

Understanding Evaluations of Kamala Harris in 2020: Political Ideology Qualifies Perceived Communality Effects when Communal Cues are Present

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Abstract

Women of color (vs. White women) are underrepresented in the United States government. Identifying factors that affect evaluations of these women is important to understand their underrepresentation. Deviating from communal expectations contributes to backlash against women. Being perceived as prioritizing communality thus appears key for women to receive support. Little work, however, has examined this relation in actual politicians and how perceiver political ideology may affect it. We examined how gendered trait inferences and political ideology affected evaluations of Kamala Harris, the first woman of color elected to the executive branch, before the 2020 election. People perceived Harris as more agentic than communal (Studies 1–2). Communal trait inferences and having a more liberal political ideology each positively related to evaluations of Harris. More liberal relative to more conservative perceivers had weaker positive communality effects when evaluating her expected success (Studies 1–2) and when a description conveyed Harris’s communality (vs. agency; Study 2). These findings highlight communality effects on evaluations of Harris and suggest a context under which she was likely more supported by co-partisans. Moreover, these studies identify potential sources of bias toward female candidates of color, illustrating a need for gendered trait inferences to be thoroughly considered in campaign strategies. *Additional online materials for this article are available on PWQ’s website at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/suppl/10.1177/03616843221104383>.*

Keywords

gender stereotypes, Kamala Harris, 2020 election, trait association, role congruity

Decades of research have converged on the idea that agency and communion are the “Big Two” dimensions of social cognition (Abele et al., 2008; Bem, 1974; Bem, 1981; Bruckmüller & Abele, 2013; Martin & Slepian, 2021; Wiggins, 1991). Illustrating the reach of these dimensions, agency and communion impressions largely capture how people perceive (Eagly, 1997), evaluate (Phelan et al., 2008), and behave toward (Archer, 1996; Eagly & Wood, 1991) others. These traits have distinct associated inferences. Whereas agency is associated with independence and competence, communion is associated with warmth and a general social orientation (Abele & Wojciszke, 2007; Wiggins, 1991). The social construct of gender is theorized to underlie these inferences (Abele, 2003; Martin & Slepian, 2021). People associate agentic and communal traits with men and women, respectively (Eagly & Crowley, 1986; Eagly & Wood, 1991). One consequence of the theorized link between gender and the Big Two is difficulty in disentangling them, which likely perpetuates women’s underrepresentation in leadership (e.g.,

in politics; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). Indeed, women often face backlash for agentic behaviors enabling men’s success because they are perceived as deviating from communal expectations (e.g., Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Being perceived as communal may thus be essential for agentic women to attain leadership positions (Cassidy & Liebenow, 2021; Rosette & Tost, 2010; Sinclair et al., 2016).

Much work examining effects of agentic and communal trait inferences on evaluations of aspiring female leaders has done so

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using hypothetical women and contexts (e.g., Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Although it is important to characterize evaluations of agentic women (Diehl et al., 2004; Rudman & Glick, 2001), less work (e.g., Conroy et al., 2020; Gervais & Hillard, 2011) has examined how these inferences affect evaluations of *actual* agentic women aspiring to leadership. This area of work is important to characterize whether our theoretical understanding maps onto evaluations of real women.

Social psychological research examining actual agentic women aspiring to high leadership roles in the United States government has, to date, focused on White women (e.g., Hillary Clinton; Gervais & Hillard, 2011). The increasing proportion of non-White individuals in the United States (Myers & Levy, 2018), however, highlights a need to identify how agentic and communal inferences relate to evaluations of women of color who aspire to leadership. Women of color are especially underrepresented in government (e.g., Nelson & Piatak, 2021) and are often evaluated differently than White women when displaying agentic behaviors (Livingston et al., 2012; Motro et al., 2022). Such findings call for an examination of a more diverse sample of aspiring female leaders (Gershon & Lavariega Monforti, 2021; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; Schneider & Bos, 2019) to reveal how gendered trait inferences affect support for agentic women evaluated on the basis of both their race and gender.

The 2020 United States presidential election provided an opportunity to fill this gap given Kamala Harris's vice-presidential nomination. Throughout her career, Harris has held male-dominated positions (e.g., prosecutor; Glick et al., 1995), which has likely led to her being perceived as highly agentic. Beyond being one of the first women nominated to the Vice Presidency, Harris's identity as a Black and Asian woman made her the first woman of color to be nominated. Harris's racial identity was subject to scrutiny throughout her campaign (Dowe, 2020), with media coverage of her candidacy emphasizing both racial and gender identifiers (Cassese et al., 2022). To this end, we first briefly summarize work on gendered trait inferences of aspiring female leaders and discuss how those inferences may be especially relevant to women of color. Because actual female politicians have well-known political ideologies, we next discuss how perceiver political ideology may qualify effects of gendered trait inferences on evaluations of aspiring female leaders. Finally, we present two studies conducted before the 2020 election that examined inferences of Kamala Harris as agentic and communal and how those inferences affect evaluations of her.

Gendered Trait Inferences of Aspiring Female Leaders and Their Consequences

Sixty years of public opinion polls show that expectations about the traits women possess remain pervasive in the United States (Eagly et al., 2020). Linked with the traditional female

gender role (Eagly & Wood, 2012), both men and women perceive women (relative to men) as having more communal traits (e.g., warm) reflecting a relationship orientation (Eagly et al., 2020; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly & Wood, 2012). By contrast, people perceive men (relative to women) as having more agentic traits (e.g., assertive) reflecting leadership and dominance. These expectations are prescriptive in that they dictate how people think others should behave (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Thus, the societal belief that women are communal is paralleled by the prescription that women *should be* communal.

Stereotypic prescriptions are theorized to maintain a status quo (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990; Jost & Banaji, 1994) of women's underrepresentation in leadership (e.g., Garcia-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2006). Role congruity theory posits that women are less likely to attain leadership positions when role expectations are incongruent with female gender stereotypes (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Women in mixed-sex dyads, for example, often acquiesce leadership to men only when a task is stereotypically masculine (Ritter & Yoder, 2004). Beyond simply not attaining leadership positions, women violating communal gender prescriptions often receive negative bias because they face a double-bind when aspiring to leadership (Fiske et al., 2018; Phelan et al., 2008; Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001). First, because leadership-related traits (e.g., assertive) are associated with men, women must work harder to show they possess them. Second, because such highly agentic women are often perceived as not being communal, they receive backlash for that prescriptive deviation (e.g., Rudman & Glick, 2001).

More negative evaluations of agentic women are prevalent in the political domain (e.g., Schneider et al., 2022). United States executive offices have been male-dominated, which creates obstacles for women aspiring to them (Smith et al., 2007). Indeed, simply aspiring to political office may violate communal expectations of women and attenuate the likelihood of their receiving support (Conroy et al., 2020; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). Because this literature has focused on White women, whether these findings extend to women of color is unclear. Considering this generalizability is important because multiple possibilities emerge for how communal inferences may relate to evaluations of female candidates of color. Indeed, past work indicates that women of color may experience a "strategic advantage" or a "double disadvantage" in support due to their intersecting racial and gender identities (Gershon & Lavariega Monforti, 2021).

Work examining race and gender effects on agentic biases toward women shows that people stereotype Black women as highly dominant, angry, and hard-working (Rosette et al., 2016). This work suggests little overlap between these stereotypes of Black women and the communal stereotypes attributed to the superordinate category of women. Thus, one possibility is that lessened communal prescriptions for Black women may result in highly agentic Black women being less dependent on perceived communality to attain leadership

roles. These women may not be perceived as violating communal expectations with their high agency. Consistent with this possibility, some work has shown that Black women are not conferred the lower status that White women are when they are highly agentic (Livingston et al., 2012). Although Kamala Harris is multi-racial, she is often perceived as Black by the electorate (Ma et al., 2021). These perceptions may be attributed to the “one drop rule” in that people who are visibly of Black racial heritage are perceived as fully Black in society (Hollinger, 2005). Indeed, less than 20% of people identify Harris’s racial identity as both Black and Asian (Clayton et al., 2022). Evaluations of Harris may thereby parallel evaluations expected toward Black women. Perceived communality may thus only have a weak, if any, positive relation with evaluations of Harris before 2020 election.

Women of color, however, remain especially underrepresented in politics and organizations. They are less likely than White women, for example, to attain leadership roles in government (Nelson & Piatak, 2021). Agentic stereotypes of Black women may thus not map onto traits expected of leaders in a way that enhances their support in ecologically valid contexts. Indeed, Black individuals are often stereotyped negatively on competence (Devine, 1989), an agentic trait characteristic of leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Some stereotypes of Black women may further limit their attaining leadership roles. Indeed, to the extent that anger is associated with dominance (Knutson, 1996), the “angry Black woman” stereotype contributes to Black women having worse assessments of leadership capability than White women (Motro et al., 2022). These patterns reflect media coverage of real women. For example, media coverage of Stacey Abrams during the Georgia Democratic gubernatorial primary in 2018 contained more negative and agentic stereotypes than coverage of Stacey Evans, a White woman seeking the nomination (Hicks, 2022). A second, and perhaps more likely, possibility is that perceived communality may have a strong positive relation with evaluations of Kamala Harris. Perceived communality may be especially important to combat agentic penalties conferred to Black women (Rosette et al., 2016). Recent work (Haines & Stroessner, 2019) outlines how agentic women can be positively perceived, providing a theoretical rationale for this possibility.

Perceived Role Prioritization and Evaluations of Aspiring Female Leaders. Despite women aspiring to political office often being perceived as highly agentic (Koenig et al., 2011), highly agentic perceptions do not always prevent women from the communal perceptions likely key to their success (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). Agentic female leaders also perceived as communal often receive an evaluative advantage relative to other leaders (Rosette & Tost, 2010). Such an advantage is consistent with a role prioritization perspective building on role congruity theory. This perspective proposes that whereas perceived low prioritization of traditional gender roles elicits negative evaluations, perceived prioritization of agentic and

communal behavior may prevent such negativity (Haines & Stroessner, 2019). If agentic women are perceived as fulfilling their communal roles, they may not be penalized for their agency in other domains. Directly supporting this assertion, unambiguous information about an agentic female leader’s communal attributes conveyed through behavior and role information mitigates negativity toward agentic female leaders (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). Because gender role violations strongly elicit negative attitudes toward female politicians (Schneider et al., 2022), an examination of effects of gendered trait inferences on evaluations of Harris interpreted within a role prioritization framework is especially timely.

Work on actual female leaders indirectly supports this assertion. For example, although Hillary Clinton was perceived as more agentic than communal, only her perceived communality positively related to endorsing her in 2008 (Gervais & Hillard, 2011). The extent of agentic women’s perceived communality may thus be especially important for them to be positively evaluated. Because she held office in a male-dominated Senate, we expected people to perceive Harris as more agentic than communal. Because communality positively relates to stereotypic femininity (Abele, 2003; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Martin & Slepian, 2021) in line with gender prescriptions, we also expected communal inferences to positively relate to evaluations of Harris. Showing such patterns would provide an ecologically valid link to theory positing conditions under which agentic women can “have it all” (Haines & Stroessner, 2019). It would also expand the social psychological literature on this topic by investigating a real woman of color for the first time.

Perceiver Political Ideology Will Qualify the Relation Between Gendered Trait Inferences and Evaluations of Aspiring Female Leaders

Past work provides reason to expect that perceived communality will positively relate to evaluations of Kamala Harris. However, these evaluations are likely to be affected by the relative political ideology of perceivers because as a Democrat, Harris is perceived as being ideologically liberal. Across the ideological spectrum, people display similar levels of partisan bias, or a tendency to evaluate information more favorably when it supports one’s political beliefs (Ditto et al., 2019). This bias extends from how people evaluate information to how they evaluate others. Indeed, liberals and conservatives are similarly intolerant toward others who are ideologically dissimilar from them (Brandt et al., 2014), making negative attributions toward people whose values are inconsistent with their own (Morgan et al., 2010). These findings complement an identity-based (Tajfel, 1970) model of political ideology (Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018) in that people favor candidates sharing their ideology and values over candidates who do not (Iyengar & Krupenkin, 2018; Mallinas et al., 2018; West & Iyengar, 2022).

Social psychological research examining evaluations of actual female politicians has largely examined separable effects of communality and ideology. For example, both perceived communality and being more ideologically liberal positively related to the likelihood of voting for Hillary Clinton in 2008 even when controlling for sexism (Gervais & Hillard, 2011). Examining an interactive relation between these factors may be critical to characterize communality effects on evaluations of female candidates. Such an examination is warranted given that the salience of partisanship may limit the use of gender stereotypes when evaluating female candidates (Hayes, 2011). An identity-based model of political ideology (Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018) suggests that communality effects on evaluations of Harris may differ by whether perceivers identify as more conservative or more liberal. As a liberal, Harris is more positively evaluated by more liberal than conservative perceivers. One potential outcome of liberal perceivers' more positive evaluations is that Harris may be evaluated positively even if she is perceived as lower in communality. We thus expected a weaker positive relation between communality and evaluations of Harris among more liberal than conservative perceivers. Such a pattern would align with work showing that people show favoritism toward ideologically similar others (Balliet et al., 2018). It would also provide nuance to work on how communality relates to support for agentic female candidates, which often focuses on overall effects without considering ideology beyond using it as a control variable (e.g., Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). See Figure 1 for a conceptual model of the hypothesized interactive relation of gendered trait inferences and political ideology on evaluations of Kamala Harris.

Study 1

Consistent with work on hypothetical candidates (e.g., Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010), we expected Harris to be perceived as more agentic than communal. Consistent with work showing that perceiving female politicians as communal positively relates to their success (e.g., Conroy et al., 2020; Gervais & Hillard, 2011), we expected that perceiving Harris

as more communal would relate to favorable evaluations. We expected political ideology to moderate this relation. Political ideology engenders ingroup favoritism (Iyengar & Krupenkin, 2018; Mallinas et al., 2018; West & Iyengar, 2022), driving polarized affective evaluations of political leaders (Rogowski & Sutherland, 2016). That Harris is ideologically liberal could thus elicit a weaker relation between perceived communality and evaluations of her among more liberal than conservative perceivers. Given their shared ideology, more liberal (relative to conservative) perceivers might be expected to evaluate Harris more positively even when they perceive her as lower in communality.

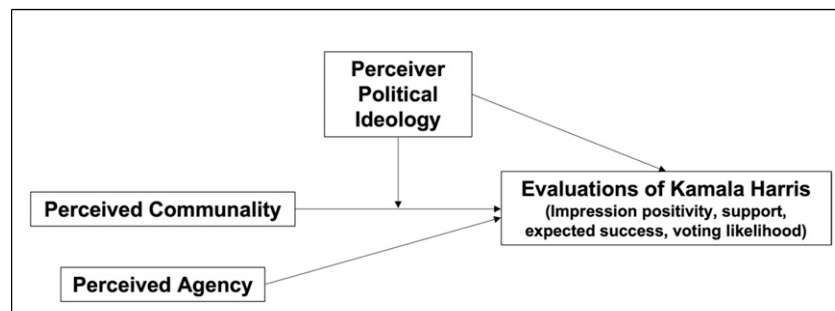
Although this hypothesis is complemented by an identity-based model of political ideology (Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018), people across the ideological spectrum vary by more than how they ideologically identify. For example, conservatism is related to higher sexism (Christopher & Mull, 2006) and more negative attitudes toward social change (Jost et al., 2003, 2008). Ideology could thus moderate a relation between perceived communality and evaluations of Harris because conservatism relates to negative responses to people violating role prescriptions (Silván-Ferrero & Bustillos López, 2007; Wetherell et al., 2013). Thus, a key question is whether any effects of political ideology reflect the favoritism showed toward ideologically similar others (e.g., Brandt et al., 2014; Finkel et al., 2020) or if they function as a proxy for valuing traditional gender prescriptions. To aid in the interpretation of effects involving political ideology, we sought to verify that ideology had a stronger and more consistent effect on evaluations of Harris when accounting for effects of sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996) and traditional beliefs about social roles (Baber & Tucker, 2006).

Method

Participants

Power analysis (G*Power; Erdfelder et al., 1996) using $f^2 = 0.15$ targeted 103 participants for a significant regression with seven predictors at 80% power and $\alpha = .05$. We

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Hypothesized Effects Between Gendered Trait Inferences and Political Ideology on Evaluations of Kamala Harris in Study 1.



oversampled to account for anticipated exclusions and to increase the likelihood of obtaining a wide range of political ideologies. Overall, 175 people from MTurk participated on October 14, 2020. All participants were United States citizens. We recruited participants from MTurk to obtain a larger range of ages and political ideologies than would be possible using an undergraduate participant pool. We did not screen for whether people planned to vote in the 2020 election. All studies were IRB approved.

Three items were used as exclusion criteria. At the beginning of the study, people were asked if they knew who Kamala Harris was (yes/no). Ten were excluded for answering “No.” People were asked to “Select 4” when making trait inferences of Harris. All did so. At the end of the study, people indicated whether they answered questions about Kamala Harris or Hillary Clinton. All indicated Harris. These exclusion criteria yielded an analyzed sample of 165 participants ($M_{age} = 38.90$ years, $SD = 12.71$; $M_{years\ of\ education} = 15.31$, $SD = 2.15$; 79 identifying as female). One-hundred thirty-six participants identified as White, 12 as Black, 11 as Asian, four as multi-racial, and two indicated that their race was unknown to them. Of the 165 participants, 152 also identified as non-Hispanic.

Procedure

Participants read that the study regarded how people evaluate familiar others and that they would make evaluations about Kamala Harris. After indicating whether they knew who Kamala Harris was, participants saw a picture of Kamala Harris standing next to Joe Biden and read commonly repeated information about her: “Kamala Harris attended Howard University and the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. She has been a prosecutor, District Attorney of San Francisco, and Attorney General of California. In 2016, she became the second Black woman and the first South Asian individual elected to the United States Senate. In January 2019, Kamala Harris announced her candidacy for President of the United States, although she dropped out of the race before the end of the year. In August 2020, Joe Biden announced Kamala Harris as his running mate, making her the third female vice-presidential candidate in United States history. Over the next few slides, we will be asking you about your perceptions of Kamala Harris. There are no right or wrong responses.”

Trait Inferences and Evaluations of Kamala Harris. Of interest were trait inferences and evaluations of Harris, grouped as listed here. Groupings were presented at random. Within groupings, items were randomly presented. Although we had overall hypotheses regarding communality and political ideology, we selected a variety of different evaluations because they reflect the polling questions often asked of potential voters. These evaluations included perceiver attitudes (impression positivity), expectations (expected success) and intended behavior (support and

voting likelihood), each of which are of interest when examining political campaigns (e.g., Bauer, 2017).

Gender Stereotypicality. One item measured Harris’s gender stereotypicality (“Relative to other women, how feminine or masculine do you find Kamala Harris?” rated from -3 [*very feminine*] to 3 [*very masculine*]; $M = -0.41$, $SD = 1.28$).

Agency and Communality. Participants evaluated Harris on agentic (assertive, ambitious, independent, strong, determined, and persistent) and communal (cooperative, warm, friendly, caring, compassionate, and sympathetic) traits using a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*). The traits were from a validated database (Diehl et al., 2004) and are widely used examples of agentic and communal traits (e.g., Abele, 2003; Bruckmüller & Abele, 2013; Gervais & Hillard, 2011; Trapnell & Paulhus, 2012). Responses to the agentic traits (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .89$) were averaged to create a composite agency inference. Responses to the communal traits (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.97$) were averaged to create a composite communality inference. Within the inferences was one item asking participants to “Select 4.” All participants did so.

Impression Positivity. Two items measured impression positivity (“Overall, how likable do you find Kamala Harris to be?” rated from 1 [*not at all*] to 7 [*extremely*]; “Overall, how negative or positive is your impression of Kamala Harris?” rated from 1 [*extremely negative*] to 7 [*extremely positive*]). Responses were highly correlated, $r(163) = .95$, $p < .001$, and were averaged to create a composite impression positivity score.

Support and Expected Success. One item measured support (“Do you support Kamala Harris’s candidacy for Vice President?” rated from 1 [*not at all*] to 7 [*completely*]). Two items measured expected success (“How successful do you think Kamala Harris would be as Vice President?” rated from 1 [*not at all*] to 7 [*extremely*]; “Relative to other male Vice Presidents, how successful do you think Kamala Harris would be as Vice President?” rated from 1 [*not at all*] to 7 [*extremely*]). Responses to the success-related items were highly correlated, $r(163) = .94$, $p < .001$, and were averaged to create a composite expected success score.

Voting Likelihood. We measured voting likelihood over three items (“Assuming it were possible, what would your likelihood of voting for Kamala Harris be for [Senator/Vice President/President]?” rated from 1 [*very unlikely*] to 7 [*very likely*]). Responses (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .96$) were averaged to create a composite voting likelihood score.

Participant Characterization. Participants completed three questionnaires measuring political ideology, sexism, and social role endorsement in a random order after the above-described groupings. The validity of these measures is

supported by intercorrelations (Table 1) in expected directions (e.g., hostile sexism is positively correlated with traditional gender role beliefs). Reliability (measured via Cronbach's α) indicates the reliability of responses within this participant sample.

Political Ideology. Participants indicated political ideology over four items (overall, economic issues, social issues, and foreign policy issues) on a scale ranging from 1 (*extremely conservative*) to 9 (*extremely liberal*). Responses (Cronbach's $\alpha = .97$) were averaged to create a composite political ideology score. Note that although relative ideology does not exactly match with the American political parties (i.e., Democrats and Republicans), these correlated concepts (Abramowitz & Saunders, 2008) can determine partisanship effects on person perception (e.g., Wilson & Rule, 2014).

Sexism. Participants completed the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 1996). The ASI measures hostile (e.g., "Women are too easily offended") and benevolent (e.g., "Women should be cherished and protected by men") sexism on a scale ranging from 0 (*disagree strongly*) to 5 (*agree strongly*). Higher scores indicate more sexism. Items measuring hostile (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.93$) and benevolent (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.87$) sexism were averaged to create hostile and benevolent sexism scores.

Social Role Beliefs. Participants completed the Social Roles Questionnaire (SRQ; Baber & Tucker, 2006) to measure gender-transcendent (e.g., "Tasks around the house should not be assigned by sex") and gender-linked (e.g., "For many important jobs, it is better to choose men instead of women") beliefs. Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement from 0% to 100% in 10% increments. We reverse-coded gender-transcendent items so they could be interpreted like the gender-linked items (i.e., higher values measuring non-transcendent gender beliefs). Higher scores reflect more traditional social role beliefs. Items measuring non-transcendent gender beliefs (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$) and items measuring gender-linked beliefs (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.91$) were averaged to create two social role belief scores.

Results

Kamala Harris is Perceived as Being More Agentic than Communal

A paired samples t-test showed that people perceived Harris as more agentic ($M = 5.94$, $SD = 1.01$) than communal ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 1.72$), $t(164) = 12.99$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.01$. To show gendered trait inferences, we regressed gender stereotypicality ratings on composite communality and agency (each standardized around the overall mean). We included standardized

Table 1. Intercorrelations Between Variables Measured in Study 1.

Variable	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Impression positivity	4.46 (2.08)										
2. Support	4.70 (2.36)	.94** [.92, .95]									
3. Expected success	4.88 (1.93)	.89** [.86, .92]	.90** [.86, .92]								
4. Voting likelihood	4.34 (2.31)	.92** [.90, .94]	.94** [.92, .96]	.87** [.83, .91]							
5. Communal	4.40 (1.72)	.91** [.88, .93]	.84** [.79, .88]	.84** [.79, .88]	.84** [.79, .88]						
6. Agentic	5.94 (1.01)	.40** [.26, .52]	.45** [.32, .56]	.50** [.38, .61]	.45** [.32, .57]	.47** [.34, .58]					
7. Ideology	5.86 (2.30)	.65** [.55, .73]	.70** [.61, .77]	.71** [.62, .78]	.67** [.58, .75]	.63** [.53, .71]	.33** [.19, .46]				
8. Hostile sexism	1.61 (1.26)	-.24** [-.38, -.09]	-.29** [-.43, -.15]	-.36** [-.49, -.22]	-.33** [-.46, -.19]	-.25** [-.39, -.10]	-.29** [-.42, -.14]	-.44** [-.56, -.31]			
9. Benevolent sexism	1.85 (1.18)	.05 [-.10, .20]	-.03 [-.18, .13]	-.08 [-.23, .07]	-.04 [-.19, .11]	.10 [-.06, .25]	-.05 [-.20, .10]	-.22** [-.36, -.06]	.46** [.33, .57]		
10. Non-gender transcendent beliefs	18.19 (18.18)	-.11 [-.26, .04]	-.17* [-.32, -.02]	-.19* [-.34, -.04]	-.22** [-.36, -.07]	-.12 [-.27, .03]	-.40** [-.52, -.26]	-.25** [-.39, -.10]	.39** [.25, .51]	.36** [.22, .48]	
11. Gender-linked beliefs	32.63 (24.71)	-.14 [-.29, .01]	-.20* [-.34, -.05]	-.25** [-.38, -.10]	-.21** [-.35, -.06]	-.11 [-.26, .05]	-.16* [-.31, -.01]	-.36** [-.48, -.22]	.67** [.57, .74]	.62** [.51, .70]	.46** [.33, .57]

Note. Values in square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each correlation. The confidence interval is a plausible range of population correlations that could have caused the sample correlation (Cumming, 2014). * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

composite ideology scores because ideology might be expected to broadly affect perceptions. The model was significant, $F(3, 161) = 7.65, p < .001, R^2 = .12$. Perceptions of greater communality related to perceiving Kamala Harris as more feminine, $b = -0.50, SE = 0.13, t = 3.92, p < .001$. No significant relations emerged with perceived agency, $b = 0.11, SE = 0.11, t = 1.01, p = .31$, or ideology, $b = 0.03, SE = 0.12, t = 0.22, p = .83$. A model including Participant Gender (male = -1 and female = 1) did not explain more variance, $F(1, 160) = 1.10, p = .29$.

Interactive Effects of Perceived Communality and Political Ideology on Evaluations of Kamala Harris

We conducted a multivariate multiple regression by entering standardized composite communality inferences, composite agency inferences, composite ideology scores, and their interactions simultaneously into a model. This model yielded Communality (Pillai's trace = 0.73, $F(4, 154) = 102.58, p < .001$), Agency (Pillai's trace = 0.20, $F(4, 154) = 9.37, p < .001$), and Ideology (Pillai's trace = 0.28, $F(4, 154) = 14.73, p < .001$) effects. The expected Communality $\times$ Ideology interaction emerged, Pillai's trace = 0.22, $F(4, 154) = 11.04, p < .001$. An unexpected Agency $\times$ Ideology interaction emerged, Pillai's trace = 0.10, $F(4, 154) = 4.29, p = .003$. There was no Communality $\times$ Agency interaction, Pillai's trace = 0.05, $F(4, 154) = 2.13, p = .08$, and no three-way interaction, Pillai's trace = 0.03, $F(4, 154) = 1.29, p = .28$.

To characterize these effects, we regressed the same predictors on each evaluation. We examined interactions involving ideology using values one standard deviation above (more liberal) and below (more conservative) the mean composite political ideology score. Models including Participant Gender (male = -1 and female = 1) and its interactions did not explain significantly more variance in the models than the more parsimonious models, $F_s < 1.64, p_s > 0.12$. Participant Gender was thus not explored further. We made an a priori decision not to aggregate across the four evaluations because they reflect different kinds of polling questions asked of potential voters. See the [Supplemental Material](#) for analyses aggregating across them.

Impression Positivity. The model was significant, $F(7, 157) = 122.00, p < .001, R^2 = .84$ (Table 2). More communality, $b = 1.77, SE = 0.10, t = 18.19, p < .001$, and having a more liberal ideology, $b = 0.23, SE = 0.10, t = 2.43, p = .02$, was related to more impression positivity. The expected interaction between communality and political ideology did not emerge, $b = -0.09, SE = 0.08, t = 1.12, p = .27$.

Support. The model was significant, $F(7, 157) = 74.60, p < .001, R^2 = .77$ (Table 2). More communality, $b = 1.45, SE = 0.14, t = 10.75, p < .001$, and having a more liberal ideology, $b = 0.60, SE = 0.13, t = 4.55, p < .001$, was related to more support. The expected

interaction between communality and political ideology did not emerge, $b = -0.19, SE = 0.11, t = 1.69, p = .09$.

Expected Success. The model was significant, $F(7, 157) = 97.24, p < .001, R^2 = .81$ (Table 2). More communality, $b = 1.01, SE = 0.10, t = 10.14, p < .001$, and having a more liberal ideology, $b = 0.36, SE = 0.11, t = 3.73, p < .001$, was related to more expected success. The expected Communality $\times$ Ideology interaction emerged, $b = -0.43, SE = 0.08, t = 5.30, p < .001$ (Figure 2a). Perceived communality had a stronger positive relationship with expected success for more conservative, $b = 1.45, SE = 0.11, t = 13.47, p < .001$, than liberal, $b = 0.57, SE = 0.15, t = 3.85, p < .001$, participants.

Agency related to expected success, $b = 0.36, SE = 0.10, t = 3.40, p < .001$. An unexpected Agency $\times$ Ideology interaction also emerged, $b = 0.17, SE = 0.05, t = 3.24, p = .001$ (Figure 2b). Perceived agency was positively related to expected success for more liberal, $b = 0.75, SE = 0.16, t = 4.80, p < .001$, but not conservative participants, $b = -0.04, SE = 0.17, t = 0.23, p = .82$.

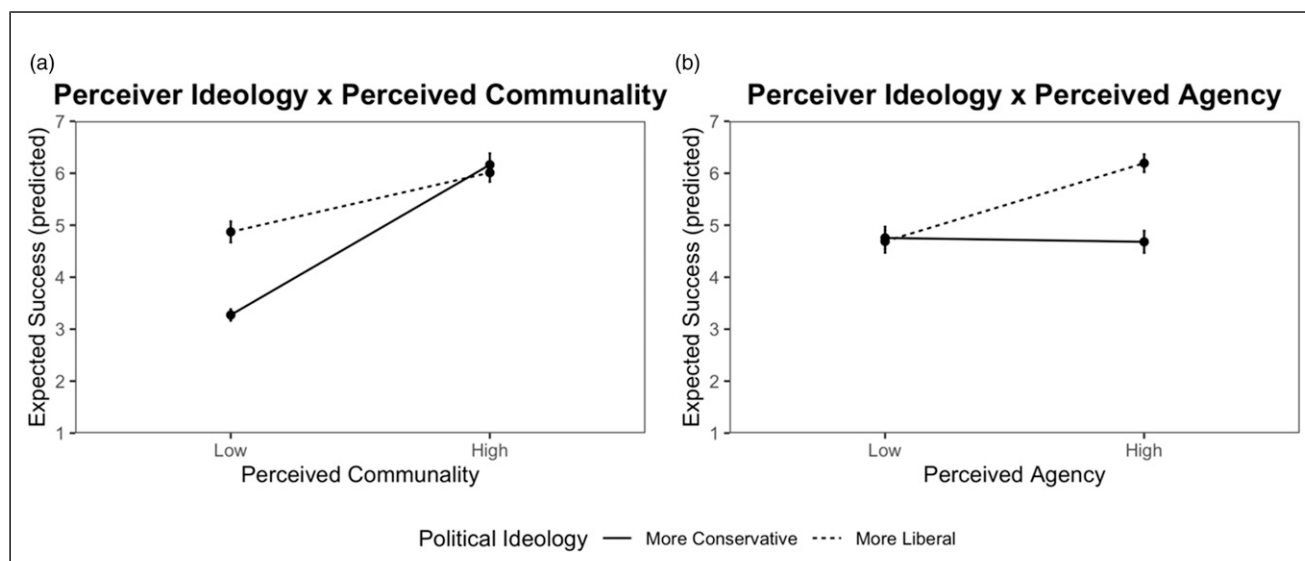
Voting Likelihood. The model was significant, $F(7, 157) = 66.52, p < .001, R^2 = 0.75$ (Table 2). More communality, $b = 1.53, SE = 0.11, t = 11.13, p < .001$, and having a more liberal ideology, $b = 0.60, SE = 0.13, t = 4.44, p < .001$, was related to a higher voting likelihood. The expected interaction between communality and political ideology did not emerge, $b = 0.04, SE = 0.11, t = 0.33, p = .74$.

Interpreting Political Ideology Effects. Two interpretations for ideology effects on evaluations seemed plausible. First, given the identity-based theoretical account of political ideology (Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018), ideology might positively relate to evaluations because more liberal perceivers shared aspects of identity and values with Harris. Second, because ideological conservatism relates to negative responses to people violating role prescriptions (Silván-Ferrero & Bustillos López, 2007; Wetherell et al., 2013), conservatives might have more negatively evaluated Harris because she violated the female role prescription through her high agency. To aid in the interpretation of effects involving political ideology, we next regressed evaluations of Harris (impression positivity, support, expected success, and voting likelihood) on political ideology, hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, non-transcendent gender beliefs, and gender-linked beliefs (all standardized). More liberal ideology had significant positive relations with evaluations across models. No other significant and consistent relations emerged (Supplemental Table 1).

These findings do not suggest that political ideology is the only predictor of evaluations of Harris. However, they suggest that ideology provides strongly consistent relations beyond relations with variables more face valid in measuring sexism and gender role beliefs. We thus interpreted our findings regarding political ideology from an identity-based perspective

Table 2. Regression Summaries for Evaluations of Kamala Harris by Gendered Trait Inferences and Political Ideology in Study 1 ($N = 165$).

	Impression Positivity			Support			Expected Success			Voting Likelihood		
	<i>b</i> (SE)	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i> (SE)	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i> (SE)	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i> (SE)	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Communality	1.77 (0.10)	18.19	<.001	1.45 (0.14)	10.75	<.001	1.01 (0.08)	10.14	<.001	1.53 (0.14)	11.13	<.001
Agency	−0.13 (0.10)	1.22	.23	0.29 (0.14)	2.03	0.04	0.36 (0.11)	3.40	<.001	0.26 (0.14)	1.77	.08
Ideology	0.23 (0.10)	2.43	.02	0.60 (0.13)	4.55	<.001	0.36 (0.10)	3.73	<.001	0.60 (0.13)	4.44	<.001
Communality × Agency	−0.13 (0.08)	1.64	.10	−0.04 (0.11)	0.33	.74	−0.11 (0.08)	1.45	.14	−0.02 (0.11)	0.21	.83
Communality × Ideology	−0.09 (0.08)	1.12	.27	−0.19 (0.11)	1.69	.09	−0.44 (0.08)	5.30	<.001	0.04 (0.11)	0.33	.74
Agency × Ideology	0.07 (0.12)	0.62	.54	0.06 (0.17)	0.34	.73	0.39 (0.12)	3.24	.001	−0.02 (0.17)	0.12	.91
Communality × Agency × Ideology	−0.03 (0.07)	0.44	.66	−0.11 (0.10)	1.08	.28	0.05 (0.07)	0.75	.46	−0.13 (0.10)	1.27	.20

Figure 2. Interactive Effects on Expected Success.

Note. In Study 1, perceived communality had a stronger relation with expected success among more conservative than more liberal participants (a). Perceived agency had a stronger relation with expected success among more liberal than conservative participants (b).

(Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018). If ideology was a proxy for valuing traditional gender prescriptions, we would expect the other variables to also have consistently significant positive relations with evaluations or for relations to be more comparable to the strength of the ideology effect.

Discussion

People perceived Kamala Harris as being more agentic than communal, paralleling work using hypothetical (e.g., Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010) and actual (e.g., Gervais & Hillard, 2011) candidates. Like past work (Abele et al., 2008; Abele & Wojciszke, 2007; Martin & Slepian, 2021), perceiving Harris as more communal related to perceiving

her as more feminine relative to other women. Perceptions of agency did not significantly relate to her evaluated gender stereotypicality. This finding might seem surprising because agency is associated with masculinity (Abele, 2003; Bem, 1974). Speculatively, evaluating Harris relative to other women may have increased the salience of communality as a predictor of gender stereotypicality. Like related work (Gervais & Hillard, 2011), we measured gender stereotypicality using one item. Because recent work suggests that masculinity and femininity are distinct dimensions in person perception (Hester et al., 2021), future work may consider multiple items when examining evaluations of women to link these literature.

Perceived communality positively related to evaluations of Harris even when accounting for perceived agency and

political ideology. This finding reflects that communal perceptions are especially important for women to be favorably evaluated (e.g., Eagly & Karau, 2002). This pattern may link to work showing that women who are perceived as agentic *and* communal often receive evaluative advantages relative to leaders with other combinations of these traits (Rosette & Tost, 2010), supporting a role prioritization perspective (Haines & Stroessner, 2019).

The multivariate analysis showed the expected interactive relation between perceiver political ideology and perceived communality on evaluations of Harris. Univariate analyses, however, only showed an interactive effect for Harris's expected success. Expected success may differ from the other evaluations in that it speaks to Harris in relation to a leadership role rather than attitudes and behaviors toward Harris herself. The positive relation between perceived communality and expected success was attenuated among more liberal than conservative perceivers. This pattern was due to more liberal than conservative perceivers expecting more success when Harris was perceived as less but not more communal (see [Supplemental Material](#) for statistics). From an identity-based perspective, this pattern is consistent with ingroup favoritism (Tajfel, 1970), the current polarized political climate (Finkel et al., 2020) and work showing that ideology polarizes impressions of partisans (Mallinas et al., 2018; Rogowski & Sutherland, 2016). Sharing an ideology with female candidates (relative to not) may buffer success expectations when women are perceived as less communal.

Unexpectedly, perceived agency and ideology interacted to affect expected success. Here, the positive relation between perceived agency and expected success was stronger for more liberal than conservative perceivers. This pattern was due to more liberal relative to conservative perceivers expecting more success when Harris was perceived as more, but not less, agentic (see [Supplemental Material](#)). Because agentic traits characterize leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002), one possibility is that being perceived as more agentic may yield evaluations that Harris is more likely to be successful overall. Speculatively, sharing a female candidate's ideology may augment expectations of her success given any positive evaluations. Future work may directly address this possibility by manipulating candidate ideology.

Although the multivariate analysis suggested an interaction between perceived communality and ideology, this pattern did not reach the statistical significance across evaluations. One possibility is that the description of Harris reflected her prioritization of agency by describing her education and professional accomplishments. The role prioritization model (Haines & Stroessner, 2019), however, posits that agentic women perceived as prioritizing communality are less penalized for their agency than women who do not prioritize it (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rosette & Tost, 2010). Liberals could have a weaker communality effect on evaluations of Harris than conservatives when they are provided information describing her communality through role information and behavior. By contrast,

receiving information describing Harris's agency may make perceiving communality more broadly important for perceivers to positively evaluate her. Study 2 addresses this possibility by having people read descriptions conveying information about Harris's agency or communality before evaluating her.

Study 2

Although aspiring female leaders are often penalized for perceived low communality (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Schneider et al., 2022), women who have achieved top-level positions may receive evaluative advantages if they are perceived as highly agentic *and* as prioritizing communality (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rosette & Tost, 2010). One possibility is that if people receive agentic information about a high-achieving agentic woman, perceived communality might be an especially important contributor to positive evaluations of her. Recent work indirectly supports this possibility.

In one study (Cassidy & Liebenow, 2021), conveyed agentic or communal information about Harris was manipulated between-participants. People then selected which face out of an array best resembled her. These faces were manipulated such that some were perceived as more communal than agentic. A positive relation between selecting a communal face and positive evaluations of Harris only emerged when her agency was described. This relation may reflect that perceived communality is broadly important for agentic women to be positively evaluated when given information about her conveys agency. That the description of Harris in Study 1 conveyed her agency through educational and professional accomplishments and roles raises the possibility that communal evaluations were especially important to elicit positive evaluations of her in this context. If true, an interaction between ideology and perceived communality could be blunted based on whether a given description of Harris conveys agentic information.

To test for this possibility, we re-ran Study 1 and modified the task in two ways. First, we manipulated the description of Harris between-participants. The description conveyed details about Harris's roles and behaviors speaking to her agency (e.g., education and professional information) or communality (e.g., relationships and family life). Second, people made agentic and communal trait inferences immediately after reading the description. This modification directly linked trait inferences to the descriptions and prevented inferences from potentially being affected by other evaluations. Although we expected Harris to be perceived as more agentic than communal overall, we expected a larger difference among people who read the description conveying more agentic versus more communal information.

If a description conveyed information regarding Harris's more agentic roles and behaviors, we reasoned that communal inferences should be especially important for Harris not to receive an agentic penalty (i.e., more negative evaluations). We thus expected that the description of Harris would qualify how political ideology and perceived communality interact to affect evaluations. If information about Harris's agentic roles and

behaviors makes perceived communality especially salient, similarly positive communality effects on evaluations across more liberal and conservative perceivers should emerge. By contrast, we expected more liberal perceivers to show a weaker positive communality effect on evaluations than more conservative perceivers when a description focused on Harris's more communal roles and behaviors. Evidence of communal roles and behavior may buffer negative effects of perceiving low communality to the extent that people share ideology with a candidate.

Method

Participants

We recruited 275 MTurk participants who did not complete Study 1 on October 16, 2020. Exclusion criteria mirrored Study 1. Nine participants were excluded for indicating that they did not know who Kamala Harris was. Two were excluded for not passing the "Select 4" attention check. One was excluded for indicating they evaluated Hillary Clinton. These exclusions yielded an analyzed sample of 263 participants ($M_{age} = 40.60$ years, $SD = 12.136$; $M_{years\ of\ education} = 15.52$, $SD = 2.15$; 124 identifying as female). Two-hundred eighteen participants identified as White, 20 as Black, 14 as Asian, two as Native American/Alaska Native, six as multi-racial, and two reported having an unknown race. One did not report race. Of these participants, 237 identified as non-Hispanic. All participants were United States citizens. We did not screen for whether participants planned to vote in the 2020 election.

Procedure

Study 2 replicated Study 1 with the following changes. Participants were randomly assigned to read a description of Harris conveying information about her agentic ($n = 127$) or communal ($n = 136$) roles and behaviors for at least 30 seconds. Participants reading the agentic ($M = 79.87s$, $SD = 99.12$) and communal ($M = 87.94s$, $SD = 202.38$) description did not differ in how much time they spent on the description screen, $t(261) = 0.41$, $p = .67$, $d = 0.05$. Male and female participants were similarly represented across descriptions, $\chi^2(1) = 0.16$, $p = .69$.

For the description conveying agentic information, participants saw a picture of Kamala Harris giving a speech at a podium and read, "Kamala Harris attended Howard University and the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. She has been a prosecutor, District Attorney of San Francisco, and Attorney General of California. As California's attorney general, Harris prioritized the prosecution of transnational gangs and weapons, drugs, and human traffickers. She extracted \$25 billion from Wall Street to compensate California homeowners following the financial crisis. Additionally, she won a \$1.1 billion settlement against a for-profit-college chain over allegations of predatory and illegal practices. In 2016, she became the second Black woman and the first South Asian individual elected to the United States Senate.

Since then, she has become a prominent voice in Congress. In January 2019, Kamala Harris announced her candidacy for President of the United States, although she dropped out of the race before the end of the year. In August 2020, Joe Biden announced Kamala Harris as his running mate, making her the third female vice-presidential candidate in United States history."

For the description conveying communal information, participants saw a picture of Kamala Harris smiling at her wedding with family members and read, "Kamala Harris was born and raised in Oakland, California to her parents Shyamala and Donald. After Kamala's parents divorced when she was seven years old, her mother primarily raised her and her sister. Kamala is very close to her younger sister, Maya Harris, who was the campaign chairwoman for her presidential bid. Kamala's niece, Meena, is also very close to her and wrote a children's book about Kamala and Maya's childhood. Kamala has been married to Douglas Emhoff, a lawyer, since 2014. Kamala is a stepmother to Cole and Ella, with whom she is close. Both endearingly refer to Kamala as 'Momala.' Kamala has a tradition of weekly Sunday dinners with her family, where she makes dinner for family and friends. In August 2020, Joe Biden announced Kamala as his running mate, making her the third female vice-presidential candidate in United States history."

Note that these descriptions differed in conveyed agency and communality and in the context in which information is presented. Whereas the agentic description focuses on Harris's roles and behaviors in a public setting, the communal description does so in the context of her private life. These differences reflect media portrayal of how female political candidates convey their communality (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009) and speak to work showing that communal traits shown in agentic women's personal lives affect perceptions of their job performance (Bligh et al., 2012; Diekmann & Schneider, 2010; Rosette & Tost, 2010). Future work may consider how communality conveyed through information about agentic women's public lives affects evaluations of them. In this context, their agentic leadership positions would still be highlighted.

Participants evaluated agentic and communal traits after reading the description. Agentic inferences (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$) were averaged to create a composite agency inference. Communal inferences (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.97$) were averaged to create a composite communality inference.

Evaluations of Kamala Harris. Participants next completed the other groupings from Study 1 in a random order. Responses to the impression positivity items, $r(261) = 0.93$, $p < .001$, were averaged to create a composite score. Responses to the success-related items, $r(261) = 0.94$, $p < .001$, were averaged to create a composite score. Responses to voting likelihood items (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.96$) were averaged to create a composite score.

Participant Characterization. Participants then completed the questionnaires from Study 1 in a random order. Responses to political ideology items (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.96$) were averaged to create a composite score. For the ASI, items measuring

hostile (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.94$) and benevolent (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.89$) sexism were averaged to make composite scores. For the SRQ, items measuring non-transcendent gender beliefs (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.78$) and gender egalitarian beliefs (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.90$) were averaged to make composite scores. The validity of these measures is again supported by intercorrelations (Table 3) in expected directions. No differences emerged by description, $t_s < 1.14$, $p_s > 0.26$.

Results

Agentic and Communal Perceptions of Kamala Harris Vary by Description Information

To test whether a description conveying information about Harris's agency or communality affected trait inferences, we subjected composite agency and communality inferences to a 2 (Description: agentic, communal) $\times$ 2 (Trait: agency, communality) mixed model ANOVA. Replicating Study 1, a Trait effect showed that Harris was perceived as more agentic ($M = 5.86$, $SD = 1.00$) than communal ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.53$), $F(1, 261) = 153.63$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .37$. A Description $\times$ Trait interaction emerged, $F(1, 261) = 41.42$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .14$. With the agentic description, people perceived Harris as more

agentic ($M = 6.02$, $SD = 1.01$) than communal ($M = 4.59$, $SD = 1.61$), $t(126) = 12.10$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.07$. With the communal description, people perceived Harris as more agentic ($M = 5.70$, $SD = 0.97$) than communal ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 1.39$) to a lesser extent, $t(135) = 4.68$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.40$. That the communal description did not override perceptions that Harris is more agentic speaks to the strength of agentic perceptions of her. The smaller difference given the communal description was due to Harris being perceived as more agentic given the agentic relative to the communal description, $t(261) = 2.60$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.32$, and as more communal given the communal relative to the agentic description, $t(261) = 3.57$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.44$. No Description effect emerged, $F(1, 261) = 1.54$, $p = .22$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, likely because of the strong overall perception that Harris is highly agentic.

We again regressed evaluated gender stereotypicality on standardized composite communality and agency inferences as well as standardized composite ideology scores. The model was significant, $F(3, 259) = 13.54$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .14$. More perceived communality related to perceiving Harris as more feminine, $b = -0.56$, $SE = 0.10$, $t = -5.38$, $p < .001$. Having a more liberal ideology related to perceiving Harris as more masculine, $b = 0.24$, $SE = 0.10$, $t = 2.44$, $p = .02$. The agency effect was non-significant, $b = -0.76$, $SE = 0.09$, $t = -0.80$,

Table 3. Intercorrelations Between Variables Measured in Study 2.

Variable	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Impression positivity	4.74 (1.97)										
2. Support	4.75 (2.37)	.90** [.87, .92]									
3. Expected success	5.00 (1.89)	.87** [.83, .89]	.87** [.84, .90]								
4. Voting likelihood	4.44 (2.34)	.88** [.85, .90]	.95** [.93, .96]	.86** [.83, .89]							
5. Communal	4.93 (1.53)	.82** [.78, .86]	.76** [.71, .81]	.76** [.70, .80]	.75** [.69, .79]						
6. Agentic	5.85 (1.00)	.49** [.39, .58]	.52** [.42, .60]	.58** [.49, .65]	.51** [.42, .60]	.52** [.43, .60]					
7. Ideology	5.82 (2.28)	.65** [.57, .71]	.68** [.61, .74]	.64** [.56, .70]	.70** [.63, .76]	.54** [.45, .62]	.39** [.29, .49]				
8. Hostile sexism	1.68 (1.26)	-.41** [-.50, -.30]	-.47** [-.56, -.37]	-.51** [-.59, -.41]	-.49** [-.58, -.40]	-.35** [-.45, -.23]	-.35** [-.45, -.24]	-.38** [-.48, -.27]			
9. Benevolent sexism	2.06 (1.17)	-.12* [-.24, -.00]	-.16* [-.27, -.04]	-.14* [-.26, -.02]	-.17** [-.29, -.05]	-.02 [-.14, .11]	-.06 [-.18, .06]	-.32** [-.42, -.20]	.36** [.25, .46]		
10. Non-gender transcendent beliefs	19.66 (18.64)	-.29** [-.40, -.18]	-.36** [-.46, -.25]	-.40** [-.50, -.30]	-.38** [-.48, -.27]	-.32** [-.42, -.20]	-.37** [-.47, -.26]	-.31** [-.41, -.19]	.47** [.38, .56]	.20** [.08, .31]	
11. Gender-linked beliefs	37.35 (24.36)	-.21** [-.33, -.10]	-.28** [-.38, -.16]	-.32** [-.42, -.21]	-.30** [-.40, -.18]	-.12 [-.23, .00]	-.14* [-.26, -.02]	-.35** [-.45, -.24]	.65** [.57, .71]	.56** [.47, .64]	.45** [.35, .54]

Note. Values in square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each correlation. The confidence interval is a plausible range of population correlations that could have caused the sample correlation (Cumming, 2014). * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

$p = .42$. Including Participant Gender (male = -1 and female = 1) did not explain more variance than the first model, $F(1, 258) = 0.12, p = .73$. Including Description (agentic = -1 and communal = 1) did not explain more variance than the first model, $F(1, 258) = 0.09, p = .76$.

Interactive Effects of Perceived Communality and Political Ideology on Evaluations of Kamala Harris

We conducted a multivariate multiple regression entering standardized composite communality inferences, composite agency inferences, composite ideology scores, Description (agentic = -1 , communal = 1) and their interactions simultaneously into a model (Table 4). Like Study 1, this model yielded Communality (Pillai's trace = $0.50, F(4, 244) = 61.34, p < .001$), Agency (Pillai's trace = $0.09, F(4, 244) = 5.98, p < .001$), and Ideology (Pillai's trace = $0.28, F(4, 244) = 23.89, p < .001$) effects. Like Study 1, this model yielded a Communality $\times$ Ideology interaction, Pillai's trace = $0.05, F(4, 244) = 2.91, p = .02$. This model uniquely yielded interactions between Description, Communality, and Ideology (Pillai's trace = $0.04, F(4, 244) = 2.62, p = .04$) and between Communality, Agency, and Ideology (Pillai's trace = $0.09, F(4, 244) = 6.18, p < .001$).

Regressions on each evaluation characterized these relations. We examined interactions involving composite political ideology using values one standard deviation above (more liberal) and below (more conservative) the mean composite political ideology score. Exploratory models including Participant Gender (male = -1 and female = 1) and its interactions did not explain more variance than the more parsimonious models, $F_s < 1.13, p_s > .32$.

Impression Positivity. The model was significant, $F(15, 247) = 51.65, p < .001, R^2 = 0.76$ (Table 5). Positive Communality, $b = 1.30, SE = 0.10, t = 13.42, p < .001$, and Ideology, $b = 0.65, SE = 0.09, t = 7.36, p < .001$, effects emerged. The expected Communality $\times$ Ideology $\times$ Description interaction emerged (Figure 3a), $b = -0.20, SE = 0.08, t = 2.45, p = .02$. To characterize this interaction, we compared communality effects for more liberal and more conservative participants reading each description. With the agentic description, communality effects similarly emerged among more conservative, $b = 1.44, SE = 0.12, t = 11.71, p < .001$, and liberal, $b = 1.46, SE = 0.21, t = 6.92, p < .001$, participants, $b = -0.02, SE = 0.21, t = 0.12, p = .91$. With the communal description, communality effects were stronger for more conservative, $b = 1.55, SE = 0.16, t = 9.63, p < .001$, than liberal, $b = 0.76, SE = 0.21, t = 3.54, p = .001$, participants, $b = 0.79, SE = 0.26, t = 3.10, p = .002$.

An Agency $\times$ Communion $\times$ Ideology interaction also emerged (Figure 4a), $b = -0.20, SE = 0.07, t = 2.71, p = .007$. To characterize this interaction, we compared communality effects for more liberal and more conservative participants one standard deviation below (less agentic) and above (more agentic) the mean agency inference. When Harris was perceived as less agentic, communality effects similarly emerged among more conservative, $b = 1.15, SE = 0.13, t = 9.03, p < .001$, and liberal, $b = 1.17, SE = 0.20, t = 5.82, p < .001$, participants, $b = -0.02, SE = 0.22, t = -0.08, p = .95$. When more agentic, communality effects were stronger for more conservative, $b = 1.84, SE = 0.16, t = 11.88, p < .001$, than liberal, $b = 1.05, SE = 0.18, t = 6.01, p < .001$, participants, $b = 0.79, SE = 0.22, t = 3.525, p = .001$.

Support. The model was significant, $F(15, 247) = 43.54, p < .001, R^2 = .73$ (Table 5). Positive Communality, $b = 1.31, SE = 0.12, t =$

Table 4. Multivariate Regression Summary for Evaluations of Kamala Harris by Description, Gendered Trait Inferences, and Political Ideology in Study 2 ($N = 263$).

	Pillai's Trace	F	p
Communality	0.50	61.34	<.001
Agency	0.09	5.98	<.001
Ideology	0.28	23.89	<.001
Description	0.02	1.03	0.39
Communality $\times$ Agency	0.04	2.26	0.06
Communality $\times$ Ideology	0.05	2.91	0.03
Agency $\times$ Ideology	0.01	0.75	0.56
Communality $\times$ Description	0.006	0.38	0.82
Agency $\times$ Description	0.008	0.50	0.74
Ideology $\times$ Description	0.02	0.97	0.42
Communality $\times$ Agency $\times$ ideology	0.09	6.18	<.001
Communality $\times$ Agency $\times$ Description	0.02	1.17	0.33
Communality $\times$ Ideology $\times$ Description	0.04	2.62	0.04
Agency $\times$ Ideology $\times$ Description	0.01	0.65	0.63
Communality $\times$ Agency $\times$ ideology $\times$ Description	0.001	0.04	0.99

10.53, $p < .001$, Agency, $b = 0.45$, $SE = 0.13$, $t = 3.41$, $p < .001$, and Ideology, $b = 1.07$, $SE = 0.11$, $t = 9.49$, $p < .001$, effects emerged.

The expected Communality $\times$ Ideology $\times$ Description interaction emerged (Figure 3b), $b = -0.29$, $SE = 0.11$, $t = 2.69$, $p = .008$. With the agentic description, communality effects similarly emerged among more conservative, $b = 1.34$, $SE = 0.16$, $t = 8.52$, $p < .001$, and liberal, $b = 1.75$, $SE = 0.27$, $t = 6.47$, $p < .001$, participants, $b = -0.41$, $SE = 0.27$, $t = 1.50$, $p = .13$. With the communal description, communality effects were stronger for more conservative, $b = 1.45$, $SE = 0.21$, $t = 7.01$, $p < .001$, than liberal, $b = 0.70$, $SE = 0.27$, $t = 2.56$, $p = .01$, participants, $b = 0.75$, $SE = 0.33$, $t = 2.25$, $p = .03$.

The Agency $\times$ Communion $\times$ Ideology interaction emerged, (Figure 4b), $b = -0.43$, $SE = 0.09$, $t = 4.48$, $p < .001$. When Harris was perceived as less agentic, communality effects were stronger for more liberal, $b = 1.67$, $SE = 0.26$, $t = 6.50$, $p < .001$, than conservative, $b = 0.99$, $SE = 0.16$, $t = 6.06$, $p < .001$, participants, $b = -0.68$, $SE = 0.29$, $t = -2.38$, $p = .02$. When more agentic, communality effects were stronger for more conservative, $b = 1.80$, $SE = 0.20$, $t = 9.07$,

$p < .001$, than liberal, $b = 0.78$, $SE = 0.22$, $t = 3.47$, $p = .001$, participants, $b = 1.02$, $SE = 0.29$, $t = 3.57$, $p = .001$.

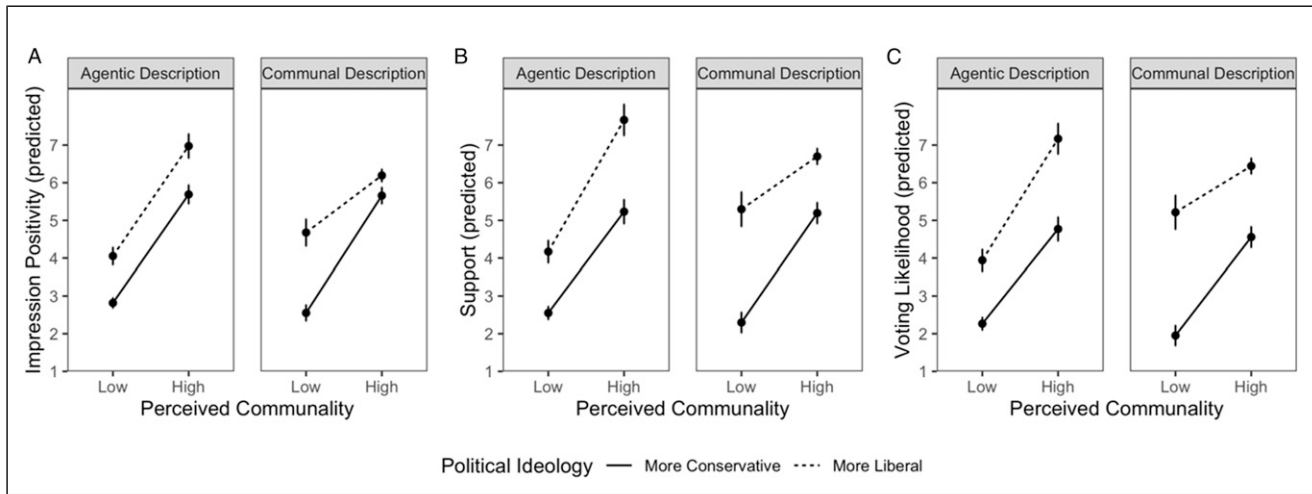
Expected Success. The model was significant, $F(15, 247) = 38.48$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = 0.70$ (Table 5). Positive Communion, $b = 0.93$, $SE = 0.10$, $t = 8.94$, $p < .001$, Agency, $b = 0.52$, $SE = 0.11$, $t = 4.73$, $p < .001$, and Ideology, $b = 0.62$, $SE = 0.09$, $t = 6.54$, $p < .001$, effects emerged.

Like Study 1, a Communion $\times$ Ideology interaction emerged, $b = -0.23$, $SE = 0.09$, $t = -2.52$, $p = .01$. Communion effects were stronger for more conservative, $b = 1.15$, $SE = 0.11$, $t = 10.65$, $p < .001$, than liberal, $b = 0.70$, $SE = 0.16$, $t = 4.37$, $p < .001$, participants. Unexpectedly, Description did not qualify this interaction, $b = -0.07$, $SE = 0.09$, $t = 0.74$, $p = .46$.

The Agency $\times$ Communion $\times$ Ideology interaction emerged, $b = -0.21$, $SE = 0.08$, $t = 2.61$, $p = .01$ (Figure 4c). When Harris was perceived as less agentic, similar communality effects emerged among more conservative, $b = 0.95$, $SE = 0.14$, $t = 6.97$, $p < .001$, and liberal, $b = 0.91$, $SE = 0.22$,

Table 5. Regression Summaries for Evaluations of Kamala Harris by Description, Gendered Trait Inferences and Political Ideology in Study 2 ($N = 263$).

	Impression Positivity			Support			Expected Success			Voting Likelihood		
	<i>b</i> (<i>SE</i>)	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>SE</i>)	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>SE</i>)	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i> (<i>SE</i>)	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Communionality	1.30 (0.08)	13.42	<.001	1.31 (0.12)	10.53	<.001	0.93 (0.10)	8.94	<.001	1.20 (0.12)	9.77	<.001
Agency	0.22 (.10)	2.14	.03	0.45 (0.13)	3.42	<.001	0.52 (0.11)	4.73	<.001	0.51 (0.13)	3.96	<.001
Ideology	0.65 (0.09)	7.36	<.001	1.07 (0.11)	9.49	<.001	0.62 (0.09)	6.55	<.001	1.15 (0.11)	10.39	<.001
Description	-0.06 (0.08)	0.68	.50	-0.02 (0.11)	0.16	.88	-0.13 (0.09)	1.40	.16	0.002 (0.11)	0.03	.98
Communionality $\times$ Agency	0.14 (0.08)	1.86	.06	-0.02 (0.10)	.022	.82	-0.003 (0.08)	0.04	.97	0.09 (0.10)	0.95	.35
Communionality $\times$ Ideology	-0.19 (0.08)	2.29	.02	-0.08 (.11)	0.79	.43	-0.23 (0.09)	2.52	.01	-0.09 (0.11)	0.77	.44
Agency $\times$ Ideology	-0.12 (0.10)	1.19	.23	-0.21 (0.13)	1.64	.10	-0.02 (0.11)	0.21	.83	-0.30 (0.13)	2.32	.02
Communionality $\times$ Description	-0.15 (0.09)	1.51	.13	-0.24 (0.12)	1.89	.06	-0.07 (0.10)	0.66	.51	-0.24 (0.12)	1.94	.05
Agency $\times$ Description	0.06 (0.10)	0.63	.53	0.10 (0.13)	0.78	.43	-0.04 (0.11)	0.37	.72	0.09 (0.13)	0.69	.49
Ideology $\times$ Description	0.02 (0.09)	0.20	.84	0.06 (0.11)	0.50	.62	0.12 (0.09)	1.24	.21	0.13 (0.11)	1.21	.23
Communionality $\times$ Agency $\times$ Ideology	-0.20 (0.07)	2.71	.007	-0.43 (0.09)	4.48	<.001	-0.21 (0.08)	2.61	0.01	-0.45 (0.09)	4.84	<.001
Communionality $\times$ Agency $\times$ Description	0.09 (0.08)	1.15	.25	0.002 (0.10)	0.03	.98	-0.04 (0.08)	0.47	.64	0.06 (0.10)	0.67	.50
Communionality $\times$ Ideology $\times$ Description	-0.20 (0.08)	2.45	.02	-0.29 (0.11)	2.69	.008	-0.07 (0.09)	0.74	.46	-0.26 (0.11)	2.49	.01
Agency $\times$ Ideology $\times$ Description	0.11 (0.10)	1.11	.27	0.13 (0.13)	1.01	.31	0.15 (0.11)	1.36	.18	0.10 (0.13)	0.80	.42
Communionality $\times$ Agency $\times$ Ideology $\times$ Description	-0.01 (0.07)	0.17	.86	-0.02 (0.09)	0.24	.81	-0.003 (0.08)	0.03	.97	-0.03 (0.09)	0.34	.74

Figure 3. Description $\times$ Perceiver $\times$ Perceived Communionality Interactions.

Note. In Study 2, stronger communionality effects on impression positivity (a), support (b), and voting likelihood (d) emerged among more conservative than more liberal participants when a description conveyed role and behavior information about Harris reflecting her agency, but not her communionality.

$t = 4.25, p < .001$, participants, $b = 0.04, SE = 0.24, t = 0.16, p = .87$. When more agentic, communionality effects were stronger for more conservative, $b = 1.36, SE = 0.17, t = 8.21, p < 0.001$, than liberal, $b = 0.49, SE = 0.19, t = 2.63, p = .01$, participants, $b = 0.86, SE = 0.24, t = 3.62, p = .001$.

Voting Likelihood. The model was significant, $F(15, 247) = 44.15, p < .001, R^2 = .73$ (Table 5). Positive Communionality, $b = 1.20, SE = 0.12, t = 9.77, p < .001$. Agency, $b = 0.51, SE = 0.13, t = 3.96, p < .001$, and Ideology, $b = 1.15, SE = 0.11, t = 10.39, p < .001$, effects emerged.

The expected Communion $\times$ Ideology $\times$ Description interaction emerged, $b = -0.26, SE = 0.11, t = 2.49, p = .01$ (Figure 3c). With the agentic description, communionality effects similarly emerged across more conservative, $b = 1.25, SE = 0.16, t = 8.10, p < .001$, and liberal, $b = 1.61, SE = 0.27, t = 6.06, p < .001$, participants, $b = -0.36, SE = 0.27, t = 1.35, p = 0.18$. With the communal description, communionality effects were stronger for more conservative, $b = 1.30, SE = 0.20, t = 6.41, p < 0.001$, than liberal, $b = 0.62, SE = 0.27, t = 2.28, p = .02$, participants, $b = 0.69, SE = 0.33, t = 2.11, p = 0.04$.

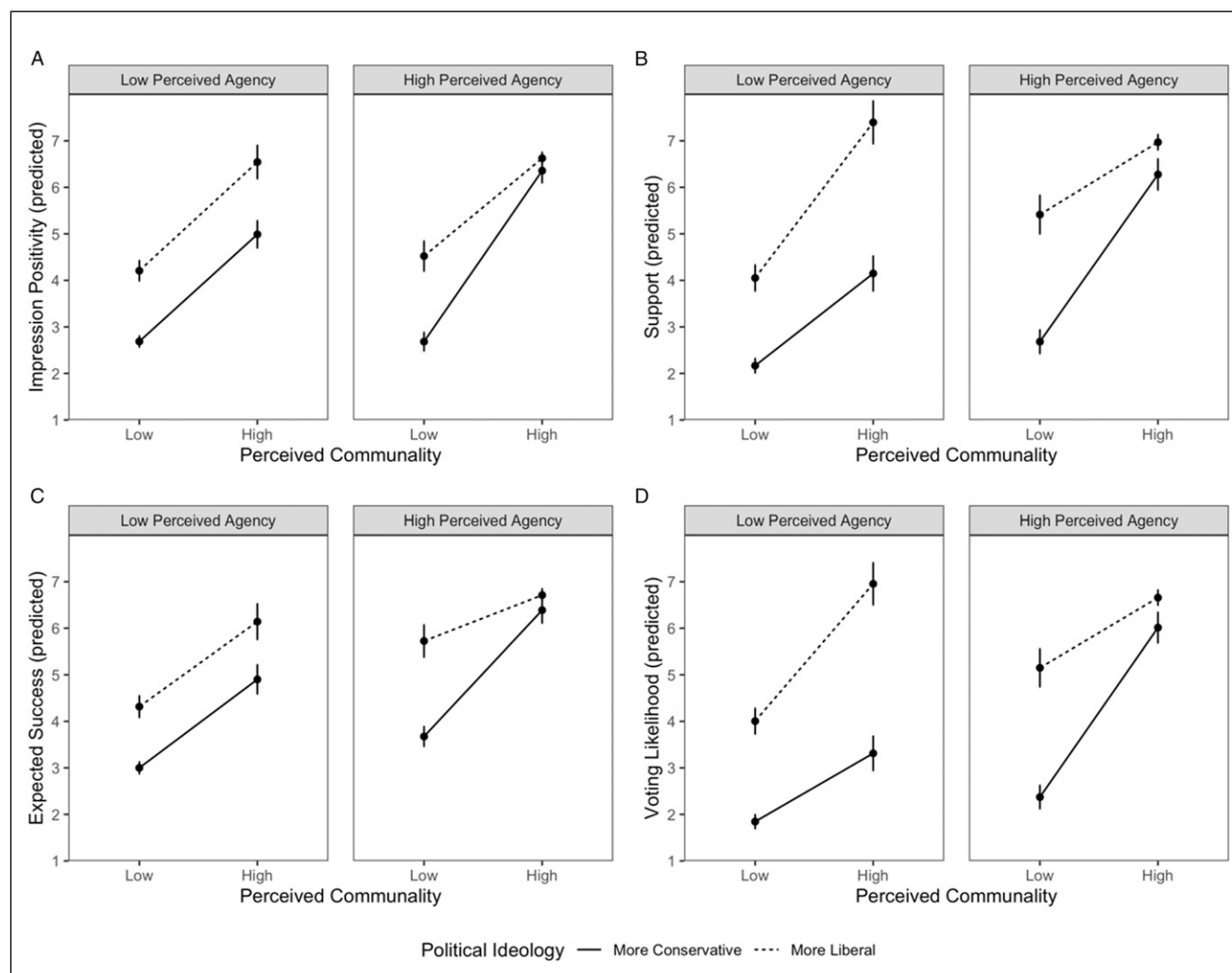
The Agency $\times$ Communion $\times$ Ideology interaction emerged, $b = -0.45, SE = 0.09, t = 4.84, p < .001$ (Figure 4d). When Harris was perceived as less agentic, communionality effects were stronger for more liberal, $b = 1.48, SE = 0.25, t = 5.82, p < .001$, than more conservative, $b = 0.73, SE = 0.16, t = 4.57, p < .001$, participants, $b = -0.74, SE = 0.28, t = -2.62, p = .01$. When more agentic, communionality effects were stronger for more conservative, $b = 1.82, SE = 0.20, t = 9.34, p < .001$, than liberal, $b = 0.75, SE = 0.22, t = 3.42, p = .001$, participants, $b = 1.07, SE = 0.28, t = 3.80, p = .001$.

Interpreting Political Ideology Effects. Regression models again showed that a more liberal political ideology more strongly related to favorable evaluations than the other variables (Supplemental Table 2).

Discussion

The extent to which Harris was perceived as more agentic than communal was larger when people read a description of Harris conveying agentic relative to communal roles and behaviors. This pattern extends work on trait inferences of female politicians (Bauer & Carpinella, 2018; Conroy et al., 2020; Conroy & Green, 2020; Gervais & Hillard, 2011) by suggesting malleable inferences of female candidates of color based on how they are described. This finding may be important given that many stereotypes of women of color do not include traits characteristic of communionality (Rosette et al., 2016).

When the description conveyed more agentic details, positive communionality effects on impression positivity, support, and voting likelihood similarly emerged across perceivers. This finding aligns with theoretical (Haines & Stroessner, 2019) and empirical (Cassidy & Liebenow, 2021; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rosette et al., 2016; Rosette & Tost, 2010; Schneider et al., 2022) work suggesting that perceived communionality is broadly important for agentic women to bypass agentic penalties. By contrast, stronger positive communionality effects emerged among more conservative than more liberal perceivers when the description conveyed more communal details. A female candidate's communionality may thus offset negative effects of perceiving that candidate as less communal if people share her ideology. Indeed, across these evaluations, more liberal than conservative perceivers evaluated Harris positively to a

Figure 4. Perceiver Ideology x Perceived Community x Perceived Agency Interactions.

Note. In Study 2, stronger communality effects emerged on impression positivity (a), support (b), expected success (c), and voting likelihood (d) for more liberal than for more conservative participants only when Harris was perceived as highly agentic.

greater extent when she was perceived as less communal (see [Supplemental Material](#)). Providing different information about female candidates may thus affect the extent that sharing that candidate's ideology allows for more positive evaluations.

The patterns for expected success differed from the other evaluations. Like Study 1, more liberal relative to conservative perceivers expected success to a greater extent when perceiving Harris as less communal (see [Supplemental Material](#)). Whereas the other evaluations regarded *perceiver-focused* attitudes and behaviors, expected success regarded how *Harris would act* in the context of a leadership role. Although beyond the scope of the current work, these patterns suggest that ideology and perceived communality may interact to affect evaluations differently based on whether evaluations focus on the perceiver or candidate. A more liberal ideology, for example may offset perceived low communality when

people evaluate how women with shared ideology might perform in office because people show favoritism toward ideologically similar others in terms of their job performance ([West & Iyengar, 2022](#)). Notably, people may admit that a female candidate is likely to do well without explicitly supporting her (e.g., [Cassidy & Krendl, 2019](#)). Because this possibility holds implications for political polling, future work should directly address it.

Perceived agency qualified an interaction between perceived communality and ideology across evaluations. When Harris was perceived as more agentic, positive communality effects were stronger among more conservative than more liberal participants. When perceived as less agentic, similarly positive communality effects on impression positivity and expected success emerged across partisans. In fact, *stronger* positive communality effects on support and voting likelihood emerged among more liberal than more conservative

perceivers. Notably, trait inferences across studies were quite positive. Having more positive inferences of Harris on one trait dimension might offset more negative evaluations on the other provided that perceivers shared an ideology with her and thus were motivated to like her (e.g., [Mallinas et al., 2018](#)). Indeed, when people perceived Harris as less agentic, more liberal relative to more conservative perceivers who perceived her as more communal were more likely to vote for her. Likewise, when people perceived Harris as more agentic, more liberal relative to more conservative perceivers who perceived her as less communal more positively evaluated her.

One question regards why this interaction emerged in Study 2, but not Study 1. Given the subtleties of three-way interactions, it could be difficult to detect in the smaller sample used in Study 1. Because subtle effects can yield sizable consequences, future work should probe such relations while powering for a complicated interaction. We also made a methodological choice to have people make trait inferences before the other evaluations to highlight their contributions to those evaluations. Doing so may have allowed subtle effects of the inferences to emerge. That this interaction emerged further supports that political ideology and gendered trait inferences interacted to affect evaluations of Harris. Showing different patterns between and across different descriptions of Harris suggests multiple ways these interactive effects emerged to affect evaluations.

General Discussion

This work identified effects of gendered trait inferences and political ideology on evaluations of Kamala Harris, the first woman of color elected to the executive branch. Harris was perceived as more agentic than communal (Studies 1 and 2) even when a description of Harris conveyed her communality (Study 2). Across studies, perceiving Harris as more communal and having a more liberal political ideology each positively related to evaluations of her. People with a more liberal relative to a more conservative political ideology had weaker (albeit significant) positive communality effects when evaluating her expected success (Studies 1 and 2) and when her communal roles and behaviors were described (Study 2).

Aspiring female leaders receive backlash (e.g., [Rudman & Glick, 1999](#)) for deviating from the prescription that women should be communal ([Prentice & Carranza, 2002](#)), evidenced by, for example, lower political support ([Bauer, 2017](#); [Bauer & Carpinella, 2018](#)). However, agentic women who are perceived as communal can receive evaluative advantages ([Cassidy & Liebenow, 2021](#); [Rosette & Tost, 2010](#)). Aligning with these findings, people who perceived Harris as more communal had more positive evaluations of her despite her being perceived as more agentic overall. This pattern may reflect that the prioritization of agentic *and* communal behavior prevents negative bias against women ([Haines & Stroessner, 2019](#)). Being perceived as having agentic and

communal behaviors and goals may benefit female politicians the most in terms of garnering support. Indeed, violating communal prescriptions rather than more general norm deviations explains backlash against female candidates ([Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010](#)).

As a woman of color, Harris is subject to racial scrutiny ([Dowe, 2020](#)) and stereotypes ([Rosette et al., 2016](#)) that have not applied to past female candidates for United States executive office. Some work suggests that perceived communality may not strongly contribute to evaluations of agentic women who people identify as Black ([Livingston et al., 2012](#)) because stereotypes of Black women largely do not involve traits characteristic of communality ([Rosette et al., 2016](#)). Yet, stereotypes of Black women also contribute to their worse leadership assessments relative to White women ([Motro et al., 2022](#)). In actuality, communality may be key for women of color to overcome penalties afforded by their agency. That communality strongly contributed to evaluations of Harris across studies supports the latter idea. Perceived communality may be even *more* important for women of color (relative to White women) aspiring to high leadership roles to be positively evaluated by others. Future work should directly address this possibility.

Perceiver Ideology May Qualify Communality Effects on Evaluations

Positive communality effects on evaluations of Harris were weaker for more liberal than more conservative people when a description of her conveyed details about her communality (but not agency). Despite the current polarized political climate ([Finkel et al., 2020](#)), this finding suggests that female candidates cannot assume unwavering support from people sharing their ideology. It also suggests a context by which co-partisan support of agentic women may be more likely. When evidence of Harris's communality was presented, liberal relative to conservative perceivers more positively evaluated Harris when their perceptions of Harris were lower in communality. Because people favor candidates sharing their ideologies ([Iyengar & Krupenkin, 2018](#); [Mallinas et al., 2018](#); [West & Iyengar, 2022](#)), a shared aspect of identity may allow people to favorably evaluate agentic female candidates provided they have some evidence of communality.

Although we interpreted interactive effects of gendered trait inferences and political ideology on evaluations of Harris from an identity-based perspective, this interpretation does not rule out effects of sexism on evaluations of agentic women aspiring to leadership roles. Indeed, work on Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign has indicated that sexism was related to her lack of support ([Cassidy & Krendl, 2019](#); [Ratliff et al., 2019](#); [Rothwell et al., 2019](#)). Although Clinton and Harris both had historic nominations, they differed subtly in how they impacted the status quo of men in power. Clinton's nomination shattered a glass ceiling for women because she was positioned to be the President of the United States. Harris's election certainly shattered a glass ceiling because she

became the first woman elected to the executive branch. However, endorsing Harris maintained the male-dominated presidency. One avenue for future research may consider how factors contributing to evaluations of a woman poised to *be* President relative to *aid* a President may be different. For example, prejudice might more strongly affect evaluations of candidates of color when a party ticket cannot help maintain a status quo of a White man in power. Indeed, racial prejudice negatively related to support for Barack Obama in 2008 (e.g., Payne et al., 2010; Piston, 2010) and 2012 (e.g., Knuckey & Kim, 2015).

Future Directions

Few women attain the success that Harris has had during her political career. It will thus be important that future work examine whether the displayed patterns generalize to other women. Examining this generalizability is important because Democrat and Republican female candidates may present themselves differently to their constituents. Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin, for example, were differentially perceived in their agency and communality in 2008, and whereas only perceived communality positively related to a likelihood of voting for Clinton, both perceived agency and communality did for Palin (Gervais & Hillard, 2011). Since these patterns were for idiosyncratic candidates, it is unclear whether differences emerged because of candidate qualities or because of broader partisan differences. Future work may systematically vary the presentation of hypothetical conservative and liberal female candidates.

Such work is also important to conduct given that people associate Democrats more with femininity and Republicans more with masculinity (Winter, 2010). Because Harris is a Democrat, communal traits associated with femininity may be especially important for her to be perceived as being aligned with her party. This finding does not suggest, however, that Republican women will not face any penalties for their agency. Indeed, more women run for office and win as Democrats than Republicans (Winter, 2010). One possibility is that female Republican candidates are more likely penalized given the positive relation between conservatism and traditional gender role beliefs. Thus, it will be important to determine not just *if* the current findings seem to generalize, but *why* they seem to do so to capture the likely considerable nuances contributing to evaluations of female political candidates.

It would also be useful for work to consider how evaluations of female candidates change over time. The current data were collected when support for Harris may have been most polarized among partisans (i.e., in the weeks preceding the 2020 election). Perceptions of female politicians, however, change over time (e.g., Cassidy & Krendl, 2019). Thus, future work may examine the described relations at different time points to reveal whether they are stable or whether they change in response to different events (e.g., party losses in midterm elections). Such work may broaden our understanding how people evaluate agentic women in ecologically valid contexts.

Practice Implications

Despite more women being interested in political office than ever before (Bonneau & Kanthak, 2020), women remain underrepresented in the United States government. The current work stresses a consideration of gendered trait inferences when developing women's campaign strategies and suggests that this consideration may be especially relevant for female candidates of color. Highlighting multiple prioritized aspects of their lives may be key for women to continue shattering glass ceilings in government representation. Women may thus choose to be strategic in how they present themselves to the electorate in different contexts. Some people may also assume that women do not suffer disproportionately based on their gender in terms of garnering public support. The current work argues against this potential assumption by providing consistent evidence that the gendered ways in which people perceive an actual female candidate affects their evaluations of her, sometimes despite a shared ideology. More awareness of the influence of gendered trait inferences on evaluations of female candidates may provide a timely reminder to the electorate that we do not live in a post-gender or post-racial society.

Conclusion

The findings of our study indicate that perceived communality is key for agentic women to garner support (e.g., Haines & Stroessner, 2019). We found consistently strong positive communality effects on evaluations of Kamala Harris and showed that political ideology tempered the strength of this relation in some contexts. By identifying when and how gendered trait inferences affected the support of an actual female candidate, we can more fully understand contributing factors to women's underrepresentation in politics.

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Supplemental Material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

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