Beware the angry leader: Trait anger and trait anxiety as predictors of petty tyranny ☆

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on the general aggression model and theories of victimization and temperamental goodness-of-fit, we investigated trait anger and trait anxiety as antecedents of petty tyranny: employing a multilevel design with data from 84 sea captains and 177 crew members. Leader trait anger predicted subordinate-reported petty tyranny. Subordinate trait anxiety was associated with subordinate-reported petty tyranny. The association between leader trait anger and subordinate-reported petty tyranny was strongest among low trait anger subordinates supporting the theory of temperamental goodness-of-fit—or rather misfit—in dyads. Hence, leader anger-generated petty tyranny seems to constitute itself both as an average leadership style and as behavior targeting specific subordinates, in this case low trait anger subordinates. In addition, anxious subordinates report more exposure to such abusive leadership behaviors irrespective of levels of trait anger in the captain. The practical implications are above all the needs for organizational and individual management of leader trait anger.

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1. Introduction

> "Anyone can get angry, or give and spend money—these are easy; but doing them in relation to the right person, in the right amount, at the right time, with the right aim in view, and in the right way—that is not something anyone can do, nor is it easy". Aristotle: Nicomachean ethics (trans. 2000, p. 35)

Aristotle was not, in our opinion, barking up the wrong tree when he declared anger to be a tricky beast in relation to over-the-line behavior. Our question is how trait anger operates in relation to a modern conceptualization of a specific over-the-line behavior in working life: petty tyranny among leaders and managers. The concept of petty tyranny or tyrannical leadership (see also Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, 2007) was originally introduced by Ashforth (1994) as a description of leaders who lord their powers over subordinates, by self-aggrandizement, belittling subordinates, behaving in arbitrary ways, showing non-contingent punishment, discouraging initiative, and showing a lack of consideration.

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The concept of petty tyranny may act as an umbrella concept for a range of similar but more recently introduced concepts, such as destructive leadership (Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, 2007; Schyns & Hansbrough, 2010), generalized workplace abuse (Rospenda, Richman, Wislar, & Flaherty, 2000), workplace bullying (Hoel, Glasø, Hetland, Cooper, & Einarsen, 2009), and abusive supervision (cf. Tepper, 2007 for how some of these concepts interrelate): focusing on the sustained hostile and demeaning behavior of superiors against their subordinates. Explicit empirical research on such destructive leadership behaviors is relatively recent, with clear inspiration from other fields of research such as workplace deviance (Robinson & Bennett, 1995), counter-productive work behavior (Fox & Spector, 2005), hostile workplace behaviors (see Keashly & Jagatic, 2003, p. 33), workplace bullying (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003), and victimization at work (Aquino & Thau, 2009). Empirical studies on the association between such forms of leadership practices and detrimental outcomes for followers have accordingly been accumulating (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010; Tepper, 2007). Yet, few studies exist on the potential predictors of abusive and hostile forms of leadership behavior. Theoretical contributions, however, suggest a range of promising individual as well as situational predictors (Ashforth, 1994; Tepper, 2007). Among the proposed individual factors, various personality characteristics are commonly suggested (Padilla, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2007; Tepper, 2007), with trait anger as a particularly likely candidate, indicated by both theory (Hershcovis & Barling, 2007) and empirical evidence (Bettencourt, Talley, Benjamin, & Valentine, 2006). In line with this, trait anger figures as a key factor in fundamental theories on interpersonal aggression, such as *the general aggression model* (Anderson & Bushman, 2002), along with several overarching models of counterproductive work behavior (e.g. Spector & Fox, 2005). Yet, empirically, trait anger as a predictor of petty tyranny remains to be tested. The first aim of this study is therefore to investigate the relationship between self-rated leader *trait anger* (Spielberger, 1996) and subordinate-rated petty tyranny, which we suggest to have both an individual level influence, and a group-level influence in line with an average leadership style approach.

Secondly, we wish to inquire about exposure to petty tyranny and personality in relation to the other party, to the follower—the target. In this we first turn to the pioneering work of Olweus (1978, 2003)—further supported by the later body of research on victimization at work (e.g. Aquino & Thau, 2009)—suggesting the largest group of victims being characterized by anxiety, self-doubt, and submissiveness. These victims may both be targeted more and experience the abuse they face differently than do other victims. The second aim of this study is therefore to investigate the relationships between self-rated subordinate *trait anxiety* (Spielberger, 1983) and subordinate-rated petty tyranny, which we suggest to be an individual-level influence on behalf of the subordinate.

Hershcovis and Barling (2007) call for more investigations of the relationship between actor and target in research on workplace aggression: combinations of leader and follower personality may, specifically, contribute beyond the main effects of either leader or follower personality on the follower ratings of petty tyranny (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). Petty tyranny may take place both in teams but also in dyadic relationships (cf. Rayner & Cooper, 2003), indicating that an important issue may be how personalities fit together—or not (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005), often called "interpersonal chemistry" in lay language. A basic temperamental *goodness-of-fit* is claimed to determine the development of parent and child relations, rather than the temperament of the child *per se*; poor fit leading to poor relations (Lerner & Lerner, 1983). The third aim of this study is therefore to investigate the qualified, interactive relationship between high self-rated leader trait anger and low self-rated subordinate trait anger in determining subordinate-rated petty tyranny, which we suggest to be a dyadic, hence within-group influence.

Thus, the three aims of the study correspond with making consecutive acquaintance with "the leaders and the followers both separately and in combination—that is, as leaders, followers, and linkages" (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008, p. 136), investigating the role which trait anger and trait anxiety may play in petty tyranny in these three different *dimensions of leadership* (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Theoretically, the study promises to shed light on some likely antecedents of petty tyranny and the according conceptual implications of them. In this, we have the overarching assumption that petty tyranny may both be a style affecting all subordinates, as well as being dyadic in nature. That is, we assume that abusive leaders will be generally abusive while some subordinates yet may be more affected than are others. Methodologically, the study promises to join the relatively few studies that clarify issues of levels of analysis (Yammarino, Dionne, Uk Chun, & Dansereau, 2005), and that do so while employing separate data sources in fighting single-source biases (Barling, Dupre, & Kelloway, 2009). The observant reader will furthermore have noticed how the two traits chosen, often regarded as parts of a neuroticism dimension of personality, are hypothesized to have somewhat different effects for actor and targets, hence following a narrow bandwidth personality approach (Bergner, Neubauer, & Kreuzthaler, 2010), as the broader personality dimension of neuroticism has yielded somewhat contradictory and inconclusive results in this domain (e.g. Berry, Ones, & Sackett, 2007; Salgado, 2002). For practice, the study promises to supply leaders, subordinates, and their organizations with a vantage point for devising countermeasures against the already documented troubles in the wake of petty tyranny.

2. Antecedents of petty tyranny and abusive supervision

To date, empirical investigations of antecedents of petty tyranny, and the conceptually close abusive supervision, range from macro- to micro-level factors in which harshness of thermal climate and degree of collective wealth on a societal level are the most distant macro-level predictors investigated (cf. Van de Vliert, Matthiesen, Gangsøy, Landro, & Einarsen, 2010). Further down the funnel of antecedents investigated, we find perceptions of organizational factors as well as micro-level attitudinal and state-like characteristics of leaders and subordinates. Hoobler and Brass (2006) for instance found that when university supervisors showed a high hostile attribution bias, and experienced a high amount of psychological contract violations from their

organization, their students reported higher levels of abusive supervision. Intimately linked to behavior yet distal enough to precede behavior—here acts of petty tyranny—lies the realm of relatively stable personality traits.

Although already suggested by Ashforth (1994) in his seminal theoretical study as likely antecedents of petty tyranny, stable and distal personality predictors are surprisingly absent in the empirical studies on antecedents of petty tyranny and abusive supervision, for instance as reviewed by Tepper (2007). Accordingly, Tepper (2007) proposes personality as important for future research in this field. There are however some examples of recent contributions addressing personality and destructive leadership in the shape of leader Machiavellianism (Kiazad, Restubog, Zagenczyk, Kiewitz, & Tang, 2010), and also leader perceptions of deep-level dissimilarity between leader and subordinate, relationship conflict and subordinate performance (Tepper, Moss, & Duffy, 2011). The systematic study of what Ashforth (1994) called the *etiologies of ineffective leadership* is, however, still in its fledgling stage, particularly with respect to the influence of personality.

Theoretically, petty tyranny is (a) an aggressive behavior directed towards other people in a formally unequal power structure, namely towards subordinates, that (b) crosses the line of what may be considered culturally acceptable behavior. The definition does not prescribe petty tyranny to be either a *reactive* aggression, which is a "hot-blooded" emotionally driven aggression, or a cold instrumental or *proactive* aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Petty tyranny is descriptive of leader behavior *per se*, irrespective of what drives it. A deep theoretical as well as empirical sounding board for such acts among leaders may be found in the general aggression model, where traits are seen as important person factors predicting human aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). The "consistent relationships between personality variables (e.g. trait anger, negative affect) and workplace aggression" (Barling et al., 2009, p. 677) further support the notion of personality as a likely predictor of petty tyranny. Here we also note Robinson and Bennett's (1995, p. 567) proposition that "individual variables may be more likely [than organizational variables] to explain interpersonal forms of [workplace] deviance". With the strongest relationship found between trait negative affectivity and interpersonal forms of deviance (.33, p<0.05), Aquino, Lewis, and Bradfield (1999, p. 1087) concluded their study based on structural equation modeling by stating that "employees are more likely to respond to negative emotional states by exhibiting direct forms of deviance against individuals than they are to act indirectly against employing institutions".

Advocates of personality as an important antecedent of leadership behavior, such as Hogan and Kaiser (2005, p. 175), claim that managerial failure "is related more to having undesirable qualities than to lacking desirable ones, that is, having the wrong stuff". We will consider this, without going to the extremes of psychopathology, when we focus on trait anger: a personality trait that may be considered undesirable, or as having toxic qualities due to its effects on both individual subordinates and entire workgroups (Schaubroeck, Walumbwa, Ganster, & Kepes, 2007), albeit neither exclusively undesirable nor necessarily being an abnormal quality (Furnham & Crump, 2005). The latter is important as no "compelling evidence" is found for the notion of workplace aggression being a "function of mental illness" (Barling et al., 2009, p. 685); instead, we find trait anger, along with trait anxiety, to be a part of the normal psychology of the universal commoner. The two traits are furthermore narrow enough to clarify conceptually different influences upon perpetrator and target (cf. Bergner et al., 2010, p. 196), as well as for assessing personality-based fit or misfit between the parties (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 318).

Trait anger here is defined as the relatively stable individual "disposition to perceive a wide range of situations as annoying or frustrating, and the tendency to respond to such situations with more frequent elevations in state anger" (Spielberger, 1996, p. 1). In this definition anger "refers to an emotional state that comprises of feelings that vary in intensity, from mild annoyance or aggravation to fury and rage" (Spielberger, 1996, p. 9). Spielberger emphasizes the difference between the stable proneness to an emotional state of anger and the behavior, often labeled as *aggression*. The latter implies "destructive or punitive behavior" directed towards other persons (Spielberger, 1996, p. 9), in our case petty tyranny directed towards subordinates. Trait anger is thus a personal characteristic likely to predict behavior of an abusive nature. It is furthermore a *provocation-sensitive* trait (Bettencourt et al., 2006), which is relevant here as we wish to investigate it in a specific relationship; leaders high in trait anger may be particularly provoked by the actions or demeanor of particular subordinates. Furthermore, trait anxiety—here defined as "individual differences in the tendency to perceive a wide range of situations as dangerous or threatening" (Spielberger & Sydeman, 1994, p. 294)—is strongly indicated as a predictor of victimization (e.g. Aquino & Thau, 2009; Olweus, 1978). Both trait anger and trait anxiety are therefore personal characteristics that are likely to be of relevance in cases of petty tyranny, albeit somewhat differently as will be theorized in the following.

2.1. Leader trait anger as a predictor of petty tyranny

We start out with the first dimension in leadership—the leader (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), incidentally also the aggressor in petty tyranny. In the generalized aggression model (Anderson & Bushman, 2002), trait anger may be seen as a significant person input which via routes of affect, cognition, and arousal may result in both impulsive and thoughtful action. Furthermore, trait anger may play several roles that may contribute towards leaders displaying the repeated behavior towards subordinates that constitutes petty tyranny. High trait anger may for instance reduce inhibitions for retaliation, as shown by its provocation-sensitive nature (Bettencourt et al., 2006), making the classical hostile or hot-blooded aggression more likely (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). On the other hand, high trait anger may also allow a leader to maintain aggressive intent over time and help resolve ambiguities in vague social situations, hence energizing behavior (Anderson & Bushman, 2002), perhaps even to the point where it crosses the line of appropriate behavior (cf. Geddes & Callister, 2007), thus becoming petty tyranny.

Even if trait anger is considered an antecedent factor in models of counterproductive work behavior (e.g. Spector & Fox, 2005), it remains to be tested empirically as a possible antecedent of petty tyranny, although it is specifically suggested as such by Tepper

(2007) in his review of abusive supervision. A wider range of studies, however, shows trait anger to predict aggressive behaviors, counterproductive work behaviors, and bullying: for instance, a meta-study showed trait anger to be a significant predictor of interpersonal aggression (Hershcovis et al., 2007). It has also been found to be a predictor of aggression of both a psychological and physical nature (Douglas & Martinko, 2001), particularly regarding behavior directed towards subordinates (Inness, LeBlanc, & Barling, 2008). Miles, Borman, Spector, and Fox (2002) showed in a regression analysis that trait anger alone explained 9% of the variance in counterproductive work behavior, beyond the 9% of variance explained by three environmental variables: workload, constraints, and interpersonal conflict. Trait anger has also been shown to be associated with being a perpetrator of workplace bullying (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007). Furthermore, the tendency to interpret stimuli as more negative is noticeable when trait anger is high (Wilkowski & Robinson, 2007), potentially leading to more hostile behaviors. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. High levels of self-reported leader trait anger are associated with elevated levels of subordinate-reported petty tyranny.

When investigating the first hypothesis we apply an average leadership style approach, assuming that trait anger causes similar behaviors towards all subordinates in the team (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008, p. 136), alternatively causing many team-members to perceive petty tyranny even if they personally are not targeted (see Figure 1 in Olweus & Limber, 2010, p. 125). Acts of aggression do influence bystanders—be it children witnessing military violence (Qouta, Punamäki, Miller, & El-Sarraj, 2008), or family members (Dekel & Monson, 2010) and even therapists (Arvay, 2001) being vicariously or secondarily traumatized by persons with post-traumatic stress disorder. We suggest the reach of petty tyranny to be particularly similar to that of bullying, with many parties involved—even so in the popular scenario of a single perpetrator and a single victim (Namie & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010; Salmivalli, 2010). The bystanders may range from henchmen and supporters, to onlookers and defenders (see Figure 1 in Olweus & Limber, 2010, p. 125)—all capable of being affected by the petty tyranny. The statistical analysis of our empirical data will therefore pertain to between-group differences when testing this hypothesis. We thus consider the subordinates of a given leader as a single but unified group. In the following, we will consecutively turn to the individual and dyadic level, in order to cover our overarching assumption of petty tyranny as a phenomenon working on several levels.

2.2. Subordinate trait anxiety as a predictor of petty tyranny

The second dimension of leadership addresses the individual subordinate (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), which is repeated in the *toxic triangle* model of leader derailment (Padilla et al., 2007). Through their actions, character, or appearance, subordinates may provoke petty tyranny in their superiors. Leaders may react upon certain subordinates more than others through, for example, an increase in petty tyranny (Tepper, Duffy, Henle, & Lambert, 2006). For instance, the anxious *submissive victims* identified by Olweus (1978) "signal to others that they are insecure and worthless individuals who will not retaliate if they are attacked or insulted" (Olweus, 2003, p. 66), and are thereby possibly seen "as ripe targets for exploitation" (Tepper et al., 2006, p. 105) by potential abusers. The perhaps most salient characteristic of targets of abuse—trait anxiety—was thus indicated early on by Olweus (1978). It has since been consistently demonstrated in a wide range of victimization research among adults (cf. Aquino & Thau, 2009). The personality characteristic of trait negative affectivity, including both trait anxiety and trait anger, "shows the most consistent relationship to various victimization measures" (Aquino & Thau, 2009, pp. 722–723), as exemplified by targets of bullying compared to non-bullied persons portraying higher scores on all six facets of neuroticism (Persson et al., 2009). In extensive research conducted on school children, targets are typically found to be high on anxiety, resulting in exposure to bullying (Olweus, 2003). Similarly, Matthiesen and Einarsen (2007) found targets of workplace bullying to be high on anxiety.

An extension of the victim precipitation has been described in bullying (Olweus, 2003) and victimization (Aquino & Thau, 2009), and demonstrated in a meta-study of 18 longitudinal investigations of peer victimization among children as a vicious circle (Reijntjes, Kamphuis, Prinzie, & Telch, 2010): Namely, that prolonged exposure to abuse may also increase the level of trait anxiety, besides eliciting the abuse in the first place.

Finally, subordinates high in trait anxiety may, of course, be more sensitive than those low in trait anxiety, and may therefore perceive leader behavior differently—a proneness to perceive "situations as dangerous or threatening" is at the very core of the concept (Spielberger, 1983). Whether leader behavior is perceived as hostile or not, whether it is perceived not only as *expressed*, but also as *improper* (cf. Geddes & Callister, 2007) may thus to some extent be influenced by the perceivers personality. The experience one team member has of a given behavior may be quite different from that of another team member (Bowling & Beehr, 2006); for example, what is perceived as an ironic joke by one subordinate may be perceived as an act of sarcastic humiliation by another. Such hypersensitivity to negative events may be exemplified by subordinate trait negative affectivity seeming to influence their perception of their leaders' abusiveness in dyadic relationships (Tepper et al., 2006).

The association of target trait anxiety and perpetrator abusive behavior is hence highly likely, though untried with petty tyranny specifically. One obvious purpose is thereby to replicate findings in adjacent fields: Another perhaps less obvious purpose is to try victim trait anxiety conjunctively with the typically covariate trait anger in order to reveal possible differing effects of the traits upon petty tyranny. When investigating the second hypothesis we apply a within-group approach, viewing subordinates as *independent individuals* (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008, p. 137), as different subordinates may contribute to eliciting petty tyranny

from the same leader to varying degrees, or at least differ in their tendency to perceive such behavior in their leader. The trait anxiety of the victims thus substantiates our proposal of the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2. Subordinates high on self-reported trait anxiety will report higher levels of exposure to petty tyranny than do subordinates low on self-reported trait anxiety.

2.3. Dyadic interaction of leader trait anger and subordinate trait anger as predictors of petty tyranny

The third dimension of leadership covers the relationship between the leader and the subordinate (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), or the *linkage* itself: "It is only when the leaders and followers link together that leadership emerges" (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008, p. 137). Just as a marriage may work out well with a good match of partners, or disastrously with a poor match of partners, it is feasible to find analogously matched entities among organizational members. Studies on leader–member exchange have demonstrated this point, though with constructive or effective leadership as the focal dependent variable (cf. Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Ilies, 2009). Yet, such a relationship focus is generally lacking in workplace aggression research according to Hershcovis and Barling (2007). Rayner and Cooper (2003) and Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen, and Einarsen (2010) have shown that the large majority of leaders are rated as displaying both good and bad leader behavior, thus dyadic relationships within the group are likely to vary. For this we now focus on a potential *leader–subordinate dyad linkage* (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008). Like the analysis for the second aim of the study, the analysis for the third aim will therefore pertain to within-group differences.

Theoretically, we will argue that we may find particularly poor relationships with petty tyranny in the matching of high trait anger in leaders and low trait anger in subordinates, due to the simple reason of a misfit of personalities. Trait anger is a part of temperament, which we humans are in essence born with. From developmental psychology, we will adopt the theory on temperamental goodness-of-fit between parent and child, which determines the development of their relations rather than the temperament of the child *per se* (Lerner & Lerner, 1983, 1987). Similarity in personality may, in the same manner, explain differing qualities of relationship and differing behavior in working life (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Hence, similarity in trait anger may, theoretically, increase the likelihood of good leader–member exchange (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

The opposite of similarity—*leadership distance*—is by Napier and Ferris (1993) argued to decrease the quality of leader–member exchange—a notion gaining new support in recently found direct effects of leader perceptions of deep-level dissimilarity on abusive supervision (Tepper et al., 2011). According to Antonakis and Atwater (2002), three dimensions of leadership distance exist: physical, social, and interaction frequency. The captains and crew members who constitute the sample of this study, working on board small vessels, are both physically close and have a high interaction frequency. This leaves perceived social distance in the shape of personality (here trait anger) as the possible distance that decreases the quality of their leader–member exchange, in our case exemplified by reports of petty tyranny. Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) conceptualize fit at work into either *supplementary* or *complementary* fit. The former being when similar personalities fit, the latter when different ones fit. We argue, in line with the developmental goodness-of-fit model, that similar traits—a supplementary fit—may influence constructive leader behavior. We argue, contrarily, that differences in traits—a complementary fit or rather personality misfit—may influence destructive leader behavior. Hence, the relationship between high leader trait anger and petty tyranny should be stronger in dyads with low trait anger subordinates and weaker in dyads with high trait anger subordinates.

Alternative theoretical frameworks are conceivable when looking at leader–subordinate linkages, yet being more ambiguous regarding predictions of dyadic trait anger-fuelled petty tyranny than are predictions following goodness-of-fit theory. For instance, it would be possible to argue for target selection based upon rational choice theory (Miethe & Rothschild, 1994), an example being how weightings of the ratio of effect versus danger have been claimed to be relevant in explaining acts of aggression (Björkqvist, Österman, & Lagerspetz, 1994). Such rational choices could result in leaders deeming low trait anger subordinates to be less dangerous targets, and therefore being prone to display more petty tyranny towards low than towards high trait anger subordinates, the latter who in effect would deter leaders from petty tyranny. Target selection based upon such rational choices can be considered a mechanism for why many victims are found to be submissive victims (cf. Olweus, 2003). However, opposite directionality could also be argued: high trait anger subordinates could be more likely to commit transgressions in the eyes of their high trait anger leaders, and either create grounds for escalating acts of aggression from both parties or at least in the eyes of their high trait anger leaders, being perceived as a form of provocative victim (cf. Olweus, 2003). Therefore, although a relevant theoretical framework, the rational choice theory is unnecessarily complex in this case, as (a) the direction of our predictions would remain ambiguous, and (b) the higher order cognitive processes necessarily involved would remove focus from the trait anger-fuelled reactive petty tyranny we aim to study.

Temperamental goodness-of-fit theory, contrarily, provides a basis for unambiguous prediction in our case. Furthermore, following this theory, the recognition of a counterpart's temperament can easily be established wordlessly and without awareness or the need of higher order cognition in those involved. Such *mirror mechanisms*, that is a system involving mirror neurons in human as well as monkey brains allowing "that actions performed by others, after being processed in the visual system, are directly mapped onto observers' motor representations of the same actions" (Rizzolatti, Fabbri-Destro, & Cattaneo, 2009, p. 24). Notably these mirror mechanisms are also shown to be involved in the "remarkable ability to read others' emotional states from a mere glance at their faces" (Dapretto et al., 2006, p. 30). Such affect sharing does not only work for newborns and their caregivers (Singer, 2006) for the here relevant establishment of temperamental goodness-of-fit (Lerner & Lerner, 1987), but is also suggested to have relevance in working life and leadership (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2008).

Hence, it is enough that the leader and subordinate observe each other for them to know whether they are temperamentally alike or not, whether there is a fit or a misfit between them. Then, if the leader as the aggressor, possesses a higher level of trait anger to be provoked by something, not even necessarily by subordinate behavior (Bettencourt et al., 2006), leader trait anger would explain even more of petty tyranny against dissimilar subordinates, that is low trait anger subordinates. As pointed out above, we expect similarity to lead to benign outcomes—less trait anger-fuelled petty tyranny in our case, while misfit or dissimilarity will lead to worse outcomes or more trait anger-fuelled petty tyranny. Again, in the case of low trait anger leaders and high trait anger subordinates there may well be some reports of petty tyranny. Although they have a misfit in temperament with high trait anger subordinates, low trait anger leaders are not likely to be provoked into reactive petty tyranny in the first place. Low trait anger leaders may still act with premeditated proactive aggressive behavior, but it is outside the scope of this study.

In conclusion, the ontogenetical nature of trait anger and according likelihood of interpersonal problems in the case of personality misfit representing a form of social leadership distance—lead us to propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3. Higher levels of self-reported leader trait anger will interact with lower levels of self-reported subordinate trait anger to increase subordinate-reported petty tyranny. In short: the relationship of leader trait anger and petty tyranny will be strongest for low trait anger subordinates.

The theoretical arguments we hereby have presented, suggest personality traits as a reasonable path to further our understanding of reactive petty tyranny, specifically looking at narrow bandwidth facets of trait anger and trait anxiety. First, we look at how perpetrators high on trait anger may drive reactive petty tyranny even influencing entire teams. Second, we look at how target trait anxiety, but not trait anger, may individually contribute to exposure to and experiences of petty tyranny. This, we predict, will furthermore contrast how target trait anger will contribute in an opposite direction in dyadic interactions with high trait anger leaders. Third, we therefore look at how temperamental misfit between perpetrator and target levels of trait anger may form a basis for even higher levels of anger-fuelled petty tyranny in dyads with high trait anger leaders and low trait anger subordinates.

3. Methods

3.1. Procedure/sample

To test our hypotheses on trait-based influences on petty tyranny, we conducted a work environment survey among captains and crewmembers of a major transport company working on board ferries in regular service along the Norwegian coastline. The sampling was naturally clustered; since individual crew members belonged to teams sharing a particular captain, the sample formed an inherently hierarchical structure requiring and allowing a multi-level statistical design.

Each vessel had 3–4 teams working in respective shifts: each team consisted of a captain and a crew of 2–10 members. The teams worked and lived together for up to seven days a week, 24 h a day. Of the 837 survey questionnaires distributed to the company ferry services, 462 were returned, providing a total response rate of 55.2 %, slightly above the mean found in surveys of this kind (cf. Baruch & Holtom, 2008). The 462 respondents included 303 crew members and 105 captains. For 31 of the 303 crew members, team membership was not properly identified, leaving 272 crew members from 134 teams in the available study sample. Nineteen of the crew members (7%) were female. Their average tenure was four years. In these 134 teams, information from 99 captains was available. All of the captains were male. Their average tenure was 5.28 years. Due to missing data, the effective study sample in the multilevel analysis consisted of 177 crew members and 84 captains (for further details see analysis section.)

3.2. Measures/instruments

3.2.1. Trait anger
We measured trait anger with the State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI) (Spielberger, 1996) for captains and crew members alike. This scale consists of 12 items ($\alpha = .74$) with response categories ranging from 1 (almost never) to 4 (almost always). An example item is: "I get angry when I'm slowed down by others' mistakes".

3.2.2. Trait anxiety
We measured trait anxiety with the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) (Spielberger, 1983) for captains and crew members alike. This scale consists of 20 items ($\alpha = .88$) with response categories ranging from 1 (almost never) to 4 (almost always). An example item is: "I am inclined to take things hard".

3.2.3. Petty tyranny
Petty tyranny was measured with five items inspired by Ashforth (1994) and used in previous studies (Aasland et al., 2010; Einarsen et al., 2007). The scale, presented to the crew members, consists of five items ($\alpha = .81$) describing the behavior of the ship's captain with response categories ranging from 1 (not correct) to 5 (entirely correct). The items had the heading "My immediate leader/captain has", and were respectively: (1) "yelled at us in rage or spent time acting grumpy"; (2) "belittled or humiliated me or other employees, if we fail to live up to his/her standards"; (3) "keeps track of the mistakes of others, while consistently trying to cover up his or her own mistakes"; (4) "justified own actions by unfairly blaming others"; and (5) "spread false information about you or your co-workers, in order to harm your/their position in the firm".

3.2.4. Control variables

In order to put our hypotheses and study variables through a rigorous test, we included a range of control variables for captains and crew members alike pertaining to: (a) demographics, (b) potential situational influences on the enactment and reporting of petty tyranny, and (c) associated personality facets within the broader dimension of neuroticism.

Gender differences amongst perpetrators are well known in aggression research, with males more often than females committing acts of active aggression (Barling et al., 2009). Males, older employees, and those with longer tenure have also been overrepresented as victims, though contrary results also exist (Aquino & Thau, 2009). Short tenure on board the ship should also be controlled for in order to address "divestiture socialization tactics, negative social communication from insiders that are designed to dismantle the identity of new recruits (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979)" (in Tepper, 2007, pp. 282–283). We accordingly controlled for gender, age, and tenure on board the ships in the analyses.

Trait anger is a provocation-sensitive trait (Bettencourt et al., 2006). As we primarily search for provocations and reactions within the leader–subordinate relationship, we need to control for possible situational provocations (e.g. Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Ashforth, 1994; Spector & Fox, 2005). Role stressors are considered significant moderators of leadership behavior in general (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Ahearne, & Bommer, 1995), and of workplace aggression (Hershcovis & Barling, 2007), and have been associated with both enactment (Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2009) and exposure to workplace bullying and harassment at work (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). Three meta-studies showed that role ambiguity and role conflict were: (a) negatively related to leader–member exchange (Gerstner & Day, 1997), (b) related to workplace harassment (Bowling & Beehr, 2006), and (c) influencing a range of consequences detrimental to employees (Örtqvist & Wincent, 2006). The two role stressors may thus influence leader behavior, perceptions of being a target of harassment, leader and subordinate tension, subordinate attitudes, and subordinate behavior that in turn may elicit tyrannical leader behavior: thereby contributing to experiences of frustration and provocation that may trigger trait anger to aggressive action (Bettencourt et al., 2006). Hence, we controlled for role conflict and role ambiguity reported by both captains and crew-members in order to investigate what personality might predict beyond such typical situational influences. Role ambiguity and role conflict were measured by the scales of Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970). Both scales consist of five items (both $\alpha = .82$), with response categories ranging from 1 (very true) to 7 (very false). We formulated the role ambiguity items as role clarity, which we reverse scored for the analyses. An example item of role clarity is: "I feel certain about how much authority I have", and of role conflict is: "I receive incompatible requests from two or more people".

In this study we have chosen to focus on the narrow bandwidth (cf. Bergner et al., 2010) trait anger and trait anxiety, respectively, arguing that the two may relate differently to reports of petty tyranny; trait anger being associated with the perpetration of abuse (Anderson & Bushman, 2002) and trait anxiety with victimization (Aquino & Thau, 2009). Furthermore, as we argue trait anger in dyadic interaction to follow a temperamental goodness-of-fit paradigm (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Lerner & Lerner, 1983), trait anger may reveal a different influence than trait anxiety in relation to victimization. Since the two traits are known to covariate within a broader dimension of neuroticism or negative affectivity, the two narrow bandwidth traits may act as confounders for each other. Therefore, when investigating the influence on petty tyranny of leader trait anger (Hypothesis 1), we controlled for leader trait anxiety. When investigating the influence of subordinate trait anxiety (Hypothesis 2), we controlled for subordinate trait anger. When investigating the interaction of leader trait anger × subordinate trait anger (Hypothesis 3), we controlled for the interaction term of leader trait anger × subordinate trait anxiety, all to compose the strictest possible test of our hypotheses.

3.3. Analysis

A notable feature of the sampling frame is that all members of a team shared the target of their ratings, namely the captain, thus forming a nested data hierarchy. Given this sampling procedure, we expected team member ratings of captains' petty tyranny to show some dependence. Dependence between observations had implications for data analysis. First, given that dependence between observations of the same captain could be expected, it was necessary to assess the level of consistency across crew

Table 1
Disaggregated correlations between study variables, accounting for team cluster effects[a].

Variable	Mean	SD	Correlation							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Petty tyranny	1.62	0.79								
2. Crew member trait anxiety	1.59	0.38	.17[*]							
3. Crew member trait anger	1.51	0.32	.13	.27[***]						
4. Crew member role ambiguity	2.26	0.87	.05	.37[***]	.07					
5. Crew member role conflict	3.1	1.27	.27[**]	.15	.22[**]	.27[**]				
6. Captain trait anxiety	1.47	0.35	.05	.03	−.07	.11	.01			
7. Captain trait anger	1.41	0.28	.21[*]	.00	.09	.06	.04	.42[***]		
8. Captain role ambiguity	2.1	0.60	.12	.11	.08	.07	.01	.22[*]	.01	
9. Captain role conflict	3.38	1.28	.12	−.01	.02	.09	.03	.49[***]	.31[**]	.19

[a] $n = 169$ with listwise deletion.
[*] $p < .05$.
[**] $p < .01$.
[***] $p < .001$.

members. We needed to account for a strong level of dependence in the analysis. If we contrarily should have ignored dependence, standard parametric models on dependent data would have tended to deflate standard errors, resulting in increased likelihood of type I error. Second, as the theoretical concept of petty tyranny, as opposed to abusive supervision, does not exclude team-level influences (Tepper, 2007), multilevel analysis is useful to illuminate the concept beyond the mere necessities of a hierarchical structure in data. In sum, we chose to use a multilevel model to account for the dependency: a decision necessary due to the clustered sample design as well as theoretical arguments relating to Hypothesis 1 investigating trait anger as an antecedent of petty tyranny as an average leadership style, hence behaviors to be observed by most or even all members of the team.

To analyze the role of personality traits on captains' behavior towards crew members, we used the many-perceivers, one target design (MP1T), as outlined in Kenny, Kashy, and Cook (2006). In the MP1T design, the leader (here the captain) is the focal person, and multiple partners rate the captain's behavior towards crew members in general. The MP1T can be viewed as a nested hierarchy, with crew member reports in this study clustered within teams, with one captain rated per team, and can be fitted using multilevel modeling (Goldstein, 2003). In line with Kenny et al. (2006), we formulated a two-level analysis, with crew members as level 1 and the focal person as level 2. Based on the MP1T design, we assume that the characteristics of the focal person, which affect all crew members, will cause the correlation between crew member ratings of the focal person. In a multilevel model, we would expect indications of such a correlation by the extent to which reports of leadership behavior vary across leaders but comparatively little between crew members rating the same leader. Thus, as a starting point, we conducted a multilevel variance component model for petty tyranny, with random intercepts at the leader level. The objective of this analysis was to examine the intra-class correlation for crew member reports, indicating the extent to which crew member's ratings of their leader are consistent. Consistent reports give reason to believe that crew member reports reflect a consistent, generalized, or average leadership style of a captain towards the crew members as a team. By contrast, low consistency in crew member reports of petty tyranny is likely to reflect a dyadic and specific interaction pattern between a captain and each individual crew member.

The main analysis of the study was a multilevel regression analysis, regressing crew member reports of leader behavior on team-level and individual-level characteristics. The key objective of this analysis was to isolate the association between captain characteristics and crew member reports of petty tyranny. We intended to assess the impact of, respectively, captain and crew member personality traits on petty tyranny, controlled for role stressors experienced by captains and individual crew members alike. Due to the skewed distribution of leadership behavior, we conducted robust maximum likelihood estimations of parameters and Yuan–Bentler corrected chi-square statistics using Mplus 5.2.

In this study, missing data might occur at two levels of analysis: the individual level observations, and the between team-observations. In a complete case analysis, all cases with missing team level variables (captain reported) or missing individual-level (crew member reported) information on the independent variables would be excluded from the analysis. For teams without captain observations on the independent variables, all individuals within the team would also be excluded. Assuming a missing at random (MAR) mechanism we thus used full-information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimation of missing data within and between teams. In the regression models that included cross-level interaction terms of captain and crew member variables, the computed cross-level interaction term was based on observed information only. Thus, the reported analysis was based on responses from 177 crewmembers and 84 teams with captain information, although the full potential sample in a two-level main effects model would be 272 individuals from 134 teams.

4. Results

Table 1 shows the disaggregate bivariate correlations between study variables. Petty tyranny showed statistically significant associations with crew member trait anxiety and crew member role conflict, and with captain trait anger. Table 2 shows the results from a multivariate two-level unrestricted model of relevant study variables. It can be seen that at the within-team-level petty tyranny correlated moderately with crew members role conflict ($r = 0.37$), but only weakly with crew members trait anxiety and trait

Table 2
Estimated correlations from multivariate two-level model of relevant study variables[a].

Variable	Mean	SD	Correlation				
			1	2	3	4	5
Level 1 — within team							
1. Petty tyranny [b]	0.00	0.60	(.81)				
2. Crew member trait anxiety	1.60	0.15	.19	(.88)			
3. Crew member trait anger	1.51	0.11	.06	.30	(.74)		
4. Crew member role ambiguity	2.25	0.87	.09	.38	.06	(.82)	
5. Crew member role conflict	3.14	1.75	.37	.27	.22	.26	(.82)
Level 2 — between team							
1. Petty tyranny	1.71	0.10					
2. Captain trait anxiety	1.49	0.13	.13				
3. Captain trait anger	1.43	0.08	.50	.40			
4. Captain role ambiguity	2.13	0.37	.23	.20	−.05		
5. Captain role conflict	3.46	1.42	.26	.38	.26	.07	—

[a] Crew member $n = 177$, captain $n = 84$. Values in parentheses are alpha coefficients.
[b] Level 1 — within team petty tyranny (1) mean is centered.

anger. The team-level variation of crew member-reported petty tyranny was strongly correlated with captain trait anger ($r = 0.50$), but only weakly related to other team-level variables.

4.1. Variance components of crew member reports of petty tyranny

A key question is whether the crew member reports of their leaders are in agreement, as indicated by the size of the intraclass correlation. Consistent reports give reason to believe that crew member reports reflect a consistent, generalized, or average leadership style of a captain towards the crew members as a team. In contrast, low consistency in crew member reports of petty tyranny is likely to reflect a dyadic and specific interaction pattern between a captain and each individual crew member. Table 3 shows the results of a two-level variance component model. The key variable of interest—petty tyranny—showed a substantial between-team variance component. The ICC1 was 0.19, and the ICC2 was 0.33 for the mean of raters. While the observed pattern suggested strong dependence in crew member ratings of their captain's petty tyranny, the agreement was too low to warrant a team-level approach. The ICC2 of 0.33 suggests that aggregated analyses using the mean of crew member ratings would not be a reliable measure of leadership behavior under the current groups size.

4.2. Multilevel regression modeling

Conceptually, the strong dependence suggests multiple sources of influence on crew member ratings of captains' petty tyranny. The individual level component may reflect individual differences in perception, or individual differences in relating to the captain. In contrast, the shared component may reflect consistent team-level influences on the crew member reports of petty tyranny. The observed pattern indicates that a purely individual level model as well as a purely aggregate level model alone would fail to capture significant information about the influences on crew member reports of their captain's petty tyranny.

To capture both within-team and between-team predictors of petty tyranny, we specified a nested two-level model. We tested four such nested two-level models in a series, with the intention of first controlling for possible demographic variables and role-stressors, then proceeding with individual crew member contributions, captains' contributions, and, finally, cross-level interaction effects in order to investigate the contribution of the captain–crew member personality linkage.

The first nested two-level model of predictors of petty tyranny, labeled "psychosocial factors", included demographic variables and role stressors: level one predictors were team tenure, gender, and crew member-perceived role ambiguity and role conflict; level two predictors were captain-perceived role ambiguity and role conflict. To test the hypothesis that crew member trait anxiety predicted higher petty tyranny (Hypothesis 2), the second model, labeled "crew member personality", included crew member trait anger and trait anxiety as independent level-one predictors of crew member-reported petty tyranny. To test the hypothesis that captains trait anger predicted higher petty tyranny (Hypothesis 1), the third model, labeled "captain personality", included captain trait anger and trait anxiety as a shared level-two predictor of petty tyranny. To test the hypothesis that captains trait anger interact with crew member trait anger in predicting the petty tyranny (Hypothesis 3), the fourth and final model, labeled "dyadic interaction", included interaction terms between captain trait anger and crew member trait anger, as well as captain trait anger and crew member trait anxiety. Table 4 shows the unstandardized model coefficients of the series of the four nested models.

The first model, displayed in the first column of Table 4, showed a main effect of crewmember role conflict and gender on petty tyranny. Being female was associated with lower crew member-reported petty tyranny, indicating less reported petty tyranny. Higher crew member role conflict was associated with a higher level of crew member-reported petty tyranny. In line with Hypothesis 2 the second model showed that crew member trait anxiety—but not trait anger—was associated with a higher level of crew member-reported petty tyranny. In line with Hypothesis 1, the third model showed that captain trait anger was associated with higher crew member-reported petty tyranny. Finally, in line with Hypothesis 3 the fourth model (see the last column of Table 4) showed a cross-level interaction effect between captain trait anger and crew member trait anger, but not between captain trait anger and crew member trait anxiety.

We present the cross-level interaction effect between captain trait anger and crew member trait anger in Fig. 1. The figure shows that the relationship between captain trait anger and crew member reports of petty tyranny was stronger among crew members with low trait anger compared to crew members with high trait anger, in line with Hypothesis 3. As a post-hoc follow-up, we conducted a simple slope analysis of captain trait anger at different levels of crew member trait anger. Standard errors for the simple slopes were obtained using the procedure of Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003), based on information from the asymptotic covariance matrix.

Table 3
Variance components of petty tyranny within- and between teams[a].

	Estimate	SE	Estimate/SE	p
Intercept	1.71	0.06	30.39	0.00
Random				
Within	0.57	0.08	7.01	0.00
Between	0.14	0.06	2.18	0.03
ICC1	0.19			
ICC2	0.33			

[a] ICC1 = intraclass correlation 1; ICC2 = intraclass correlation 2.

Table 4
Model summary from multilevel regression model with petty tyranny as dependent variable[a].

Variable	M1: psychosocial factors			M2: crew member Personality			M3: captain personality			M4: dyadic interaction		
	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p
Intercept	1.60	0.06	***	1.60	0.06	***	1.60	0.06	***	1.60	0.06	***
Gender (males reference)	−0.36	0.14	**	−0.35	0.13	**	−0.35	0.13	**	−0.35	0.13	**
Tenure in team, years	0.00	0.01		0.01	0.01		0.01	0.01		0.01	0.01	
Crew member role ambiguity	−0.02	0.07		−0.08	0.08		−0.07	0.08		−0.06	0.08	
Crew member role conflict	0.15	0.06	**	0.15	0.06	**	0.15	0.06	**	0.14	0.06	**
Captain role ambiguity	0.13	0.09		0.12	0.10		0.16	0.09		0.17	0.09	
Captain role conflict	0.06	0.04		0.06	0.04		0.05	0.05		0.05	0.05	
Crew member trait anxiety				0.36	0.18	*	0.36	0.18	*	0.34	0.18	
Crewmember trait anger				−0.11	0.19		−0.16	0.19		−0.05	0.16	
Captain trait anxiety							−0.22	0.22		−0.24	0.22	
Captain trait anger							0.61	0.24	*	0.63	0.24	**
Captain trait anger × crew member trait anxiety										0.10	0.55	
Captain trait anger × crew member trait anger										−1.06	0.53	*
Random within teams	0.47	0.08		0.44	0.08		0.45	0.08		0.44	0.08	
Random between teams	0.08	0.06		0.10	0.06		0.07	0.07		0.07	0.07	
R-squared within	0.093			0.124			0.121			0.138		
R-squared between	0.117			0.099			0.404			0.419		
−2(loglikelihood)[b]	2475.02			2470.20			2464.39			2461.59		
Akaikes information criterion	2541.03			2540.20			2538.39			2539.60		
Yuan–Bentler scaled LRT test[c]	21.64			4.21			4.30			4.66		

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.
[a] Models 1 through 4, crew member n = 177, captain n = 84.
[b] Under robust maximum likelihood, the −2(loglikelihood) does not follow a chi-square distribution.
[c] M1 compared to null model; M2 compared to M1; M3 compared to M2; M4 compared to M3.

At high levels of crew member trait anger, the statistical association between captain trait anger and petty tyranny was not significantly different from zero (B = 0.13, SE = 0.30). In contrast, at low levels of crew member trait anger, the statistical association was strong and significantly different from zero (B = 0.93, SE = 0.26).

5. Discussion

Leaders, including the seafaring captains investigated in this study, may at times need to act tough, even displaying anger, but without passing into the improper. It is, however, easy to step over the line. Inappropriately lording ones power over others—displaying petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1994)—is a considerable problem in working life (cf. Tepper, 2007). Personality traits, be it the leader's or their subordinate's, will influence both individual behavior and perception thereof, as well as how two individuals fit together. It is therefore vital to understand the extent to which personality traits of the perpetrator, the victim, and the fit of their combined traits contribute to the aggressive behavior of petty tyranny.

In this study, we investigated leader (captain) and subordinate (crew member) trait anger and trait anxiety as antecedents of petty tyranny. First, on a team level, we hypothesized self-reported leader trait anger to predict subordinate-reported petty tyranny. The results supported our first hypothesis (Hypothesis 1). Secondly, on an individual level, we hypothesized that self-reported subordinate trait anxiety predicted subordinate-reported petty tyranny. The results supported our second hypothesis (Hypothesis 2), although the results revealed a rather weak relationship between the two. Thirdly, on a dyadic level, we hypothesized self-reported
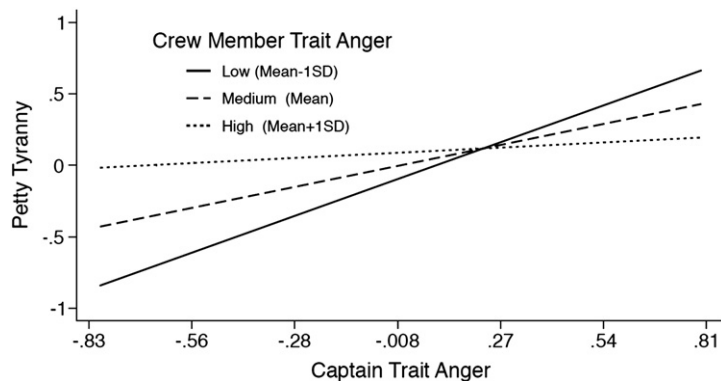

Fig. 1. Interaction of captain trait anger and crew member trait anger.

subordinate trait anger to moderate any relationship between self-reported leader trait anger and subordinate-reported petty tyranny—if subordinate trait anger differs from the leader's trait anger. The results supported our hypothesis (Hypothesis 3), as the relationship between trait anger in captains and subordinate reported petty tyranny were strongest for those crew members being low in trait anger. We will now discuss these findings in the, by now, familiar order of appearance: leader anger, subordinate anxiety, and the linkage between leader and subordinate anger.

5.1. Angry leaders commit more petty tyranny, even affecting teams

In line with Hypothesis 1, the study showed that the higher the level of leader trait anger, the more petty tyranny subordinates reported. This robust cross level main effect furthermore shows that the crew of a high trait anger leader will report more petty tyranny than will the crew of a low trait anger leader: indicating that even an average leadership style interpretation (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008) with petty tyranny affecting teams can be viable. We have argued this relationship to be an example of hot-blooded reactive aggression, that is a behavior triggered by actual or perceived provocations (Bettencourt et al., 2006). Importantly, we did control for role stressors, being common situational stressors influencing leadership behavior in general (Podsakoff et al., 1995), with associations to both enactment (Hauge et al., 2009), and exposure to workplace bullying and harassment at work (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). Yet, the effect remains. Accordingly, we suggest leader trait anger to be an antecedent of petty tyranny.

The findings indicate that it is, as Aristotle claimed (trans. 2000), indeed hard to act aggressively within reason, within limits, and aimed at the right target. Seemingly, leader trait anger may push leader behavior over the line, beyond reason, and into affecting unwarranted targets. Trait anger contributes to petty tyranny; it contributes to aggressive and dominant over the line behavior. This finding is in line with the general aggression model (Anderson & Bushman, 2002), and earlier findings on interpersonal workplace aggression (Hershcovis et al., 2007), including that of aggression directed towards subordinates (Inness et al., 2008). Yet to our best knowledge, the relationship to petty tyranny has not been tested prior to our study.

The few other studies on the antecedents of petty tyranny conducted so far have, in our opinion, provided pointers on abusive behavior as a proactive or instrumental aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002); for instance through cognitions such as attributions (e.g. Hoobler & Brass, 2006) or perceptions of interactional justice (Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007). The even fewer personality-oriented studies are likewise aimed at the "head", for instance as the personality factor Machiavellianism (Kiazad et al., 2010) is clearly related to premeditated leader behavior. The "head" is also an integral part of the supervisors' perceptions of deep-level dissimilarity in terms of attitudes, values and moral scope of justice to their subordinates, reported by Tepper et al. (2011). Of course, trait anger may also be involved in processes of premeditated instrumental aggression, thus passing through mediating variables such as cognitive appraisal and choices. Such possibilities are, however, beyond the scope of this study. Hence, at this stage we have mainly distilled out reactive aspects of leader trait anger and petty tyranny, hence complementing the individual tendency to feel the emotion of anger to the emergent cognitive instrumental understanding of petty tyranny.

Finally, our findings lead us to question a virtual premise for the concept of petty tyranny, and more explicitly so for abusive supervision: only individual subordinates may suffer from it. Our results revealed both a within-team and a between-team effect, the former being discussed below when turning to our third hypothesis on the anger–anger interaction. Target selection and victimization makes it likely that some subordinates may be singled out, and/or suffer more than others. However, it is also clear in our results that entire teams of high-anger leaders experience more petty tyranny than do teams of low trait anger leaders. In this we may also glance at the number of parties involved in schoolyard bullying besides the bullies and the whipping boys themselves (see Figure 1 in Olweus & Limber, 2010, p. 125), identifying henchmen, supporters, onlookers and defenders—all of which may be affected by, as well as contributing to the abuse. Therefore, we suggest the conduction of future investigations on both the individual and the team level. Future research may also want to factor in the *dispersion* of victimization from petty tyranny in a team. That is, to what extent targets are alone, or one amongst other targets—the latter seemingly being easier to bear (Salmivalli, 2010, p. 117).

This multilevel nature of petty tyranny—suggested at the introduction of Hypothesis 1 and supported by the findings—may not only constitute a promising avenue for future research, but also for interventions. Managers responsible for countering petty tyranny may want to consider interventions including the bystanders (be they found among management or subordinates), as they may be "*easier to influence* by interventions than the active, initiative-taking bullies" (Salmivalli, 2010, p. 117). These intervention possibilities and moral obligations of bystanders are also suggested elsewhere: in literature on followership (e.g. Blumen, 2008; Kellerman, 2008), and on a grand scale in Lewin's (1943) targeting of wide-spread laissez-faire behavior in Nazi-Germany.

5.2. Anxious subordinates perceive more petty tyranny

As we expected, self-reported subordinate trait anxiety is associated with subordinate-reported petty tyranny: highly anxious subordinates report more exposure to petty tyranny than do subordinates low in trait anxiety. This individual-level finding, supporting our second hypothesis, is in line with those reported in a range of earlier studies in related fields such as workplace victimization (Aquino & Bradfield, 2000) and harassment (Bowling & Beehr, 2006): thereby replicating the association but here with petty tyranny specifically. The high trait anxiety subordinates may first of all, in comparison to low trait anxiety subordinates, be hypersensitive to negative events: They may perceive the same leader behavior differently than other colleagues do (Aquino & Thau, 2009; Bowling & Beehr, 2006). Notably, trait anxiety as a concept pertains in itself to a proneness to perceive "situations as dangerous or threatening" (Spielberger, 1983).

Yet, we think that there is more to it than a subjective experience influenced by the perceiver's personality. Our finding regarding the influence of subordinate trait anxiety on their reports of petty tyranny is congruent with the findings showing that anxious, submissive victims are the largest group of victims in bullying research (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007; Olweus, 2003). Target selection is thus another plausible explanation. Anxious victims of bullying typically display a reaction pattern that is submissive and anxious; being insecure and quiet; withdrawing from social situations with a negative attitude towards themselves (Olweus, 2003), hence making them easy targets. Anxious subordinates may also act provocatively to leaders, eliciting abusive responses. The broad dimension of neuroticism has for instance been shown to predict workplace deviance in general (Judge, LePine, & Rich, 2006), and interpersonal workplace deviance specifically (Berry et al., 2007), and even leader-targeted aggression (Inness et al., 2008).

We must, however, stress that it is not possible to be adamant of the direction of causality; such anxiety can also be partially a product of exposure to mistreatment (Olweus, 2003), thus being both an antecedent and a consequence, working in a vicious circle (Reijntjes et al., 2010). This may particularly be when working in forced closeness to the perpetrator over prolonged periods (Hershcovis & Barling, 2007), as may well be the case on board the vessels involved in this study.

Not only the antecedent–consequence vicious circle of a specific trait calls for better understanding, but also a specific narrow trait compared to a broad personality dimension. Hershcovis and Barling (2007, p. 274) pointed to the need to tease possible explanations apart of "whether individuals with high negative affectivity are more likely to be the target of aggression, or whether these individuals are more likely to perceive themselves as victims". Our findings cannot falsify high subordinate trait anxiety being involved in self-perception as a victim, even though we theoretically argue for target selection. The findings on subordinate trait anger, as we will see in the following section, actually show the need for teasing the broad constructs, such as trait negative affectivity, apart in order to find explanations. According to our hypotheses and findings, subordinate trait anger has a dyadic interaction with leader trait anger fuelled petty tyranny, a relationship which subordinate trait anxiety does not have.

5.3. Petty tyranny increases in dyads, if subordinate trait anger differs from the leader's

5.3.1. The dyadic trait anger interaction

The main effect of leader trait anger on subordinate-reported petty tyranny (Hypothesis 1) had a substantial between-team variance component, indicating anger-fuelled petty tyranny to influence members of teams somewhat differently. In line with this, we also hypothesized that subordinate trait anger would moderate that relationship, because some leader–subordinate dyads would show a misfit of temperament (Hypothesis 3). That is exactly what we found (see Fig. 1).

In response to the initial and pertinent question asked by Ashforth (1994, p. 774); "Do certain kinds of subordinates encourage or discourage tyrannical behavior?", our results support the notion of low subordinate trait anger playing a "catalyzing role in enacting hurtful interactions with the supervisor" (Schaubroeck et al., 2007, p. 247), yet only when there is a temperamental misfit with the leader. In line with our chosen theory, the same subordinates receive a better than average treatment if there is a temperamental fit with the leader. Hence, temperamental goodness-of-fit between the parties (in our case the degree of similarity in trait anger) should be taken into account. The lower the subordinate trait anger, the more subordinates are at the mercy of leader trait anger—for better, with "free cards" from petty tyranny from low trait anger leaders and for worse, with receiving more petty tyranny from high trait anger leaders. With subordinate trait anger at the highest, subordinates are unaffected by leader trait anger-fuelled petty tyranny, but receive a mean level of petty tyranny nevertheless. Thus, leaders' hot-bloodedness (Bettencourt et al., 2006) cannot explain the petty tyranny that high trait anger subordinates face; the answers may instead lie partly in the realm of calculated proactive petty tyranny for this select group of subordinates, and thus, in other antecedent processes and factors than those investigated here. Furthermore, the finding on Hypothesis 3—subordinate trait anger moderates the effect of leader trait anger on petty tyranny in dyads—provides one exception to our general assumption of leader trait anger relating to petty tyranny. The intraclass correlation (see Table 3) reveals something both consistent and something different in how leaders act towards their subordinates. We must therefore also bear in mind that the more general assumption substantiated by the team level confirmation of Hypothesis 1 partially extends into dyads, as most subordinates will be affected by leader trait anger simply because most subordinates do not possess high trait anger.

5.3.2. The simple beauty of temperamental misfit theory

Now, let us turn to the reasons for our findings on trait anger interaction. First, according to the theoretical arguments we made for Hypothesis 3, we found the theory of temperamental goodness-of-fit derived from developmental psychology (Lerner & Lerner, 1983, 1987) particularly appropriate for trait anger. The theory simply claims that temperamental similarity is good, and difference is bad. This argument has its counterpart in working life with similarity increasing likelihood of good leader–member exchange (Gerstner & Day, 1997), and leadership distance increasing likelihood of poor relations (Napier & Ferris, 1993), for instance in the shape of differing personality as a social distance (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002). More specifically person–leader fit at work could be either supplementary (similar traits) or complementary (different traits) (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Again, this fits the fundamental idea of temperamental goodness-of-fit. The "free cards" from petty tyranny of low trait anger leaders to low trait anger subordinates may be an example of the benefits of temperamental goodness-of-fit. The increases of petty tyranny from high trait anger leaders to low trait anger subordinates seem a strong case for the problems of temperamental misfit. We may note another point relevant in our sample, high task interdependence and prolonged work in physical proximity to the perpetrator may contribute to worsening the relationship, particularly for the subordinate (Hershcovis & Barling, 2007). The temperamental misfit we propose is a basic explanation of the findings. It is primitive in the sense of being part of the evolution of the human species. It is a particularly basic explanation with trait anger being an ontogenetically stable construct, a trait we are

born with; a trait which can very easily—even "without higher order cognitive mediation"—be recognized by other humans, as exemplified by research on mirror neurons (cf. Rizzolatti et al., 2009, p. 33), and such recognition being established between infants and their primary caregivers (Lerner & Lerner, 1983). Therefore, we believe this explanation to be the simplest model—supplying theoretical parsimony.

Second, a selection of targets, based on rational choice, may be an alternative explanation of the above findings. According to rational choice theory, "human behaviour is produced by the relative weighting of the probabilities and magnitudes of both rewards and punishment" (cf. Miethe & Rothschild, 1994, p. 326). Such weightings, as explained by the effect/danger ratio, is relevant in relation to aggression (Björkqvist et al., 1994). Submissive victims have been identified as the preferred targets of highly aggressive schoolyard bullies (e.g. Olweus, 2003). On the other hand, fear of losing a battle or fear of retaliation may result in a perception of poor effect/danger ratio, and thereby deter a leader from aggressive behavior. Hence, a low trait anger subordinate may not deter a high trait anger leader as much as would a high trait anger subordinate. Yet, such an explanation is inevitably more complex than an explanation based upon temperamental goodness-of-fit, as (a) higher order cognitive mediation is more likely in a rational choice paradigm, which (b) may to a higher degree involve calculated proactive petty tyranny rather than the anger-fuelled reactive petty tyranny investigated here.

5.3.3. Implications of narrow bandwidth anger and temperamental misfit

The focal combination of dyadic trait anger in relation to petty tyranny was, as defined by Hypothesis 3, the high–low combination: high leader trait anger and low subordinate trait anger. We chose high leader trait anger because of it being the most likely driver for reactive anger-driven petty tyranny. We chose low trait subordinate trait anger, because of it being the perfect misfit with high leader trait anger. Thus, according to temperamental goodness-of-fit theory, the most unfortunate combination that should display even higher levels of petty tyranny, beyond the main effect of leader trait anger alone driving petty tyranny noticeable for entire teams (Hypothesis 1).

The astute reader will perhaps feel an increasing curiosity towards the remaining possible combinations, namely the low–high, the low–low, and the high–high ones. None of these were focal to this study: The first two because low trait anger leaders should possess little or no driver for reactive anger-fuelled petty tyranny in the first place. The latter because it would be a case of a temperamentally good fit, yet involve a leader with a high driver for reactive petty tyranny, possible to provoke by many other conditions, against which a temperamental fit not necessarily would safeguard. Thus, we had only reason to expect increases beyond the main effect in the high–low condition. However, we should say a few words about the other three combinations and the associated implications for research.

The logic of temperamental misfit still stands. The basic assumption of dissimilarity being worse than similarity stands. The results for instance show how the high–low is worse than the high–high (see Fig. 1): increasing dissimilarity with a high trait anger leader increases petty tyranny. The results also show how the low–high is worse than the low–low (see Fig. 1): increasing dissimilarity with a low trait anger leader allows the presence of some petty tyranny, where the (most fortunate) low–low shows a striking absence of any petty tyranny. Therefore, the temperamental misfit explains the differences. Yet, what fuels the petty tyranny displayed in the low–high and in the high–high combinations, may still need further research. We believe the low–high to be a relatively pure case of calculated proactive cognitions motivating behavior, whereas the high–high may include proactive cognitions as well as reactive anger-fuelled petty tyranny.

Future research that uses temperamental misfit and trait anger as parameters together with measures of proactive cognition, may further our understanding. In particular this may increase our understanding of: (a) the mechanisms for the petty tyranny of low trait anger leaders (with high trait anger subordinates); and (b) the cognitive mechanisms and the reactive provocations—unrelated to temperamental misfit—for the petty tyranny of high trait anger leaders (with high trait anger subordinates). As we will return to below, such research would face methodological dilemmas different from ours, because of increased bias from social desirability in the reporting of cognitive processes that include intent and rationales for behavior (cf. McClelland, Koestner, & Weinberger, 1989). More observational and experimental data, perhaps combined with instruments that are more refined may be necessary in such cases.

The findings also carry meaning in relation to which personality measures to choose—narrow bandwidth traits or broad dimensions—and how they relate to mechanisms behind petty tyranny. We find in this study that leader trait anger affects teams *and* all but high trait anger subordinates in dyads. This stands in stark contrast to high trait anxiety, making subordinates more individually vulnerable (as in our supported second hypothesis). What is more, when facing a high trait anger leader in a dyad, high subordinate trait anxiety does not contribute further to petty tyranny (an interaction-term which we controlled for), whereas medium to low subordinate trait anger does. The target selection we argued for in relation to Hypothesis 2 may still be valid: anxious victims are easy targets for all leaders. The different effects for the two traits may teach us something about aggression types: Petty tyranny seems to be anger-fuelled in relation to low anger subordinates in dyads; it seems not to be anger-fuelled in relation to high anxiety subordinates in dyads. This contrast leads us to suggest poor temperamental goodness-of-fit and reactive aggression for the first part; to suggest other mechanisms and calculated proactive aggression for the second. Hence, we may argue that the theoretical claim of Aquino (2000), being a central argument in Tepper's (2007, p. 273) review of antecedents of abusive supervision: "people who present themselves as weak and unwilling to fight back are more likely to be victimized", actually has two different mechanisms, one related to trait anxiety, and another related to trait anger in a temperamental goodness-of-fit paradigm. Again, we see the value of investigating petty tyranny with narrow traits, rather than with broad dimensions. Based on our results we thus argue that the opposite of high trait anger is not high trait anxiety, but low trait anger, although trait anxiety and trait anger tend to covariate, as shown in broader dimensions of neuroticism.

If nothing else, the findings have indicated that normal traits such as trait anger are plausible individual antecedents of petty tyranny. Thus it is likely that workplace aggression is not primarily a function of mental illness, as pointed out by Barling et al. (2009).

5.4. Strengths and limitations

This study offers six notable strengths. First, we employed separate sources for measurement of leader traits and leader behavior, avoiding single-source bias. Second, we took levels of analysis into account (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008; Yammarino et al., 2005). The theoretical arguments of levels of analysis and multilevel analyses used conjunctively are not only necessary, but reveal a better and different understanding than one would gain without such scrutiny. Third, including all three domains of leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995)—leaders, subordinates, and relationships—supplies a broader, but also nuanced, picture of the relationships between personality factors as antecedents of petty tyranny.

The second and third strengths both come across clearly in this recap: the trait anger of leaders has, for instance, a significant influence on behavior affecting entire workgroups as well as within dyadic relationships with particular subordinates. The trait anger of subordinates is significant solely within the dyadic relationship with the trait anger of their leader. The trait anxiety of subordinates is significant solely on an individual level. Thus, the two narrow bandwidth traits influence petty tyranny differently on different levels of analysis. Furthermore, trait anxiety and trait anger of subordinates do influence petty tyranny in *opposite directions:* the higher the trait anxiety, the more of petty tyranny, whereas the lower the trait anger, the greater the effect of leader trait anger on petty tyranny in dyads. These differences bring us to the fourth strength of the present study: the use of narrow bandwidth personality measures. Petty tyranny is a very specific concept: a form of destructive leadership behavior that is aggressive and anti-subordinate in nature and therefore a form of aggression within unequal power relations. Very specific concepts may demand equally specific antecedents, hence the use of narrow bandwidth measures (Bergner et al., 2010). Broader personality dimensions, such as neuroticism—including both trait anxiety and trait anger—may instead turn the opposite effects of anger and anxiety into a meaningless mean and be interpreted as non-significant results. The nuances found with these narrow bandwidth measures can be contrasted with broader dimensional measures providing inconclusive results in a study on personality moderators of the relationship between petty tyranny and subordinates' resistance (Tepper, Duffy, & Shaw, 2001), or both significant (Berry et al., 2007) and insignificant (Salgado, 2002) associations in meta-studies to workplace deviance and to counterproductive behaviors, respectively.

The fifth strength is the application of a wide range of rigorous controls—typical situational stressors for both parties, and gender, age and tenure—which increase the value of the findings of personality as antecedents to petty tyranny. Finally, we investigate petty tyranny within the social relationships in which it actually occurs, as suggested by Hershcovis and Barling (2010): in real-life teams on board real-life ferries whose crews work closely together over longer periods of time. Our sample thereby also complies with the demands for more context-specific studies (McClenahan, Giles, & Mallett, 2007), hence controlling for a range of possible confounding variables.

However—in turning to possible limitations of the study—we therefore, firstly, encourage some caution when generalizing our results. Nonetheless, we may also consider them with greater confidence within the context, as a number of spurious explanations are probably absent. Secondly, average team sizes were small in this study, whereby the ICC2 values can be expected to be somewhat low. Larger teams would therefore be desirable, but similar analyses have been conducted with even smaller team sizes, namely with dyads (Kenny et al., 2006). The fact that we did find a team level effect, in spite of the size limitation, only serves to encourage future research with larger teams. Thirdly, we must again remind that the individual level effect of subordinate trait anxiety in relation to subordinate reported petty tyranny investigated in Hypothesis 2 used data from a single source—the subordinate. This obviously allows for single-source bias. However, we must also remember that the subordinate reports concerned the trait of themselves, and the behavior of another person. We approached Hypothesis 2 from an individual target perspective, why the subordinates experience of both own personality and leader behavior is relevant. In addition, it was a necessary backdrop for establishing the different influence of subordinate trait anger in the dyadic approach of Hypothesis 3. Finally, another limitation in such studies is that employees high in trait negative affectivity, represented here by both trait anger and trait anxiety, may "selectively recall more negative events than do employees low in trait negative affectivity" (Aquino & Thau, 2009, p. 723). This may obviously bias the current reports of petty tyranny. However, the multilevel analysis employed in this study, including the reports of several subordinates sharing the same leader, supplies the type of control suggested by Aquino and Thau (2009) for such variables, thus, in fact, strengthening the results of this study.

5.5. Implications

5.5.1. Implications for research

Above all and as extensively discussed above, we suggest, based upon the results of this study, that future research continue to investigate petty tyranny with: (a) multilevel approaches, (b) narrow bandwidth personality measures, and (c) with aims of understanding more of the interpersonal dynamics influencing anger-fuelled reactive leader behavior. In addition, we would like to suggest the following topics of future research based upon some key issues in this type of studies, namely: (d) universality contra cultural variation, (e) moderators of the impropriety line, (f) sampling and behavioral variability, and (g) consideration of implicit measures for such socially undesirable behaviors as destructive leadership.

In sum, we propose future research on petty tyranny with (a) multilevel approaches because the nature of petty tyranny seems to be multilevel, not single level. Our results support theorists claiming that petty tyranny may have individual effects of target selection and/or experience of leader behavior (our Hypothesis 2 and victimization literature, e.g. Aquino & Thau, 2009). Our results also support theorists claiming that petty tyranny may have dyadic effects (our Hypothesis 3 and literature on petty tyranny and abusive supervision, e.g. Tepper, 2007). Our results even support theorists claiming that petty tyranny may have team effects, with influences beyond the targets to various bystanders (our Hypothesis 1 and bullying literature, e.g. Salmivalli, 2010). Should we scholars continue addressing merely one level at a time, we may risk flogging some dead horses, instead of gaining new knowledge of petty tyranny across the levels of analysis.

New knowledge is in our view also more likely if scholars consider using (b) narrow bandwidth personality measures, in order to better target specific mechanisms concerning the specific concept of petty tyranny (Bergner et al., 2010). We have demonstrated how the two personality traits of anger and anxiety have different, and even opposite influences dependent on which level we conduct the analysis. Broader measures such as negative affectivity may therefore risk hiding important information. Based upon this, we suggest narrow bandwidth measures and perhaps trait anger in particular, to be relevant for studies on petty tyranny and abusive supervision.

Trait anger and trait anxiety are furthermore not only narrow bandwidth personality concepts, but also primitive ones—in the sense of having been with our human species through a long period of our evolution, the *phylogenesis*. Trait anger, in particular is also quite stable over the life span of a single human, the *ontogenesis*. It also constitutes the main component of temperamental misfit in dyads—an equally primitive interpersonal process (Lerner & Lerner, 1983), which can be established subconsciously in a blink of an eye (Rizzolatti et al., 2009). We therefore suggest that (c) trait anger and temperamental misfit in dyads may precede many other antecedents and mechanisms involved in petty tyranny. Accordingly, inclusion of these parameters in further research, preferably along with parameters for calculated proactive aggression (see our discussion above in Section 5.3), may shed more light on the interpersonal dynamics of petty tyranny.

The phylogenetically and ontogenetically primitive and stable nature of both trait anger and temperamental misfit is our main reason to: (d) expect the relationships to be universal. We would be surprised if leader trait anger did not increase petty tyranny in teams, if subordinate trait anxiety did not increase individual reporting of petty tyranny, and temperamental misfit to increase petty tyranny further in dyads—no matter where. We would expect the relationships described, and their direction to be the same across societal cultures, and across different workplaces.

Yet, we do believe that important aspects of these relationships may show cultural variation. A first example could be variation in the impropriety threshold (Geddes & Callister, 2007). This goes for organizations—saying a particular thing in strong affect to the office secretary may be way over the impropriety line, whereas saying the same thing to the military recruit on the training field may be OK. This goes for societies—the very low tolerance in Scandinavia for aggressive behavior may set the impropriety line far below the one in the more aggression-tolerant cultures (e.g. Dorfman, Hanges, & Brodbeck, 2004). Second, specific acts of petty tyranny may also vary: acts of humiliation may for instance be different in a factory in Japan, a tribal hunting team among the San people of southern Africa or a US charity organization. Still, a leader who "belittled or humiliated me or other employees …" (as in item 2 used in this study, applied from Einarsen, Tangedal, et al., 2007) would behave with petty tyranny, even though the act itself could be culturally specific. Third, magnitudes of the petty tyranny effects may vary with cultural—societal and organizational—moderators. For instance, to what extent cultural *individualism–collectivism* (Chen, Chen, & Meindl, 1998) may moderate the experience of petty tyranny. In addition, whether one person perpetrates the petty tyranny alone or conjointly with others in a form of group bullying may influence its effects as well as its antecedents. Along the same line of thought, the *dispersion* of petty tyranny—whether there is only one or many targets of it may influence how hard it is felt, and whether the target is capable of externalizing the guilt of the act to the perpetrator or perpetrators (cf. Salmivalli, 2010).

Anger expressions, including trait anger driven petty tyranny, may thus be perceived differently, dependent upon the organizations norm for what is deemed as merely expressed, and what is deemed as improper behavior (Geddes & Callister, 2007). Within one single organization as the one in this study, petty tyranny will be petty tyranny, in the sense that the same organizational norms for what is deemed improper is likely to influence all respondents. However, when comparing respondents from several organizations and their ratings of petty tyranny—common in many studies, and certainly in meta-studies—a comparative problem may arise. The question is where leader behavior (with expressions of anger) changes connotation from mere expression to the improper. This calls for understanding (e) major moderators of perception of (anger-driven reactive) petty tyranny. An obvious one is performance, since leadership essentially pertains to the reaching of goals, besides the influencing of people (Rauch & Behling, 1984). Petty tyranny does not have to exclude leaders also behaving constructively. Perhaps leader as well as team performance may influence petty tyranny, or rather the perception of it. Einarsen and colleagues (2007a,b) suggested theoretically that tyrannical behaviors as opposed to derailed leader behaviors might be pro-organizational, at least in the short term. Those of us working as practitioners hear suggestions of organizational members having a higher tolerance for tyrannical behavior in times of crisis. Furthermore, leaders themselves often rationalize their petty tyranny with the addendum of "…, but we have a job to do" (cf. Crawshaw, 2007). Thus reminiscent of the mechanisms of moral disengagement used by people committing atrocities (e.g. Zimbardo, 2007, pp. 310–311). To what extent are such theoretical and practical claims of performance influencing the perception of petty tyranny true? If so, how should scholars deal with it when investigating across several organizations?

In this study, we have found personality traits to have significant associations to petty tyranny. We found these associations even though the average level of petty tyranny was low and there was modest variability from captain to captain. Maybe petty tyrants do not become captains of Norwegian vessels. Maybe life onboard Norwegian vessels hold few situational stressors that could provoke high trait anger captains into petty tyranny. We tried role stressors known to influence both perpetration and

experience of abuse as controls, but without much effect upon our hypothesized personality traits' relationship with petty tyranny (see Table 4). Future research should therefore focus on (f) situations where there is a known wide variation in the petty tyranny behavior of individual team leaders, either due to recruitment or due to demanding conditions.

When searching for situations with wider variation in petty tyranny future studies could also target the culture, sample, and setting more specifically: in the terms of Hershcovis and Barling (2007)—the *characteristics of the context*. Will the universal trait anger of all humans have a similar influence on petty tyranny across cultures, as in the current sample from an affluent society with egalitarian and humanistic values but with harsh thermal climate (Holmberg & Åkerblom, 2007; Van de Vliert et al., 2010)? In addition, scholars may take other organizations and variation in tasks into account by performing further studies in the maritime sector, for instance: with multi-national crews in the shipping industry, with high-risk fishing in the arctic, or with supply-ships for the offshore oil-industry daily interacting with several organizations. Such studies would be comparable on several contextual parameters to this study of ferries operating along a national coastline, yet bringing new light to the basic question we have investigated here. Again, trait anger and the potential for dyadic temperamental mismatch and for petty tyranny is everywhere humans are. Will the hypotheses and findings herein—as we believe—extend to land, and to air; to offices, and to schools; to politics, and to non-profit organizations?

Implicit motives for behavior are according to McClelland et al. (1989, p. 700) based "on innate types of affective arousal and are more primitive than the elaborate system of explicit goals, desires, and commitments that are characteristic of self-attributed motives". This suggest to us that the in essence primitive influence of emotionally driven behavior, of leader trait-anger driven reactive petty tyranny expressed in Hypothesis 1, and supported by the results, can be an implicit motive to consider for future research on petty tyranny. This, we suggest, is seconded by the findings that the primitive influence of Hypothesis 1, had a stronger effect when an equally primitive mechanism in social interaction is present, namely temperamental misfit in dyads (supporting Hypothesis 3). Considering issues of social desirability, future research may consider (g) both implicit personality measures (e.g. Egloff & Schmukle, 2003), and development of implicit measures of destructive leadership behavior in particular when asking leaders to describe their behavior or own motives for it. If not, just like in this study, scholars should employ other sources for leader behavior than the leaders themselves.

5.5.2. Implications for practice

Our findings may have a range of practical implications for leaders, subordinates, and senior management alike. If we were to propose a prescription with the still limited knowledge we currently have, in order to be as concrete as possible for the parties, it would be as follows:

Leaders: know your impact on teams, and on low trait anger and high trait anxiety subordinates. Control your trait anger as a driver for abusive behavior towards subordinates. At work our emotions need to be controlled for the benefit of all (cf. Glasø, Ekerholt, Barman, & Einarsen, 2006). Employ suitable anger management techniques and find fair alternatives for the advantages you expect from instrumental petty tyranny.

High trait anxiety subordinates: find ways to choose your leader and to reduce or opt out of instrumental petty tyranny. It may also be helpful to find ways to build confidence and personal strength.

Low trait anger subordinates: realize that you are at the mercy of leader trait anger. Therefore, either choose the haven of having a low trait anger leader, or find ways to deter, reduce, or opt out of leader high trait anger-generated petty tyranny. Faking anger when there is none is highly possible (Booth & Mann, 2005). Aggression by subordinates may be pro-social, beneficial, productive—for instance when trying to eliminate negative factors such as poor leadership (Hershcovis & Barling, 2007, p. 269)—and even healthy for subordinates (Leineweber et al., 2011). Yet, when doing so you may risk provoking even low trait anger leaders into more acts of petty tyranny, as well as facing instrumentally driven petty tyranny in general.

High trait anger subordinates: realize the potentially manifold effects of your own behavior on petty tyranny, of sometimes deterring, sometimes provoking petty tyranny that may be either leader trait anger-generated or instrumentally driven. Thus, proceed with caution and know your surroundings. Aristotle's advice of finding the virtuous mean between vices of excess and deficiency (trans. 2000), is perhaps particularly relevant for you.

Senior management responsible for the organization: the buck stops with you, also when it comes to petty tyranny. You must actively manage petty tyranny and execute operational procedures and policies that protect the dignity and integrity of all. This must include procedures for standing up against unfair treatment. You may want to empower bystanders to be committed allies in fighting petty tyranny (cf. Namie & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010; Salmivalli, 2010). Support your subordinate leaders, and remember that they too are your subordinates, with all the above implications. Also, even if trait anger may have its advantages (cf. Anderson & Bushman, 2002, pp. 44–45), be aware of the risks associated with hiring high trait anger mangers in relation to their treatment of subordinates.

For us all: Aristotle was probably right—anger is not easy to harness for good, particularly with its potential to contribute in several ways to petty tyranny. Remember: beware the angry leader—particularly if you are not angry yourself!

Acknowledgments

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