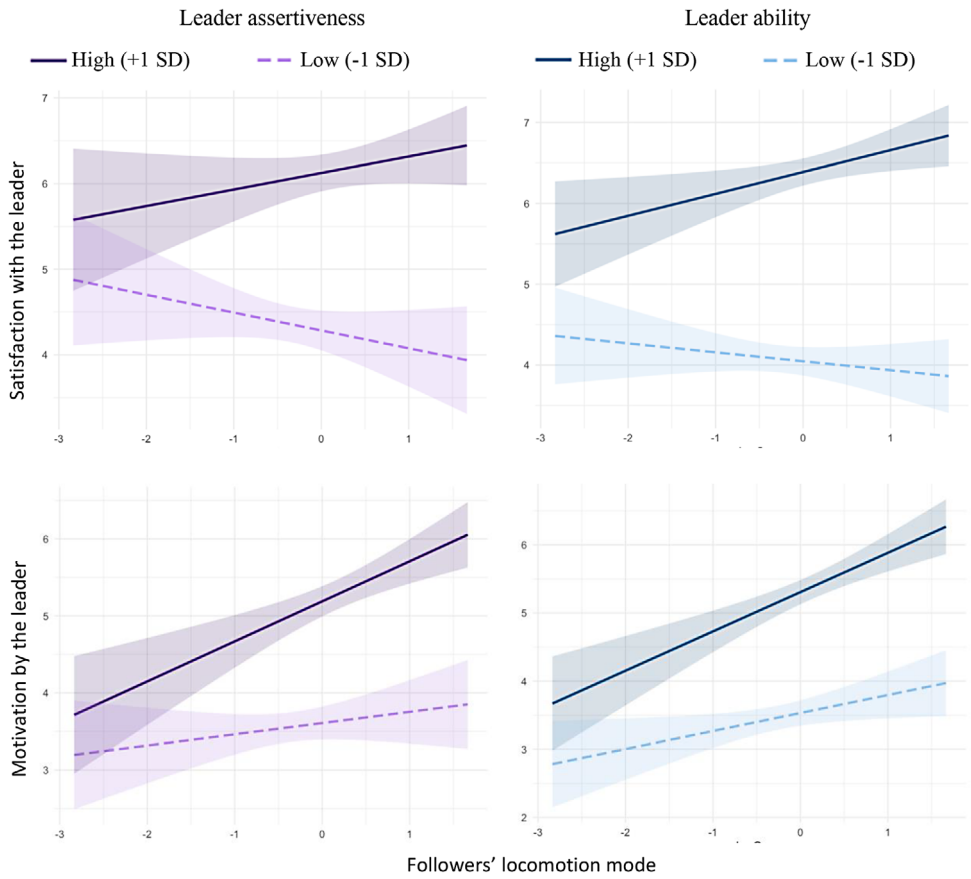


FIGURE 2 | Satisfaction with (on the top) and motivation by (on the bottom) the leader depending on followers' locomotion mode and their leader's assertiveness (on the left) or ability (on the right) with confidence interval in the band in Study 2.

traits as captured by the four facets (i.e., ability, assertiveness, friendliness or morality) and the interaction between both modes and perceived leader traits (i.e., locomotion × facet; assessment × facet). All variables were standardised in the regression analyses, such that the reported regression coefficients are standardised. Because we are only interested in the interaction between participants' modes and perceived leader traits, we present below only results pertaining to these interactions. All other results, which we did not have predictions for, can be found in the Supporting Information on OSF.

3.2.1 | Satisfaction With the Leader

Supporting our hypothesis regarding satisfaction, we found a significant interaction between participants' locomotion mode and perceived leader assertiveness, $\beta = 0.09$, $SE = 0.04$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.01, 0.18], $t(286) = 2.27$, $p = 0.024$ (see Figure 2). When participants perceived their leader to be high in assertiveness (+1 *SD*), participants' locomotion mode was positively, though not significantly, associated with their satisfaction, $\beta = 0.09$, $SE = 0.06$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.04, 0.22], $t(286) = 1.41$, $p = 0.161$, and it was negatively, though not significantly, associated when participants perceived their leader as low in assertiveness (−1 *SD*), $\beta = -0.10$, $SE = 0.07$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.24, 0.04], $t(286) = -1.39$, $p = 0.166$.

There was also an interaction between locomotion mode and perceived leader ability, $\beta = 0.09$, $SE = 0.03$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.03, 0.15], $t(286) = 2.74$, $p = 0.007$. When participants perceived their leader to be high in ability (+1 *SD*), locomotion mode was significantly related to their satisfaction, $\beta = 0.13$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.03, 0.23], $t(286) = 2.47$, $p = 0.014$, whereas such a relation did not emerge when they perceived their leader to be low in ability (−1 *SD*), $\beta = -0.05$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.16, 0.05], $t(286) = -0.98$, $p = 0.328$.

No interactions emerged for the friendliness and morality facets or between participants' assessment mode and leaders' traits.

3.2.2 | Motivation by the Leader

Regarding motivation, we found the predicted interaction between participants' locomotion mode and perceived leader assertiveness, $\beta = 0.09$, $SE = 0.04$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.01, 0.17], $t(286) = 2.31$, $p = 0.022$. Specifically, when participants perceived their leader as high in assertiveness (+1 *SD*), their locomotion mode was positively significantly associated with their motivation, $\beta = 0.26$, $SE = 0.06$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.14, 0.38], $t(286) = 4.12$, $p < 0.001$, but there was no association when they perceived their leader to be low in assertiveness (−1 *SD*), $\beta = 0.07$, $SE = 0.07$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.06, 0.21], $t(286) = 1.06$, $p = 0.292$.

In addition, there was an interaction between participants' locomotion mode and perceived leader ability, $\beta = 0.08$, $SE = 0.04$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.01, 0.15], $t(286) = 2.12$, $p = 0.035$. When participants perceived their leader to be high in ability (+1 *SD*), locomotion

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uco) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

mode was more strongly associated with motivation, $\beta = 0.29$, $SE = 0.06$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.17, 0.40], $t(286) = 4.96$, $p < 0.001$, than when they perceived their leader to be low in ability (−1 *SD*), $\beta = 0.13$, $SE = 0.06$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.01, 0.25], $t(286) = 2.21$, $p = 0.028$.

We again found no interactions for perceived leader friendliness and morality or between participants' assessment mode and leaders' traits.

3.3 | Discussion

In support of our hypothesis, we found a stronger positive relation between followers' locomotion mode and their satisfaction with[7] and motivation by their leaders when followers perceived their leaders' assertiveness to be high rather than low. Followers' locomotion mode interacted with perceived leader ability in a similar manner. Specifically, the higher the followers' locomotion mode and perceived leader ability were, the more followers were satisfied with and motivated by their leaders. To the extent that ability also influences whether one manages to reach one's goal, it is not surprising that this facet also matters to locomotors. A critical reader might thus question whether followers' locomotion especially fits with leaders' assertiveness or—more generally—with both facets of the vertical dimension. We posit assertiveness to be of larger relevance, compared to ability, for locomotion-oriented followers, as this facet most clearly embodies the mindset and drive needed to achieve goals, thus corresponding to locomotion concerns. To obtain more unequivocal evidence, we decided to experimentally pit assertiveness against ability in Study 3, which also addresses one limitation of the previous studies, namely, their correlational nature.

4 | Study 3

In Study 3, we decided to focus specifically on the facets of the vertical dimension by manipulating leaders' assertiveness and ability. We placed participants in an organisational simulation where we presented them with different leader profiles. We predicted that the positive relationship between followers' locomotion mode and their satisfaction with and motivation by leaders would be stronger for a highly assertive leader, compared to a highly competent leader.

4.1 | Method

4.1.1 | Participants

We conducted a power analysis using the PANGEA web app (Westfall 2016), specifying a design with three variables: participants, locomotion (2 levels: high vs. low)[8] and leader profile (2 levels: assertiveness vs. ability), with participants nested within locomotion and leader profile. We aimed to be able to detect an interaction between participants' locomotion and leader profile with a small- to medium-sized effect (i.e., $d = 0.30$). The power analysis indicated that 356 participants would be required to ensure 80% power ($1 - \beta$) with $\alpha = 0.05$. To account for potential losses due to our exclusion criteria, we recruited 376 participants. As preregistered, we excluded participants who failed embedded attention checks ($n = 1$), were outliers (studentised residuals > |3|; $n = 5$), did not indicate being at least part-time (> 40%) employed ($n = 5$) and did not indicate having a manager ($n = 7$). The final sample comprised 358 participants (185 males, 168 females, 4 other and 1 prefer not to say; $M_{age} = 35.79$, $SD_{age} = 11.02$).

4.1.2 | Procedure and Materials

Participants took an average of 6 mins to complete the survey and received a compensation of £0.55. They first provided informed consent, before completing the Regulatory Mode Questionnaire. Next, they were asked to imagine working in a company under the supervision of a manager. We manipulated leaders' ability and assertiveness, using two different male leader profiles (adapted after Carpinelli and Yzerbyt 2022). Participants saw a 'personality profile' depicting their leader as either high in assertiveness or high in ability (with other characteristics, e.g., agreeableness being rather average, see Figure A1 in Appendix). We randomly assigned participants to one of the two leader profile conditions and asked them to indicate the extent to which they would expect to be satisfied with and motivated by the described leader.[9] Finally, participants answered items related to their occupation and assessing the same demographic information as in Studies 1 and 2, and they were debriefed, thanked and paid.

4.1.3 | Measures

4.1.3.1 | Chronic Regulatory Mode. We measured locomotion ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.69$; $\alpha = 0.84$) and assessment ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.70$; $\alpha = 0.76$) modes as in the previous studies.

4.1.3.2 | Expected Satisfaction With and Expected Motivation by the Leader. We measured participants expected satisfaction with ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.30$; $\alpha = 0.89$) and expected motivation by the presented leader ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.10$; $\alpha = 0.78$) using the same items as in Study 2.

4.2 | Results

To test our hypotheses, we followed Judd, McClelland, and Ryan's (2011) approach and ran two separate regression analyses, one with participants' satisfaction and one with participants' motivation score as the criterion. As predictors, we used participants' locomotion score, participants' assessment score, leader profile (high ability coded −0.5, high assertiveness coded 0.5) and the interactions between each mode and leader profile (i.e., locomotion by leader profile; assessment by leader profile; for all results). All variables were standardised in the regression analyses, such that the reported regression coefficients are standardised.

4.2.1 | Expected Satisfaction With the Leader

Regarding satisfaction with the leader, there was a significant effect of leader profile, $\beta = -0.34$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.44, −0.25], $t(352) = -7.24$, $p < 0.001$, such that participants reported they would be more satisfied with the leader high in ability

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uco) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

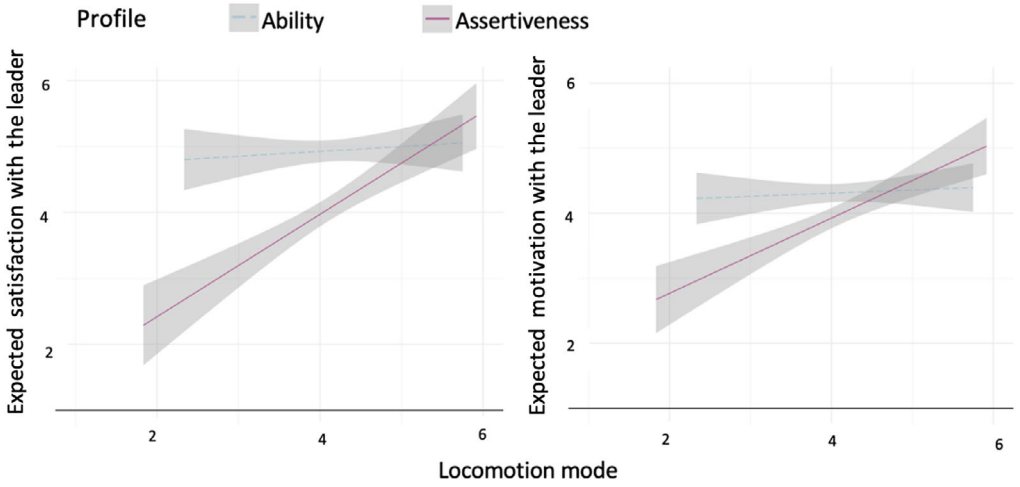


FIGURE 3 | Expected satisfaction with (on the left) and expected motivation by (on the right) the leader depending on locomotion mode (with standard error in the gray band) in Study 3.

($M = 4.93$; $SD = 1.10$), compared to the one high in assertiveness ($M = 4.05$; $SD = 1.35$). Consistent with Study 2, locomotion predicted satisfaction, $\beta = 0.24$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.15, 0.33], $t(352) = 5.07$, $p < 0.001$, such that the higher the participants' locomotion mode was, the more they expected that they would be satisfied.

More importantly, and in line with our hypothesis, there was a significant interaction between participants' locomotion and leader profile, $\beta = 0.17$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.08, 0.27], $t(352) = 3.60$, $p < 0.001$ (see Figure 3). When the leader was high in assertiveness, the stronger the participants' locomotion mode was, the more they expected to be satisfied with this leader, $\beta = 0.41$, $SE = 0.06$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.29, 0.54], $t(352) = 6.44$, $p < 0.001$. Such a relation did not emerge for the leader high in ability, $\beta = 0.07$, $SE = 0.07$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.07, 0.21], $t(352) = 0.99$, $p = 0.321$.

Assessment mode negatively predicted satisfaction, $\beta = -0.13$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.22, −0.03], $t(352) = -2.58$, $p = 0.010$: the higher participants' assessment was, the less they imagined being satisfied with either leader. There was no interaction between the assessment mode and the leader profile, $\beta = 0.05$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.05, 0.15], $t(352) = 1.00$, $p = 0.318$.

4.2.2 | Expected Motivation by the Leader

As in Study 2, results for expected motivation mirrored those for satisfaction. There was an effect of leader profile, $\beta = -0.15$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.25, −0.05], $t(352) = -2.94$, $p = 0.004$, such that participants reported that they would expect to be more motivated by a leader high in ability ($M = 4.37$; $SD = 0.99$) than one high in assertiveness ($M = 4.04$; $SD = 1.18$). In addition, locomotion positively predicted expected motivation, $\beta = 0.40$, $SD = 0.08$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.24, 0.56], $t(352) = 4.91$, $p < 0.001$: the higher the participants' locomotion mode was, the more they expected being motivated with either leader.

Again, and as predicted, we found a significant locomotion by leader profile interaction, $\beta = 0.16$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.06, 0.26], $t(352) = 3.17$, $p = 0.002$. When the leader was high in assertiveness, the stronger the participants' locomotion mode was, the more they imagined being motivated, $\beta = 0.41$, $SE = 0.07$, $CI_{95\%}$ [0.28, 0.55], $t(352) = 6.00$, $p < 0.001$. In contrast, no such relation emerged when the leader was high in ability, $\beta = 0.09$, $SE = 0.08$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.06, 0.24], $t(352) = 1.18$, $p = 0.240$.

There was no assessment effect, $\beta = -0.06$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.16, 0.04], $t(352) = -1.15$, $p = 0.253$; nor an assessment by leader profile interaction effect, $\beta = 0.05$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.05, 0.15], $t(352) = 0.97$, $p = 0.331$.

4.3 | Discussion

In Study 3, we focused on the leader's vertical facets dimension and predicted that assertiveness would be the key facet fitting in response to followers' locomotion mode (i.e., even more so than ability). The present study results fully support our prediction: the more the participants were locomotors, the more they reported being satisfied with and motivated by a leader described as highly assertive and average on the other facets. No such relation emerged when the profile presented the leader as high in ability and average on the other facets. One should note that our results do not suggest that leader assertiveness leads to more satisfaction and motivation among high locomotors, compared to leader ability. Instead, the distinction lies in the relationship between locomotion and satisfaction or motivation: this relationship is influenced by leaders' assertiveness, whereas leaders' ability does not seem to influence this relationship here. At low levels of locomotion, participants' satisfaction and motivation appear much lower when the leader is high in assertiveness than when the leader is high in ability, while this pattern disappears at higher levels of locomotion.

Importantly, the present data extend the previous results by showing that the positive effects of highly assertive leaders on motivation and satisfaction of high-locomotion followers also arise within a more controlled setting in which we manipulated leaders' assertiveness and ability.

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Ucl) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

5 | General Discussion

Prior work highlighted the importance of followers' self-regulation in shaping leadership style preference and, in turn, successful leadership (Sassenberg and Hamstra 2017). Building on the social evaluation literature (Abele et al. 2021), we found evidence that especially assertiveness, a facet of the vertical dimension fundamental in people's social judgement, is a characteristic of leaders that fits the concerns of followers' locomotion mode. Specifically, in Study 1, the stronger the followers' locomotion mode was, the more they preferred ideal leaders to be assertive. Moreover, a moderation pattern confirmed that this positive relation was stronger than the ones we observed for all other facet traits (i.e., ability, friendliness and morality). In Study 2, we measured followers' regulatory mode, and they reported how they perceived their actual leader. We found that followers' locomotion and leaders' perceived assertiveness interacted to predict followers' satisfaction with and motivation by their leader. Specifically, the relation between followers' locomotion and their satisfaction and motivation was stronger when their leader was more rather than less assertive. The same relation emerged for leaders' ability. In Study 3, we asked participants to imagine working in an organisation and manipulated their leaders' assertiveness and ability to ascertain that assertiveness particularly fits with followers' locomotion mode rather than both facets of the vertical dimension being equally important to them. We found clear support for our hypothesis in that the stronger the followers' locomotion mode was, the more they imagined being satisfied with and motivated by the highly assertive leader. Such a pattern did not emerge for the highly capable leader.

Looking at the overall picture, we can see some differences in the studies' conclusions and results. This is partly due to differences in the nature of each study. Study 1 points to a specific association between locomotion and preference for assertiveness in leaders. Although locomotion in this study is also linked to a preference for other facets, these associations are less strong than the association with assertiveness. Presumably, the other associations also emerged because participants reflected on the characteristics of an ideal leader; obviously, a leader's ability, friendliness and morality are also of importance. The results of the correlational Study 2 converge with those of Study 1 in a more ecologically valid context, but again, do not present a strong case for the relationship between assertiveness (compared to ability) and locomotion being special. However, experimental Study 3 clearly allows the conclusion that when leaders are assertive, this is associated with high levels of motivation and satisfaction among high-locomotion followers but not among low-locomotion followers, while the relationship between leaders' ability and followers' motivation and satisfaction is less or not dependent on the followers' locomotion mode. As such, the different results suggest that other factors may play a role in the field. We further discuss why such potential factors might have emerged in the limitations section.

Previous work revealed that followers' regulatory mode influences their leadership behaviour preferences. However, these findings have sent an ambiguous message, associating followers' locomotion with preferences for seemingly inconsistent or even contradictory leadership styles, such as transformational leadership (Benjamin and Flynn 2006), directive leadership (Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins 2007) or even preferences for participative leadership (Beylat et al. 2020). In trying to integrate this past work with the present results, it may seem as if directive leadership is the more representative behaviour of an assertive leader—placing our results more in line with those of Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins (2007). However, this might be less true than it appears at first sight. Indeed, a leader can easily adopt a directive style by giving clear and precise information on what needs to be done in a non-assertive manner. Moreover, participative leadership can likewise be enacted in an assertive manner, for instance, by asking followers to participate in the decision-making in an assertive manner. Certain aspects of participative leadership, such as making a final decision after consulting followers, also require assertiveness (Wang, Hou, and Li 2022). Future research should delve into the relations between leadership behaviour and leaders' characteristics and into how different contexts may modulate such relations. In addition, and further attempting to reconcile our results with prior findings, how people perceive a certain leadership behaviour and its propensity to push followers towards more movement presumably varies from one context to the next, while characteristics such as traits should, by definition, be more stable. The propensity of traits to reflect individuals' perception of others and guide their evaluation (Abele et al. 2021; Koch et al. 2021) could allow better identification and understanding of interpersonal self-regulatory fit effects.

Although not central to our research question, it is interesting to note that our studies revealed no fit effects for followers' assessment with any of the leaders' trait facets. As such, our results are in line with other work that failed to identify fit effects between assessment and leadership style preferences (Benjamin and Flynn 2006; Beylat et al. 2020; but see Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins 2007 for an exception). This might be due to higher assessment entailing a focus on thoroughly evaluating the entire situation in the decision-making (Kruglanski et al. 2000) and, therefore, inferring less about a person based on traits (Pierro et al. 2009a). Consequently, assessors might be less likely to consider only one trait facet as central to their overall evaluation of their leader. To test this, further research on how assessment might influence interpersonal preferences is required.

5.1 | Contributions and Future Directions

The present work contributes to the understanding of regulatory mode, interpersonal self-regulatory fit, social evaluation of individual targets and the role of assertiveness in attitudes towards leaders. In terms of regulatory mode, the present findings highlight the fact that assertiveness is a facet that resonates with locomotion mode concerns. Indeed, perceiving assertiveness in others leads one to assume that they are motivated to advance and push to reach their goals—which is crucial for movement and goal change that locomotors cherish. Future research could explore whether, conversely, higher locomotion leads to coming across as more assertive by others.

Previous research on interpersonal self-regulatory fit from a regulatory mode perspective identified fit effects based on specific behaviours of others in interpersonal situations, such as helping behaviour (Zee et al. 2018) and advice-taking (Du et al. 2022). The present work goes beyond this by demonstrating that the

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

feeling of fit can also arise based on alignment with the personal characteristics of others. Although we found evidence for such fit in the follower–leader context, our work opens up novel research avenues exploring trait-based fit effects in other interpersonal situations. For instance, future work could investigate whether such effects also emerge in interactions with colleagues or friends (e.g., whether high locomotors are more likely to take advice from an assertive person; Du et al. 2022) or regarding other traits interacting with people's motivational orientations beyond regulatory mode, such as regulatory focus (Higgins 1998), action versus state control (Kuhl 1987) or behavioural inhibition versus activation systems (Carver and White 1994). Future work could also consider how followers' own levels of assertiveness might interact with their regulatory mode to shape preference for this characteristic in their leader (for an example on interpersonal complementarity vs. contrast regarding dominance, see Bohns et al. 2013).

As highlighted in a recent adversarial collaboration (Abele et al. 2021), social evaluation widely depends on the specific context in which it takes place. Indeed, evaluating the self, another individual or the many groups that make up a society can affect the nature of the evaluation (Abele et al. 2008; Abele and Hauke 2020; Koch et al. 2016, 2021). This is true for several parameters, such as the primacy of one dimension over the other, the number of dimensions used in one's assessment or the relation between dimensions (Abele et al. 2021). The present work sheds light on the benefits of referring to the facets of social evaluation rather than the more encompassing dimensions to assess more precisely what matters in the leader–follower context. Even though the vertical dimension might have primacy over the horizontal one in the workplace, our results point to the relevance of considering a facet approach, in line with recent work (Abele 2022; Yzerbyt et al. 2022). Moreover, our results emphasise the relevance of differentiating between the vertical facets of assertiveness and ability.

Finally, this research contributes to the leadership literature by clarifying the role of leaders' assertiveness in followers' satisfaction and motivation. Prior research revealed that assertiveness plays a role in leadership success but that it should be calibrated with great care (Ames 2009). That is, too little assertiveness may make the leader appear lacking in conviction and unable to take charge, whereas too much assertiveness can make leaders appear hostile and uncooperative (Santora 2007). The present work expands on this notion by highlighting the influence of followers' motivational concerns on whether higher leader assertiveness leads to more followers' satisfaction and motivation. Whereas followers with a high locomotion mode might more easily disregard negative aspects associated with high assertiveness, the same level of assertiveness might very well backfire with other followers (Ames 2009). Future research could examine whether followers' locomotion mode indeed influences their sensitivity to the negative aspects of high leader assertiveness.

5.2 | Limitations

One limitation of the present work is that we did not consider the gender of the leader in Studies 1 and 2 and used only male leader profiles in Study 3. This certainly is a caveat, given previous results from a gender stereotype perspective that showed assertiveness to be interconnected with gender (e.g., Otterbacher, Bates, and Clough 2017). Indeed, people attribute assertive traits more readily to men, while they connect women more with traits related to the horizontal dimension. This association between men and assertiveness also exists in the leadership research field, where the dimension picturing assertive traits was initially named 'masculinity' (e.g., den Hartog 2004). In addition, the literature on the so-called backlash effect reveals that women who show a higher level of assertiveness will be judged more severely than men (Rudman 1998). Other work on assertiveness in entrepreneurs shows that comparable assertive behaviours do not receive equal appreciation based on the gender of the person demonstrating such behaviours (Bongiorno, Bain, and David 2014; McSweeney et al. 2022). There is also work showing that promotion-oriented women are less appreciated than their male counterparts (Gutermuth and Hamstra 2024). Hence, the present fit effect between followers' locomotion and leaders' assertiveness may not manifest or be different in nature when the leader in question is a woman. Future research would do well to take into account leaders' gender and to explore whether it affects the locomotion–assertiveness fit effect found here.

Additionally, the gender of the follower could also influence preferences regarding leaders' characteristics. For example, research by Koenig et al. (2011) shows that male participants attributed stronger masculine stereotypes to leaders. Vial and Napier (2018) showed that male participants, compared to female participants, have a stronger preference for their ideal leader to be competent. Thus, participants' gender could influence how they perceive their leader and what they prefer to see in their leader. That said, for all our studies, we checked whether gender influenced our results, and this was not the case. Results remain similar in all studies, apart from Study 1 where the interaction of interest turns marginal when gender is considered (see results on OSF). Likewise, ethnicity could be important to take into account (Chin 2013; Romero 2005), as well as other (dis)similarities between leaders and followers that future work might consider.

Another limitation stems from the fact that Study 2's results are only descriptively in line with the rest of our findings and hypothesis. While they do show that leaders' assertiveness is relevant for high-locomotion followers, they also point to such a relationship for leaders' ability. In fact, the study design may not have been ideal for comparing results across facets given that all measures stemmed from the same source—the participants. Indeed, how people evaluate a person on one trait may influence their rating on the other traits (Abele et al. 2021), meaning that how people evaluated their leader's assertiveness may have influenced how they see them regarding the other facets. This could be especially the case for high locomotors who value assertiveness and who, therefore, would have rated their leader highly competent if they deemed them highly assertive. Further research may rely on different sources of evaluation of the leaders, such as other followers or colleagues of the leader, to test whether the results then align better with our prediction.

6 | Conclusion

In conclusion, building on previous findings indicating that followers' regulatory mode influences what behaviour they prefer

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

to see in their leader (e.g., Benjamin and Flynn 2006; Kruglanski, Pierro, and Higgins 2007), we proposed that followers' regulatory mode should also fit leaders' characteristics. Specifically, we predicted a fit between followers' locomotion and leaders' assertiveness. Our results support this prediction: Followers were more motivated by and satisfied with their leaders when they were themselves high in locomotion, compared to when they were low in locomotion, and their managers or superiors were high in assertiveness. This paves the way for future research to gain further insights into the antecedents and consequences of follower–leader fit and a better understanding of the link between locomotion and assertiveness outside of follower–leader contexts.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

All materials, data and analyses scripts of all studies are available on OSF: https://osf.io/3vr7u/?view_only=626df278c0e040419563c3e61cfbba49.

Endnotes

[1] For this study, we preregistered different hypotheses that focused on comparing the associations of locomotion and assessment modes with the ability and assertiveness facets (see https://aspredicted.org/k7nb-hjr9.pdf). After further consideration, we decided to focus on the specific link between locomotion mode and assertiveness, and therefore on comparing the associations between locomotion mode and the different facets, to show that the locomotion–assertiveness association is indeed the strongest one. Moreover, the analysis conducted here aligns with the preregistered predictions of Studies 2 and 3.

[2] We also measured facet preferences with open-ended questions and by asking participants to rank the facets in the order they would prefer to see them in their leaders. However, these measures were included only for exploratory purposes, and we do not discuss them further here.

[3] We ran additional analyses controlling for the gender of our participants, as this could influence their preferences regarding their leaders' traits (see General Discussion). When controlling for participants' gender, gender does not appear to influence preference, but the interaction between locomotion and the 'assertiveness versus ability' contrast becomes marginal ($\beta = -0.09$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI_{95\%}$ [−0.20, 0.01], $t(873) = -1.67$, $p = 0.095$). The rest of the conclusions remain the same in this study, as well as in Studies 2 and 3 (see results on OSF).

[4] Here, we are interested in the association between locomotion and assertiveness being stronger than with the other facets. This does not preclude other facets from being deemed (more) preferable.

[5] Our preregistration included only a hypothesis concerning satisfaction with the leader, while motivation was initially included for exploratory purposes (see https://aspredicted.org/mmm4-c2b9.pdf). As this research evolved, we considered motivation as a key variable for observing regulatory fit, which is why we have added it here and included it in the preregistration for Study 3.

[6] For exploratory purposes, we also measured participants' job satisfaction and how they perceived themselves on the different social evaluation facets.

[7] The simple slopes regarding the association between locomotion and satisfaction are not significant when leaders' assertiveness is either high or low, but the interaction was indeed positive, highlighting the significant difference in the association between locomotion and satisfaction when leaders are perceived as high in assertiveness, compared to low in assertiveness.

[8] Locomotion is a continuous variable and not a dichotomous variable, but PANGEA does not allow to specify continuous variables. Therefore, we specified locomotion as a two-level variable. Note that this provides a more conservative prediction as, in essence, this resembles performing a median split on locomotion (McClelland et al. 2015).

[9] We checked that participants had properly read the respective profile by asking them what the biggest strength of their manager was. Results with and without participants who did not ($n = 298$) answer correctly proved similar. Therefore, we present results including all participants (results including only participants who answered correctly are in Supporting Information on OSF).

References

Abele, A. E. 2022. "Evaluation of the Self on the Big Two and Their Facets: Exploring the Model and Its Nomological Network." *International Review of Social Psychology* 35, no. 1: 14. https://doi.org/10.5334/irsp.688.

Abele, A. E., A. J. Cuddy, C. M. Judd, and V. Y. Yzerbyt. 2008. "Fundamental Dimensions of Social Judgment." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 38, no. 7: 1063–1065. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.574.

Abele, A. E., N. Ellemers, S. T. Fiske, A. Koch, and V. Yzerbyt. 2021. "Navigating the Social World: Toward an Integrated Framework for Evaluating Self, Individuals, and Groups." *Psychological Review* 128, no. 2: 290–314. https://doi.org/10.1037/rev0000262.

Abele, A. E., and N. Hauke. 2020. "Comparing the Facets of the Big Two in Global Evaluation of Self Versus Other People." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 50, no. 5: 969–982. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2639.

Abele, A. E., N. Hauke, K. Peters, E. Louvet, A. Szymkow, and Y. Duan. 2016. "Facets of the Fundamental Content Dimensions: Agency With Competence and Assertiveness—Communion With Warmth and Morality." *Frontiers in Psychology* 7: 1810. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01810.

Amato, C., A. Pierro, A. Chirumbolo, and G. Pica. 2014. "Regulatory Modes and Time Management: How Locomotors and Assessors Plan and Perceive Time." *International Journal of Psychology* 49, no. 3: 192–199. https://doi.org/10.1003/ijop.12047.

Ames, D. 2009. "Pushing Up to a Point: Assertiveness and Effectiveness in Leadership and Interpersonal Dynamics." *Research in Organizational Behavior* 29: 111–133. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2009.06.010.

Ames, D. R., and F. J. Flynn. 2007. "What Breaks a Leader: The Curvilinear Relation Between Assertiveness and Leadership." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 92, no. 2: 307–324. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.2.307.

Asch, S. E. 1946. "Forming Impressions of Personality." *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 41, no. 3: 258–290. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0055756.

Avnet, T., and E. T. Higgins. 2003. "Locomotion, Assessment, and Regulatory Fit: Value Transfer From 'How' to 'What'." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 39, no. 5: 525–530. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031(03)00027-1.

Avnet, T., and E. T. Higgins. 2021. *Regulatory Fit and Non-Fit: How They Work & What They Do*. Columbia Business School Research Paper Forthcoming. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3824009.

Barbedor, J., J. Scheider, V. Yzerbyt, and A. Abele-Brehm. 2024. "A Novel Approach to the Evaluation of Groups: Type of Group and Facet of Evaluation Matter." *Collabra: Psychology* 10, no. 1: 124471. https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.124471.

Bass, B. M., and B. J. Avolio. 1997. *Full Range Leadership Development: Manual for the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*. Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden Inc. Research.

Bass, B. M., D. A. Waldman, B. J. Avolio, and M. Bebb. 1987. "Transformational Leadership and the Falling Dominoes Effect." *Group & Organization Management* 12: 73–87. https://doi.org/10.1177/105960118701200106.

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

Bélanger, J. J., A. Pierro, A. W. Kruglanski, R. J. Vallerand, N. De Carlo, and A. Falco. 2014. "On Feeling Good at Work: The Role of Regulatory Mode and Passion in Psychological Adjustment." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 45, no. 6: 319–329. https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12298.

Benjamin, L., and F. J. Flynn. 2006. "Leadership Style and Regulatory Mode: Value From Fit?" *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 100: 216-230. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.01.008.

Benson, A. J., H. J. Woodley, L. Jensen, and J. Hardy. 2024. "Mapping the Traits Desired in Followers and Leaders Onto Fundamental Dimensions of Social Evaluation." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*. Published ahead of print, July 25, 2024. https://doi.org/10.1037/xap0000514.

Beylat, M., K. A. Woltin, K. Sassenberg, and V. Yzerbyt. 2020. "Preference for Directive versus Participative Leadership: The Role of Regulatory Mode and Context Quality Definition." *Comprehensive Results in Social Psychology* 4, no. 3: 290–314. https://doi.org/10.1080/23743603.2021.2001325.

Blake, A. B., V. H. Luu, O. V. Petrenko, W. L. Gardner, K. J. Moergen, and M. E. Ezerins. 2022. "Let's Agree About Nice Leaders: A Literature Review and Meta-analysis of Agreeableness and Its Relationship With Leadership Outcomes." *The Leadership Quarterly* 33, no. 1: 101593. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2021.101593.

Bohns, V. K., G. M. Lucas, D. C. Molden, et al. 2013. "Opposites Fit: Regulatory Focus Complementarity and Relationship Well-being." *Social Cognition* 31, no. 1: 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1521/soco.2013.31.1.1.

Bongiorno, R., P. G. Bain, and B. David. 2014. "If You're Going to be a Leader, at Least Act Like It! Prejudice Towards Women Who Are Tentative in Leader Roles." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 53, no. 2: 217–234. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12032.

Brambilla, M., and C. W. Leach. 2014. "On the Importance of Being Moral: The Distinctive Role of Morality in Social Judgment." *Social Cognition* 32: 397–408. https://doi.org/10.1521/soco.2014.32.4.397.

Capozza, D., A. Bobbio, G. A. Di Bernardo, R. Falvo, and A. F. Pagani. 2017. "Leaders' Competence and Warmth: Their Relationships With Employees' Well-Being and Organizational Effectiveness." *TPM: Testing, Psychometrics, Methodology in Applied Psychology* 24, no. 2: 185–214. https://doi.org/10.4473/TPM24.2.3.

Carpinelli, A., and V. Yzerbyt. 2022. *Les facettes de la dimension verticale: Différences et similarités eut égard aux variables de mérite, d'estime et de méritocratie*. CIPS 2022, Bordeaux, France, July 11–12, 2022.

Carrier, A., E. Louvet, B. Chauvin, and O. Rohmer. 2014. "The Primacy of Agency Over Competence in Status Perception." *Social Psychology* 5: 347–356. https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-9335/a000176.

Carver, C. S., and T. L. White. 1994. "Behavioral Inhibition, Behavioral Activation, and Affective Responses to Impending Reward and Punishment: The BIS/BAS Scales." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67, no. 2: 319–333. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.2.319.

Cheng, J. T., J. L. Tracy, T. Foulsham, A. Kingstone, and J. Henrich. 2013. "Two Ways to the Top: Evidence That Dominance and Prestige Are Distinct yet Viable Avenues to Social Rank and Influence." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 104, no. 1: 103–125. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030398.

Chin, J. L. 2013. "Diversity Leadership: Influence of Ethnicity, Gender, and Minority Status." *Open Journal of Leadership* 2, no. 1: 1–10. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2013.21001.

De Carlo, N. A., A. Falco, A. Pierro, M. Dugas, A. W. Kruglanski, and E. T. Higgins. 2014. "Regulatory Mode Orientations and Well-being in an Organizational Setting: The Differential Mediating Roles of Workaholism and Work Engagement." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 44, no. 11: 725–738. https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12263.

den Hartog, D. N. 2004. "Assertiveness." In *Cultures, Leadership and Organizations: A 62 Nation GLOBE Study*, edited by P. J. H. M. Javidan R. J. House, A. V. Gupta, and GLOBE. Vol. 1, 395–436. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Derue, D. S., J. D. Nahrgang, N. E. Wellman, and S. E. Humphrey. 2011. "Trait and Behavioral Theories of Leadership: An Integration and Meta-analytic Test of Their Relative Validity." *Personnel Psychology* 64, no. 1: 7–52. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2010.01201.x.

Du, X., Q. Jia, F. Li, J. Wang, and G. Chen. 2022. "I Will Listen to You If You Match With Me: The Effect of Regulatory Fit on Advice Taking." *Current Psychology* 42: 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03571-4.

Ellemers, N., and D. de Gilder. 2022. "Moral Leadership." In *The Moral Organization: Key Issues, Analyses, and Solutions*, edited by N. Ellemers and D. de Gilder, 77–117. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84175-1_3.

Faul, F., E. Erdfelder, A. Buchner, and A. G. Lang. 2009. "Statistical Power Analyses Using G* Power 3.1: Tests for Correlation and Regression Analyses." *Behavior Research Methods* 41, no. 4: 1149–1160. https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.41.4.1149.

Giacomantonio, M., L. Mannetti, and A. Pierro. 2013. "Locomoting Toward Well-being or Getting Entangled in a Material World: Regulatory Modes and Affective Well-being." *Journal of Economic Psychology* 38: 80–89. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joep.2012.07.003.

Gutermuth, D., and M. R. Hamstra. 2024. "Promotion Focus Is Valued in Men More Than in Women." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 45, no. 5: 764–781. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2781.

Higgins, E. T. 1998. "Promotion and Prevention: Regulatory Focus as a Motivational Principle." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 30: 1–46. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60381-0.

Higgins, E. T. 2000. "Making a Good Decision: Value From Fit." *American Psychologist* 55, no. 11: 1217–1230. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.11.1217.

Higgins, E. T. 2005. "Value From Regulatory Fit." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 14: 209--213. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0963-7214.2005.00366.x.

Higgins, E. T. 2012. *Beyond Pleasure and Pain: How Motivation Works*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199765829.002.0006.

Higgins, E. T., A. W. Kruglanski, and A. Pierro. 2003. "Regulatory Mode: Locomotion and Assessment as Distinct Orientations." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 35: 293–344. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(03)01005-0.

Judd, C. M., G. H. McClelland, and C. S. Ryan. 2011. *Data Analysis: A Model Comparison Approach*. New York, NY: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203892053.

Judge, T. A., J. E. Bono, R. Ilies, and M. W. Gerhardt. 2002. "Personality and Leadership: A Qualitative and Quantitative Review." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87, no. 4: 765–780. https://doi.org/10.1037//0021-9010.87.4.765.

Judge, T. A., A. E. Colbert, and R. Ilies. 2004. "Intelligence and Leadership: A Quantitative Review and Test of Theoretical Propositions." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 89, no. 3: 542–552. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.89.3.542.

Judge, T. A., and R. Piccolo. 2004. "Transformational and Transactional Leadership: A Meta-analytic Test of Their Relative Validity." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 89: 755–768. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.89.5.755.

Judge, T. A., R. F. Piccolo, and T. Kosalka. 2009. "The Bright and Dark Sides of Leader Traits: A Review and Theoretical Extension of the Leader Trait Paradigm." *The Leadership Quarterly* 20, no. 6: 855–875. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2009.09.004.

Kirkpatick, S. A., and E. A. Locke. 1991. "Leadership: Do Traits Matter?." *Academy of Management Perspectives* 5, no. 2: 48–60. https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.1991.4274679.

Koch, A., R. Imhoff, R. Dotsch, C. Unkelbach, and H. Alves. 2016. "The ABC of Stereotypes About Groups: Agency/Socioeconomic Success, Conservative–Progressive Beliefs, and Communion." *Journal of Person-*

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

ality and Social Psychology 110, no. 5: 675–709. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000046.

Koch, A., V. Yzerbyt, A. E. Abele, N. Ellemers, and S. T. Fiske. 2021. "Social Evaluation: Comparing Models Across Interpersonal, Intragroup, Intergroup, Several-Group, and Many-Group Contexts." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 63: 1–68. https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.aesp.2020.11.001.

Koenig, A. M., A. H. Eagly, A. A. Mitchell, and T. Ristikari. 2011. "Are Leader Stereotypes Masculine? A Meta-analysis of Three Research Paradigms." *Psychological Bulletin* 137, no. 4: 616–642. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023557.

Komissarouk, S., M. Chernikova, A. W. Kruglanski, and E. T. Higgins. 2019. "Who Is Most Likely to Wear Rose-Colored Glasses? How Regulatory Mode Moderates Self-flattery." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 45, no. 3: 327–341. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218783194.

Kruglanski, A. W., E. Orehek, E. T. Higgins, A. Pierro, and I. Shalev. 2010. "Modes of Self-Regulation: Assessment and Locomotion as Independent Determinants in Goal Pursuit." In *Handbook of Personality and Self-Regulation*, edited by R. Hoyle. 375–402. Chichester, UK: Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444318111.ch17.

Kruglanski, A. W., A. Pierro, and E. T. Higgins. 2007. "Regulatory Mode and Preferred Leadership Styles: How Fit Increases Job Satisfaction." *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 29: 137–149. https://doi.org/10.1080/01973530701331700.

Kruglanski, A. W., A. Pierro, and E. T. Higgins. 2016. "Experience of Time by People on the Go: A Theory of the Locomotion–temporality Interface." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 20, no. 2: 100–117. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868315581120.

Kruglanski, A. W., E. P. Thompson, E. T. Higgins, M. N. Atash, A. Pierro, and J. Y. Shah. 2000. "To 'Do the Right Thing' or to 'Just Do It': Locomotion and Assessment as Distinct Self-regulatory Imperatives." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79: 793--815. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.79.5.793.

Kuhl, J. 1987. "Action Control: The Maintenance of Motivational States." In *Motivation, Intention, and Volition*, edited by F. Halisch and J. Kuhl, 19–34. Berlin: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-70967-8_19.

Leach, C. W., N. Ellemers, and M. Barreto. 2007. "Group Virtue: The Importance of Morality (VS. COMPETENCE AND SOCIABILITY) in the Positive Evaluation of In-Groups." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 93, no. 2: 234–249. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.2.234.

Mannetti, L., M. Giacomantonio, E. T. Higgins, A. Pierro, and A. W. Kruglanski. 2010. "Tailoring Visual Images to Fit: Value Creation in Persuasive Messages." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 40, no. 2: 206–215. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.726.

Mauro, R., A. Pierro, L. Mannetti, E. T. Higgins, and A. W. Kruglanski. 2009. "The Perfect Mix: Regulatory Complementarity and the Speed-accuracy Balance in Group Performance." *Psychological Science* 20: 681–685. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.14679280.2009.02363.x.

Mayer, D. M., M. Kuenzi, R. Greenbaum, M. Bardes, and R. B. Salvador. 2009. "How Low Does Ethical Leadership Flow? Test of a Trickle-Down Model." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 108: 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2008.04.002.

McClelland, G., J. G. Lynch, J. R. Irwin, S. A. Spiller, and G. J. Fitzsimons. 2015. "Median Splits, Type II Errors, and False Positives. Consumer Psychology: Don't Fight the Power." *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 25, no. 4: 679–689. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2015.05.006.

McSweeney, J. J., K. T. McSweeney, J. W. Webb, and C. E. Devers. 2022. "The Right Touch of Pitch Assertiveness: Examining Entrepreneurs' Gender and Project Category Fit in Crowdfunding." *Journal of Business Venturing* 37, no. 4: 106223. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2022.106223.

Motyka, S., D. Grewal, N. M. Puccinelli, et al. 2014. "Regulatory Fit: A Meta-Analytic Synthesis." *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 24, no. 3: 394–410. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2013.11.004.

Oppenheimer, D. M., T. Meyvis, and N. Davidenko. 2009. "Instructional Manipulation Checks: Detecting Satisficing to Increase Statistical Power." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 45: 867–872. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2009.03.009.

Orehek, E., R. Mauro, A. W. Kruglanski, and A. M. van der Bles. 2012. "Prioritizing Association Strength Versus Value: The Influence of Self-regulatory Modes on Means Evaluation in Single Goal and Multigoal Contexts." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 102: 22–31. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025881.

Otterbacher, J., J. Bates, and P. Clough. 2017. "Competent Men and Warm Women: Gender Stereotypes and Backlash in Image Search Results." In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference On Human Factors in Computing Systems*. 6620–6631. Denver, CO: Association for Computing Machinery. https://doi.org/10.1145/3025453.3025727.

Peters, K., N. K. Steffens, and T. Morgenroth. 2018. "Superstars Are Not Necessarily Role Models: Morality Perceptions Moderate the Impact of Competence Perceptions on Supervisor Role Modeling." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 48, no. 6: 725–746. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2372.

Pierro, A., M. Giacomantonio, G. Pica, A. M. Giannini, A. W. Kruglanski, and E. T. Higgins. 2013. "Persuading Drivers to Refrain From Speeding: Effects of Message Sidedness and Regulatory Fit." *Accident Analysis & Prevention* 50: 917–925. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aap.2012.07.014.

Pierro, A., M. Giacomantonio, G. Pica, A. W. Kruglanski, and E. T. Higgins. 2011. "On the Psychology of Time in Action: Regulatory Mode Orientations and Procrastination." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 101: 1317–1331. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025943.

Pierro, A., S. Leder, L. Mannetti, E. T. Higgins, A. W. Kruglanski, and A. Aiello. 2008. "Regulatory Mode Effects on Counterfactual Thinking and Regret." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 44, no. 2: 321–329. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2007.06.002.

Pierro, A., F. Presaghi, T. E. Higgins, and A. W. Kruglanski. 2009. "Regulatory Mode Preferences for Autonomy Supporting Versus Controlling Instructional Styles." *British Journal of Educational Psychology* 79, no. 4: 599–615. https://doi.org/10.1348/978185409×412444.

Rehani, B., and E. Bar-Kalifa. 2022. "Capitalisation, Motivational Effectiveness, and Regulatory Mode: A Daily Diary Study of Romantic Partners." *Cognition and Emotion* 36, no. 4: 616–629. https://doi.org/10.1080/02699931.2022.2035688.

Romero, E. J. 2005. "The Effect of Hispanic Ethnicity on the Leadership Process." *International Journal of Leadership Studies* 1, no. 1: 28–43.

Rudman, L. A. 1998. "Self-Promotion as a Risk Factor for Women: The Costs and Benefits of Counterstereotypical Impression Management." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 74, no. 3: 629–645. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.3.629.

Santora, J. C. 2007. "Assertiveness and Effective Leadership: Is There a Tipping Point?" *Academy of Management Perspectives* 21, no. 3: 84–86. https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2007.26421241.

Sassenberg, K., and M. R. W. Hamstra. 2017. "The Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Dynamics of Self-regulation in the Leadership Process." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 55: 193–257. https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.aesp.2016.08.001.

Scholl, A., M. Wenzler, N. Ellemers, D. Scheepers, and K. Sassenberg. 2021. "Just Do It or Do It Right? How Regulatory Mode Relates to Perceived Responsibility and Opportunity in Collaborations." *Personality and Individual Differences* 176: 110776. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2021.110776.

Schönbrodt, F. D., and M. Perugini. 2013. "At What Sample Size Do Correlations Stabilize?" *Journal of Research in Personality* 47, no. 5: 609–612. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2013.05.009.

Vial, A. C., and J. L. Napier. 2018. "Unnecessary Frills: Communality as a Nice (BUT EXPENDABLE) Trait in Leaders." *Frontiers in Psychology* 9: 381384. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01866.

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uclo) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License

Wang, Q., H. Hou, and Z. Li. 2022. "Participative Leadership: A Literature Review and Prospects for Future Research." *Frontiers in Psychology* 13: 924357. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.924357.

Webb, C. E., P. T. Coleman, M. Rossignac-Milon, S. J. Tomasulo, and E. T. Higgins. 2017. "Moving on or Digging Deeper: Regulatory Mode and Interpersonal Conflict Resolution." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 112, no. 4: 621–641. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000131.

Westfall, J. 2016. "PANGEA (v0.2). Power ANalysis for GEneral Anova Designs." Accessed October 11, 2016. https://jakewestfall.shinyapps.io/pangea/.

Yzerbyt, V., J. Barbedor, A. Carrier, and O. Rohmer. 2022. "The Facets of Social Hierarchy: How Judges' Legitimacy Beliefs and Relative Status Shape Their Evaluation of Assertiveness and Ability." *International Review of Social Psychology* 35, no. 1: 1–13. https://doi.org/10.5334/irsp.695.

Zee, K. S., J. V. Cavallo, A. J. Flores, N. Bolger, and E. T. Higgins. 2018. "Motivation Moderates the Effects of Social Support Visibility." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 114, no. 5: 735–765. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000119.

Appendix

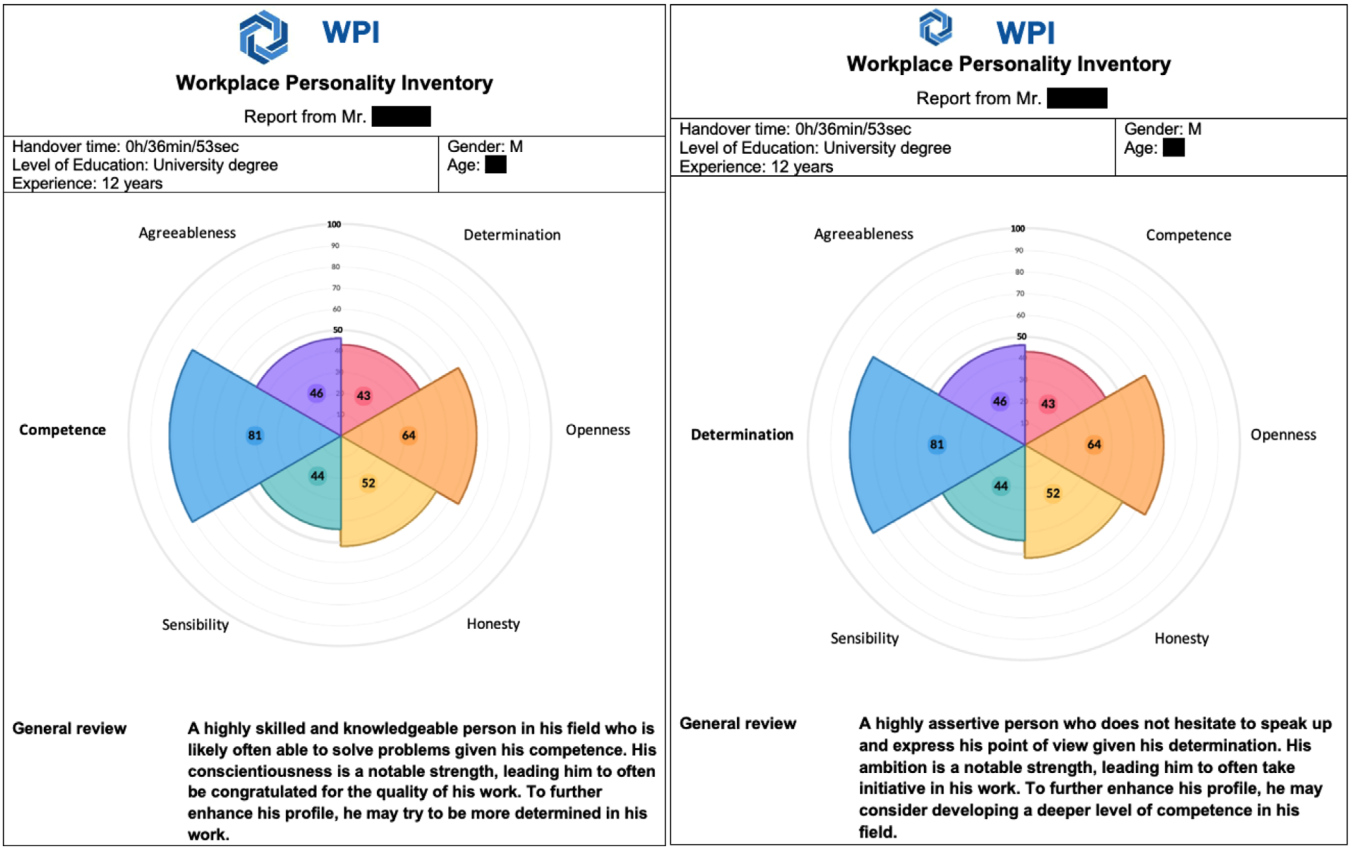


FIGURE A1 | Profiles (high in ability on the left, high in assertiveness on the right) used in Study 3.

10990992, 0, Downloaded from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.3141 by Julien Barbedor - Bibliothecaire En Chef Uni Catholique De Louvain (Uco) , Wiley Online Library on [10/01/2025]. See the Terms and Conditions (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/terms-and-conditions) on Wiley Online Library for rules of use; OA articles are governed by the applicable Creative Commons License