

Explaining Abusive Supervision via Leader Narcissism – The Role of Narcissistic Leaders' Internal Processes and Follower Behaviors

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SUMMARY

With the current dissertation, I aimed to shed light on antecedents of abusive supervision from a leader perspective. First, I investigated whether leader narcissism is associated with abusive supervision (Research Question 1). Building on a two-dimensional approach to narcissism (Back et al., 2013), I differentiated between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and admiration. Second, building on threatened egotism theory (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), I examined which underlying cognitive processes could explain the relationship between leader narcissism and abusive supervision (Research Question 2). Third, I tested how follower behavior influences narcissistic leaders and their underlying cognitive processes, thus evoking abusive supervision (Research Question 3). The present dissertation includes three manuscripts composed of two empirical studies each (see Chapters 2 to 4) and a mini meta-analysis corroborating some of the research findings (see Chapter 5).

In the first manuscript (see Chapter 2), a direct positive effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision was proposed along with a moderated mediation suggesting that supervisor-directed deviance will moderate the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision via perceived self-esteem threat. Hypotheses were tested in two studies: a field study with leader-follower dyads and an experimental vignette study with a leader sample. Across both studies, I found that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry were more likely to show abusive supervision. However, this effect was independent of followers' supervisor-directed deviance and leaders' perceived self-esteem threats could only in part explain why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry had abusive supervision intentions.

In the second manuscript (see Chapter 3), I hypothesized that leaders' narcissistic rivalry would be positively associated with abusive supervision. Furthermore, I proposed that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry would be particularly prone to show abusive supervision in

response to followers' organization-directed deviance, but to a lesser degree in response to followers' supervisor-directed or coworker-directed deviance. Finally, I hypothesized that leaders' injury initiation motives, but not their performance promotion motives, would explain why these leaders showed abusive supervision in reaction to followers' organization-directed deviance. I conducted an experimental vignette study and a mixed-methods study with leader samples to test the hypotheses. Across both studies, leaders' narcissistic rivalry was positively associated with abusive supervision. Furthermore, only in Study 1 (but not in Study 2) there were differences in the effect sizes of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision depending on the type of follower behavior, but not in the expected direction. Finally, leaders' injury initiation motives, but not their performance promotion motives, explained why these leaders engaged in abusive supervision in response to followers' organization-directed deviance.

In the third manuscript (see Chapter 4), I proposed that leaders' narcissistic rivalry, but not admiration, would be positively associated with abusive supervision. Furthermore, I proposed an indirect effect via leaders' injury initiation motives and a moderation of this indirect effect by type of follower behavior (differentiating between counterproductive work behavior [CWB], organizational citizenship behavior [OCB], and task performance [TP]). Two experimental vignette studies with samples of working adults were conducted. Results revealed that only leaders' narcissistic rivalry, but not their admiration, was positively related to abusive supervision. Furthermore, leaders showed abusive supervision because they experienced injury initiation motives. The indirect effect was significant in all conditions of follower behavior, but significantly stronger when followers showed CWB than when they showed TP.

Finally, I conducted a mini meta-analysis (see Chapter 5) to obtain a more precise estimate of the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision.

More specifically, I conducted a meta-analysis of the effects of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision from this dissertation's primary studies. Results indicated that the association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision was moderately positive in size, which again stresses the idea that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is an important precursor of abusive supervision.

Overall, the findings of this dissertation underline the idea that abusive supervision results from a complex interplay between leaders' personality, underlying cognitive processes, and follower behaviors. These findings expand the understanding of abusive supervision from a leader perspective and offer fruitful directions for future research. Limitations (e.g., in terms of theoretical and methodological considerations) are discussed along with practical implications for practitioners and organizations.

MANUSCRIPTS INCLUDED IN THIS DISSERTATION

This dissertation includes three manuscripts. All three manuscripts are embedded in this dissertation (Chapters 2-4) and can be read independently.

Gauglitz, I. K., Schyns, B., Fehn, T., & Schütz, A. (2022). The dark side of leader narcissism: The relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. *Journal of Business Ethics*. doi:10.1007/s10551-022-05146-6

Gauglitz, I.K., & Schyns, B. (2022). *Don't mess with my organization: Narcissistic leaders' abusive supervision in response to different forms of follower workplace deviance*. [Manuscript in preparation]. Department of Psychology, University of Bamberg.

Gauglitz, I.K., Schyns, B., & Volmer, J. (2022). *Leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions – The role of leaders' injury initiation motives and follower behaviors*. [Manuscript in preparation]. Department of Psychology, University of Bamberg

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Leadership is one of the most researched phenomena in organizational psychology with approximately 4,290,000 hits on Google Scholar (2020). This is not surprising, given that leadership is vital for successful organizational functioning. Traditionally, leadership researchers have tried to determine who emerges as a leader or to identify leadership styles and personality variables that enhance leader effectiveness (e.g., Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Despite the growing amount of knowledge about successful leadership, history is full of examples of leader misconduct (e.g., the case of Cuba and Castro; Padilla, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2007) and corporate scandals in organizations such as Enron (e.g., Tourish & Vatcha, 2005) or the Bristol Royal Infirmary (e.g., Fraher, 2016), but also in academia (Pelletier, Kottke, & Sirotnik, 2019). According to a national study in the U.S. workforce, 13.5% of workers (thus, approximately 15 million workers) have experienced aggression from their supervisor during the last 12 months (Schat, Frone, & Kelloway, 2006). In a study in the Norwegian workforce, 33.5% to 61% of workers reported being exposed to some kind of destructive leadership behaviors during the last 6 months (Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2010). From an ethical perspective, it is quite disturbing that so many followers experience destructive leadership. In addition, extant research has revealed that destructive leadership is associated with numerous dysfunctional work outcomes (Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Tepper, 2007; Tepper, Simon, & Park, 2017). For instance, in a meta-analysis including 57 studies, Schyns and Schilling (2013) found that destructive leadership was negatively correlated with favorable work outcomes (e.g., attitudes toward the leader, well-being, job satisfaction, justice perceptions, job-related attitudes, commitment, and individual performance) and positively correlated with undesirable work outcomes (e.g., counterproductive work behaviors, turnover intentions, resistance to the leader, and stress). Furthermore, destructive leadership is quite expensive. According to an estimation by Tepper, Duffy, Henle, and Lambert (2006),

destructive leadership creates costs of \$23.8 billion annually alone in the US (e.g., due to productivity losses, absenteeism, legal costs).

In sum, the high prevalence rates of destructive leadership, its associations with negative work outcomes, and the associated costs highlight the urgency for studying its antecedents. In this vein, it has been assumed that destructive leadership emerges from an interplay of leader, follower, and environmental factors (Padilla et al., 2007), and a growing body of research has supported this assumption (Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2017; Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017; Zhang & Bednall, 2016). However, one major restriction of this line of research is that it usually considers destructive leadership from the followers' point of view. Thus, our understanding of the leaders' perspective on destructive leadership is somewhat limited. Yet, knowing whether leaders are aware of their own destructive acts and understanding why and under which conditions they show destructive leadership is vital for gaining a more holistic picture of the emergence of destructive leadership. This knowledge is also an important prerequisite for avoiding destructive leadership in the first place or for dealing with it when it already exists. In the current dissertation, I therefore attempted to complement prior literature by studying the antecedents of destructive leadership from the leaders' perspective. More precisely, I examined the antecedents of abusive supervision, which is the most often-studied form of destructive leadership (Tepper et al., 2017).

In the following, I first define the focal construct of this dissertation: abusive supervision. Next, I present the overarching theoretical model of this dissertation along with my research questions, and I explain how my research extends prior knowledge on the antecedents of abusive supervision. Afterwards, I outline the key assumptions of this dissertation in detail. Finally, I outline the different chapters of the dissertation.

Defining Abusive Supervision

Abusive supervision is a specific form of destructive leadership defined as “subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact” (Tepper, 2000, p. 178). It includes a wide range of leader behaviors, such as criticizing employees in public, speaking rudely to employees, belittling employees, or being rude to employees.

Distinguishing Abusive Supervision from Related Constructs

In order to gain a deeper understanding of what abusive supervision is (or is not), it is helpful to distinguish it from other destructive leadership and workplace aggression constructs (for detailed discussions, see, e.g., Hershcovis, 2011; Krasikova, Green, & LeBreton, 2013; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). First, abusive supervision differs from other workplace aggression constructs in that the perpetrator is always the supervisor and is never other members of the organization (as it is, e.g., for bullying; Einarsen, 2000). Second, different from other destructive leadership constructs (e.g., social undermining; Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002), abusive supervision was originally described as a perception from the followers' perspective. Third, abusive supervision refers to behaviors that are shown over a long period of time, whereas other destructive leadership (e.g., petty tyranny; Ashforth, 1994) and workplace aggression constructs (e.g., workplace incivility; Andersson & Pearson, 1999) do not explicitly mention the persistence of the aggressive behavior. Fourth, abusive supervision includes only hostile behaviors but excludes physical abuse. Contrary to this, other destructive leadership constructs also include non-hostile behaviors (e.g., petty tyranny; Ashforth, 1994) or physical abuse (e.g., destructive leadership behavior; Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, 2007). Finally, abusive supervision does not necessarily include an intent to harm, whereas other definitions of destructive leadership do (e.g., intentionally toxic leadership; Lipman-Blumen, 2005).

Assessment of Abusive Supervision

Whereas abusive supervision is based on actual leader behavior (e.g., breaking promises or lying to followers), it was originally conceptualized as a subjective experience of followers (Tepper, 2000). Accordingly, a preponderance of research has assessed abusive supervision from the followers' perspective by asking them how often their leaders displayed a number of behaviors (Mackey et al., 2017; Tepper et al., 2017). However, the leaders' perspective may also be informative as it indicates the extent to which leaders are aware of their own abusive supervision. Accordingly, a few researchers have studied abusive supervision from the leaders' perspective by including leader reports of their own abusive behaviors (Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao, & Chang, 2012; Lin, Ma, & Johnson, 2016).

In the current dissertation, I shifted away from the predominant focus on the followers' perspective of abusive supervision to the leaders' perspective of abusive supervision for the following reasons. First, research on self- versus other ratings of leadership has shown that both self- and other leadership ratings provide meaningful information but that the two may differ from each other (e.g., Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Fleenor, Smither, Atwater, Braddy, & Sturm, 2010). Accordingly, it is important to complement prior research on abusive supervision, which has mostly relied on other ratings (i.e., follower ratings of abusive supervision; Mackey et al., 2017; Tepper et al., 2017), with self-ratings of abusive supervision (e.g., Johnson et al., 2012; Lin et al., 2016). By studying leaders' self-ratings, the current dissertation fosters insights into leaders' self-awareness of their own abusive supervision (see also Fleenor et al., 2010). In addition, self-ratings provide insights into the raters' dispositions (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992) and thus provide useful information about which leaders display abusive supervision. Second, studying the leaders' perspective on abusive supervision is also practically relevant. Leaders' self-awareness and self-knowledge are important prerequisites for leader development, which is why leaders'

self-evaluations are also assessed in practice (e.g., using 360° feedback surveys; Day, 2000). Thus, in order to prevent or diminish abusive supervision through leader development, it is critical to understand how leaders see themselves in terms of abusive supervision as a starting point for further action.

To sum up, studying abusive supervision from the leaders' perspective is both theoretically and practically important. Therefore, in the current dissertation, I focus primarily on leaders' evaluations of their own abusive supervision. But how and why does abusive supervision evolve from the leaders' perspective? In the following section, I present the overarching theoretical model of this dissertation along with my research questions.

Overarching Theoretical Model of this Dissertation and Research Questions

In the present dissertation, I examined how abusive supervision evolves from the leaders' perspective. As leaders and followers jointly co-produce destructive leadership and can be considered the most proximal actors in the destructive leadership process (Padilla et al., 2007; Shamir, 2007), I focused primarily on leader and follower antecedents in the current dissertation (but always from the leaders' perspective).

First, I aimed to unravel which leaders are likely to display abusive supervision and examine whether leader narcissism is associated with abusive supervision (Research Question 1). Second, I aimed to understand why narcissistic leaders engage in abusive supervision and investigated the role of narcissistic leaders' cognitive processes as explanatory mechanisms (Research Question 2). Third, I aspired to determine how followers may contribute to abusive supervision and how follower behavior influences narcissistic leaders' abusive supervision by evoking narcissistic leaders' cognitive processes (Research Question 3).

The research questions and the overarching theoretical framework of my dissertation are depicted in Figure 1. Below, I outline my research questions in detail. In addition, I

explain how this dissertation fits into and goes beyond prior research on the antecedents of abusive supervision.

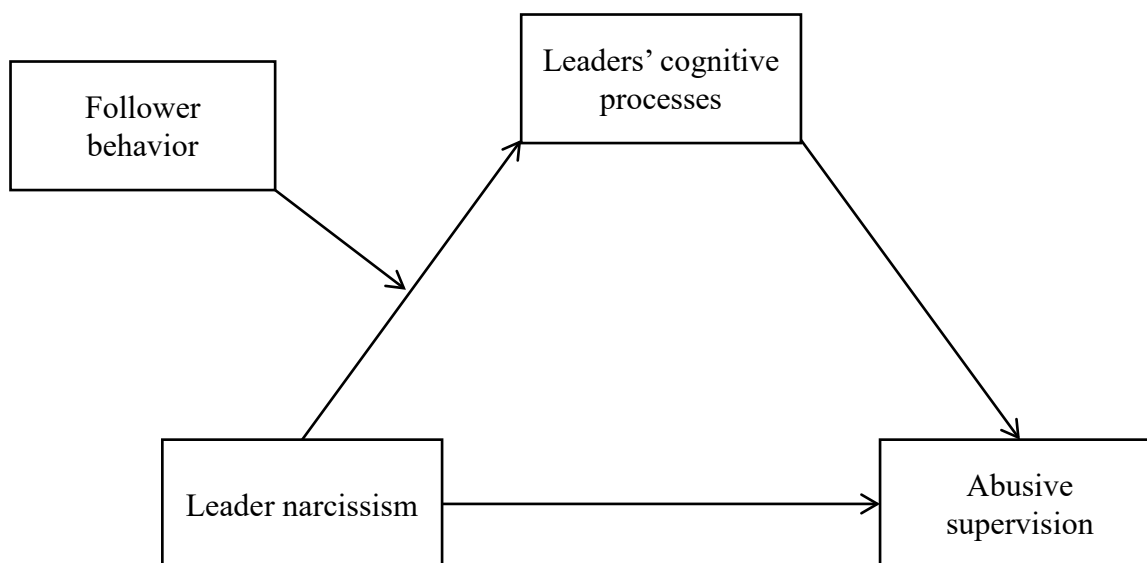


Figure 1. Overarching theoretical model of the dissertation.

Research Question 1 (“Are narcissistic leaders likely to display abusive supervision?”) follows trait approaches to leadership, which have hypothesized and empirically shown that leaders’ personality traits predict important leadership criteria (e.g., Antonakis, Day, & Schyns, 2012; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Judge et al., 2002; Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009). Indeed, previous work has revealed that leaders’ personality traits are important predictors of abusive supervision (for reviews, see, e.g., Mackey et al., 2017; Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017; Zhang & Bednall, 2016). For instance, abusive supervision was found to be associated with leaders’ bright (e.g., leaders’ HEXACO personality traits; Breevaart & de Vries, 2017; Camps, Stouten, & Euwema, 2016) and dark personality traits (e.g., Machiavellianism; Kiazad, Restubog, Zagenczyk, Kiewitz, & Tang, 2010; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). However, with respect to leader narcissism, research has revealed mixed findings. Whereas some researchers found that leader narcissism was associated with abusive supervision (Waldman, Wang, Hannah, Owens, & Balthazard, 2018; Whitman, Halbesleben, & Shanine, 2013), others did not (Nevicka, De Hoogh, Den Hartog, & Belschak, 2018; Wisse

& Sleebos, 2016). In the current dissertation, I aimed to contribute to prior literature by disentangling these inconclusive findings and clarifying whether leader narcissism is associated with abusive supervision or not. This knowledge also has important managerial consequences. For instance, organizations could pay attention to leader narcissism in leader selection and promotion and could provide leader development programs that are customized to the needs of narcissistic leaders.

Research Question 2 (“Why do narcissistic leaders show abusive supervision?”) builds on a process view of abusive supervision from the leaders’ perspective and aims to unravel the specific cognitive processes that might explain why narcissistic leaders show abusive supervision. By doing so, I extend prior research on leader narcissism and abusive supervision, which has so far neglected to study narcissistic leaders’ internal processes (Nevicka et al., 2018; Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). Whereas research on abusive supervision has shown that leaders’ internal processes, such as the experience of hostile cognitions and negative affect, might precede abusive supervision (for reviews, see, e.g., Mackey et al., 2017; Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017; Zhang & Bednall, 2016), research has yet to determine whether these mechanisms can also explain the relationship between leader narcissism and abusive supervision. However, studies have shown that narcissism is associated with specific cognitive processes that influence how narcissists behave toward others (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001) and that have the potential to explain abusive supervision (e.g., Hansbrough & Jones, 2014). Accordingly, the investigation of narcissistic leaders’ internal processes contributes to a more holistic understanding of leader narcissism and abusive supervision from the leaders’ perspective. Furthermore, it offers new starting points for leader development in practice. For instance, in order to reduce abusive supervision, practitioners can develop specific leader training programs that address the respective cognitive processes of narcissistic leaders.

Research Question 3 (“How does follower behavior influence narcissistic leaders’ cognitive processes and evoke abusive supervision?”) builds on a social-interactionist perspective of abusive supervision and acknowledges the role of followers as co-producers of abusive supervision (Padilla et al., 2007). Indeed, a growing body of research has supported the assumption that some followers possess characteristics or behave in ways that make them more likely to experience abusive supervision than others (for reviews, see, e.g., Mackey et al., 2017; Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017; Zhang & Bednall, 2016). In this vein, Nevicka et al. (2018) examined abusive supervision from the followers’ perspective and investigated the interactive effect of leader narcissism and follower characteristics (i.e., self-esteem and core self-evaluations) on abusive supervision. They did not find a direct association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision, but they found that followers with low (compared with high) self-esteem and core self-evaluations perceived their leaders as abusive. To date, Nevicka et al.’s (2018) study is the only one that has examined the interactive effects between narcissistic leaders and follower characteristics, but it did not provide an explanation for why narcissistic leaders reacted with abusive supervision. By examining the interactive effects between leader narcissism and follower behaviors, the current dissertation therefore extends the scarce amount of literature on this topic. Furthermore, by taking a leader perspective and by examining how follower behavior influences narcissistic leaders’ cognitive processes, the findings of this dissertation also offer possible explanations for why narcissistic leaders react with abusive supervision. This knowledge can also help prevent abusive supervision. For instance, followers can be made aware of the behaviors that put them at risk of abusive supervision, which might then help them avoid being subjected to abusive supervision.

In the following, I will elaborate in detail on why I focused on these variables in particular and why I expected them to be antecedents of abusive supervision.

Leader Narcissism as a Primary Antecedent of Abusive Supervision

In the current dissertation, I focused on leader narcissism as a primary antecedent of abusive supervision as narcissists often attain leadership positions (Grijalva, Harms, Newman, Gaddis, & Fraley, 2015), which makes this trait particularly relevant in the study of leadership. In addition, Judge, LePine, and Rich (2006) found that narcissism incrementally predicted transformational leadership above the Big Five traits, thus showing that narcissism is relevant for understanding leadership ratings. Furthermore, at first sight, narcissists appear to be charming and leader-like figures (Back, Schmukle, & Egloff, 2010), but this picture may change in the long run as narcissists often act selfishly and disregard the needs of others (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Their preoccupation with personal interests even at the expense of others makes it very likely that narcissistic leaders will engage in destructive leadership (Krasikova et al., 2013). Accordingly, I expected to find that leader narcissism would predict abusive supervision. Before outlining my argumentation in detail, I define narcissism in the following.

Defining Narcissism

The term narcissism has its origins in Greek mythology. In his book “*Metamorphoses*”, Ovid described a young man named Narcissus who was extraordinarily beautiful. One day, Narcissus saw his own reflection in a pond and fell in love with it. Unable to break loose from this sight, Narcissus slowly wasted away and died. This extreme self-love is a core feature of narcissism.

In social-personality psychology, narcissism is considered a normally distributed trait that exists in all individuals to varying degrees (in contrast to clinical psychology, where narcissism is considered a personality disorder; Cain, Pincus, & Ansell, 2008). Narcissism can be defined as “a relatively stable individual difference consisting of grandiosity, self-love and inflated self-views” (Campbell, Hoffman, Campbell, & Marchisio, 2011, p. 269). Campbell et

al. (2011) suggested that narcissism contains three elements: The first element is the narcissistic self, which includes the belief that one is special and unique, feelings of entitlement, and striving for power and esteem. The second element refers to narcissistic relationships, which are often shallow or exploitative and characterized by low empathy and emotional closeness. The third element consists of self-regulatory strategies directed at enhancing and upholding inflated self-views (e.g., by seeking out opportunities for attention or using others for one's own means). This definition already shows that narcissism may be relevant in the context of leadership, as leadership is a means of climbing organizational hierarchies and may thus satisfy the narcissistic self's desire to feel superior and achieve power. Furthermore, leadership encompasses relationship building with followers, but due to the difficulties narcissists encounter in interpersonal contexts, narcissistic leaders may have problems doing so. Finally, due to their preoccupation with enhancing and maintaining their grandiose self-views, narcissistic leaders may pay less attention to their followers' needs and organizational goals. In the current dissertation, I built on social-personality psychology conceptualizations of narcissism and examined leader narcissism as a personality trait- as most researchers do when studying narcissism in leadership contexts (Cain et al., 2008; Campbell et al., 2011).

Narcissism in Leadership Research

With regard to leadership, narcissism seems to have both a bright and a dark side (for reviews, see, e.g., Braun, 2017; Campbell et al., 2011; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006).

According to Campbell and Campbell (2009), the bright sides of leader narcissism surface in the "emerging zone," thus, in short-term situations where individuals are unacquainted or are in the early stages of their relationship such as in leader emergence situations. For instance, in leaderless group discussions with unacquainted students and business executives, Brunell et al. (2008) found that narcissistic individuals were likely to emerge as leaders in terms of self-

reports, group-reports, and observer-reports of leader emergence. Similarly, Nevicka, De Hoogh, Van Vianen, Beersma, and McIlwain (2011) found that students preferred team members who were high on narcissism for a leader in a zero-acquaintance situation. Furthermore, in a study of military cadets, narcissistic peers (operationalized in terms of egotism and self-esteem) were more likely to emerge as leaders than less narcissistic peers (Paunonen, Lönnqvist, Verkasalo, Leikas, & Nissinen, 2006). On the one hand, seeking out leadership positions might serve to promote narcissistic leaders' positive self-views (Campbell & Campbell, 2009) and provide a "stage to shine" (Nevicka et al., 2011). Furthermore, narcissists strive for power and dominance and want to "get ahead" (Campbell & Foster, 2007), which might explain why they pursue leadership positions. On the other hand, the narcissism-leader-emergence link might be explained by the fact that narcissists possess many leader-like characteristics (Smith & Foti, 1998): For instance, narcissists possess high self-esteem (Emmons, 1984), and they are perceived as intelligent at first sight (Paulhus, 1998). Furthermore, meta-analytic results suggested that the positive association between narcissism and leader emergence is explained by extraversion (Grijalva et al., 2015).

In sum, it seems that narcissists strive for and are more likely to achieve leadership positions. However, does this also mean that narcissistic leaders are good leaders? According to Campbell and Campbell (2009), the dark sides of leader narcissism are most likely to emerge in the "enduring zone" thus, in long-term situations where individuals are well-acquainted or in long-term relationships. Thus, when leaders and followers continue working together, a natural shift occurs from the emerging zone to the enduring zone, which should also be reflected in unfavorable leader ratings and low leadership effectiveness (Campbell & Campbell, 2009). In support of this view, prior research revealed that narcissistic individuals who were initially perceived as leaders in groups of unacquainted students were rated less favorably as time went on (Ong, Roberts, Arthur, Woodman, & Akehurst, 2016).

Furthermore, among acquainted groups, narcissism was initially unrelated to leader perceptions and even negatively related to leader perceptions later on (Ong et al., 2016). When it comes to leadership ratings of actual leaders in the enduring zone, research findings have shown that narcissism was negatively related to transformational leadership among members of a beach patrol (Judge et al., 2006) and among chief executives and senior managers (Khoo & Burch, 2008). In addition, narcissistic managers received poor supervisor ratings in interpersonal effectiveness, conceptual effectiveness, and integrity (Blair, Hoffman, & Helland, 2008). Furthermore, meta-analytic results suggested that there is a curvilinear association between narcissism and leadership effectiveness, meaning that medium levels of leader narcissism are associated with the highest leadership effectiveness ratings (Grijalva et al., 2015).

Thus, leader narcissism seems to be a double-edged sword. As Hogan and Kaiser (2005) put it:

The bright side concerns the person you meet in an interview; the dark side concerns the person who actually comes to work. Dark side tendencies typically coexist with well-developed social skills that mask or compensate for them in the short run. Over time, however, dark side tendencies erode trust and undermine relationships. (p. 171)

As trust and relationship building are important for leadership, it is likely that narcissistic leaders will be unable to build and maintain positive relationships with their followers. This assumption has found support from the findings that narcissists want to get ahead but are less motivated to get along with others (Campbell & Foster, 2007; Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002), and thus, narcissistic leaders might not put much effort into establishing positive relationships with their followers. Furthermore, narcissists have been found to be disagreeable (Bradlee & Emmons, 1992) and to lack empathy (Watson, Grisham, Trotter, & Biderman, 1984). Therefore, narcissistic leaders might also not care for their

followers' welfare. Consequently, followers are likely to suffer under narcissistic leaders (Campbell & Campbell, 2009), and narcissistic leaders are likely to engage in destructive leadership due to their selfishness and lack of regard for others (e.g., Krasikova et al., 2013). The latter assumption has found support from findings that narcissism is linked to antagonism and hostility toward others (Raskin & Terry, 1988; Rhodewalt & Morf, 1998). In addition, narcissists have been found to be callous and manipulative (Jones & Figueredo, 2013) and tend to use aggression to dominate others (Park & Colvin, 2015; Seah & Ang, 2008). Accordingly, it is likely that narcissistic leaders will also show hostility and aggressiveness toward their followers and engage in abusive supervision. This assumption was already tested in prior research, and I summarize this line of research next.

Leader Narcissism and Abusive Supervision

The association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision was studied earlier but revealed inconclusive findings. In a study with leaders and followers from various organizations, Wisse and Sleebos (2016) did not find an association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision. In a similar vein, Nevicka et al. (2018) did not find a direct association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision across two studies with leaders and followers from different organizations. By contrast, Waldman et al. (2018) found a positive association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision in a sample of leaders from the military and business sectors and their followers and peers. In another study with leader-follower dyads of nurses, Whitman et al. (2013) reported a positive association between leader entitlement (one aspect of leader narcissism) and abusive supervision.

Therefore, in the present dissertation, I aimed to disentangle these mixed findings and illuminate whether leader narcissism is related to abusive supervision (as indicated by Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013) or not (as indicated by Nevicka et al., 2018; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). One reason for the inconsistent findings could be the use of different

narcissism measures, which emphasize different aspects of leader narcissism. For instance, Wisse and Sleebos (2016) used four items from the Dirty Dozen scale (Jonason & Webster, 2010). However, the Dirty Dozen scale has been criticized for its lack of specificity; thus, it does not seem to capture the unique features of narcissism (Lee et al., 2013). Furthermore, Nevicka et al. (2018) and Waldman et al. (2018) both employed the NPI and calculated total NPI scores, even though the NPI is multidimensional (e.g., Emmons, 1984; Raskin & Terry, 1988). Differences in the research findings could stem from the fact that Nevicka et al. (2018) and Waldman et al. (2018) used different versions of the NPI with different numbers of items (16 vs. 34 items, respectively). Finally, Whitman et al. (2013) applied Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, and Bushman's (2004) nine-item Psychological Entitlement Scale. Despite the fact that psychological entitlement is a core feature of narcissism (e.g., Emmons, 1984; Emmons, 1987), narcissism is a complex syndrome, covering even more aspects (Campbell et al., 2011; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001).

However, as elaborated on above, leader narcissism has both bright and dark sides (e.g., Braun, 2017; Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Campbell et al., 2011; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006), and these might not be assessed well with one-dimensional narcissism measures. Therefore, in the current dissertation, I used a two-dimensional narcissism measure, which captures the adaptive and maladaptive sides of leader narcissism separately. The Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ; Back et al., 2013) measures narcissistic admiration (reflecting narcissists' tendency to self-enhance via assertive means) and narcissistic rivalry (reflecting narcissists' tendency to self-protect via antagonistic means). Prior research has shown that narcissistic admiration covers the bright side of narcissism, whereas narcissistic rivalry covers the dark side of narcissism in interpersonal contexts (e.g., Grapsas, Brummelman, Back, & Denissen, 2019; Leckelt, Küfner, Nestler, & Back, 2015; Wurst et al., 2017). For instance, narcissistic admiration is associated with being

perceived as assertive or sociable, whereas narcissistic rivalry is associated with being perceived as untrustworthy or unlikeable (Back et al., 2013). Accordingly, the bright and dark sides of narcissistic admiration versus narcissistic rivalry can also be expected to appear in the interpersonal context of leadership in terms of different associations with abusive supervision.

In the current dissertation, I therefore differentiated between leaders' narcissistic admiration and narcissistic rivalry in all manuscripts by hypothesizing that only leaders' narcissistic rivalry (the dark side of narcissism) would be positively associated with abusive supervision (see Chapters 2 to 4). In addition, I conducted a mini meta-analysis across the results of the three manuscripts to gain meaningful insights into the strength of the association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (see Chapter 5).

Narcissistic Leaders' Internal Processes as an Explanation for Abusive Supervision

Besides examining leader narcissism as a primary antecedent of abusive supervision, I also aimed to answer the question of *why* narcissistic leaders show abusive supervision. To do so, I examined narcissistic leaders' cognitive processes that might explain the expected association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision. I focused on leaders' internal processes, as narcissism can be described as a "distinctive dynamic system of social, cognitive, and affective self-regulatory processes" (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001, p. 178) aimed at building and maintaining desirable self-views. Thus, in their dynamic self-regulatory processing model of narcissism, Morf and Rhodewalt (2001) highlighted the role of narcissists' intrapersonal processes for narcissistic self-regulation. These intrapersonal processes ultimately also influence how narcissists behave toward others (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). In the present dissertation, I therefore examined whether narcissistic leaders' cognitive processes could explain the relationship between leader narcissism and abusive supervision. In addition, the literature on human aggression has shown that personality traits (e.g., narcissism) can increase the accessibility of certain cognitions, which in turn cause aggression

(e.g., Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Indeed, earlier theorists have argued that narcissism is associated with the experience of hostile cognitions (e.g., Hansbrough & Jones, 2014; Morf & Rhodewalt, 1993).

In the following, I outline in detail the cognitive states that narcissism is linked to and how these in turn may translate into abusive supervision.

The Role of Narcissistic Leaders' Cognitions

The overarching goal of narcissists is to establish and maintain their grandiose self-views (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Thus, narcissists' cognitions continuously revolve around how to enhance their self-views and how to protect them from unfavorable evaluations.

First, to enhance their self-views, narcissists may engage in several cognitive strategies, such as attributing success internally (e.g., Farwell & Wohlwend-Lloyd, 1998; Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995), overestimating themselves in agentic aspects (e.g., Campbell et al., 2002; Gabriel, Critelli, & Ee, 1994), and demonstrating superiority over others (Morf, Weir, & Davidov, 2000). Furthermore, narcissists self-enhance by derogating others (Park & Colvin, 2015). Indeed, narcissists think of other people in negative, hostile ways and are cynically mistrustful of others (Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995). Hostile thoughts, in turn, may fuel aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Garcia, Restubog, Kiewitz, Scott, and Tang (2014) tested the latter assumption in a leadership context and found that leaders' hostile cognitions increased the likelihood of abusive supervision. In a similar vein, Hansbrough and Jones (2014) argued that narcissistic leaders possess negative implicit followership theories (i.e., they think that their followers are incompetent or insubordinate) and attribute follower performance and mistakes in negative ways (e.g., as intended to harm the leader). Consequently, narcissistic leaders may be more likely to show abusive supervision as a form of retaliation against followers who supposedly tried to harm them (Hansbrough & Jones, 2014). In sum, one reason why narcissistic leaders aggress could be that they possess hostile

and negative thoughts about their followers, which provide a justification for and make them more inclined to show abusive supervision.

Second, besides trying to enhance their self-views, narcissists also try to defend their grandiose self-views against negative evaluations (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Thus, whenever narcissists experience that their grandiose self-views are being disputed by others, they are likely to aggress, an assumption that is rooted in threatened egotism theory (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998; Baumeister et al., 1996). Narcissists are very likely to experience ego threats (i.e., perceptions of a mismatch between desired self-views and actual external feedback that challenges those self-views) as they hold inflated self-views that do not necessarily reflect their real abilities or how others see them (Baumeister et al., 1996). For instance, Judge et al. (2006) found that narcissistic leaders held positive self-views in terms of leadership, whereas others rated narcissistic leaders' leadership skills in less positive ways. In another study, narcissistic college students predicted that they would receive better final grades, but in the end, they did not receive better grades than less narcissistic students (Farwell & Wohlwend-Lloyd, 1998).

Furthermore, extant research has shown that narcissists aggress in reaction to ego threats. For instance, in a laboratory study by Bushman and Baumeister (1998), narcissistic students were most likely to aggress in reaction to negative feedback on a written essay (see also Study 9 by Campbell et al., 2004; Jones & Paulhus, 2010) or in response to social rejection (Twenge & Campbell, 2003). In an experimental vignette study with a convenience sample, narcissistic participants were most likely to aggress in reaction to an ego threat in the form of negative feedback, which was delivered in public (but not in private; Ferriday, Vartanian, & Mandel, 2011). Thus, perceived ego threats may explain the link between narcissism and aggression (Baumeister et al., 1998; Baumeister et al., 1996).

In sum, it seems that narcissism is associated with hostile cognitions toward others and the perception of ego threats, both of which may fuel aggressive responses. In the current dissertation, I therefore proposed that narcissistic leaders' cognitive processes may explain why they show abusive supervision. In Manuscript 1, I focused on narcissistic leaders' perceived self-esteem threat as an explanation for abusive supervision. In Manuscripts 2 and 3, I examined narcissistic leaders' injury initiation motives (as a form of hostile cognitions) toward their followers as an explanatory mechanism.

Follower Behavior as a Condition of Abusive Supervision

Besides studying leader narcissism and its associated cognitive processes as predictors of abusive supervision, I also aimed to enhance the understanding of the conditions under which narcissistic leaders are more likely to show abusive supervision. As leadership is an interpersonal process that results from the interplay between leaders and followers (e.g., Padilla et al., 2007; Shamir, 2007; Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014), I examined how followers might influence narcissistic leaders and the associated cognitive processes and evoke abusive supervision.

Indeed, a growing body of research has testified that followers contribute to abusive supervision (e.g., Mackey et al., 2017; Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017; Zhang & Bednall, 2016). Some researchers have based their research on victim precipitation theory (Elias, 1986; Olweus, 1978), arguing that followers may provoke abusive supervision because they either appear too vulnerable to defend themselves or because they behave in provocative ways that fuel aggressive responses in terms of abusive supervision. Yet, in the current dissertation, I aimed to extend this stream of research by studying the interactive effects between follower behavior and leader narcissism. Whereas victim precipitation theory suggests that *all* leaders tend to react aggressively in reaction to particular followers, I tried to explain why *narcissistic* leaders react aggressively in response to particular followers. More

precisely, by building on threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1998; Baumeister et al., 1996), I proposed that narcissistic leaders would respond with abusive supervision to followers who behaved in ego-threatening ways. I proposed that followers who dispute narcissistic leaders' grandiose self-views are likely to trigger cognitive processes in these leaders (i.e., perceptions of ego threat and injury initiation motives toward the follower). Such processes in turn may leave narcissistic leaders inclined to respond with aggression in the form of abusive supervision toward the focal follower. Indeed, according to threatened egotism theory, narcissists are likely to direct their aggression toward the source of ego-threat as a means of punishment, retaliation, and an opportunity to regain their status (Baumeister et al., 1996; Grapsas et al., 2019). In this vein, abusive supervision can be seen as a self-regulatory reaction of narcissistic leaders to defend themselves against followers who have threatened their grandiose self-views (see also Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001).

Prior research has supported the view that narcissistic aggression is targeted toward the perpetrator of ego threat. For instance, following an ego threat (i.e., a negative evaluation), narcissistic students were more likely to aggress against the source of the ego threat (i.e., the person from whom they received the bad evaluation) than against a different, uninvolved person (Study 2; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). Furthermore, Twenge and Campbell (2003) found that narcissistic students were likely to experience anger and to respond aggressively (i.e., by blasting an unpleasant noise) to a peer who rejected them socially (Study 3). In another experimental study, Stucke and Sporer (2002) found that narcissistic students with low self-concept clarity were likely to experience anger in reaction to negative performance feedback on an intelligence test and to react aggressively toward the source of this ego threat (by negatively evaluating the experiment [Study 1] and the experimenter [Study 2]). These findings support my assumption that narcissistic leaders will show abusive supervision toward followers who threaten their grandiose self-views.

In the current dissertation, I considered different forms of follower behaviors that vary in their potential to threaten narcissistic leaders' grandiose self-views. In Manuscript 1, I examined followers' supervisor-directed deviance. In Manuscript 2, I additionally studied followers' organization-directed and coworker-directed deviance. Finally, in Manuscript 3, I took a broader perspective and investigated narcissistic leaders' reactions to followers' counterproductive work behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance.

Outline of the Dissertation

The current dissertation includes three manuscripts that focused on the antecedents of abusive supervision. All three manuscripts examined the role of leader narcissism as a primary predictor of abusive supervision and build on the NARC (Back et al., 2013) by differentiating between leaders' narcissistic admiration and rivalry. In all three manuscripts, a direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision was proposed and tested. However, the manuscripts differed with respect to (a) the cognitive processes that were studied and (b) the respective follower behavior. Each manuscript consists of two empirical studies and can be read independently. The manuscripts are included in Chapters 2 to 4.

In Manuscript 1 (Chapter 2), besides a direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision, a moderated mediation was proposed. I hypothesized that followers' supervisor-directed deviance would strengthen an indirect effect via perceived self-esteem threat. Manuscript 1 includes a field study with leader-follower dyads (Study 1) and an experimental vignette study with leaders (Study 2).

Manuscript 2 (Chapter 3) examined the moderating role of different forms of followers' workplace deviance on the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. More precisely, I expected that the direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision would be particularly strong when followers showed organization-directed deviance compared to supervisor-directed or coworker-directed

deviance. Finally, I differentiated between two potentially underlying cognitive processes: leaders' injury initiation motives and performance promotion motives. I expected that leaders' injury initiation motives, but not their performance promotion motives, could explain why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision when experiencing organization-directed deviance. Manuscript 2 consists of an experimental vignette study with leaders (Study 1) and a study using a mixed-methods approach in which leaders' autobiographical recollections were analyzed (Study 2).

In Manuscript 3 (Chapter 4), I proposed that leaders' injury initiation motives (as an underlying cognitive process) would explain why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision. Furthermore, I considered followers' counterproductive work behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance. I expected that follower behavior would moderate the indirect positive relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision via injury initiation motives, such that the relationship would be strongest when followers show CWB, less strong when followers show OCB, and smallest when followers show TP. .

Finally, as I tested a direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision across all three manuscripts, I conducted a mini meta-analysis to summarize the study results and to achieve a more reliable estimate of the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. The mini meta-analysis is included in Chapter 5.

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CHAPTER 2: THE DARK SIDE OF LEADER NARCISSISM: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERS' NARCISSISTIC RIVALRY AND ABUSIVE SUPERVISION (MANUSCRIPT 1)

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The Dark Side of Leader Narcissism: The Relationship Between Leaders' Narcissistic Rivalry and Abusive Supervision

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Abstract

Narcissists often attain leadership positions, but at the same time do not care for others and often engage in unethical behaviors. We therefore explored the role of leader narcissism as an antecedent of abusive supervision, a form of unethical leadership. We based our study on the narcissistic admiration and rivalry concept (NARC) and proposed a direct positive effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry—the maladaptive narcissism dimension—on abusive supervision. In line with trait activation and threatened egotism theory, we also proposed a moderated mediation assuming that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry would be particularly prone to showing abusive supervision in reaction to followers' supervisor-directed deviance, as this form of follower behavior would threaten their self-esteem. We conducted a field study with leader–follower dyads (Study 1) and an experimental vignette study with leaders (Study 2). Leaders' narcissistic rivalry was positively related to abusive supervision (intentions) in both studies. This effect was independent of followers' supervisor-directed deviance and leaders' perceived self-esteem threat. We discuss our findings in light of the NARC, as well as threatened egotism theory, and offer directions for future research. Finally, we make practical recommendations for organizations.

Keywords Abusive supervision · Narcissism · Threatened egotism · Perceived self-esteem threat · Supervisor-directed deviance

Over the last two decades, research has shown that followers and organizations as a whole suffer from abusive supervision, a form of unethical leadership defined as leaders' "sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact" (Tepper, 2000). Abusive supervision includes morally unacceptable behaviors, such as lying to followers, talking badly about them, or making them responsible for the leader's own mistakes. Extant research has shown that abusive supervision is associated with a wide range of harmful outcomes in followers, such as lower levels of life satisfaction, diminished well-being, and less productivity (for overviews, see e.g., Martinko et al., 2013; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). These findings highlight that abusive supervision is a serious problem for organizations and individuals and make it all the more important to

study its antecedents (for reviews, see Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017; Zhang & Bednall, 2016).

In our study, we strive to complement prior research on the antecedents of abusive supervision and provide new theoretical insights using existing theory to identify factors associated with this specific form of destructive leadership. As abusive supervision refers to leader behaviors, investigating leader-related antecedents is key. Business ethics scholars have been particularly concerned with the role of leader narcissism as an antecedent of abusive supervision, as narcissism is linked to unethical and self-serving behaviors (e.g., Harrison et al., 2018). Narcissism is defined as "a relatively stable individual difference consisting of grandiosity, self-love and inflated self-views" (Campbell et al., 2011). It is particularly relevant in the study of leadership because narcissists are highly motivated to get ahead and often attain leadership positions (e.g., Grijalva et al., 2015). This is even more important, as narcissists are interpersonally difficult (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001), which may be reflected in the way narcissistic leaders behave toward their followers (Hansbrough & Jones, 2014).

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However, empirical findings have been ambiguous, with some studies reporting a direct association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision (e.g., Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013) and others reporting none (Nevicka et al., 2018; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). On the one hand, these inconclusive findings are problematic because they still leave open the question of whether narcissism is good or bad for organizations (e.g., Campbell et al., 2011). On the other hand, previous ambiguous results also highlight the need to theoretically rethink the role of narcissism in negative leadership. This is especially relevant in light of robust evidence connecting narcissism to leader emergence (Grijalva et al., 2015). Hence, we build our study on the narcissistic admiration and rivalry concept (NARC; Back et al., 2013) and aim to provide theoretical insights into how narcissism and abusive supervision interrelate in order to clarify previous, inconclusive findings on narcissism and abusive supervision (Nevicka et al., 2018; Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016).

Unlike prior research, which has neglected the facet structure of narcissism (Nevicka et al., 2018; Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016), the NARC differentiates between agentic and antagonistic sides of narcissism, which each have distinct social consequences (Back et al., 2013; Helfrich & Dietl, 2019). Prior research employing the NARC in an organizational setting has shown, for instance, that the agentic side of narcissism (called narcissistic admiration) is positively associated with empowerment, whereas the antagonistic side of narcissism (called narcissistic rivalry) is negatively associated with empowerment (Helfrich & Dietl, 2019). Overall, according to the NARC, the negative consequences of narcissism (i.e., aggressive, immoral, and manipulative behaviors) can be traced back to narcissistic rivalry, whereas narcissistic admiration should be unrelated to social conflict (Back et al., 2013). Therefore, we assume that only leaders' narcissistic rivalry (but not their narcissistic admiration) is positively related to abusive supervision. By building our study on the two-dimensional narcissism model of the NARC, we extend prior research on leader narcissism and abusive supervision, which has not differentiated between dimensions of narcissism.

Furthermore, from an ethics perspective, it would be one-sided to look for causes of abusive supervision only in the leader. Hence, we turned to relevant theory to derive antecedents for abusive supervision relating to the situation as, according to trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003; Tett & Guterman, 2000), traits are triggered by situational cues. In line with this reasoning, we do not expect leadership to occur in a vacuum, and consider the role of followers as situational triggers of abusive supervision (Padilla et al., 2007; Thoroughgood et al., 2018). For instance, prior research has shown that followers are likely to experience

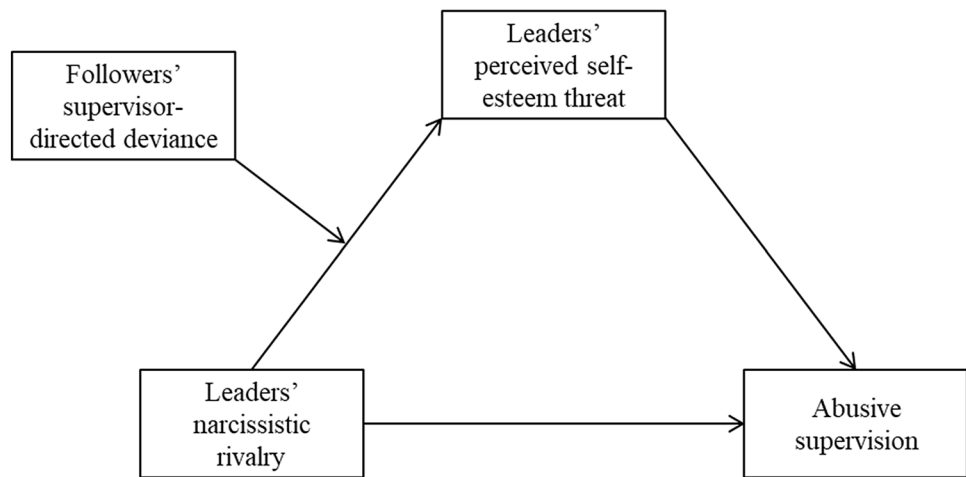
more abusive supervision when they behave in deviant ways (Mawritz et al., 2017; Simon et al., 2015), show avoidant behaviors (Simon et al., 2015), or perform poorly (Liang et al., 2016), supporting the notion that followers might trigger abusive supervision, at least in some leaders. We wondered whether narcissistic leaders would behave abusively, particularly in response to certain follower behaviors. Hence, we took an integrative approach and examined the interactive effects of leader narcissism and follower behaviors as possible antecedents of abusive supervision, attempting to examine *when* and *why* leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision.

Based on threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), we propose that followers' supervisor-directed deviance constitutes a self-esteem threat for leaders high in narcissistic rivalry. We argue that such leaders are especially likely to perceive that these followers evaluate them negatively and in a way that contradicts their grandiose self-views, thus threatening their inflated, but fragile, self-esteem. In response, we expect those leaders to show abusive supervision in order to reaffirm their superiority. In sum, we assume that followers' supervisor-directed deviance (moderator) triggers narcissistic leaders' abusive supervision via perceived self-esteem threat (mediator). We show the theoretical model of our research in Fig. 1.

Prior research on abusive supervision has relied mainly on follower ratings of abusive supervision by asking followers how often their leaders showed abusive behaviors (see Mackey et al., 2017; Tepper et al., 2017). However, it is also important to examine abusive supervision from the leaders' perspective, as self-awareness of negative leadership is an important prerequisite for leader development (Day, 2000). In the current research project, we combine both perspectives by examining follower ratings of abusive supervision in Study 1, and leader ratings of abusive supervision intentions in Study 2. By doing so, we enhance prior research in an important way by combining both follower and leader perspectives on abusive supervision.

Narcissism and Leadership

Whereas narcissists are motivated to get ahead and often emerge as leaders (e.g., Grijalva et al., 2015; Nevicka et al., 2011), they are not motivated to get along with others (Bradlee & Emmons, 1992). Furthermore, in interpersonal contexts, narcissists are not interested in, and indeed have problems building and maintaining, positive relationships with others (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001), including in the workplace (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Narcissists are selfish, put their own interests above others', derogate others (Park & Colvin, 2015), and tend to behave aggressively

Fig. 1 Proposed theoretical model

(Seah & Ang, 2008), all of which makes it likely that narcissistic leaders will show abusive supervisory behaviors (e.g., Krasikova et al., 2013; Tepper, 2007).

However, despite these theoretical assumptions, the empirical results have been ambiguous. Whereas some authors did not find a direct association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision (Nevicka et al., 2018; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016), others did (Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013). One reason for these mixed findings could be the previous use of unidimensional narcissism measures, which reflect different aspects of narcissism but do not differentiate between assertive and antagonistic aspects of narcissism. In particular, Wisse and Sleebos (2016) employed the four narcissism items from the Dirty Dozen scale (Jonason & Webster, 2010), which has been criticized for not capturing the unique features of narcissism (Lee et al., 2013). By contrast, Nevicka et al. (2018) and Waldman et al. (2018) used different short versions of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Emmons, 1984; Raskin & Hall, 1979), calculating total NPI scores that combine different dimensions of narcissism. Thus, the potential differential effects of antagonistic and agentic aspects of narcissism on abusive supervision might have cancelled each other out in these studies. Finally, Whitman et al. (2013) used Campbell et al.'s (2004) Psychological Entitlement Scale, and thus captured only one core feature of leader narcissism (i.e., leaders' psychological entitlement), while neglecting other, more antagonistic, aspects. In sum, it seems there is a potential association between leader narcissism and abusive supervision. However, it is unclear which dimensions of narcissism are relevant as previous research has used unidimensional measures combining both assertive (e.g., extraversion, self-assurance, charmingness) and antagonistic (e.g., hostility, malicious envy, aggression) aspects.

Narcissism includes both a bright (assertiveness) and a dark side (antagonism), each relating differently to leadership (Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005),

and it would seem important to employ a narcissism measure to differentiate both. Thus, we base our study on a theoretical model that explicitly takes this differentiation into account, namely, the NARC (Back et al., 2013). The NARC differentiates between agentic and antagonistic sides of narcissism, that is, narcissistic admiration and narcissistic rivalry. These two dimensions of narcissism are associated with distinct behavioral strategies (i.e., assertiveness versus antagonism) related to opposing interpersonal outcomes (e.g., social success vs social conflict, respectively). Therefore, the NARC is a potentially useful theoretical approach to clarify previously inconclusive findings on narcissism and abusive supervision as it (1) differentiates between narcissism dimensions (different from previous research treating narcissism as a unidimensional construct), and as (2) the behavioral dynamics associated with these two dimensions are related to opposing interpersonal outcomes, thus potentially revealing which aspects of narcissism are related to abusive supervision and which are not. More precisely, we argue that only the antagonistic side of narcissism (narcissistic rivalry) is associated with abusive supervision, while the agentic side (narcissistic admiration) is not. In the next section, we outline the NARC in more detail.

The Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Concept (NARC)

The NARC posits that narcissists' central goal is to build and maintain highly positive self-views, an idea that is in line with other models of narcissism (e.g., Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). However, according to Back et al. (2013), narcissists differ in the social strategies they adopt to achieve and maintain their grandiose self-views. Narcissistic admiration describes a self-enhancing interpersonal strategy associated with striving for uniqueness, grandiose fantasies, and charming behaviors. These

behavioral dynamics lead to social success (e.g., being perceived as assertive or sociable; Back et al., 2013), and consequently strengthen the narcissist's grandiose self-view. In contrast, narcissistic rivalry describes a defensive interpersonal strategy associated with striving for supremacy and devaluing others, and includes aggression. The strategy is likely to lead to social failure (e.g., being perceived as untrustworthy or unlikeable; Back et al., 2013), and consequently perpetuates the narcissist's negative views of others. Narcissistic admiration and narcissistic rivalry correlate moderately to strongly with each other (Back et al., 2013; Leckelt et al., 2015; Wurst et al., 2017), meaning that the two dimensions can co-occur, but do not have to. In sum, this two-dimensional approach describes how narcissists behave toward others and is therefore relevant for leadership contexts, which typically rely heavily on interactions between leaders and followers. As narcissistic rivalry reflects the antagonistic side of narcissism, which is supposed to lead to social conflict (Back et al., 2013), we argue that leaders' narcissistic rivalry will be related to abusive supervision. In contrast, narcissistic admiration reflects the agentic side of narcissism, entailing charismatic, charming behavior. The latter is related to popularity and social status and is not supposed to be associated with dysfunctional interpersonal orientation and relationship outcomes (Back et al., 2013). Thus, we assume that this narcissism dimension plays a minor role in [abusive supervision](#). In the next section, we outline our argument in detail and summarize the relevant research.

Leaders' Narcissistic Rivalry and Abusive Supervision

According to the NARC, only narcissistic rivalry (but not narcissistic admiration) is related to problematic behaviors and negative interpersonal outcomes. For instance, narcissistic rivalry (but not narcissistic admiration) has consistently negative associations with empathy, trust, forgiveness, and gratitude (Back et al., 2013). Furthermore, in romantic relationships, only narcissistic rivalry (but not narcissistic admiration) is related to lower relationship quality and a higher occurrence of conflict (Wurst et al., 2017). Additionally, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry (but not those high in narcissistic admiration) show arrogant and aggressive behaviors and are perceived as untrustworthy, which results in a decrease in popularity over time (Leckelt et al., 2015). In sum, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry have little interest in others, are unable to maintain close relationships, and are likely to engage in aggressive behaviors toward others. Accordingly, we expect that the behavioral dynamics associated with narcissistic rivalry in interpersonal contexts (e.g., conflicts or aggressiveness; Leckelt et al., 2015; Wurst et al., 2017) will also be relevant for leadership contexts.

More precisely, we propose that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry try to protect their grandiose self-views by behaving in hostile ways and by putting others down (Back et al., 2013). We argue that it is likely that the propensity of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry to aggress will translate into aggression against their followers because followers are relatively safe targets. Due to the power imbalance, followers will probably not retaliate. In addition, research on the characteristic intra- and interpersonal dynamics of the antagonistic narcissism dimension suggests that individuals with high narcissistic rivalry maintain and defend their self-view by derogating and devaluing others (Back et al., 2013). Their belief in their own superiority is inextricably linked to the belief in others' inferiority and justifies the mistreatment of others (Grapsas et al., 2019). Thus, we assume that individuals high in narcissistic rivalry see their abusive behavior as justified. By showing abusive supervision, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry can act out their aggressive tendencies. A few examples of abusive supervision can help illustrate this process. For instance, by putting followers down and ridiculing them, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry may feel superior and thus strengthen their own status. Furthermore, by not giving followers credit for their work and by reminding them of past mistakes, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry can make their followers feel small and prevent them from growing professionally. Also, blaming followers for the leader's own mistakes can be seen as the self-protective strategy of a leader high in narcissistic rivalry, and this can help the leader defend their grandiose self-views. In sum, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry might use abusive supervision as a means to protect their superior status as a leader. Therefore, we propose:

Hypothesis 1 Leaders' narcissistic rivalry will be positively associated with abusive supervision.

Followers' Supervisor-Directed Deviance and Perceived Self-Esteem Threat

Beyond a general predisposition to behave aggressively and show abusive supervision, we wondered *when* and *why* leaders high in narcissistic rivalry would show abusive supervision. According to the NARC, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry are particularly likely to aggress when their grandiose, but fragile self-views are threatened (Back et al., 2013). This assumption is rooted both in trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003; Tett & Guterman, 2000) and threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998).

Trait activation theory takes an interactionist approach and highlights the role of trait-relevant situational cues, which trigger the expression of traits (Tett & Burnett, 2003;

Tett & Guterman, 2000). This means that the behavioral expression of a trait (i.e., leaders' narcissistic rivalry) depends at least in part on the situational circumstances. According to threatened egotism theory, the most important trait-relevant cue that might explain aggressive behavior in narcissists is "threatened egotism, particularly when it consists of favorable self-appraisals that may be inflated or ill-founded and that are confronted with an external evaluation that disputes them" (Baumeister et al., 1996). Thus, ego threats can be seen as threats to self-esteem (e.g., Stucke & Sporer, 2002; Vohs & Heatherton, 2001). When narcissists have the impression that their inflated self-views are not validated, or are challenged by others, their self-esteem is threatened, and they are likely to react to that threat with aggression (e.g., Bushman & Baumeister, 1998).

According to the NARC, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry are particularly attentive to cues that signal social failure (Back et al., 2013) or loss in status (Grapsas et al., 2019), and their self-esteem is fragile and highly contingent on external validation (Geukes et al., 2017). Consequently, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry are likely to perceive a mismatch between their own inflated self-esteem and any external evaluations of the self (e.g., indicated by cues signaling social failure or loss in status) and feel threatened by this mismatch. Whenever individuals high in narcissistic rivalry perceive self-esteem threats, their self-protection strategy is activated and triggers aggressive responses (Back et al., 2013). In support of this assumption, Back et al. (2013) found that individuals high in narcissistic rivalry engage in revenge-oriented behaviors in reaction to relationship transgressions.

A typical example of follower behavior that may threaten the grandiose self-esteem of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry is supervisor-directed deviance (Simon et al., 2015), as it consists of undesirable behaviors aimed at harming the leader (Bennett & Robinson, 2003), and may humiliate the leader. It encompasses behaviors such as making fun of, being rude toward, or making negative comments about the leader (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). We assume that supervisor-directed deviance challenges the grandiose, but fragile self-esteem of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, as it undermines their status, provoking the impression that they are unable to control the follower, and signals that the follower does not respect them. We expect that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will respond with abusive supervision toward the source of the self-esteem threat (i.e., the follower who showed supervisor-directed deviance) in order to punish the follower, re-establish leader status, and ultimately restore their grandiose self-views. They respond in such a way because they see their behavior as justified (Back et al., 2013; Baumeister et al., 1996; Grapsas et al., 2019). For instance, by putting down their followers, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will aim to re-establish the impression

that they are powerful and superior to their followers. We thus expect that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will react with abusive supervision in response to perceived self-esteem threats induced by followers who showed supervisor-directed deviance. In sum, we propose:

Hypothesis 2 Supervisor-directed deviance will moderate the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision via perceived self-esteem threat. The indirect effect will be stronger when supervisor-directed deviance is high than when it is low.

Study 1

In order to examine the hypothesized relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision in a field setting, we conducted an online study with leader–follower dyads.

Method

Sample and Procedure

Study participants were recruited via personal and professional contacts, online platforms and the first author's university's press department and website. In the course of the survey, participants were asked to indicate the e-mail address of either their direct leader or one of their followers. These dyadic partners were then automatically invited to take part in the survey. We stressed anonymity and confidential treatment of the data in order to minimize concerns about the dyadic partners having insight into the data. Overall, 164 leaders and 192 followers completed the questionnaire. After matching the leaders and followers, the final sample consisted of 123 dyads because some participants could not be matched. A total of 35% of the leaders and 61% of the followers were women. Leaders were on average 46.84 years old ($SD = 11.02$) and followers were 38.32 years old ($SD = 13.46$). Leaders and followers had worked together for 4.91 years ($SD = 5.83$) on average. Leaders and followers came from diverse industries and most often worked in public administration, education, health, and social services (26.8%); trade, traffic, storage, and the catering industry (15.4%); and the service sector (13%).

Measures

Narcissistic Rivalry

We measured leaders' narcissistic rivalry with the respective nine items of the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ; Back et al., 2013). Leaders indicated

Table 1 Means, standard deviations, correlations, and internal consistency estimates

Variable	$M_{\text{Study 1}}/M_{\text{Study 2}}$	$SD_{\text{Study 1}}/SD_{\text{Study 2}}$	1	2	3	4	5
1. Narcissistic rivalry	1.91/1.99	0.52/0.85	(0.78/0.88/)	0.24***	0.40***	0.07	0.40***
2. Perceived self-esteem threat	2.18/2.55	0.61/1.11	0.10	(0.75/0.89)	0.48***	0.31***	0.00
3. Abusive supervision	1.27/1.62	0.31/0.74	0.20*	0.16	(0.81/0.95)	0.35***	0.14*
4. Supervisor-directed deviance ^a	1.11/1.96	0.26/0.80	0.19*	0.26**	0.37***	(0.75/-)	0.10
5. Narcissistic admiration	3.11/3.30	0.79/0.93	0.30**	- 0.38***	- 0.10	- 0.00	(0.87/0.86)

$N=123$ (for Study 1) and $N=313$ (for Study 2). Alpha coefficients are given in parentheses along the diagonal with Study 1 appearing first and Study 2 appearing second. Correlations from Study 1 appear below the diagonal, and correlations from Study 2 appear above the diagonal

^aStudy 2: 1 = low supervisor-directed deviance, 2 = medium/high supervisor-directed deviance

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

how much they agreed with the respective items on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = *do not agree at all*, 6 = *agree completely*). A sample item is “Most people won’t achieve anything”. Cronbach’s alpha was 0.78.

Supervisor-Directed Deviance

Supervisor-directed deviance was measured with five items from Bennett and Robinson (2000). A sample item is “My follower says something hurtful to me” (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.75$). Leaders were asked to think about their matched follower and indicate on a 5-point Likert scale how frequently the respective follower exhibited the described behaviors (1 = *never* to 5 = *always*).

Perceived Self-Esteem Threat

In line with previous research (Leary et al., 2009; Stucke & Sporer, 2002), we measured perceived self-esteem threat with a German version of Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale (RSE; von Collani & Herzberg, 2003). In general, the RSE assesses a person’s self-esteem and thus a person’s view of themselves. We employed the state version of the RSE to examine participants’ self-esteem in reaction to past interactions with their followers assuming that their self-esteem would be threatened when followers behaved in ways that challenge the leaders’ grandiose self-views (i.e., when they display supervisor-directed deviance). Prior research has shown that state self-esteem is sensitive to threatening events such as status threats (Mahadevan et al., 2016; Rudolph et al., 2020). When calculating the scale mean, we inverted the original items so that high values indicated high perceived self-esteem threat and low values indicated low perceived self-esteem threat. The items were put into the appropriate context by asking leaders to think about past interactions with their matched follower and indicate how often this follower elicited the described thoughts or feelings. A sample item is “I felt useless” (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.75$). Participants indicated their agreement with the 10 items on

a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*almost always*).

Abusive Supervision

We measured abusive supervision using the 15 items of the German version of Tepper’s (2000) abusive supervision scale (Schilling & May, 2015). Followers indicated how often their leader showed the respective abusive behaviors (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.81$). A sample item is “My leader ridicules me”. We used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*).

Control Variable

As narcissistic rivalry and admiration are moderately correlated (Back et al., 2013) and in line with prior research (e.g., Wurst et al., 2017), we controlled for leaders’ narcissistic admiration in order to make sure that effects could be traced back to the maladaptive dimension of narcissism only. We measured narcissistic admiration with the nine items from the NARQ (Back et al., 2013; Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.87$). Participants indicated their agreement with items such as “Being a very special person gives me a lot of strength” on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = *do not agree at all*, 6 = *agree completely*). We additionally ran all analyses without narcissistic admiration as a control variable. The results can be found in Online Appendix A.

Results

We present the means, standard deviations, correlations, and internal consistency estimates for the study variables in Table 1. To test Hypothesis 1, we conducted a linear regression analysis examining followers’ ratings of abusive supervision as the outcome, leaders’ narcissistic rivalry as the predictor, and leaders’ narcissistic admiration as the covariate. Leaders’ narcissistic rivalry was significantly and

Table 2 Results multiple regression analyses (Study 1)

Variable	Abusive supervision						Perceived self-esteem threat		
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic admiration	-0.07	0.04	-.18	-0.06	0.04	-1.43	-0.34	0.06	-5.20***
Narcissistic rivalry	0.15	0.06	.26*	0.14	0.06	2.49*	-0.43	0.35	-1.21
Supervisor-directed deviance							-0.84	0.74	-1.14
Narcissistic rivalry × supervisor-directed deviance							0.58	0.30	1.92
Perceived self-esteem threat				0.04	0.05	0.78			
<i>R</i> ²	0.07			0.07*			0.26***		

N = 123

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

positively associated with follower-reported abusive supervision ($\beta = 0.26$, $SE = 0.06$, $p = 0.007$), thus providing support for Hypothesis 1. In contrast, leaders' narcissistic admiration was unrelated to follower-reported abusive supervision ($\beta = -0.18$, $SE = 0.04$, $p = 0.052$). Results are presented in Table 2 (see model 1). Without leaders' narcissistic admiration as a covariate, we also found a direct positive association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and followers' reported abusive supervision ($\beta = 0.20$, $SE = 0.05$, $p = 0.026$; see Online Appendix A), which renders further support for Hypothesis 1.

To test the moderated mediation posited in Hypothesis 2, we used the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2018). The results revealed that followers' supervisor-directed deviance did not moderate the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision via perceived self-esteem threat (index of moderated mediation: $B = 0.02$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI [-0.07, 0.12]). This means that leaders' narcissistic rivalry was unrelated to perceived self-esteem threat, irrespective of followers' supervisor-directed deviance, and perceived self-esteem threat was unrelated to followers' ratings of abusive supervision. The direct effect from leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision was still evident here ($B = 0.14$, $SE = 0.06$, $p = 0.014$). Leaders' narcissistic admiration was unrelated to follower-rated abusive supervision ($B = -0.06$, $SE = 0.04$, $p = 0.155$) and was negatively related to perceived self-esteem threat ($B = -0.34$, $SE = 0.06$, $p < 0.001$). This model explained 7.5% of the variance in abusive supervision ratings ($p < 0.05$). The results are presented in Table 2 (see models 2 and 3). In all, we could not find support for Hypothesis 2. The results without leaders' narcissistic admiration as control variable were similar: the index of moderated mediation was also insignificant ($B = 0.04$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI [-0.03, 0.16]; see also Online Appendix A).

A closer look at the results reveals that the direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on perceived self-esteem threat

was not significant in the low and medium values of the moderator, but was significant in the high value of the moderator ($B = 0.27$, $SE = 0.10$; $p = 0.009$). The indirect effects, however, were not significant in any value of the moderator because perceived self-esteem threat did not predict abusive supervision. Importantly, as the variance of supervisor-directed deviance was extremely low, both the low and medium values of the moderator were set at 1.00 by the PROCESS macro, and the "high" value was set at 1.20. Thus, these results have to be interpreted cautiously as being restricted by a potential floor effect and will be addressed in the discussion section. Furthermore, we decided to use an experiment in Study 2, as this allowed us to systematically manipulate followers' supervisor-directed deviance.

Study 2

In Study 2, we tested all hypotheses using experimental vignettes, which allowed us to assess leaders' perceptions of self-esteem threat, together with their intentions regarding abusive supervision in response to followers' supervisor-directed deviance (which was systematically manipulated in the experimental vignettes). We chose this methodological approach, as we were interested in the leaders' internal processes (i.e., perceived self-esteem threats) and their own intent to show abusive supervision. Experimental vignettes offer the possibility of capturing short-term dynamics and direct reactions. In addition, we used behavioral intention as the most proximate predictor of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991).

Method

Sample and Procedure

Participants were recruited via a German panel service (respondi) and were paid €1.25 for their participation.

Eligible participants had to be currently employed in a leadership position, work at least 20 h per week, and have at least three months of work experience. The study was conducted online and consisted of two measurement points. A total of 331 participants took part in the study.¹ We excluded nine participants, who stated that they did not consider the described vignettes credible at all, or who could not imagine themselves in the situation described in the experimental vignette. Furthermore, we excluded six participants who reported substantially different ages at the two measurement points, and three participants who had participated twice at T2. Our final sample consisted of 313 participants (low supervisor-directed deviance condition: $N=107$; medium supervisor-directed deviance condition: $N=112$; and high supervisor-directed deviance condition: $N=94$). Participants had a mean age of 47.66 ($SD=9.9$), and 31% were women. On average, participants worked 42 h per week ($SD=8.5$); 14.7% held a low, 45.4% a medium, and 39.9% a high leadership position. Participants worked in diverse industries, most often in the service sector (12.8%), manufacturing sector (11.2%), and public administration (9.9%).

In order to reduce method bias, we separated the measurements in time (Podsakoff et al., 2012). At the first measurement point, we assessed our independent variable (narcissistic rivalry) and our control variable (narcissistic admiration), and collected sociodemographic information. At the second measurement point (one week later), participants read one of three experimental vignettes in which we manipulated supervisor-directed deviance. Participants were randomly assigned to read either a low, medium, or high supervisor-directed deviance vignette. Subsequently, participants indicated how threatened they felt by the followers' behavior (perceived self-esteem threat, mediator) and their abusive supervision intentions (dependent variable).

Development and Content of Experimental Vignettes

Following recommendations by Lapierre et al. (2009), we developed three experimental vignettes that described low, medium, and high supervisor-directed deviance, respectively. In line with best practice recommendations (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014; Lapierre et al., 2009), we chose three levels of supervisor-directed deviance in an attempt to represent various interactions in the workplace where supervisor-directed deviance can also vary. By doing so, we not only

tested whether it makes a difference if a follower shows low or high supervisor-directed deviance, but also what happens in-between (when a follower shows a medium level of supervisor-directed deviance). Thus, distinguishing between three levels of supervisor-directed deviance is a more conservative test of our hypothesis than when comparing only low and high conditions.

Each experimental vignette included an introduction followed by a specific description of a follower's supervisor-directed deviant behavior. First, all participants were instructed to put themselves in the role of a leader and read the scenarios carefully. Next, all participants received the same background information so that they could embed their responses contextually (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). They were told to imagine that they were working for a software company and were asked to read information about the company and their job duties. In the vignettes, participants' duties were described as consisting of delegating work to followers, monitoring the followers' work progress, and evaluating the followers' performance. Participants were then told that they had to evaluate the work and interpersonal behavior of a follower named Alex while he worked on a specific project. The next paragraph in the vignette described Alex's behavior. His interpersonal behavior varied across the conditions. We based the behaviors and wording of our experimental vignettes on existing scales and studies that had previously examined workplace deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Spector & Fox, 2005; Spector et al., 2006). Consequently, in the low supervisor-directed deviance condition, Alex was described as a follower who never ridiculed or verbally abused his leader; in the medium supervisor-directed deviance condition, he sometimes showed these behaviors; and in the high supervisor-directed deviance condition, he often showed these behaviors toward his leader. Afterwards, we measured our focal variables, manipulation check items, and, in addition, we asked participants how credible they found the experimental vignettes, and whether or not they could imagine themselves in the situation. The full experimental vignettes can be found in Online Appendix H.

Measures

Narcissistic Rivalry

We measured leaders' narcissistic rivalry using the same measure as in Study 1 (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.88$).

Perceived Self-Esteem Threat

We used the same assessment of perceived self-esteem threat as in Study 1. We adapted the original instructions of the RSE scale (von Collani & Herzberg, 2003) to fit the experimental vignettes (i.e., "Please think again about the scenario

¹ At T1, 388 participants took part in the online survey. Of these, 364 participants were invited to take part in the second online survey at T2. The other 24 participants were not invited to participate at T2 due to quality issues. As the acquisition of participants was stopped manually, we acquired slightly more participants than originally intended (331 total participants instead of the targeted number of 300 participants at T2).

you just read and put yourself in the role of Alex's leader. How did you feel on the basis of Alex's behavior?"). Participants indicated their agreement with the items (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.89$) on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*do not agree at all*) to 6 (*agree completely*).

Abusive Supervision Intentions

We measured abusive supervision intentions using the 15 items of the German version of Tepper's (2000) abusive supervision scale (Schilling & May, 2015). We asked participants how likely the leaders would be to show the indicated abusive supervisory behaviors in response to the follower's behaviors described in the vignettes. Therefore, participants' responses reflected specific behavioral intention indicators and not general behavioral tendencies. A sample item was "I would ridicule Alex" (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.95$). Participants indicated their agreement with these items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very unlikely*) to 5 (*very likely*).

Manipulation Check

After reading the experimental vignettes and before answering the scales for measuring perceived self-esteem threat and abusive supervision intentions, participants responded to two items to rate the follower's supervisor-directed deviance. We used items from Bennett and Robinson (2001, 2005), which reflected the content of our experimental vignettes ("Alex acted rudely toward you", "Alex said something hurtful to you").

Control Variable

We controlled for leaders' narcissistic admiration (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.86$) using the same measure as in Study 1 and using leader ratings of their own narcissistic admiration. Additionally, we ran all analyses without narcissistic admiration as control variable. The results can be found in Online Appendix A.

Results

Before testing our hypotheses, we conducted manipulation checks to see if our experimental manipulation of followers' supervisor-directed deviance had worked. As expected, ratings of supervisor-directed deviance differed between the three conditions (low supervisor-directed deviance: $M = 1.33$, $SD = 0.65$; medium supervisor-directed deviance: $M = 3.97$, $SD = 1.20$; high supervisor-directed deviance: $M = 4.09$, $SD = 1.13$), $F(2, 310) = 244.73$, $p < 0.001$. Post hoc Bonferroni tests revealed that the participants in the low supervisor-directed deviance condition rated the

follower's behavior as significantly less deviant than in the medium ($p < 0.001$) and high ($p < 0.001$) supervisor-directed conditions. Ratings of supervisor-directed deviance did not differ significantly between the medium and high supervisor-directed deviance groups ($p = 1.00$). Therefore, we decided to group the medium and high supervisor-directed deviance conditions together and test whether the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via perceived self-esteem threat differed between the low and medium/high group. Nevertheless, we also report results where we differentiated between the three groups as originally intended (see Online Appendix B).

We present the means, standard deviations, correlations, and internal consistency estimates for the study variables in Table 1. We tested Hypothesis 1 with a linear regression analysis, with leaders' narcissistic rivalry as the predictor and leaders' narcissistic admiration as a covariate. Supporting Hypothesis 1, leaders' narcissistic rivalry positively predicted abusive supervision intentions ($\beta = 0.41$, $SE = 0.05$, $p < 0.001$). In contrast, leaders' narcissistic admiration was unrelated to abusive supervision intentions ($\beta = -0.02$, $SE = 0.05$, $p = 0.760$). Results are presented in Table 3 (see model 1). Without leaders' narcissistic admiration as covariate, we also found a direct positive association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions ($\beta = 0.40$, $SE = 0.05$, $p < 0.001$; see Online Appendix A), which further supports Hypothesis 1.

To test Hypothesis 2, we also used the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2018). There was no conditional indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions (index of moderated mediation: $B = 0.03$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI [-0.04, 10]). However, the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via perceived self-esteem threat was significant in both experimental conditions (low supervisor-directed deviance: $B = 0.07$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [0.02, 13]; medium/high supervisor-directed deviance: $B = 0.10$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [0.05, 16]). The direct effect from leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions was still evident here ($B = 0.25$, $SE = 0.05$, $p < 0.001$). Leaders' narcissistic admiration was unrelated to abusive supervision intentions ($B = 0.02$, $SE = 0.04$, $p = 0.602$). In all, these results did not support Hypothesis 2. This model explained 16% of the variance in abusive supervision intention ratings ($p < 0.001$). Table 3 presents the results (see models 2 and 3). In Online Appendix A, we report our results without leaders' narcissistic admiration as control variable. Again, we did not find support for a conditional indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions (index of moderation: $B = 0.02$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI [-0.04, 0.10]). Furthermore, in Online Appendix B, we report our results with a three-level moderator (distinguishing between low, medium, and high supervisor-directed deviance). Again, our

Table 3 Results multiple regression analyses (Study 2)

Variable	Abusive supervision intentions						Perceived self-esteem threat		
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic admiration	− 0.01	0.05	− 0.31	0.02	0.04	0.52	− 0.14	0.07	− 2.08*
Narcissistic rivalry	0.35	0.05	7.18***	0.25	0.05	5.50***	0.17	0.28	0.62
Condition ^a							0.52	0.32	1.63
Narcissistic rivalry × condition							0.10	0.15	0.62
Perceived self-esteem threat				0.27	0.03	8.31***			
<i>R</i> ²		0.16***			0.31***			0.16***	

N = 313

^aCondition = Experimental condition (1 = low supervisor-directed deviance, 2 = medium/high supervisor-directed deviance)

p* < 0.05; *p* < 0.01; ****p* < 0.001

results remained the same. There was no conditional indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions when using the three-level moderator (index of moderated mediation: $B = 0.00$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [− 0.05, 0.06]), which further supports that Hypothesis 2 must be rejected.

Post Hoc Analyses

We conducted several additional analyses following the reviewers' suggestions. The results of these analyses can be found in Appendix.

Analyses with Different Operationalization of Self-Esteem Threat (Online Appendix C)

First, we used a second operationalization of perceived self-esteem threat to examine whether our results replicated with a different operationalization. Using our alternative perceived self-esteem threat operationalization via three bipolar items, we replicated our results in both studies. We found no conditional indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision (intentions) in Study 1 (index of moderation: $B = 0.00$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [− 0.08, 0.06]) and Study 2 (index of moderation: $B = - 0.00$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [− 0.05, 0.05]).

Analyses with Overall Narcissism Score (Online Appendix D)

We additionally tested Hypothesis 1 with an overall narcissism score. We used the overall narcissism score as predictor and follower-reported abusive supervision (in Study 1) and abusive supervision intentions (in Study 2) as outcome. Our results revealed a non-significant

association between the overall narcissism score and the follower-reported abusive supervision in Study 1 ($\beta = 0.01$, $SE = 0.05$, $p = 0.807$), and a significant positive association between the overall narcissism score and the abusive supervision intentions in Study 2 ($\beta = 0.32$, $SE = 0.05$, $p < 0.001$).

Simple Mediation Analysis (Online Appendix E)

Furthermore, we conducted a simple mediation analysis with leaders' narcissistic rivalry as predictor, abusive supervision (intentions) as outcome, perceived self-esteem threat as mediator, and leaders' narcissistic admiration and condition as covariates. Results of this analysis revealed a non-significant indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision via perceived self-esteem threat in Study 1 ($\beta = 0.01$, $SE = 0.02$, 95% CI [− 0.02, 0.06]) and a significant indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions in Study 2 ($\beta = 0.08$, $SE = 0.02$, 95% CI [0.04, 0.13]).

Simple Moderation Analysis (Online Appendix F)

We also tested a simple moderation analysis, with leaders' narcissistic rivalry as predictor, followers' supervisor-directed deviance as moderator, leaders' abusive supervision (intentions) as outcome, and leaders' narcissistic admiration as covariate. For both studies, results revealed that the interaction between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and supervisor-directed deviance was not significant in either Study 1 ($\beta = 0.24$, $SE = 0.16$, $p = 0.15$) or Study 2 ($\beta = 0.18$, $SE = 0.04$, $p = 0.055$).

Leaders' Narcissistic Admiration as Predictor (Online Appendix G)

Additionally, we ran our analyses with leaders' narcissistic admiration as predictor to examine whether there is a conditional indirect effect with leaders' narcissistic admiration as predictor, perceived self-esteem threat as mediator, followers' supervisor-directed deviance as moderator, and abusive supervision (intentions) as outcome. We conducted those analyses with leaders' narcissistic rivalry as control variable. There was no conditional indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic admiration on abusive supervision (intentions) via perceived self-esteem threat moderated by followers' supervisor-directed deviance in Study 1 (index of moderation: $B = -0.01$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [-0.09, 0.04]) and Study 2 (index of moderation: $B = 0.05$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI [-0.02, 0.12]).

Discussion

In our study, we strove to provide new insights on narcissism and abusive supervision to the literature. More precisely, we applied the NARC (Back et al., 2013), trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003; Tett & Guterman, 2000), and threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998) to a leadership context and examined factors connected to abusive supervision in order to better understand the antecedents of abusive supervision.

Building on the NARC, we proposed and found that only leaders' narcissistic rivalry—the antagonistic dimension of narcissism—is consistently directly and positively associated with abusive supervision, while leaders' narcissistic admiration—the agentic dimension of narcissism—is not consistently related to abusive supervision (intentions), supporting the view that applying a differentiated model of narcissism to leadership is fruitful. Furthermore, building on and extending trait activation theory and threatened egotism theory, we proposed a moderated indirect effect, assuming that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry would perceive self-esteem threats in reaction to followers' supervisor-directed deviance, which in turn would lead to abusive supervision. However, while we found at least in part an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision (intentions) via perceived self-esteem threats, this effect was not moderated by followers' supervisor-directed deviance. Thus our studies only partially supported the notion of threatened egotism theory as the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions was (partly) mediated by ego threat, but not triggered by follower behavior (also contradicting trait activation theory).

A methodological advantage of our research is that we conducted two studies with different methodological

approaches (a field study and an experimental vignette study), which complement each other. By doing so, we could test our assumptions in a real work context, but also in an experimental context in which we manipulated our moderator variable systematically. In sum, our results show that leaders' narcissistic rivalry plays a pivotal role in abusive supervision, whereas follower behaviors (i.e., followers' supervisor-directed deviance) and leaders' internal processes (i.e., perceived self-esteem threats) seem to be less important to abusive supervision.

Theoretical Implications

First, we advanced the literature on leader narcissism as an antecedent of abusive supervision. We were particularly interested in leader narcissism as a precursor of abusive supervision because narcissists are likely to attain leadership positions (Grijalva et al., 2015). At the same time, they are likely to have trouble maintaining positive relationships and often behave in derogatory (Park & Colvin, 2015) or aggressive ways (Seah & Ang, 2008).

Yet interestingly, prior research on leader narcissism as an antecedent of abusive supervision has remained inconclusive and has revealed mixed results (Nevecka et al., 2018; Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). These might be due to the use of different one-dimensional narcissism measures that consider narcissism as one global construct, or focus only on specific aspects, such as entitlement. It has been argued that narcissism is a multidimensional construct with agentic and antagonistic sides (e.g., Back et al., 2013), and that differentiating between these two sides can help identify their specific linkages with organizational outcomes (e.g., Helfrich & Dietl, 2019). We thus extended prior research using the NARC, which provides a more differentiated view on narcissism and distinguishes between the antagonistic (i.e., narcissistic rivalry) and agentic (i.e., narcissistic admiration) dimensions of narcissism, to derive theoretical assumptions about different dimensions of narcissism.

In line with theory, we found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry, but not their narcissistic admiration, was consistently positively associated with follower ratings of abusive supervision (Study 1), as well as leaders' abusive supervision intentions (Study 2). This shows that it is important to differentiate between the antagonistic and the agentic side of leader narcissism in abusive supervision research and that this differentiation can help clarify previous inconclusive findings which might be due to treating narcissism as a one-dimensional construct. Apparently, at work, narcissistic rivalry, as the antagonistic form of narcissism and a hostile self-protective strategy, leads to abusive supervision (intentions). Leaders high in narcissistic rivalry act out their hostile tendencies and strive for supremacy by putting their

followers down. In contrast, the agentic side of leader narcissism, leaders' narcissistic admiration, is not consistently positively associated with abusive supervision (intentions). Interestingly, we found those effects both when abusive supervision was rated by followers (Study 1) and when it was rated by leaders (Study 2). Thus, we complemented prior research—which has mainly studied abusive supervision from the followers' perspective (Mackey et al., 2017; Tepper et al., 2017)—by showing that some leaders (i.e., those high in narcissistic rivalry) also state explicitly that they would behave abusively toward their followers. By doing so, we can show that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is positively associated with self-views, as well as other-ratings of abusive supervision, thus further extending prior research to include self- and other views of abusive supervision.

Second, on the basis of trait activation theory and threatened egotism theory, we aimed to explain *why* and *when* leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision. In particular, based on threatened egotism theory, we expected that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry would perceive self-esteem threats in response to followers' supervisor-directed deviance, and that these perceived self-esteem threats would lead to abusive supervision (intentions). Contrary to our expectations, we did not find an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via perceived self-esteem threats that was contingent on followers' deviant behavior in both studies. That is, follower deviance did not seem to influence leaders' tendency to show abusive supervision as a response to their egos being threatened.

A closer look at the results shows that in Study 1, leaders' narcissistic rivalry predicted self-esteem threats when supervisor-directed deviance was high. However, "high" in our case meant values only slightly above the scale endpoint, as deviance was low overall. Furthermore, in Study 2, the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via perceived self-esteem threat was significant in all experimental conditions, but the interaction between narcissistic rivalry and condition was not significant. That is, narcissistic rivalry and supervisor-directed deviance predicted perceived ego threats independently, but they did not interact. It seems that sensitivity to self-esteem threats in leaders who are high in narcissistic rivalry (Back et al., 2013; Baumeister et al., 1996; Geukes et al., 2017) is so strong that it overshadows variations in follower behavior. This reasoning is also in line with assumptions that individuals high in narcissistic rivalry generally have negative thoughts about others (Back et al., 2013), and that narcissists generally hold negative implicit beliefs about followers (Hansbrough & Jones, 2014). Thus, it seems that situational factors (e.g., follower behavior) are less important, and that the trait itself (i.e., narcissistic rivalry) can explain best why some leaders display abusive supervision and others not.

This somewhat contradicts the threatened egotism theory and trait activation theory in so far as here the situational trigger (follower behavior) was not relevant to the supervisor's behavior. In sum, we conclude that in the case of leaders who are high in narcissistic rivalry, whether or not their followers show supervisor-directed deviance is of relatively little importance as these leaders are highly prone to treating others badly, irrespective of how others behave. That is, they need little or nothing to trigger their negative behavior.

Practical Implications

Our findings also have notable implications for organizations. Given the negative outcomes of abusive supervision (Schyns & Schilling, 2013), it is important to take measures to prevent such behavior. As our study shows that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry are particularly likely to engage in abusive supervision, organizations should be cautious when hiring or promoting such leaders. In addition, organizations could train leaders high in narcissistic rivalry to display more supportive leader behaviors (e.g., Gonzalez-Morales et al., 2018), or provide coaching to help them develop their leadership skills (Kets de Vries, 2014). As narcissists seldom see reasons to change their destructive behavior, organizations should focus on self-relevant reasons for doing so (e.g., implications for performance ratings) to incentivize narcissistic leaders to take their followers' well-being into account. Leaders high in narcissistic rivalry should be made aware that healthy and productive followers reflect better on them. This should help them understand that abusive supervision does not contribute to their desired grandiose self-view. Instead, for selfish reasons, they should refrain from displaying abusive supervision and commit to ethical leadership practices. In addition, as leaders high in narcissistic rivalry strive for status (Grapsas et al., 2019), they should be made aware that productive and healthy followers can also be a means for boosting their status in organizations that uphold communal values and do not tolerate aggression.

Furthermore, we found, at least in one study that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry are prone to perceiving self-esteem threats, and that perceived self-esteem threats can translate into abusive supervision intentions (see Study 2). Therefore, firms should develop interventions aiming to mitigate perceived self-esteem threats. For instance, Grapsas et al. (2019) proposed that individuals should be trained to be less attentive to cues that hinder the pursuit of status. Accordingly, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry could be trained to focus less on followers' negative evaluations that might evoke perceptions of self-esteem threat. Instead, they should learn to direct their attention to their followers' positive aspects. In addition, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry could be taught to critically reflect on their followers' actual negative evaluations and reappraise them as learning

experiences and opportunities to improve their status (Grapsas et al., 2019).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Whereas a strength of this research is that we conducted two studies with different research methodologies, there are also some limitations. In Study 1, we enhanced the external generalizability of our findings by examining actual leader–follower dyads in the workplace. One drawback of Study 1 is that we assessed our focal variables cross-sectionally, limiting the causal conclusions that can be drawn from these findings. Therefore, future longitudinal field studies are needed to show the process in the field. Another interesting approach would be to conduct diary studies using event sampling methods (Lopes et al., 2004; Ohly et al., 2010). These could capture the short-term dynamics of abusive supervision as a direct reaction to single episodes of supervisor-directed deviance and self-esteem threat.

Finally, as participation in our study was voluntary, we cannot rule out the possibility of self-selection bias. It is possible that leader–follower dyads with positive relationships were more likely than others to participate in our study. Indeed, the variance of followers' supervisor-directed deviance was relatively low across the whole sample with a "high" value set at 1.20. This indicates that there was a floor effect, and in particular, that followers who did not behave in deviant ways participated in our study. For future research, we would recommend selecting participants differently to ensure more variance in followers' supervisor-directed deviance. For instance, HR departments could invite random leader–follower dyads to participate in research studies to ensure more variance in follower behaviors.

In Study 2, we randomly assigned participants to one of three experimental vignettes describing low, medium, or high supervisor-directed deviance. However, our manipulation check showed that participants rated the medium and high supervisor-directed deviance experimental vignettes as equally deviant. In the medium supervisor-directed deviance condition, the follower was described as someone who *sometimes* shows deviant behaviors toward the leader; whereas in the high supervisor-directed deviance condition, the follower was described as someone who *often* showed these behaviors toward the leader. Thus, it seems that as soon as a follower is described as someone who shows supervisor-directed deviance to *some* extent (irrespective if this is sometimes or often), the follower is perceived as deviant and also as more deviant than a follower who *never* shows supervisor-directed deviance (low supervisor-directed deviance condition). Consequently, we grouped the medium and high supervisor-directed deviance conditions for our analyses. For our results, we consider the lack of differentiation between the

medium and high supervisor-directed deviance groups as less problematic, as we found an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via perceived self-esteem threat in *all* conditions (low, and medium/high). This finding also aligns with the results of Study 1, in which, similarly, followers' supervisor-directed deviance did not moderate the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision via perceived self-esteem threat.

In our study, participants first read the supervisor-directed deviance vignettes and were subsequently asked about perceived self-esteem threat and about their abusive supervision intentions. With this design, we were able to ensure that supervisor-directed deviance preceded our mediator (i.e., self-esteem threat) and dependent variable (i.e., abusive supervision intentions). However, we are cautious about making claims about the causal ordering of our mediator and dependent variable. Future research could therefore implement experimental causal-chain designs to establish a causal ordering (Spencer et al., 2005). Furthermore, in Study 2, we chose a between-subjects design to keep participants' workload low. However, this approach did not allow us to make comparisons concerning the same person. To overcome this restriction, future studies could implement within-person designs (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). This would offer an opportunity to examine how different forms of supervisor-directed deviance affect abusive supervision intentions within the same individual.

According to trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003; Tett & Guterman, 2000), threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), and the NARC (Back et al., 2013), individuals high in narcissistic rivalry are assumed to be particularly likely to aggress when their grandiose, but fragile self-views are threatened. However, contrary to our expectations, our studies showed that followers' supervisor-directed deviance did not trigger self-esteem threat in leaders high in narcissistic rivalry and lead to abusive supervision. Instead, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry were prone to showing abusive supervision irrespective of their followers' behavior. Therefore, future research could examine whether other follower behaviors may threaten the grandiose self-esteem of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry and thus increase the likelihood of abusive supervision. For instance, prior research assumed that narcissists are more likely to aggress when threatened in public than in private (Ferriday et al., 2011). Individuals high in narcissism want to be admired by others and being challenged in public could threaten their positive self-image. Accordingly, we advise future researchers to differentiate between private vs public ego-threatening follower behaviors, because the latter might be even more threatening to leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, and thus lead to more abusive supervision.

Furthermore, it has been proposed that narcissists are particularly likely to aggress when threatened in status-related (and less when threatened in affiliation-related) aspects, as when being confronted with a competitor who could damage the narcissist's reputation (Grapsas et al., 2019). Thus, it could be that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry might be particularly prone to show aggression toward followers who outperform them and thus undermine their status.

Conclusion

In sum, our findings show that narcissistic rivalry is the maladaptive dimension of leader narcissism, while leaders' narcissistic admiration seems to be the brighter narcissism dimension. Across the two studies, we found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry, but not their narcissistic admiration, was consistently positively associated with follower-reported abusive supervision and abusive supervision intentions. Furthermore, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry showed tendencies toward abusive supervision, irrespective of followers' supervisor-directed deviance, and that only in part could leaders' perceived self-esteem threats explain why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry displayed abusive supervision intentions.

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Declarations

Conflict of interest The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the studies.

Research Involving Human Participants and/or Animals All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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Supplementary Material

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Note. The original version of the supplementary material can be found here

(<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-022-05146-6>).

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Appendix A: Results without Narcissistic Admiration as Control Variable (Both Studies)

Index of moderated mediation:

- Study 1: $B = 0.04$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI [-.03, .16]
- Study 2: $B = 0.02$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI [-.04, .10]

Table 4
Results Multiple Regression Analyses (Study 1)

Variable	Abusive Supervision						Perceived Self-Esteem Threat		
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.12	0.05	2.25*	0.11	0.05	2.10*	-0.64	0.39	-1.65
Supervisor-Directed Deviance							-0.89	0.82	-1.10
Narcissistic Rivalry x Supervisor-Directed Deviance							0.63	0.34	1.88
Perceived Self-Esteem Threat				0.07	0.05	1.54			
<i>R</i> ²	.04			.06*			.10**		

Note. $N = 123$.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 5
Results Multiple Regression Analyses (Study 2)

Variable	Abusive Supervision Intentions						Perceived Self-Esteem Threat		
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.35	0.05	7.69***	0.26	0.04	6.26***	0.12	0.28	0.44
Condition ^a							0.53	0.32	1.64
Narcissistic Rivalry x Condition							0.09	0.15	0.58
Perceived Self-Esteem Threat				0.27	0.03	8.31***			
<i>R</i> ²	.16***			.31***			.15***		

Note. *N* = 313.

^a Condition = Experimental condition (1 = low supervisor-directed deviance, 2 = medium/high supervisor-directed deviance).

*** *p* < .001.

Appendix B: Results with Three-Level Moderator (Experimental Vignette Study)

Index of moderated mediation: $B = 0.00$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [-.05, .06]

Table 6
Results of Moderated Mediation Analysis (Study 2)

Variable	Perceived Self-Esteem Threat			Abusive Supervision Intentions		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Admiration	-0.16	0.07	-2.38*	0.02	0.04	0.52
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.32	0.20	1.60	0.25	0.05	5.50***
Condition ^a	0.39	0.19	2.04*			
Narcissistic Rivalry x Condition	0.02	0.09	0.18			
Perceived Self-Esteem Threat				0.27	0.03	8.31***
<i>R</i> ²		.16***			.31***	

Note. $N = 313$.

^a Condition = Experimental condition (1 = low supervisor-directed deviance, 2 = medium supervisor-directed deviance, 3 = high supervisor-directed deviance).

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Appendix C: Results with Different Operationalization of Self-Esteem Threat (Both Studies)

We used a second operationalization of perceived self-esteem threat to examine whether our results replicate with a different operationalization. We used three bipolar items for describing negative or positive general self-views (being likeable – being unlikeable, being good – being bad, being worthy – being worthless; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$). The items were based on descriptions of esteem in narcissism research (Bosson et al. 2008; Bosson & Prewitt-Freilino 2007; Geukes et al. 2017).

Index of moderated mediation:

- Study 1: $B = 0.00$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [-.08, .06]
- Study 2: $B = 0.00$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [-.05, .05]

Table 7
Results Multiple Regression Analyses (Study 1)

Variable	Perceived Self-Esteem Threat			Abusive Supervision		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Admiration	-0.33	0.12	-2.64**	-0.06	0.04	-1.62
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.35	0.68	0.51	0.14	0.06	2.44*
Supervisor-Directed Deviance	0.07	1.42	0.05			
Narcissistic Rivalry x Supervisor-Directed Deviance	0.07	0.58	0.12			
Perceived Self-Esteem Threat				0.03	0.03	1.21
<i>R</i> ²		.08*			.08*	

Note. $N = 123$.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 8
Results Multiple Regression Analyses (Study 2)

Variable	Perceived Self-Esteem Threat			Abusive Supervision Intentions		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Admiration	-0.16	0.09	-1.90	0.01	0.04	0.19
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.20	0.35	0.58	0.31	0.05	6.76***
Condition ^a	1.69	0.41	4.13***			
Narcissistic Rivalry x Condition ^a	-0.01	0.20	-0.07			
Perceived Self- Esteem Threat				0.16	0.02	6.55***
<i>R</i> ²		.28***			.26***	

Note. *N* = 313.

^a Condition = Experimental condition (1 = low supervisor-directed deviance, 2 = medium/high supervisor-directed deviance).

*** *p* < .001.

Appendix D: Results with Overall Narcissism Score (Both Studies)

Table 9

Results of Linear Regression Analyses with Overall Narcissism Score (Studies 1 and 2)

Abusive Supervision (Study 1)			
Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Overall Narcissism Score	0.01	0.05	0.25
<i>R</i> ²	.00		
Abusive Supervision Intentions (Study 2)			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Overall Narcissism Score	0.32	0.05	5.92***
<i>R</i> ²	.10		

Note. *N* = 123 for Study 1 and *N* = 313 for Study 2.

*** *p* < .001.

Appendix E: Results for Simple Mediation Analysis (Both Studies)

Table 10
Results of Simple Mediation Analysis (Study 1)

Variable	Perceived Self-Esteem Threat			Abusive Supervision		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Admiration	-0.35	0.07	-5.24***	-0.06	0.04	-1.43
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.28	0.10	2.75**	0.14	0.06	2.49*
Perceived Self-Esteem Threat				0.04	0.05	0.78
<i>R</i> ²		.19***			.07*	

Note. *N* = 123.

* *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01. *** *p* < .001.

Table 11
Results of Simple Mediation Analysis (Study 2)

Variable	Perceived Self-Esteem Threat			Abusive Supervision Intentions		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Admiration	-0.16	0.07	-2.39*	-0.00	0.04	-0.01
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.35	0.07	4.76***	0.26	0.04	5.92***
Condition ^a	0.43	0.07	5.88***	0.21	0.04	4.65***
Perceived Self-Esteem Threat				0.22	0.03	6.66***
<i>R</i> ²		.16***			.36***	

Note. *N* = 313.

^a Condition = Experimental condition (1 = low supervisor-directed deviance, 2 = medium/high supervisor-directed deviance).

* *p* < .05. *** *p* < .001.

Appendix F: Results for Simple Moderation Analysis (Both Studies)

Table 12
Results of Simple Moderation Analysis (Study 1)

Variable	Abusive Supervision		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Admiration	-0.06	0.03	-1.79
Narcissistic Rivalry	-0.15	0.19	-0.81
Supervisor-Directed Deviance	-0.15	0.39	-0.38
Narcissistic Rivalry x Supervisor-Directed Deviance	0.24	0.16	1.45
<i>R</i> ²	.19***		

Note. *N* = 123.

*** *p* < .001.

Table 13
Results of Simple Moderation Analysis (Study 2)

Variable	Abusive Supervision Intentions		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Admiration	-0.02	0.04	-0.54
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.01	0.17	0.08
Condition ^a	0.15	0.20	0.76
Narcissistic Rivalry x Condition ^a	0.18	0.10	1.93
<i>R</i> ²	.27***		

Note. *N* = 313.

^a Condition = Experimental condition (1 = low supervisor-directed deviance, 2 = medium/high supervisor-directed deviance).

*** *p* < .001.

Appendix G: Results for Leaders' Narcissistic Admiration as Predictor (Both Studies)

Index of moderated mediation:

- Study 1: $B = -0.01$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [-.09, .04]
- Study 2: $B = 0.05$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI [-.02, .12]

Table 14
Results Multiple Regression Analyses (Study 1)

Variable	Perceived Self-Esteem Threat			Abusive Supervision		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.22	0.10	2.25*	0.14	0.06	2.49*
Narcissistic Admiration	0.07	0.35	0.19	-0.06	0.04	-1.43
Supervisor-Directed Deviance	1.60	0.95	1.69			
Narcissistic Admiration x Supervisor-Directed Deviance	-0.36	0.31	-1.16			
Perceived Self-Esteem Threat				0.04	0.05	0.77
R^2		.25***			.07*	

Note. $N = 123$.

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 15
Results Multiple Regression Analyses (Study 2)

Variable	Perceived Self-Esteem Threat			Abusive Supervision Intentions		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Narcissistic Rivalry	0.33	0.07	4.45***	0.25	0.05	5.50***
Narcissistic Admiration	-0.42	0.23	-1.86	0.02	0.04	0.52
Condition ^a	0.15	0.45	0.33			
Narcissistic Admiration x Condition ^a	0.17	0.13	1.31			
Perceived Self-Esteem Threat				0.27	0.03	8.31***
<i>R</i> ²		.16***			.31***	

Note. *N* = 313.

^a Condition = Experimental condition (1 = low supervisor-directed deviance, 2 = medium/high supervisor-directed deviance).

*** *p* < .001.

Appendix H: Full Experimental Vignettes

Introduction

Imagine you are the head of the marketing department at the medium-sized software company called “IT next.generation.”

The organization. In 2009, Indra Heyes founded IT next.generation in Nuremberg. Under her management, the company grew quickly. Currently, IT next.generation comprises three locations in Germany with a total of 150 employees. IT next.generation focuses on IT services (e.g., the creation of websites including conception and design, project realization, and technical support) and the implementation of IT security concepts. As a third pillar, IT next.generation offers the setup and support of software in corporate networks. IT next.generation has received several certificates and awards for exceptional customer service.

Your tasks. The overarching goal of the marketing department is to continuously develop the corporate identity of IT next.generation and to strengthen its position in the market. Along with your team, you develop and implement target-group-specific marketing concepts. For this purpose, you carry out market and competitor analyses, optimize online and social media marketing, and organize trade fairs and other events. As the head of the marketing department, you are responsible for 15 employees. You have several tasks. They include:

- Develop and implement a strategic marketing plan
- Plan processes and delegate work tasks
- Coordinate and monitor work processes
- Implement sustainable employee development
- Evaluate employees

Your task today is to evaluate your employee Alex. Both Alex’s work behavior and his interpersonal behavior are included in the assessment. Before you give your evaluation, please take some time to reflect on Alex’s behavior.

Alex's work behavior. Alex has been working on a new marketing campaign for six months. The scheduled campaign is very important for IT next generation as it should contribute significantly to the organization's economic success. Alex is responsible for creating a concept for an online marketing campaign and planning the specifics. So far, Alex has met his obligations to the project. Alex has adequately fulfilled the tasks he has been given, and his work performance has met expectations.

Experimental Condition High Supervisor-Directed Deviance

Alex's interpersonal behavior. To make the new marketing campaign a success, you have been collaborating intensively with Alex. So far, your collaborations with Alex have gone as follows: Alex has often acted rudely toward you, insulted you, or said something hurtful to you. In addition, Alex has often made fun of you or lost his temper with you.

Experimental Condition Medium Supervisor-Directed Deviance

Alex's interpersonal behavior. To make the new marketing campaign a success, you have been collaborating intensively with Alex. So far, your collaborations with Alex have gone as follows: Alex has sometimes acted rudely toward you, insulted you, or said something hurtful. In addition, Alex has sometimes made fun of you or lost his temper with you.

Experimental Condition Low Supervisor-Directed Deviance

Alex's interpersonal behavior. To make the new marketing campaign a success, you have been collaborating intensively with Alex. So far, your collaborations with Alex have gone as follows: Alex has never acted rudely toward you, nor insulted you or said anything hurtful to you. In addition, Alex has never made fun of you or lost his temper with you.

3

**CHAPTER 3: DON'T MESS WITH MY ORGANIZATION:
NARCISSISTIC LEADERS' ABUSIVE SUPERVISION IN
RESPONSE TO DIFFERENT FORMS OF FOLLOWER
WORKPLACE DEVIANCE
(MANUSCRIPT 2)**

Gauglitz, I.K., & Schyns, B. (2022). *Don't mess with my organization: Narcissistic leaders' abusive supervision in response to different forms of follower workplace deviance.* [Manuscript in preparation]. Department of Psychology, University of Bamberg.

Abstract

Previous research has shown that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is positively associated with abusive supervision. However, it remains unclear under which conditions and why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision. We strove to replicate and extend previous findings concerning the positive association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. Building on trait activation theory and the spin model of narcissism, we assumed that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry particularly show abusive supervision in reaction to follower workplace deviance which is directed towards the organization (organization-directed deviance), but to a lesser degree when it is directed towards themselves (supervisor-directed deviance), or coworkers (coworker-directed deviance). We assumed that leaders' injury initiation motives, but not performance promotion motives, explain why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry react with abusive supervision when experiencing organization-directed deviance. We conducted two studies. In the first study, we provided participants with experimental vignettes of follower workplace deviance. In the second study, we used a mixed-methods approach and investigated leaders' autobiographical recollections of follower workplace deviance. We found a positive direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry across both studies. In Study 1 (but not in Study 2) the effect sizes of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision differed depending on the type of follower behavior, but not in the expected direction. Leaders' injury initiation motives but not their performance promotion motives could in part explain this effect. We discuss findings in light of trait activation theory and the spin model of narcissism and derive implications for theory and practice.

Keywords: Narcissism, abusive supervision, workplace deviance, injury initiation motives

Introduction

Abusive supervision is a highly unethical form of leadership. We argue, similar to Schilling et al.'s (2022) considerations on inconsistent leadership, that abusive supervision is unethical both from a deontological and consequential point of view. From a deontological perspective, abusive supervision violates moral principles such as treating followers in fair and respectful manners (Leventhal 1980). For instance, abusive supervision violates distributive, interactional, interpersonal, and procedural justice perceptions of followers (Mackey et al. 2017). From a consequential perspective, abusive supervision violates ethical norms because it seriously harms followers (e.g., Martinko et al. 2013; Schyns and Schilling 2013).

Previous research has shown that narcissism and particularly its maladaptive dimension narcissistic rivalry (see Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Concept; Back et al. 2013) relates to abusive supervision (e.g., Gauglitz et al. 2022; Waldman et al. 2018; Whitman et al. 2013). Narcissism as a personality trait consists of feelings of grandiosity and superiority, entitlement, a lack of empathy, and exploitative behaviors (Morf and Rhodewalt 2001). It can be conceptualized as a two-dimensional construct consisting of narcissistic admiration (an agentic dimension) and narcissistic rivalry (an antagonistic dimension; see Back et al. 2013). It is important to differentiate between these two dimensions as they lead to different social outcomes and differentially impact work outcomes (e.g., Fehn and Schütz 2020; Helfrich and Dietl 2019). While narcissistic admiration is linked to social success, narcissistic rivalry is linked to social failure (Back et al. 2013). Accordingly, Gauglitz et al. (2022) found that only leaders' narcissistic rivalry, but not their narcissistic admiration, is positively associated with leaders' abusive supervision intentions and follower-reports of abusive supervision.

However, the conditions and mechanisms under which leaders high in narcissistic rivalry (intend to) show abusive supervision are not clear yet. For instance, Gauglitz et al. (2022) argued that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry would be particularly likely to show abusive supervision when followers enact supervisor-directed deviance, because such follower behavior would threaten their self-esteem. However, in their study, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry showed abusive supervision independently of followers' supervisor-directed deviance and leaders' perceived self-esteem threat. Thus, the question remains in which situations such leaders are more likely to show abusive supervision and why they do so.

From a theoretical perspective, one could assume that the propensity to show abusive supervision does not only depend on leaders' narcissistic rivalry, but also on situational factors. Trait activation theory posits that traits are expressed in situations that are trait-relevant (Tett and Burnett 2003; Tett and Guterman 2000). With regard to the trait of narcissism, these are situations that hinder status-pursuit (see spin model of narcissism; Grapsas et al. 2019). Whenever narcissists perceive a hindrance to their status pursuit, narcissistic rivalry and corresponding behaviors (e.g., other-derogation) are activated (Grapsas et al. 2019). Building on Gauglitz et al. (2022), we investigated the role of different foci of workplace deviance in addition to supervisor-directed deviance, that is, organization- and coworker-directed deviance. We assumed that notably organization-directed deviance is status threatening as it signals that the leader is not capable of fulfilling their leadership role properly as their followers disrespect organizational rules. Thus, we assumed that organization-directed deviance would be particularly status-threatening to leaders high in narcissistic rivalry and trigger abusive supervision. We argue that supervisor-directed deviance undermines the leaders' status to a lesser extent (as shown by Gauglitz et al., 2022) than in the case of organization-directed deviance, because no explicit rules (such as being

punctual) are violated that might fall back negatively on the leader and undermine their reputation and status as a leader. Finally, coworker-directed deviance might not be status-threatening to leaders high in narcissistic rivalry at all, because such behavior is directed towards other persons than the leader him/herself. In sum, we assume that organization-directed deviance is particularly status threatening and would elevate the tendency of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry to show abusive supervision.

Finally, we strive to provide an explanation for why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry respond with abusive supervision (intentions) in reaction to followers' organization-directed deviance. We go back to Tepper (2007) who argued that leaders might show abusive supervision either because they want to improve their followers' performance (i.e., performance promotion motive) or because they want to harm their followers (i.e., injury initiating motives). Research has shown that the detrimental consequences of abusive supervision depend at least in part on whether followers attribute abusive supervision to leaders' injury initiation or performance promotion motives (e.g., Liao et al. 2020; Yu and Duffy 2021). What we do not know, however, which motives leaders *themselves* have leading up to abusive supervision. This knowledge is important to gain a more holistic understanding for the reasons why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision (intentions). We thus complement prior research (which has mainly focused on follower attributions of leader motives to show abusive supervision) and examine leader's own motives for abusive supervision (intentions). Based on the spin model of narcissism (Grapsas et al. 2019), we argue that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry who experience a social status threat (organization-directed deviance) show abusive supervision because they want to injure their followers in order to regain status (injury initiation motives). We assume that leaders' performance promotion motives are less important in this context.

From a practical point of view, knowing how and why abusive leadership emerges is important because organizations have an ethical and moral obligation to foster the well-being of followers. Thus, organizations could make use of this knowledge in order to create countermeasures and interventions aimed at reducing and preventing abusive supervision and the negative consequences associated with this form of unethical leadership (such as reduced well-being and job satisfaction of followers; Schyns and Schilling 2013).

The goal of our study is threefold. First, we strive to replicate previous findings concerning a direct and positive relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions; Gauglitz et al. 2022). Second, we aim to shed light on the conditions that can explain the positive relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions) by proposing a moderating effect of followers' organization-directed deviance. Third, we strive to test two competing mechanisms that can potentially explain abusive supervision and suggest a mediated moderation in which leaders' injury initiation motives, but not their performance promotion motives, explain why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry react with abusive supervision in response to organization-directed deviance.

Leaders' Narcissistic Rivalry and Abusive Supervision (Intentions)

While some authors have argued that leader narcissism overall might be associated with destructive leadership (e.g., Hansbrough and Jones 2014; Krasikova et al. 2013), Gauglitz (2022) argues that it is important to differentiate between different forms of narcissism, as not all narcissism dimension might be related to destructive leadership. Accordingly, when studying the relationship between narcissism and abusive supervision, it is important consider the dimensional nature of narcissism.

The NARC (Back et al. 2013) differentiates between two dimensions of narcissism, an assertive facet called narcissistic admiration, and an antagonistic facet called narcissistic

rivalry. Both dimensions serve the same central goal of building and maintaining desirable self-views, which is in line with other models of narcissism (Campbell and Campbell 2009; Morf and Rhodewalt 2001). However, according to Back et al. (2013), narcissists differ in the social strategies they adopt to achieve these grandiose self-views. Narcissistic admiration describes a self-enhancing interpersonal strategy associated with striving for uniqueness, grandiose fantasies, and charming behaviors. In contrast, narcissistic rivalry describes a self-defending interpersonal strategy associated with striving for supremacy, devaluation of others, and aggressiveness. As a consequence, only narcissistic rivalry (but not narcissistic admiration) is associated with social conflict (Back et al., 2013). For instance, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry (but not in narcissistic admiration) show arrogant and aggressive behaviors and appear untrustworthy, resulting in a decrease in popularity over time (Leckelt et al. 2015). In addition, Back et al. (2013) showed that individuals high in narcissistic rivalry (but not in narcissistic admiration) evaluate others negatively and score low on empathy, gratitude, trust, and forgiveness. In sum and in line with the NARC, it seems that only individuals high in narcissistic rivalry (but not in narcissistic admiration) are unable to maintain close relationships and are likely to engage in aggressive behaviors. The behavioral dynamic associated with narcissistic admiration and rivalry might also determine how leaders behave towards their followers. Indeed, empirical evidence supports this notion. Gauglitz et al. (2022) found that only leaders' narcissistic rivalry, but not their narcissistic admiration, is positively associated with leaders' abusive supervision intentions and follower-reports of abusive supervision. The authors argued that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry (intend to) show abusive supervision, because by doing so they act out their aggressive tendencies and feel superior, which ultimately serves their central goal of building and maintaining grandiose self-views. Hence, we assume:

Hypothesis 1: Leaders' narcissistic rivalry is positively associated with abusive supervision (intentions).

The Moderating Effect of Different Forms of Follower Workplace Deviance

While individuals high in narcissistic rivalry have a general predisposition to aggress, the NARC also posits that this predisposition to aggress will be particularly likely to result in aggressive behavior when the grandiose self-views of these individuals are threatened (Back et al. 2013). This implies that the positive association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions) might be accentuated in certain situations. Thus, the question arises in which situations are leaders high in narcissistic rivalry particularly likely to show abusive supervision? To answer this question, it is useful to consider the basic tenets of trait activation theory (Tett and Burnett 2003; Tett and Guterman 2000) and the spin model of narcissism (Grapsas et al. 2019). Trait activation theory follows approaches of person-situation interactionism (e.g., Schneider 1987) and holds that personality is played out in situations that are trait-relevant (Tett and Burnett 2003; Tett and Guterman 2000). Thus, it is assumed that trait-relevant situational cues release the expression of a given trait. With regard to narcissism, the spin model (Grapsas et al. 2019) assumes that the expression of narcissistic rivalry is triggered by cues that hinder the status-pursuit of the narcissistic person. For instance, it has been shown that narcissists are most likely to aggress when receiving bad evaluations (Bushman and Baumeister 1998), experiencing social rejection (Twenge and Campbell 2003), or being insulted personally (Jones and Paulhus 2010). Grapsas et al. (2019) argue that in such situations signaling a status-threat, the behavioral dynamics of narcissistic rivalry are activated, meaning that narcissistic individuals will derogate others or behave aggressively towards the source of status-threat with the purpose of regaining status themselves.

Combining these two theoretical lines, we argue that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will be particularly likely to show abusive supervision in response to trait-relevant situational cues that hinder status-pursuit. At work, trait-relevant situational cues might be features of a work task (e.g., day-to-day work demands), social features (behaviors of leaders or followers), or organizational features (e.g., organizational climate; Tett et al. 2021). We assume that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will be particularly likely to show abusive supervision in response to follower workplace deviance (a situational cue on the social level) as such behavior has the potential to undermine the leaders' status. Follower workplace deviance encompasses behaviors that violate organizational norms and harm the organization or its members (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). However, workplace deviance is a broad construct as it can relate to different targets. It includes behaviors directed at the organization itself (e.g., coming too late to work) as well as behaviors directed at individuals within the organization (e.g., making fun of someone at work; Bennett & Robinson, 2000). With regard to the latter, Mitchell and Ambrose (2007) distinguish between deviance that is directed at the supervisor (supervisor-directed deviance) and deviance that is directed at other individuals of the organization (coworker-directed deviance).

We assume that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will be particularly likely to aggress in response to organization-directed deviance in comparison to supervisor- and coworker-directed deviance. In line with trait activation theory and the spin model of narcissism, we argue that of the three types of follower deviance, organization-directed deviance is most likely to hinder the status pursuit of a leader. Leaders are responsible for their followers and have to ensure that their followers behave adequately. However, when followers show organization-directed deviance they signal that they do not respect organizational rules and consequently that they do not respect the leader who is an important organizational representative. Additionally, narcissistic leaders are likely to see the organization as

themselves in the sense of narcissistic organizational identification (Galvin, Lange, & Ashforth, 2015), such that a threat to the organization is a threat to them. Accordingly, organization-directed deviance undermines the leaders' status in the organization. Furthermore, when followers show organization-directed deviance and for instance, come in too late at work, take more breaks than allowed or work slowly this will reflect badly on the leader who is responsible for achieving organizational goals (Yukl and Gardner 2019). Again, this might undermine the leaders' status. According to the spin model of narcissism, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry strive to defend or reinstate their positive self-views when perceiving cues indicating hindrance of status pursuit. Therefore, we assume that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will respond with abusive supervision to organization-directed deviance in order to defame the follower who undermined their status and at the same time to rebuild their status.

In contrast to that, we suggest that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry are less likely to aggress in response to supervisor-directed or coworker-directed deviance. Supervisor-directed deviance consists of undesirable behaviors, which might indicate that the follower does not respect the leader and therefore might threaten the leaders' status. Thus, similar to organization-directed deviance, supervisor-directed deviance might be personally threatening for a leader, but organization-directed deviance additionally indicates that a leader does not adequately fulfill their leadership roles. For instance, one important leadership task is to define job requirements (such as when and how do certain work tasks), monitoring follower behavior and intervening in case of deviations (Yukl and Gardner 2019). Yet, when followers show organization-directed deviance, they objectively disregard organizational rules (e.g., coming in too late at work) indicating that the leader failed in managing their followers – which might be particularly status-threatening as it questions the leaders' competence as a leader. Furthermore, when followers show organization-directed deviance, it is expected that

leaders intervene and ensure that followers comply with organizational rules. Thus, leaders have a justification to get the follower back on track – and we assume that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will do so by showing abusive supervision. In contrast, in the case of supervisor-directed deviance, abusive supervision might be less justifiable because no objective norms were threatened. Our assumption is backed up by the results of Gauglitz et al.'s (2022) study. The authors found that supervisor-directed deviance did not moderate the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions).

With regard to coworker-directed deviance, we assume that this type of behavior does not hinder the status-pursuit of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry. As individuals high in narcissistic rivalry do not care for others and score low on empathy (Back et al., 2013; Leunissen, Sedikides, & Wildschut, 2017), such leaders should very unlikely be concerned when their followers show coworker-directed deviance, such as insulting, talking badly about or saying something hurtful to a colleague. Taken together, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2: The positive relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision is moderated by follower workplace deviance, such that it is strongest when followers show organization-directed deviance compared to supervisor-directed or coworker-directed deviance.

The Mediating Role of Injury Initiation Motives

As Spain et al. (2014) point out, little is known about the motives that underlie the behavior of dark personalities. This raises the question of *why* leaders high in narcissistic rivalry display abusive supervision in response to organization-directed deviance. Tepper (2007) suggested that supervisors engage in abusive supervision because they either want to harm their followers or because they want them to perform better (see also Liao et al. 2020; Yu and Duffy 2021). We test this assumption by examining to what degree leaders' injury initiation and performance promotion motives can explain why leaders high in narcissistic

rivalry engage in abusive supervision. According to the spin model of narcissism (Grapsas et al. 2019), situations that hinder the status-pursuit of narcissists trigger self-protection strategies that are accompanied by devaluing thoughts about others. Consequently, we assume that organization-directed deviance triggers injury initiation motives, but not performance promotion motives, in leaders high in narcissistic rivalry. In line with the spin model of narcissism, it is likely that organization-directed deviance undermines the status of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, which is threatening for these leaders. Accordingly, they might want to punish the source of status-hindrance (i.e., a desire to injure the follower who disregarded organizational rules). However, it is unlikely that leaders high in rivalry will develop performance promotion motives as this would contradict their social strategy of keeping others down. According to Jones and Paulhus (2010), thinking about derogating the follower “should provide relief” (p. 16). Ultimately, according to the NARC, devaluing thoughts (i.e., injury initiation motives) lead to aggressive behaviors (i.e., abusive supervision). Accordingly, we suggest that injury initiation motives (but not performance promotion motives) experienced by leaders high in narcissistic rivalry in response to organization-directed deviance will translate into abusive supervision. In sum, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 3: There is an indirect effect of leaders’ narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision (intentions) via injury initiation motives, but not performance promotion motives, when followers show organization-directed deviance.

Overview

To test our hypotheses, we conducted two studies. In Study 1, we used experimental vignettes, which enabled us to draw conclusions about the causal ordering of our focal variables (Antonakis et al. 2010). In Study 2, we collected leaders’ autobiographical

memories of follower workplace deviance and assessed whether they subsequently showed abusive supervision.

Study 1

Method

Sample and procedure. Study 1 was an online experimental vignette study in which we manipulated follower workplace deviance. Participants were recruited via snowball procedure in Germany. Eligible participants were employed and had at least six months of work experience. Overall, 155 participants took part in the experimental vignette study. We deleted three participants who stated that they did not find the described vignettes credible at all or who could not place themselves in the situation described in the experimental vignette. Our final sample consisted of 152 participants (coworker-directed deviance condition: $N = 52$, organization-directed deviance condition: $N = 52$, and supervisor-directed deviance condition: $N = 48$). We employed a between-subjects design where conditions were randomly assigned. Participants were on average 37.08 years old ($SD = 14.54$) and 59.9% of participants were women. On average, participants worked 37.35 hours per week ($SD = 9.24$) and 63.8% of participants did not hold a leadership position.

In order to reduce common method variance, we separated measurements in time (Podsakoff et al. 2012). Therefore, data were collected with a time lag of two days. At the first measurement point, we assessed our independent (leader rivalry) and our control variable (negative affectivity) as well as sociodemographic information. At the second measurement point, participants read one of three experimental vignettes and subsequently indicated their injury initiation and performance promotion motives as well as their abusive supervision intentions.

Measures. We measured leaders' narcissistic rivalry with nine items of the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ; Back et al., 2013). A sample item

is “Most people won’t achieve anything” ($\alpha = .80$). In line with previous research (Gauglitz et al. 2022), we controlled for leaders’ narcissistic admiration using the corresponding nine items of the NARQ (Back et al. 2013). A sample item reads “Being a very special person gives me a lot of strength” ($\alpha = .82$). Participants indicated their agreement to the items on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not agree at all*) to 6 (*agree completely*).

Injury initiation and performance promotion motives were measured with an adapted version of Liu and colleagues’ (2012) injury initiation and performance promotion motives scales (five items each). Independent language experts translated and back translated the items. We asked participants regarding their injury initiation and performance promotion motives towards the employee who showed workplace deviance in the described experimental vignette. Sample items were “I desire to cause injury on my subordinate” for injury initiation motive ($\alpha = .83$), and “I desire to elicit high performance from my subordinate” for performance promotion motive ($\alpha = .72$). Participants rated their agreement to these items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not agree at all*) to 7 (*agree completely*).

Abusive supervision was measured using the 15 items of the German version of Tepper’s (2000) abusive supervision scale (Schilling and May 2015). We asked participants how likely it would be that they showed abusive supervision towards the employee who showed workplace deviance in the described experimental vignette. A sample item was “I would ridicule my subordinate” ($\alpha = .80$). Participants indicated their agreement with these items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very unlikely*) to 5 (*very likely*).

Development and content of experimental vignettes. We developed three experimental vignettes, one for each condition (i.e., supervisor-directed, organization-directed, and coworker-directed deviance). Each experimental vignette included an introduction followed by the specific episode of follower workplace deviance (e.g., supervisor-directed, organization-directed, and coworker-directed deviance). First, all

participants were instructed to put themselves in the role of a leader and to read the scenarios carefully. Next, all participants received the same background information in order to enable them to embed their responses contextually (Aguinis and Bradley 2014). Participants were told that they worked for a software company and received information about their job duties, including delegating work to their followers and monitoring their work progress. Then, a paragraph with the deviance scenario followed. Participants were told that they observed their follower showing workplace deviance. We based the behaviors and the wording of our experimental vignettes on existing scales and experimental vignettes that capture different forms of workplace deviance (Bennett and Robinson 2000; Lapierre et al. 2009; Mitchell and Ambrose 2007). For instance, in the organization-directed deviance condition, the follower was described as someone who came in late without permission, took longer breaks than permitted, and intentionally worked slower than he/she could have worked. In the supervisor-directed deviance condition, the follower was described as someone who behaved disrespectful towards the leader, publicly embarrassed him/her, and made fun of him/her. The follower-directed deviance condition consisted of the same deviant behaviors except that they were directed at a coworker. The appendix contains the full experimental vignettes.

Manipulation checks. After reading the experimental vignettes, participants were asked how deviant they found the follower's behavior on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not deviant at all* – 5 = *very deviant*). In all three conditions, participants rated the described follower's behavior as deviant (organization-directed deviance: $M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.86$; supervisor-directed deviance: $M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.90$; coworker-directed deviance: $M = 4.52$, $SD = 0.73$).

Results

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations, correlations and internal consistency estimates for the study variables. To test Hypothesis 1, we conducted a linear regression

analysis with leaders' narcissistic rivalry as predictor and leaders' narcissistic admiration as covariate. Leaders' narcissistic rivalry was significantly and positively associated with abusive supervision intentions ($\beta = .52, p < .001$), lending support for Hypothesis 1. Leaders' narcissistic admiration was negatively related to abusive supervision intentions ($\beta = -.20, p < .05$). This model explained 22% of variance in abusive supervision intention ratings ($p < .001$).

To test Hypothesis 2, we conducted a simple moderation analysis using the process macro by Hayes (2018). We included leaders' narcissistic rivalry as predictor, follower deviance as moderator (which was dummy coded as it is a categorical variable), leaders' abusive supervision intentions as outcome, and leaders' narcissistic admiration as covariate. Results revealed that the effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions was not significantly stronger in the organization-directed deviance condition ($B = 0.36, SE = 0.08, p < 0.001, 95\% CI [.20 .53]$) compared to the supervisor-directed deviance ($B = 0.52, SE = 0.09, p < 0.001, 95\% CI [.36 .69]$) or coworker-directed deviance condition ($B = 0.16, SE = 0.07, p < 0.05, 95\% CI [.02 .30]$). However, effect sizes differed significantly between the supervisor-directed deviance and coworker-directed deviance condition. In sum, these results contradict Hypothesis 2, which stated that the effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions would be strongest when followers show organization-directed deviance. While there was a positive effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions in all conditions, this effect was strongest in the supervisor-directed deviance condition and significantly stronger in the supervisor-directed condition compared to the coworker-directed condition.

Next, to test Hypothesis 3, we included our mediators (injury initiation and performance promotion motives) simultaneously to our model to test the moderated indirect effect (model 7 in the process macro). There was an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic

rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives ($B = .13$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI [.04, .27]), but not via performance promotion motives ($B = -.00$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI [-.02, .02]) when followers showed organization-directed deviance, supporting Hypothesis 3.

For completeness, we also report the indirect effects in the other conditions. We found significant indirect effects via injury initiation motives in the supervisor-directed ($B = .23$, $SE = .12$, 95% CI [.05, .51]) and coworker-directed ($B = .10$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI [.02, .26]) deviance conditions. There were no indirect effects via performance promotion motives in the supervisor-directed ($B = .00$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI [-.01, .02]) and coworker-directed ($B = .00$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI [-.01, .02]) deviance conditions. In this model, the direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions also remained significant ($B = 0.17$, $SE = 0.05$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI [.08, .26]). In sum, we find a consistent pattern in that injury initiation motives, but not performance promotion motives, can in part explain the positive association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions (independently of the type of follower workplace deviance).

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Internal Consistency Estimates of Studies 1 and 2

Variable	$M_{Study1}/$ M_{Study2}	$SD_{Study1}/$ SD_{Study2}	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Narcissistic Rivalry	1.82/1.61	0.64/0.57	(.80/.82)	.04	.40***	.10	.44***	.40***
2 Workplace Deviance ^a	1.97/2.27	0.81/0.71	.06	-	-.13	.11	-.06	.17*
3 Injury Initiation Motives	1.50/1.24	0.78/0.47	.13	.15	(.83/.48)	.05	.63***	.08
4 Performance Promotion Motives	4.91/4.24	1.19/1.44	.25**	.15	.23**	(.72/.75)	.07	.17*
5 Abusive Supervision Intentions	1.44/1.28	0.40/0.29	.24**	.17*	.45***	.33***	(.80/.67)	.01
6 Narcissistic Admiration	2.80/2.83	0.78/0.83	.38***	-.05	.08	.21*	.20*	(.82/.84)

Note. $N = 152$ (Study 1). $N = 141$ (Study 2). Alpha coefficients are given in parentheses along the diagonal with Study 1 appearing first and

Study 2 appearing second. Study 1 correlations appear above the diagonal and Study 2 correlations appear below the diagonal.

^a1 = coworker-directed deviance, 2 = supervisor-directed deviance, 3 = organization-directed deviance.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Study 2

Method

Sample and procedure. Next, we conducted an online study focusing on leaders' interactions with followers to test our hypotheses with a different methodological approach and to enhance external validity of our findings. Study participants were recruited via snowball sampling in Germany. We chose a mixed-method approach and included quantitative as well as qualitative questions. In the qualitative part, participants recollected an episode in which one of their followers behaved in a deviant manner. Overall, 166 participants completed the questionnaire. We deleted participants who did not pass quality checks ($n = 9$) or who did not describe a situation ($n = 10$) leading to a sample of 147. After screening participants' descriptions of situations, we deleted participants who did not describe a relevant situation ($n = 6$, see also data analysis). The final sample consisted of 141 leaders (68.1% male) who were on average 46.7 years old ($SD = 11.44$), had an average leadership experience of 13.6 years ($SD = 9.43$), held a middle management position in 44.7% of the cases, and worked on average 45.5 hours per week ($SD = 9.02$).

Measures. We measured leaders' narcissistic rivalry ($\alpha = .82$) and admiration ($\alpha = .84$) with the same items as in Study 1.

To assess follower workplace deviance, we asked participants to recall an episode of follower workplace deviance. We did not restrict participants in terms of a time frame but rather left it up to them to remember an episode. This way we aimed to capture an episode that was particularly salient to them. To do so, we first provided participants with Robinson and Bennett's (1995) definition of workplace deviance and then instructed them to remember a situation in which one of their followers displayed workplace deviance. Participants were asked to answer three questions ("What happened exactly?", "What exactly did your

subordinate do or say?”, and “In how far were you involved in the situation?”) and to write their answers into a free text field.

Afterwards, we assessed leaders’ injury initiation and performance promotion motives with the same items as in Study 1, but we slightly adapted instructions. We asked participants to what extent they had experienced injury initiation and performance promotion motives in the described situation (“Which motives did you experience in the situation you just described?”). Specifically, we asked participants for their response to a specific event – an episode of follower workplace deviance, indicating their behavioral reactions rather than general behavior tendencies. That is, in the described situation, participants might have shown some but not all of the behaviors indicated in the scales, making a reliability assessment less valid for our purposes. Sample items were “I desired to cause injury on my subordinate” for injury initiation motive ($\alpha = .48$), and “I desired to elicit high performance from my subordinate” for performance promotion motive ($\alpha = .75$).

We measured abusive supervision with the same scale as in Study 1 and asked participants to what extent they had shown abusive supervisory behaviors towards their subordinate in response to the described situation of workplace deviance. Therefore, participants’ responses reflect specific behavior indicators and not general behavior tendencies. A sample item was “I ridiculed my subordinate” ($\alpha = .67$). Participants indicated their agreement with these items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not agree at all*) to 5 (*agree completely*).

Data analysis. We first analyzed participants’ descriptions of follower workplace deviance ($n = 147$). In four cases, no relevant episode of follower workplace deviance was described and thus we excluded these four cases from our data set. Next, two researchers analyzed the remaining 143 cases and examined at whom the described follower workplace deviance was directed. More specifically, we predefined categories of follower workplace

deviance that is directed at the organization (organization-directed deviance), the supervisor (supervisor-directed deviance), or other individuals in the organization (coworker-directed deviance). The two researchers independently coded the episodes of workplace deviance using these three categories. In 104 cases, consensus was reached between the two researchers. In the remaining 39 cases, a third researcher independently coded the episodes. Afterwards, the researchers discussed the examples and solved the coding problems. In two cases, no consensus was reached and therefore two cases were deleted from our data set. Of the remaining 141 experiences, 21 were coded as coworker-directed deviance, 59 were coded as supervisor-directed deviance, and 61 were coded as organization-directed deviance.

Results

Means, standard deviations, correlations and internal consistency estimates are depicted in Table 1. To test Hypothesis 1, we conducted a linear regression analysis with leaders' narcissistic rivalry as predictor, abusive supervision as dependent variable, and leaders' narcissistic admiration as control variable. As expected, leaders' narcissistic rivalry was significantly and positively associated with abusive supervision ($\beta = .19, p < .05$) supporting Hypothesis 1. Leaders' narcissistic admiration was unrelated to abusive supervision ($\beta = .13, p = \text{n.s.}$). This model accounted for 7% of variance in abusive supervision ratings ($p < .05$).

To test Hypothesis 2, we conducted a simple moderation analysis using the process macro by Hayes (2018). We included leaders' narcissistic rivalry as predictor, follower deviance as moderator (which was dummy coded as it is a categorical variable), leaders' abusive supervision as outcome, and leaders' narcissistic admiration as control variable. Results revealed that the effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision was not significantly stronger in the organization-directed deviance condition ($B = 0.22, SE = 0.07, p < 0.01, 95\% \text{ CI } [.08 .37]$) compared to the supervisor-directed deviance ($B = 0.03, SE = 0.06,$

$p = \text{n.s.}$, 95% CI [-.08 .14]) or coworker-directed deviance condition ($B = -0.09$, $SE = 0.18$, $p = \text{n.s.}$, 95% CI [-.44 .26]). However, the effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision was only significant in the organization-directed deviance condition, which lends partial support for Hypothesis 2.

Finally, to test Hypothesis 3, we included our mediators (injury initiation and performance promotion motives) to our model to test the moderated indirect effect (model 7 in the process macro). There was an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision via injury initiation motives ($B = .07$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI [.01, .16]), but not via performance promotion motives ($B = .02$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI [-.01, .07]) when followers showed organization-directed deviance, supporting Hypothesis 3.

For completeness, we also report the indirect effects in the other conditions. We did not find significant indirect effects via injury initiation motives in the supervisor-directed ($B = -.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI [-.06, .04]) and coworker-directed ($B = -.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI [-.07, .07]) deviance conditions. There were also no indirect effects via performance promotion motives in the supervisor-directed ($B = .02$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI [-.00, .06]) and coworker-directed ($B = -.01$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI [-.08, .08]) deviance conditions. In this model, the direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision turned insignificant ($B = 0.05$, $SE = 0.04$, $p = \text{n.s.}$, 95% CI [-.03 .14]). In sum, we find that the direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision can be explained by leaders' injury initiation motives, but not their performance promotion motives, when leaders report organization-directed deviance.

Discussion

Within two studies, we investigated the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions). Building on Gauglitz et al.'s (2022) study, we assumed that leaders' narcissistic rivalry – the antagonistic facet of narcissism - is associated

with abusive supervision. Across two studies, we were able to replicate Gauglitz et al.'s (2022) results and consistently found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry (but not admiration) was positively associated with abusive supervision (intentions). Furthermore, we examined the role of different types of follower workplace deviance as a moderator of this relationship. Contrary to our expectations, the positive relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions) was not strongest in the organization-directed deviance condition. Leaders high in narcissistic rivalry showed abusive supervision (intentions) when deviance was directed at the organization (Studies 1 and 2) or at themselves (Study 1), but not when it was directed at coworkers (Study 2). Finally, we simultaneously tested two possible mediators and consistently found that leaders' injury initiation motives, but not performance promotion motives, explained why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry displayed abusive supervision (intentions) in response to followers' organization-directed deviance. These findings contribute to the literature in the following ways.

Theoretical Implications

Our study lends further support to the NARC and previous research showing that narcissistic admiration and rivalry are differentially interrelated with social outcomes and workplace criteria (e.g., Fehn and Schütz 2020; Helfrich and Dietl 2019). Particularly, we were able to replicate previous findings regarding a positive association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions; Gauglitz et al. 2022) and a positive (Study 1) or non-significant (Study 2) association between leaders' narcissistic admiration and abusive supervision (intentions). Interestingly, when asking leaders high in narcissistic rivalry about their own behavior (Study 2), they were ready to admit that they had shown abusive supervision in the past, even though it is a negative behavior that might reflect negatively on them. This is consistent with past research showing that narcissistic individuals

are aware of and admit to narcissistic behaviors and at the same time realize it is socially undesirable (e.g., Carlson 2013).

With regard to the question “When do leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision?” our findings were not as expected. We found that the positive association between leaders’ narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions) was not strongest in the organization-directed deviance condition (compared to the supervisor or coworker-directed deviance conditions) as expected. Instead, in Study 1 the effect of leaders’ narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions was stronger in the supervisor-directed deviance condition than in coworker-directed deviance condition; and in Study 2 there was no significant effect in the coworker-directed deviance condition. It seems that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry care less when their followers show coworker-directed deviance. This might be due to their lack of empathy and care for others (Back et al., 2013; Leunissen, Sedikides, & Wildschut, 2017). Speaking in terms of trait activation theory and the spin model of narcissism, it seems that coworker-directed deviance is not a trait-relevant situational cue and does not threaten the leaders’ status.

In contrast, it seems that organization-directed deviance threatens the leaders’ status and evokes abusive supervision (intentions). We argue that this type of follower behaviors undermines the leaders’ competence and reputation. When followers do not stick to organizational rules (as in the case of organization-directed deviance) this implies that the leader is not capable of fulfilling their leadership responsibilities properly. Accordingly, we assumed that organization-directed deviance undermines the leaders’ status. As proposed in the spin model of narcissism, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry tend to behave aggressively to regain status. Accordingly, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry reacted with abusive supervision when threatened by organization-directed deviance. At the same time, these leaders have a justification for their behavior as they have to restore order.

Interestingly, we found mixed results with regard to supervisor-directed deviance. Leaders high in narcissistic rivalry tended to show abusive supervision in Study 1 (similar to the results by Gauglitz et al. 2022), but not in Study 2. We wonder if these differences are a result of the different methods we used in the studies. In Study 1, participants in the supervisor-directed deviance condition reacted with abusive supervision intentions to the described episode of supervisor-directed deviance (e.g., being publicly embarrassed or being made fun of). Such behaviors can be personally threatening and might trigger narcissistic rivalry, which then make aggressive responses in the workplace, such as abusive supervision, more likely. Contrary to that, in Study 2, we asked leaders to remember a situation in which one of their follower behaved in a deviant way. While some leaders remembered situations of supervisor-directed deviance, it could be that leaders high in rivalry did not recall situations that were highly status-undermining. That means that mnemonic neglect might have occurred which describes that individuals poorly recall self-threatening information (Sedikides & Green, 2000, 2009). Mnemonic neglect has a self-protective function (Pinter, Green, Sedikides, & Gregg, 2011) and leaders high in rivalry strive to protect their grandiose self-views (Back et al., 2013). Accordingly, these leaders might have recalled episodes of supervisor-directed deviance that were not highly threatening in order to protect their grandiose self-views. Alternatively, they might not even have reported those events and focused on other types of deviances that are less self-threatening. Consequently, mnemonic neglect could explain why leaders' narcissistic rivalry was unrelated to reports of abusive supervision in response to supervisor-directed deviance in Study 2. Further research is needed to examine if supervisor-directed deviance is subject the mnemonic neglect, particularly for individuals high in narcissistic rivalry.

Third, our findings offer insights into the intrapsychic processes of narcissistic leaders who are exposed to follower workplace deviance. Previous research lacks of a thorough

understanding of the motives that drive abusive supervision (Spain et al., 2014). Our research addresses this research gap as we investigated two competing theoretical mechanisms.

According to Tepper (2007), leaders either show abusive supervision because they want to harm their followers or because they want to elicit high performance from them. We tested both mechanisms simultaneously and found an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision (intentions) via injury initiation motives, but not performance promotion motives, when followers showed organization-directed deviance (both studies). We conclude here that abusive supervision is a goal-directed behavior that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry use to threaten a follower who broke organizational rules. This finding is in line with the spin model of narcissism, according to which negative and hostile thoughts about others (i.e., injury initiation motives) emerge when one's status is threatened (i.e., via organization-directed) which, in turn, makes aggressive reactions (i.e., abusive supervision) more likely. Performance promotion motives could not explain why leaders high in rivalry showed abusive supervision. With our study, we contribute to our understanding of the mechanisms that lead to abusive supervision in a very important way. Theoretically, both injury initiation motives and performance promotion motives might explain why leaders show abusive supervision (Tepper, 2007). However, in the case of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, they show abusive supervision because they want to harm their followers and not because they want to elicit high performance from them. This stresses that narcissistic rivalry is the antagonistic side of narcissism that goes along with devaluing thoughts about others (Back et al., 2013).

Practical Implications

Our study offers several practical implications. As leaders' narcissistic rivalry is positively associated with abusive supervision (intentions), organizations may want to take interventions that focus on such leaders. Schyns et al. (2022) point out several HR practices

that can be taken in order to prevent the behavioral expression of leader narcissism, such as in recruitment and promotion career development and training, performance appraisal and feedback systems, complaint systems, and disciplinary actions. For instance, as also mentioned by Gauglitz et al. (2022), we propose that organizations should be cautious in hiring such leaders. Once in a leadership position, organizations could offer trainings to leaders high in narcissistic rivalry to lead supportively (Gonzalez-Morales et al. 2018) and indeed research has shown that particularly narcissists can be motivated to improve in developmental settings (Harms et al. 2011). Leaders' high in narcissistic rivalry should also receive psychoeducation. For instance, they should be made aware of the negative consequences of abusive supervision (e.g., stress and unproductivity; Schyns and Schilling 2013) and that unhealthy and unproductive followers might reflect badly on them and undermine their status as a leader.

Furthermore, as our research shows that injury initiation motives can explain why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision in response to workplace deviance, interventions may also focus on reducing such negative thoughts. In addition, as our research shows that performance promotion motives do not translate into abusive supervision (intentions), such motives could be fostered in leaders high in narcissistic rivalry.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

While a strength of our study is that we conducted two studies with different research methodologies, there are also some limitations. For instance, in study 2, we randomly assigned participants to one of three experimental vignettes describing different forms of follower workplace deviance. A clear strength of randomized experiments (such as our experimental vignette study) is that it allows to draw causal conclusions (Antonakis et al., 2010). In our study, participants first read the follower workplace deviance vignettes, and subsequently were asked for their injury initiation and performance promotion motives and

afterwards for their abusive supervision intentions. Therefore, we could ensure that follower workplace deviance precedes our mediators (i.e., leaders' injury initiation and performance promotion motives) and dependent variable (i.e., abusive supervision intentions). However, we have to be cautious about the causal ordering of our mediator and dependent variables. Future research could therefore implement experimental-causal-chain designs in order to establish a causal ordering (Spencer, Zanna, & Fong, 2005). Furthermore, in Study 1 we chose a between-subjects design to keep participants' workload low. However, this approach did not allow us to make comparisons within the same person. To overcome this restriction, future studies could implement within-person designs (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). This would give the possibility to examine how different forms of follower workplace deviance effect abusive supervision in narcissistic individuals.

Furthermore, in Study 2 we collected leaders' autobiographical memories of follower workplace deviance. However, this approach does not provide information about the relative importance of follower workplace deviance as an antecedent of abusive supervision in comparison to other causes. A fruitful approach for future research would therefore be to let leaders recapture an episode of abusive supervision and then ask them to name the reasons why they showed abusive supervisory behavior. This would show us how often follower workplace deviance is named as a cause of abusive supervision relative to other causes. This would broaden our understanding of leaders' self-reported reasons for abusive supervision and would enable us to examine if follower workplace deviance is a frequent cause of abusive supervision. Another limitation stems from the instruction of Study 2. We asked participants to remember an episode of follower workplace deviance but did not restrict it to a certain time period as doing so would have limited the availability of possible episodes. Hence, it could be that some leaders described an episode that happened just recently while others recaptured an episode that happened a longer time ago. Accordingly, participants might have found it more

difficult to remember their reactions to some autobiographical episodes of follower workplace. While it is a strength of our design that participants described their own experiences, making the responses less hypothetical, it also a limitation, as some events might have happened longer ago.

Finally, future research could explicitly examine leaders' perceptions of status-threat. For instance, leaders could be asked which forms of follower workplace deviance they find particularly status-threatening. By doing so, one could also examine whether leaders high in narcissistic rivalry are more vigilant to cues indicating status-threat (e.g., in response to organization-directed deviance) and whether they react to such status-threats with the derogation of others (e.g., in form of abusive supervision).

Conclusion

With our research we were able to replicate previous findings (Gaughlitz et al. 2022) concerning a positive relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision (intentions) using a similar methodology (experimental vignettes) and a new methodology (leaders' autobiographical recollections). By doing so, we lend further support for the assumption rooted in the NARC (Back et al. 2013) that narcissistic rivalry is the antagonistic narcissism dimension associated with negative social outcomes, whereas narcissistic admiration has less deleterious social consequences (with negative or positive associations to abusive supervision [intentions]). Furthermore, we were able to show that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry are more likely to show abusive supervision in reaction to some forms of workplace deviance than to others. Finally, we offer an explanation why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision (intentions) in reaction to followers' organization-directed deviance. It seems that these leaders show abusive supervision (intentions) with the motive to injure their followers and not to promote their performance.

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Appendix

Description of Experimental Vignettes used in Study 1

Today is a normal work day. As per usual, you first work through your mails and obtain an overview of the pending tasks. Then you go to your employees' office to obtain an overview of their work progress. Upon arrival at their office, you observe the following situation:

Supervisor-Directed Deviance Condition

Your employee Alex behaves disrespectfully towards you. Alex publicly humiliates you because of your job performance. Subsequently, Alex starts an argument with you that clearly does not benefit the goal. Alex also makes fun of you.

Coworker-Directed Deviance Condition

Your employee Alex behaves disrespectful towards the other employees. Alex publicly humiliates his colleagues because of their job performance. Subsequently, Alex starts an argument that clearly does not benefit the group. Alex also makes fun of his colleagues.

Organization-Directed Deviance Condition

Alex comes in late to work without permission. Subsequently, Alex intentionally works slower even though important tasks have to be taken care of. You also observe that Alex takes longer breaks than permitted.

4

**CHAPTER 4: LEADERS' NARCISSISTIC RIVALRY AND
ABUSIVE SUPERVISION INTENTIONS – THE ROLE OF
LEADERS' INJURY INITIATION MOTIVES AND
FOLLOWER BEHAVIORS
(MANUSCRIPT 3)**

Gauglitz, I.K., Schyns, B., & Volmer, J. (2022). *Leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions – The role of leaders' injury initiation motives and follower behaviors*. [Manuscript in preparation]. Department of Psychology, University of Bamberg.

Abstract

Abusive supervision is a well-known phenomenon and causes serious damage. Our research aims to shed light on the antecedents of abusive supervision intentions by examining how leader personality (i.e., leader narcissism), leader motives (i.e., injury initiation motives), and follower work behavior (i.e., counterproductive work behavior [CWB], organizational citizenship behavior [OCB], and task performance [TP]) interplay to predict abusive supervision intentions. Drawing on the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Concept (NARC), we proposed a direct effect of leaders' dark side of narcissism (i.e., narcissistic rivalry) on abusive supervision intentions and an indirect effect via leaders' injury initiation motives. Furthermore, drawing on threatened egotism theory, we examined whether type of follower behavior moderates this indirect effect. In two experimental scenario designs, we consistently found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry was positively related to abusive supervision intentions and that there is an indirect effect via leaders' injury initiation motives. Finally, we found that this indirect effect remained significant in all types of follower behavior (CWB, OCB, and TP) and was significantly stronger when followers showed CWB than when they showed TP. We discuss our findings in light of the NARC and threatened egotism theory and propose recommendations for research and practice.

Keywords: narcissism, narcissistic rivalry, injury initiation motives, abusive supervision intentions, follower behavior

Introduction

Who doesn't know this situation: A leader takes advantage of his/her power position and abuses his/her followers, for instance, by humiliating them, derogating them, or lying to them. Almost everybody has either experienced this type of leader behavior or knows others who have been mistreated by their leader. Abusive supervision, a form of workplace mistreatment, captures these behaviors and specifically refers to leaders' hostile behaviors directed at their followers (Tepper, 2000). Abundant research has shown that it has deleterious consequences for followers and organizations alike (for reviews, see Martinko et al., 2013; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Tepper, 2007). The question arises as to why certain leaders develop abusive supervision intentions if the associated costs of abusive supervision are so high.

In two studies, we look at the complex interplay between leader personality, leader motives, and follower behavior to explain leaders' intentions to show abusive supervision. We thereby build on leadership process models that call to investigate leadership as an interaction process of multiple parties (i.e., leaders and followers; see e.g., Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). We specifically focus on leaders' internal processes leading to abusive supervision intentions, assuming that intentions are the most important and immediate predictors of actual abusive behavior (Ajzen, 1985; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). We posit that leader personality (i.e., leader narcissism), leader motives (i.e., injury initiation motives), and follower work behavior (i.e., counterproductive work behavior, organizational citizenship behavior versus task performance) interplay to predict intended leader behavior.

Following trait approaches to leadership (e.g., Antonakis et al., 2012; Judge et al., 2002), it has been found that leaders' personality traits (e.g., emotional intelligence, Machiavellianism, or some of the HEXACO personality traits) play a role when leaders show abusive supervision (e.g., Breevaart & de Vries, 2017; Kiazad et al., 2010; Xiaqi et al., 2012).

Narcissism has received a lot of attention in the leadership research field (e.g., Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Grijalva et al., 2015; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Narcissism is one of the Dark Triad traits (e.g., Paulhus & Williams, 2002), which are important predictors of workplace behaviors (Harms & Spain, 2015; Schyns, 2015). Narcissism is characterized by lack of empathy (Hepper, Hart, Meek, et al., 2014) and is linked to aggression (Seah & Ang, 2008). We argue that, hence, leaders high in narcissism are more likely to develop abusive supervision intentions. However, the previous studies yielded mixed results relating to the relationship between narcissism and abusive supervision with some studies reporting positive correlations between narcissism and abusive supervision and others not (e.g., Waldman et al., 2018; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). A reason for previously found mixed results might be the use of different one-dimensional narcissism measures which emphasize one or mix different aspects of narcissism. Narcissism contains a bright and a dark side (e.g., Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001) and this should also be reflected in the measure used to assess narcissism. Hence we decided to employ a different approach to examining leader narcissism compared to prior studies by building on the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Concept (NARC; Back et al., 2013). The advantage of the NARC is that it differentiates between a dark and a bright dimension of narcissism and thus allows to make more precise assumptions. The dark dimension, narcissistic rivalry, describes narcissists' antagonistic self-protection and is linked to striving for supremacy, devaluating others, and aggressiveness. The bright dimension, narcissistic admiration, describes narcissists' assertive self-enhancement and is linked to striving for uniqueness, grandiose fantasies, and being charming. We suggest that only leaders' narcissistic rivalry will be associated with their abusive supervision intentions.

Furthermore, theory and research have suggested that leaders show abusive supervision due to different motives, for instance, because they want to hurt their followers (e.g., Liu et al., 2012; Tepper, 2007). To the best of our knowledge, research on leaders' self-

rated motives for abusive supervision is not currently available. This leaves a gap in our knowledge as to why leaders themselves think they engage in abusive supervision. With this research, we want to fill this gap and add to understanding abusive supervision from a leader point of view. In line with theoretical considerations on narcissistic leaders (Hansbrough & Jones, 2014) and the NARC (Back et al., 2013), we argue that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry likely use abusive supervision because they want to hurt their followers. Thus, we additionally assume that there is an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives.

Finally, we investigated follower-related conditions under which leaders high in narcissistic rivalry indicate stronger or less strong injury initiation motives and subsequently abusive supervision intentions. We build on the NARC and threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), according to which narcissists are particularly likely to aggress when their positive self-views are threatened. We suggest that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will be particularly likely to display injury initiation motives and abusive supervision intentions when followers behave in ways that threaten their grandiose self-views. Therefore, we examine different follower behaviors (i.e., followers' counterproductive work behavior [CWB], organizational citizenship behavior [OCB], and requested task performance [TP]) and argue that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry will be most likely to show injury initiation motives and tend to react with abusive supervision when followers show negative (i.e., CWB) and to a lesser extent when they show positive (i.e., OCB) work behaviors that deviate from what was requested by the leader compared to just fulfilling tasks as requested (i.e., TP).

In summary, our approach enhances our understanding of the antecedents of abusive supervision intentions in at least three important ways. First, we acknowledge the difference between the bright and dark side of narcissism and focus on the dark side of leader narcissism

(i.e., narcissistic rivalry; Back et al., 2013) to improve the predictive value of narcissism. Second, we take a process-view on abusive supervision intentions by considering the role of leaders' injury initiation motives (see also, e.g., Liu et al., 2012; Tepper, 2007). Third, we take into account that abusive supervision is co-created in social interactions with followers (e.g., Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). By doing so, we complement predominant models of abusive supervision that take a trickle-down (e.g., Liu et al., 2012; Mawritz et al., 2012) or displayed aggression perspective (Hoobler & Hu, 2013; Neves, 2014). We test a model of abusive supervision intentions that investigates the leaders' side, that is the dark side of narcissism and motives, as well as follower work behavior as a trigger for abusive supervision. This also means that the model considers how followers actively (intentionally or not) contribute to abusive supervision intentions (e.g., May et al., 2014) and thus deviates from the dominant view of seeing followers merely as victims of abusive supervision. Adding to our knowledge about the internal processes of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry and their reactions to follower behaviors can help to better understand the origins of abusive supervision intentions and support organizations in preventing leader abuse.

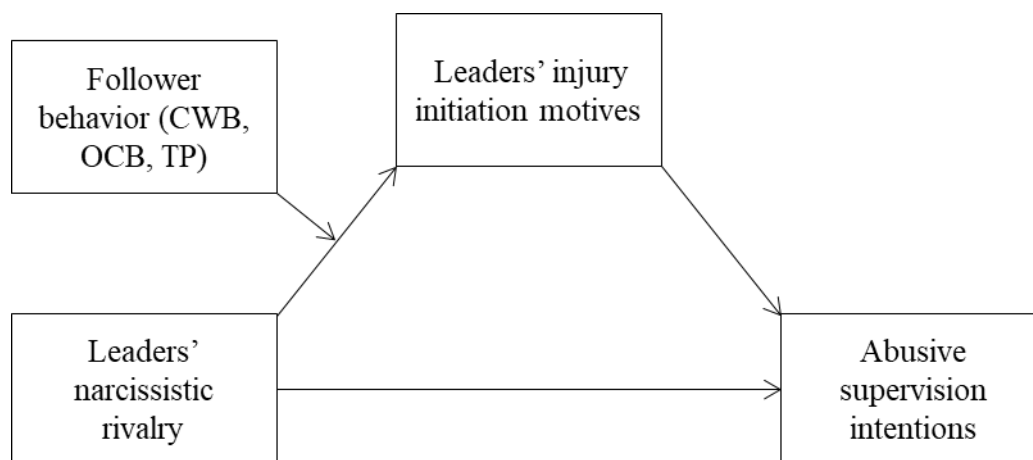
Figure 1 depicts the theoretical model of our study. In the following, we will outline our theoretical background in terms of leader narcissism, leaders' injury initiation motives, and follower behavior in more detail.

Leaders' Narcissistic Rivalry and Abusive Supervision Intentions

Narcissism is defined as “a relatively stable individual difference consisting of grandiosity, self-love, and inflated self-views” (Campbell et al., 2011, p. 269) and contains leader-like characteristics such as extraversion, a high sense of entitlement, a dominant interpersonal style, and the desire to achieve power and status (e.g., Emmons, 1984, 1987; Paunonen et al., 2006). Therefore, it is not surprising that narcissism is positively associated with leader emergence (Brunell et al., 2008; Grijalva et al., 2015), and that an optimum level

Figure 1

Theoretical Research Model



Note. CWB = Counterproductive work behavior. OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior.

TP = task performance.

of narcissism can lead to positive ratings of leader effectiveness (e.g., Emmons, 1984; Emmons, 1987; Grijalva et al., 2015; Paunonen et al., 2006). However, leader narcissism also has a downside (e.g., Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Palmer et al., 2020). For instance, narcissistic leaders receive poor interpersonal leadership and integrity ratings (Blair et al., 2008) and in some studies, narcissistic leaders were perceived as abusive (Waldman et al., 2018; but c.f. Wisse & Sleeb, 2016).

In prevailing research on narcissism and leadership, narcissism has been conceptualized as unidimensional and measured with the NPI (Grijalva et al., 2015; Raskin & Hall, 1979; Raskin & Terry, 1988). We argue that the recently introduced NARC (Back et al., 2013) has the potential to broaden our understanding of the relationship between leader narcissism and abusive supervision intentions. The NARC differentiates between a dark (i.e., narcissistic rivalry) and a bright (i.e., narcissistic admiration) side of narcissism, which are related to distinct social strategies used to uphold the narcissistic grandiose self (Back et al., 2013). They differ in term of how narcissists behave towards others in social situations,

making them relevant to leader-follower interactions. Narcissistic admiration is characterized by assertive self-enhancement and self-promotion strategies. Individuals high in admiration are more occupied with themselves and with thinking about their grandiosity and display charming behavior. In contrast, narcissistic rivalry is characterized by antagonistic self-protection and self-defense strategies. Individuals high in narcissistic rivalry strive for supremacy, devalue others, and behave aggressively to protect their superior status.

Only narcissistic rivalry is linked to antagonistic behaviors (Back et al., 2013). Consequently, we suggest that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is positively related to abusive supervision intentions. Empirical research supports this notion. Indeed, behaviors that are typical for individuals high in rivalry are similar to abusive supervisory behaviors (Tepper, 2000). For instance, Küfner et al. (2013) found that these individuals show arrogant and combative behaviors such as insulting others, making cynical remarks, or pointing at others' failures. Furthermore, narcissistic rivalry is associated with hostility, hostile goals, interpersonal problems (Grove et al., 2019), and influence tactics such as bullying or autocracy (Sauls et al., 2019). In addition, narcissistic rivalry is associated with self- and peer-rated social conflict (Lange et al., 2016).

Taken together and in line with the NARC and past empirical research, we propose:
Hypothesis 1: Leaders' narcissistic rivalry is positively related to abusive supervision intentions.

The Indirect Effect of Leaders' Injury Initiation Motives

Tepper (2007) suggested that leaders engage in abusive supervision either because they want their followers to perform better or because they want to harm them. While both explanations are plausible, we assume that in the context of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry injury initiation motives might be particularly relevant.

According to Hansbrough and Jones (2014), narcissistic leaders think of their followers in negative ways. For instance, they may possess negative implicit followership theories and think that their followers are incompetent or insubordinate. As a consequence, narcissistic leaders may attribute follower behaviours in negative ways (e.g., by assuming that followers make mistakes intentionally to harm and undermine the leader). These negative views of their followers may justify and may fuel abusive supervision. This consideration chimes with the NARC dimension of rivalry, where individuals think in negative ways about others and strive for supremacy over others which helps them to uphold their grandiose self-views (Back et al., 2013). It is therefore reasonable to assume that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry want to harm their followers and consequently display abusive supervision intentions as a means to keep their followers down and show their superiority.

Hypothesis 2: There is an indirect relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives.

The Moderating Effect of Follower Behavior

While we assume that leaders' narcissistic rivalry directly relates to abusive supervision intentions as well as indirectly via injury initiation motives, we also acknowledge that narcissists are especially likely to aggress in reaction to behaviors of others that question their favorable self-views (threatened egotism theory; Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). We, therefore, argue that followers might contribute to the effect of narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives as leaders feel threatened by some types of follower behavior.

According to threatened egotism theory, narcissists are sensitive to even minor insults and feedback that challenge their grandiose self-views (so-called ego threats; Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). They react with aggression to ego threats such as when being insulted (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), receiving negative feedback (Morf &

Rhodewalt, 1993; Smalley & Stake, 1996), or experiencing social rejection (Twenge & Campbell, 2003). When provoked, narcissists direct their aggression at the source of ego threat, for example, by showing hostility towards or derogating the feedback source (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). The NARC specifies that perceived ego threats particularly trigger narcissistic rivalry and antagonistic self-protection strategies (Back et al., 2013). Thus, when individuals high in narcissistic rivalry experience that others question their grandiose self-views, they are likely to derogate the source of the threat and aggress against that person to rebuild positive self-views and to regain status (Grapsas et al., 2019). For instance, Back et al. (2013) showed that in response to relationship transgressions, individuals high in narcissistic rivalry showed more revenge and less direct problem-focused reactions. They also react with dysfunctional coping after relationship transgressions (Wurst et al., 2017) and show a lack of forgiveness and revenge-oriented behaviors (Fatfouta et al., 2015). In line with threatened egotism theory and the NARC, we argue that when a follower behaves in ways that undermines their favorable self-views, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry might display stronger abusive supervision intentions because they want to injure this follower. In this vein, abusive supervision is a self-protection strategy activated in the face of ego threat (i.e., some follower behaviors).

We argue here that deviations from what leaders request and from what is formally part of a given job (called task performance [TP]; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002) might be particularly likely to instill a negative reaction in those leaders. Here, we can differentiate between negative (e.g., counterproductive work behavior [CWB]) and positive (organizational citizenship behavior [OCB]) deviations. Leaders high in narcissistic rivalry are likely to feel threatened by both types of behaviors as they undermine their status and question their power position (e.g., when disregarding instructions). Particularly, follower CWB (as compared to doing as they are told, task performance [TP]) is likely to increase the indirect relationship

between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives as it comprises behaviors that signal a lack of respect and a lack of acknowledging leader entitlement. However, we also assume that OCB (as opposed to TP) increases the indirect relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives as leaders high in narcissistic rivalry might perceive OCB as if the followers query their judgment and competence by doing more than asked or because they might envy them (Tariq et al., 2021). However, we expect that OCB increases this indirect effect to a lesser extent than CWB, as OCB is generally seen as a positive behavior that might contribute to organizational success and therefore also reflects well on the leader. That is, only under the condition where followers "do as they are told", or in our terminology, show TP, will leaders high in narcissistic rivalry not have an elevated wish to injure their follower and to react with abusive supervision.

In sum, we, therefore, argue that follower CWB and, to a lesser extent, follower OCB strengthens the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives. In contrast, when followers show TP, the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives should not be exacerbated. We thus hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: Follower behavior moderates the indirect positive relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives, such that the relationship is strongest when followers show CWB, less strong when followers show OCB, and smallest when followers show TP.

Overview

To examine the role of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury motivation as well as the moderating effect of follower behavior (CWB, OCB, and TP), we conducted two experimental scenario design studies. We manipulated follower

behavior and included written scenarios of a follower who either showed CWB or OCB and added TP in Study 2.

Study 1

Method

Participants and procedure. Participants were recruited in Germany via snowball procedure, a well-established method in research on organizational behavior (Fox et al., 2012; Wheeler et al., 2013). The research team and students enrolled in a Master of Science in Psychology program invited participants to take part in an online study. Data were collected two days apart to separate measurements and reduce method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2012). At T1, $N = 437$ participants, and at T2, $N = 353$ participants completed the questionnaire. After matching the samples, we deleted forty participants who answered at least one of three dichotomous knowledge questions about the experimental scenarios incorrectly. Furthermore, we asked participants to what extent they were able to place themselves in the situation described in the scenario (1 *not at all* to 6 *completely*) and how credible they found the scenario (1 *not credible at all* to 6 *completely credible*). We deleted eight participants who scored 1 on one of those two questions. Our final sample consisted of $N = 305$ participants (between-subjects design; CWB condition: $N = 145$; OCB condition: $N = 160$).

Participants (54.1% female) were on average 37.14 years old ($SD = 12.22$) and came from various industries such as healthcare and social services (17%), service industry (13.4%), education and teaching (10.8%), and IT and communication (9.2%). On average, participants worked 39.7 hours per week ($SD = 9.32$), and had 13.69 years of work experience ($SD = 12.36$). A total of $N = 120$ participants (39.3 %) held a leadership position and had an average of 8.58 years of leadership experience ($SD = 7.90$).

Instruments and manipulations. At T1, we assessed participants' narcissistic rivalry and narcissistic admiration (as control variable), and demographic information. At T2, we

provided participants with the experimental scenarios. After reading the scenarios, participants answered the quality check questions mentioned above and indicated their injury initiation motives and abusive supervision intentions. Where no German translation was available, items were translated and back translated independently by two language experts.

Narcissistic rivalry. We assessed leaders' narcissistic rivalry using the 9 items of the German version of the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ; Back et al., 2013). A sample item was "Other people are worth nothing." (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$). Items were answered on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not agree at all*) to 6 (*agree completely*).

Injury initiation motives. Leaders' desire to harm their employees was measured using an adaptation of the injury initiation motives scale (Liu et al., 2012). We asked participants regarding their desire to injure the depicted follower ("Please indicate to what degree you agree with the following desires regarding your follower."). A sample item is "I desire to cause injury on my follower" ($\alpha = .90$). Items were answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not agree at all*) to 7 (*agree completely*).

Abusive supervision intentions. Participants' intent to abuse the depicted follower was measured using an adaptation of a German version of Tepper's (2000) Abusive Supervision scale (Schilling & May, 2015). Measuring behavioral intentions is well established in aggression research (e.g., Griskevicius et al., 2009). Similar to Watkins et al. (2019), we adapted the scale and asked participants for their intent to show abusive supervision towards the follower ("How likely is it that you would show the following behaviors towards your follower?"). The scale consists of 15 items ($\alpha = .88$) and a sample item was "I ridicule my follower". Items were answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very unlikely*) to 5 (*very likely*).

Control variables. We controlled for leaders' narcissistic admiration using the 9 items of the German version of the NARQ (Back et al., 2013). A sample item was "I deserve to be seen as a great personality" ($\alpha = .86$). Items were answered on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not agree at all*) to 6 (*agree completely*). Furthermore, we controlled for leadership position (1 = *no leadership position*, 2 = *low leadership position [e.g., team lead]*, 3 = *middle leadership position [e.g., department head]*, 4 = *high leadership position [e.g., executive board]*).

Development and content of experimental scenarios. We followed Aguinis and Bradley's (2014) recommendations for designing experimental scenarios. Specifically, the first part of the scenarios contained the same background information for all participants. Participants were instructed to place themselves in the role of a leader who works for a software company. Participants received background information about the company as well as their job duties. They were told that they had asked a new follower to finish a presentation and to present it to themselves and their leader at a meeting (see supplementary material).

We based the content and wording of the subsequently described follower behavior on items relating to CWB (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Jones, 2009; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007) or OCB (Lehman & Simpson, 1992; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998; Williams & Anderson, 1991), respectively. In the CWB condition, the follower was described as coming in late to the meeting, neglecting to follow instructions, and making negative comments. In the OCB condition, the follower did more work than required, volunteered to do further work, and tried to think of ways to do the job better. We included several behavioral descriptors in each experimental condition to increase the level of realism and immersion. Both conditions were parallel in terms of length and order of events. Before administrating the scenarios, we sought feedback from several experts in the field of management and industrial-organizational psychology.

Manipulation checks of experimental scenarios. We tested our experimental manipulation in a pre-study with an independent sample of 169 German university students (in exchange for course credit). Of our participants, 72.2% were enrolled in psychology and 17.8% studied school psychology. Participants were on average 21.83 years old ($SD = 3.62$) and mostly female (82.2% female).

We implemented a between-subjects design (CWB condition: $N = 90$; OCB condition: $N = 79$) and compared participants' ratings of CWB and OCB. We included nine items from common measures of CWB selected to fit the content of our scenarios ($\alpha = .91$; Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Jones, 2009; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). A sample item read: "My follower came in late to work without permission". We equally included six items from common scales of OCB ($\alpha = .85$; Lehman & Simpson, 1992; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998; Williams & Anderson, 1991). A sample item is "My follower volunteered to do things for me". Items were answered on 5-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*).

As expected, we found that participants in the CWB condition rated the employee significantly higher on CWB ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 0.60$) compared to those in the OCB condition ($M = 1.07$, $SD = 0.15$; $t = 25.12$, $p < .001$). In addition, participants in the in the OCB condition rated the employee significantly higher on OCB ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.58$) compared to those in the CWB condition ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 0.66$; $t = -15.56$, $p < .001$). Thus, we can conclude that our manipulation check worked.

Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables are reported in Table 1.

Results of linear regression analyses showed that leaders' narcissistic rivalry ($\beta = .31$, $p < .001$) was positively related to abusive supervision intentions (see Table 2). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 2*Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Internal Consistency Estimates (Study 1)*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Leadership position ^a	1.66	0.94	-					
2 Narcissistic admiration	2.74	0.86	.13*	(.86)				
3 Narcissistic rivalry	1.79	0.62	-.03	.35***	(.80)			
4 Injury initiation motives	1.29	0.81	-.06	.06	.27***	(.90)		
5 Follower behavior ^b	1.52	0.50	.08	.08	.β6	-.16**	-	
6 Abusive supervision intentions	1.25	0.38	-.06	.16**	.33***	.33***	-.14*	(.88)

Note. *N* = 305. Alpha coefficients are given in parentheses along the diagonal.

^a coded as 1 = *no leadership position*, 2 = *low leadership position*, 3 = *middle leadership position*, 4 = *high leadership position*. ^b coded as 1 = *Counterproductive work behavior*, 2 = *Organizational citizenship behavior*.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3

Regression Coefficients of Leaders' Narcissistic Rivalry on Abusive Supervision Intentions (Studies 1 and 2)

Variable	Study 1			Study 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β
Step 1						
Leadership position	-0.03	0.02	-0.08	-0.02	0.03	-0.03
Narcissistic admiration	0.07	0.03	0.17**	0.06	0.03	0.10*
R^2		0.03			0.01	
Step 2						
Leadership position	-0.02	0.02	-0.06	-0.01	0.03	-0.01
Narcissistic admiration	0.02	0.03	0.05	-0.03	0.03	-0.05
Narcissistic rivalry	0.19	0.04	0.31***	0.21	0.03	0.31***
R^2		.12			.08	
ΔR^2		.09***			.07***	

Note. $N = 305$ (Study 1). $N = 462$ (Study 2).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Next, we tested Hypothesis 2 using model 4 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2018). In line with our expectations, there was an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives ($B = 0.05$, $SE = 0.03$, $CI [.01, .12]$). Leaders' narcissistic rivalry was positively associated with injury initiation motives ($B = 0.37$, $SE = 0.08$, $CI [.22, .52]$) and injury initiation motives were positively associated with abusive supervision intentions ($B = 0.12$, $SE = 0.03$, $CI [.07, .17]$). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Next, to test Hypothesis 3, we computed model 7 of the PROCESS macro (see table 3). Results showed that the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives was not moderated via follower behavior ($B = -0.03$, $SE = 0.04$, $CI [-.14, .02]$). The indirect effect in the CWB condition ($B = 0.06$, $SE = 0.04$, $CI [.01, .19]$) was as strong as in the OCB condition ($B = 0.04$, $SE = 0.02$, $CI [.00, .09]$). Thus, Hypothesis 3 had to be rejected relating to the difference between CWB and OCB.

Table 3

Conditional Indirect Effects of Leaders' Narcissistic Rivalry on Abusive Supervision Intentions via Injury Initiation Motives (Studies 1 and 2)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	
			LL	UL
Study 1				
CWB ^a	0.06	0.05	0.01	0.19
OCB ^b	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.09
Study 2				
CWB ^a	0.22 ^d	0.05	0.13	0.33
OCB ^b	0.10	0.04	0.04	0.19
TP ^c	0.04 ^d	0.02	0.01	0.08

Note. $N = 305$. Bootstrap sample size: 5000. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit.

^a = Counterproductive work behavior. ^b = Organizational citizenship behavior. ^c = Task performance.

^d = Effects differ significantly.

Discussion Study 1

Results of Study 1 revealed that leaders' narcissistic rivalry was positively related to abusive supervision intentions and that leaders' injury initiation motives could in part explain

this relationship: Leaders high in narcissistic rivalry experienced injury initiation motives towards their followers and injury initiation motives were positively associated with abusive supervision intentions. However, the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives was as strong when followers showed CWB as when they showed OCB. We thus cannot conclude from this study that follower CWB is more provoking to leaders high in narcissistic rivalry than follower OCB. In Study 2, we included another experimental scenario, which describes a follower who shows TP as requested, as we assumed that in this condition the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives would be less strong than in the CWB and OCB conditions.

Study 2

Method

Participants and design. We recruited participants through an online panel provider (respondi) in Germany. Online panels provide access to high-quality and reliable data (Landers & Behrend, 2015; Roulin, 2015). Adults who worked at least 20 hours per week at the time of the study and had a minimum of 3 months of work experience were invited to take part in a two-part online study. We collected data approximately 1 week apart. In exchange for participation, participants received 0.75 €/ 1.00€ for the first/second survey. After matching the data from T1 and T2, we deleted 96 of the 558 participants due to poor data quality (e.g., did not answer the knowledge questions on the scenarios correctly, could not place themselves in the scenario, and did not find the scenarios credible). The final sample consisted of 462 working adults (between-subjects design; CWB condition: $N = 155$; OCB condition: $N = 151$; TP condition: $N = 156$).

Participants (52.2% women) were on average 43.71 years old ($SD = 11.05$) and worked 37.63 hours per week ($SD = 8.11$). Of our participants, $N = 174$ (37.7%) held a

leadership position and had on average 10.80 years of leadership experience ($SD = 9.25$).

Participants came from various industries (e.g., service industry [15.4%], healthcare and social services [13.2%], public administration, defense, and social insurance [11.3%], and the manufacturing sector [8.4%]).

Measures. At T1, participants filled in questionnaires on narcissistic rivalry ($\alpha = .86$), narcissistic admiration (as control variable; $\alpha = .85$), and demographic information (e.g., leadership position as control variable). At T2, participants were randomly provided with one of three experimental scenarios (CWB, OCB, or TP condition) and subsequently answered the quality check questions, followed by questions on injury initiation motives ($\alpha = .92$) and abusive supervision intentions ($\alpha = .94$). Measures were the same as in Study 1.

Development and manipulation check of scenario TP. We developed the additional TP scenario by adapting the content of the scenarios used in Study 1. We based our wording on a scale that captures task performance (Williams & Anderson, 1991) and described the follower as someone who performs tasks as requested but does not volunteer to do extra work (see supplementary material for the complete scenario). For a pre-study to test the additional TP scenario, we recruited 99 working adults from diverse industries via a snowball procedure similar to Study 1. Participants (58.6% women) were on average 42.74 years old ($SD = 12.72$) and reported a mean of 18.96 years of work experience ($SD = 12.35$). Overall, 38 participants (38.4%) held a leadership position and had on average 9.29 years of leadership experience ($SD = 7.15$).

As a manipulation check, we included four items each to measure CWB (Bennett & Robinson, 2000), OCB (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998; Williams & Anderson, 1991), and 3 items from Williams and Anderson (1991) for TP. Items were answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Cronbach's alpha was .72 for TP. As Cronbach's alphas for CWB and OCB were lower than desirable (.30 for CWB and .41 for

OCB), we calculated composite reliability scores as an alternative estimation for reliability (Raykov, 2001). Composite reliability scores were .66 for CWB and .53 for OCB and thus above/ close to the recommended value of .6 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). A one-factorial ANOVA and Bonferroni post-hoc tests showed that participants rated the scenario TP significantly higher on TP ($M = 4.51, SD = 0.59$) than on CWB ($M = 1.12, SD = 0.30; t = 43.55, p < .001$) and OCB ($M = 2.93, SD = 0.65, t = 19.13, p < .001$). As a consequence, we conclude that our manipulation worked and that our scenario TP adequately describes a follower who displays TP.

Results

Table 5 depicts means, standard deviations, correlations, and internal consistencies.

Results of a linear regression analysis (see Table 2) showed that leaders' narcissistic rivalry was significantly and positively related to abusive supervision intentions ($\beta = .31, p < .001$) Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

To test Hypothesis 2, we computed model 4 of the PROCESS macro. In line with our expectations, there was an indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives ($B = 0.13, SE = 0.03, CI [.08, .20]$). Leaders' narcissistic rivalry was positively associated with injury initiation motives ($B = 0.32, SE = 0.06, CI [.22, .43]$) and injury initiation motives were positively associated with abusive supervision intentions ($B = 0.42, SE = 0.02, CI [.37, .46]$). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Next, to test Hypothesis 3, we computed model 7 of the PROCESS macro (see table 4) to test whether the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives was moderated by follower behavior. As our moderator was multi-categorical (three conditions: CWB, OCB, and TP), we used the dummy coding option of PROCESS. We used the TP condition as a reference category, as we assumed that in this condition the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive

Table 4*Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Internal Consistency Estimates (Study 2)*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Leadership position ^a	1.62	0.92	-					
2 Narcissistic admiration	2.76	0.89	.20***	(.85)				
3 Narcissistic rivalry	1.97	0.79	.05	.48***	(.86)			
4 Injury initiation motives	1.38	0.84	-.03	.06	.26***	(.92)		
5 Follower behavior ^b	2.00	0.82	.01	.03	-.02	-.33***	-	
6 Abusive supervision intentions	1.33	0.53	-.01	.10*	.29***	.69***	-.26***	(.94)

Note. *N* = 462. Alpha coefficients are given in parentheses along the diagonal.

^a coded as 1 = *no leadership position*, 2 = *low leadership position*, 3 = *middle leadership position*, 4 = *high leadership position*. ^b coded as 1 = *Counterproductive work behavior*, 2 = *Organizational citizenship behavior*, 3 = *Task performance*.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

supervision intentions via injury initiation motives would be lowest compared to the CWB and OCB conditions. Results showed that the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives was significantly stronger in the CWB condition ($B = 0.22$, $SE = 0.05$, $CI [.13, .33]$) than in the TP condition ($B = 0.04$, $SE = 0.02$, $CI [.01, .08]$) as indicated by the not-overlapping confidence intervals, but as strong as in the OCB condition ($B = 0.10$, $SE = 0.04$, $CI [.04, .19]$). Furthermore, the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives in the OCB condition ($B = 0.10$, $SE = 0.04$, $CI [.04, .19]$) was as strong as in the TP condition ($B = 0.04$, $SE = 0.02$, $CI [.01, .08]$). In sum, the effect sizes were in the expected direction (strongest effect in CWB condition, followed by OCB condition, followed by TP condition) and Hypothesis 3 was partly supported relating to the difference of indirect effects between CWB and TP.

Discussion

The main goal of our studies was to examine antecedents of abusive supervision intentions, assuming that leader personality, leader motives, and follower behavior interplay to predict abusive supervision intentions. Based on a process model of narcissism, the NARC, we took a leader perspective and explored whether leaders high in narcissistic rivalry intended to show abusive supervision. Furthermore, we examined why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry displayed abusive supervision intentions and proposed that there is an indirect effect via injury initiation motives. Finally, following threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), we proposed a trickle-up model of abusive supervision intentions and complemented past research by examining how follower behavior (i.e., CWB, OCB, and TP) might trigger abusive supervision intentions. Our studies offer several important insights to the literature.

Theoretical Contributions

First, the results of our studies contribute to trait approaches to leadership (e.g., Antonakis et al., 2012; Judge et al., 2002) as they indicate that leader narcissism is a key individual difference variable related to abusive supervision intentions. In comparison to prior research on narcissism and leadership, which has mostly considered narcissism as a unidimensional trait (e.g., Waldman et al., 2018; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016), we built our studies on the NARC and consistently found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is positively related to abusive supervision intentions, even when controlling for leaders' narcissistic admiration. Thus, our results lend support to the assumption that narcissistic rivalry is the antagonistic facet of narcissism that has destructive consequences (see NARC; Back et al., 2013). According to Back et al. (2013), individuals high in narcissistic rivalry are strongly motivated to protect their grandiose self-views by thinking in derogatory ways about others, behaving aggressively, and striving for supremacy. Our studies show that at work, these antagonistic tendencies can be shown in the form of leaders' abusive supervision intentions.

Second, our studies contribute to leadership process models (e.g., Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) and offer insights into the mechanisms (i.e., injury initiation motives) leading to abusive supervision intentions. Following Tepper's (2007) theoretical assumption that leaders may mistreat their followers to harm them, we found that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry experienced higher injury initiation motives and that injury initiation motives positively related to abusive supervision intentions. We thus conclude here that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry purposefully show abusive supervision intentions to harm their followers. This finding is in line with Back et al. (2013) and Hansbrough and Jones (2014), who argue that individuals high in narcissistic rivalry (or narcissism in general) possess negative views about others and purposefully display aggression/ engage in abusive supervision.

Third, our research aimed to shed light on the social conditions reinforcing the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision intentions via injury initiation motives. In line with the NARC and threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), we proposed that some (i.e., CWB, and to a lower extent OCB), but not all follower behaviors (e.g., TP) pose an ego threat to leaders high in narcissistic rivalry and reinforce injury initiation motives and subsequently abusive supervision intentions in these leaders. However, our results revealed that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry wanted to harm their followers and tended to show abusive supervision intentions to the same extent in reaction to follower CWB and OCB. Thus, it seems that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry have a general propensity to harm their followers who deviate from their instructions and to show abusive supervision and that, in this context, if the deviation is negative (CWB) or positive (OCB) is less relevant. Follower CWB encompasses behaviors that may harm the leader and signal disrespect (e.g., such as telling the leader their suggestions were useless, or by coming to work too late). Follower OCB encompasses behaviors that might question the leaders' competence (e.g., by making suggestions for improvement). Therefore, for leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, CWB and OCB equally trigger antagonistic responses and in our case the intention to show abusive supervision. Furthermore, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry wanted to harm their followers more and displayed more abusive supervision intentions when they experienced a follower who showed CWB than when they experienced a follower who showed TP. Thus, follower TP, which encompasses the fulfillment of tasks as requested, seems to challenge the grandiose self-views of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry less than follower CWB. In sum, follower behavior influences the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry, injury initiation motives, and abusive supervision intentions at least to some extent.

Practical Implications

Our results offer important practical contributions. First of all, to prevent abusive supervision, organizations must take measures that focus on the leader. We found that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry have a heightened propensity to aggress and tended to show abusive supervision intent. Therefore, in a first step, it is important to identify such leaders. Ideally, narcissistic rivalry should be considered in the personnel selection process and staffing decisions so that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry are not selected for leadership positions. However, if they already have leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, organizations can still create interventions. As outlined in the NARC and as the first empirical results suggest, leaders' narcissistic rivalry goes hand in hand with a lack of empathy (Back et al., 2013; Leunissen et al., 2017). Yet being empathetic is an important prerequisite to behaving prosocially (Miller & Eisenberg, 1988; Watkins et al., 2019). Therefore, one promising approach could be to increase empathy in leaders high in narcissistic rivalry (e.g., Hepper, Hart, & Sedikides, 2014), which would then reduce injury initiation motives. To convince those leaders to take part in an intervention that trains perspective-taking, it must be appealing to them. For instance, the positive outcomes of such training for leaders' grandiose self-views should be highlighted (e.g., by advertising perspective-taking as a desirable skill; Hepper, Hart, & Sedikides, 2014). Feeling more empathy for their followers might reduce the devaluing thoughts and the desire to injure followers of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry (e.g., Watkins et al., 2019). This in turn makes abusive supervisory reactions less likely.

In addition, followers might wonder why they get treated in abusive ways after showing voluntary extra efforts (i.e., OCB) or after fulfilling their tasks as requested (i.e., TP). Not knowing why their leader mistreats them might be extremely stressful and it is, therefore, important to increase followers' understanding of the reasons behind their leaders' behavior. This can help in the sense-making process and give relief to followers. Should the

recommendation thus be to encourage followers to *not* display OCB or TP? We do not think so as OCB and TP have lots of positive outcomes and overall contribute to organizational success (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Therefore, it is clear that interventions must start with the leader to protect motivated followers from negative leader reactions.

Limitations and Future Research

While a clear strength of our studies is that we focused on the dark side of narcissism (i.e., narcissistic rivalry) in the emergence of abusive supervision intentions, we focused on leaders' narcissistic rivalry only and did not examine the role of followers' narcissism. Yet, it has been proposed that the interaction between leaders' and followers' narcissism may influence leadership outcomes (Grijalva & Harms, 2014). Therefore, future research may consider how leaders' and followers' narcissistic rivalry might interactively contribute to abusive supervision intentions.

With our studies we strived to examine the dark side of leader narcissism and found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is positively related to abusive supervision intentions. However, leader narcissism also has a bright side – leaders' narcissistic admiration, which is linked to charming behaviors and an assertive self-enhancing style (Back et al., 2013). While we controlled for leaders' narcissistic admiration in our analyses, we did not examine its relation to other leadership styles. Future research could therefore examine whether leaders' narcissistic admiration positively influences leadership and for instance is associated with “good” leadership styles such as transformational leadership, which – similar to narcissistic admiration – contains an aspect of charisma (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1993).

In our studies, we were interested in leaders' internal processes and hence focused on abusive supervision intentions. Therefore, we do not know whether abusive supervision intentions actually result in abusive supervision perceived by followers. For example, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry might shy away from openly abusive behavior due to a fear of

being exposed to evaluation by others. Therefore, future studies might look at how abusive supervision intentions manifest in actual behavior perceived by followers and should include follower perceptions of abusive supervision. However, intentions are the most immediate predictor of actual behaviors (Ajzen, 1985; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Watkins et al., 2019) and therefore, we can assume that abusive supervision intentions may precede actual abusive supervision at least to some extent.

Finally, while we chose an experimental research design to enhance the internal validity of our research findings, a drawback of our methodology is that it constrains the external generalizability of our results (Scandura & Williams, 2000). Nevertheless, we strived to enhance the external generalizability of our findings by carefully designing our experimental scenarios (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014), which is important to enhance the generalizability of experiments (Highhouse, 2009). For instance, we gave sufficient background information so that participants could easily place themselves in the situation. Additionally, we ensured that our scenarios are realistic and easily generalizable by basing the description of our scenarios on common definitions and measures of CWB, OCB, and TP. Thus we ensured that our experimental stimuli are representative for our moderator variables. Besides, using two additional and independent pre-studies, we carefully checked whether our manipulation worked. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that future research should replicate our studies' findings with well-designed field studies.

Conclusion

Our studies show that some leaders (i.e., leaders high in narcissistic rivalry) have a heightened propensity to show abusive supervision. In addition, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry display abusive supervision intentions with a malicious motive – because they want to injure their followers. Unexpectedly, the way followers behave plays a minor role in the development of abusive supervision intentions. Leaders high in narcissistic rivalry develop

abusive supervision intentions because they want to injure their followers more or less independently of follower behavior. This tendency is only slightly stronger when followers show CWB than when followers show TP.

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Supplementary Material

Complete Experimental Scenarios

Introduction. Please imagine that you work as a project manager for a medium-sized software company which provides IT solutions. A challenging project lies ahead which involves the development and implementation of a new electronical communication system. You are responsible for the planning and management of the project. This means also that you are responsible for achieving the target. You already created a project plan and derived subgoals. In addition, you delegate individual tasks to your employees and monitor their progress. You have a new employee working for you since the beginning of the month. You assigned him the task of finalizing a presentation on the current state of the project and to present it to you and your own supervisor. To help your employee getting started you took the time to prepare a template for the presentation. You created slides for the cornerstones of the project. Additionally, you highlighted relevant points and included comments so that your employee knows which parts he has to work on. You emailed the presentation to your employee and asked him to use your presentation as a template. Today he is meant to present the revised presentation to you and your supervisor. The meeting is scheduled for 9 o'clock.

CWB condition. On the dot at 9 o'clock you welcome your supervisor. Your employee arrives with a delay of 15 minutes and starts with his presentation. When he opens the presentation you immediately realize that, contrary to what you agreed on, the presentation is not based on your template. Your employee did not finalize the presentation as requested. Instead your employee prepared a completely new presentation. After the meeting with your supervisor you address this issue and ask your employee why he did not use your template. Your employee answers that your template was neither comprehensive nor useful.

OCB condition. On the dot at 9 o'clock you welcome your supervisor. Your employee is already on-site and prepared everything for the presentation so that you can

immediately get started. When he opens the presentation you immediately realize that, as you agreed, the presentation is based on your template. Your employee finalized the presentation as requested. Furthermore, your employee added supplementary slides. After the meeting with your supervisor your employee turns to you and says that your template was comprehensive and useful. Besides he would like to present you with some suggestions for the further process of the project which he put together. He also prepared a summary of his suggestions which he hands over to you.

TP condition. On the dot at 9 o'clock you welcome your supervisor. Your employee arrives at the same time and starts with his presentation. When he opens the presentation you immediately realize that, as you agreed, the presentation is based on your template. Your employee finalized the presentation as requested. After the meeting with your supervisor you talk with your employee about the presentation that was based on your template.

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CHAPTER 5: LEADERS' NARCISSISTIC RIVALRY AND ABUSIVE SUPERVISION: A MINI META-ANALYSIS

Abstract

The current dissertation's primary studies revealed a positive relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. However, the effect sizes differed across studies. Therefore, a mini meta-analysis was conducted to achieve a more reliable estimate of the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. Results of the mini meta-analysis revealed a partial correlation between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision of $r = .28$ ($k = 6$ studies; $N = 1,496$), representing a medium-sized effect. Overall, this indicates strong support for leaders' narcissistic rivalry as an antecedent of abusive supervision.

Keywords: narcissistic rivalry, abusive supervision, meta-analysis

Introduction

In the present dissertation, I expected leader narcissism to be a primary predictor of abusive supervision (see Chapter 1). Building on the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Concept (NARC; Back et al., 2013), I differentiated between leaders' narcissistic admiration and rivalry in all manuscripts included in this dissertation (see Chapters 2 to 4). Across all manuscripts, I tested the hypothesis that leaders' narcissistic rivalry (the antagonistic facet of narcissism associated with social conflict; Back et al., 2013) would be associated with abusive supervision. In support of my hypothesis, I found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry was directly and positively associated with abusive supervision across all of the studies included in this dissertation. However, the effect sizes differed across the studies and ranged from $\beta = 0.22$ to $\beta = 0.41$. Therefore, I conducted a mini meta-analysis to summarize the results of these studies. Meta-analysis offers the opportunity to obtain a more precise estimate of effects by increasing statistical power (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001). Accordingly, the goal of this mini meta-analysis was to gain a more reliable estimate of the relationship of leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision.

Method

To conduct the mini meta-analysis, I used the open-source tool Meta-Essentials (Suurmond, van Rhee, & Hak, 2017). Meta-Essentials consists of several workbooks for conducting meta-analyses with different types of effect sizes (van Rhee, Suurmond, & Hak, 2015). I used Workbook 6, which allows users to “compare results of studies that have used different regression models” (van Rhee et al., 2015, p. 43). This workbook seemed appropriate as I used regression models with different numbers of control variables to test the direct effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision across the current studies (see Chapters 2 to 4). Workbook 6 calculates an effect size (here: partial correlations) between predictor and criterion variables while controlling for other (control) variables entered in the

regression model (van Rhee et al., 2015). Thus, I meta-analyzed the effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision, while controlling for all control variables included in the respective regression models.

Results and Discussion

The results of the mini meta-analysis are presented in Table 1. The combined effect size across studies (here: the partial correlation between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision) was $r = .28$ (95% CI [.21, .34]). The Q -statistic was not significant ($Q = 5.90, p = .316$), indicating that there was no heterogeneity in the data.

Overall, by meta-analytically summarizing this dissertation's primary studies (see Chapters 2 to 4), I was able to place greater trust in the reliability and size of the association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. The results of the mini meta-analysis suggest that there is a moderately positive association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. This finding is in line with the NARC, according to which narcissistic rivalry reflects the antagonistic side of narcissism that is related to social conflict—here, with respect to abusive supervision in the workplace. In sum, these findings support the assumption that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is an important variable to consider in the study of antecedents of abusive supervision.

Table 1

Outcomes from the Mini Meta-Analysis – Partial Correlations between Leaders' Narcissistic Rivalry and Abusive Supervision

Study	N	Effect size	95% CI	
			LL	UL
Manuscript 1, Study 1	123	.27	.10	.44
Manuscript 1, Study 2	313	.37	.27	.47
Manuscript 2, Study 1	152	.31	.17	.46
Manuscript 2, Study 2	141	.23	.07	.39
Manuscript 3, Study 1	305	.24	.13	.34
Manuscript 3, Study 2	462	.23	.14	.31
Combined effect size	1,496	.28	.21	.34
			.00	.50

Note. Effect sizes are partial correlations between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision. CI = Confidence interval; *LL* = Lower limit; *UL* = Upper limit.

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CHAPTER 6: GENERAL DISCUSSION

Overall Summary and Integration of Study Results

The overarching goal of this dissertation was to broaden the understanding of the antecedents of abusive supervision from the leaders' perspective. More precisely, I examined whether narcissistic leaders are likely to display abusive supervision (Research Question 1) and identified the cognitive processes that can explain why they do so (Research Question 2). Furthermore, I investigated how follower behavior influences narcissistic leaders' underlying cognitive processes and thus evokes abusive supervision (Research Question 3). To investigate these research questions, I conducted six empirical studies (see Chapters 2 to 4). Furthermore, I conducted a mini meta-analysis (see Chapter 5) to summarize some of the research findings from the primary studies included in this dissertation.

Building on the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Concept (Back et al., 2013), I proposed and found across all studies that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is the antagonistic facet of leader narcissism that is associated with abusive supervision. Furthermore, meta-analytic results corroborated this finding and indicated that the relationship between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision was positive and moderate in size.

In addition, building on threatened egotism theory (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), I proposed and found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry was associated with specific cognitive processes, which could account for why these leaders show abusive supervision. With regard to the underlying cognitive processes, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry were more likely to show abusive supervision (in part) because they perceived self-esteem threats (see Chapter 2) or because they experienced injury initiation motives toward their followers (see Chapters 3 and 4).

Finally, as destructive leadership is co-created between leaders and followers (Padilla, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2007; Shamir, 2007), I also examined whether follower behavior influences leaders high in narcissistic rivalry and the underlying cognitive processes and thus evokes

abusive supervision. The results were complex given that different follower behaviors and underlying cognitive processes were examined in each manuscript. I found that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry were more likely to show abusive supervision in response to followers' supervisor-directed deviance compared to followers' coworker-directed deviance (see Chapter 3) and in response to followers' counterproductive work behavior in general compared to followers' task performance (see Chapter 4). However, followers' supervisor-directed deviance did not moderate the indirect effect of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive supervision through perceived self-esteem threat (see Chapter 2). Furthermore, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry also showed abusive supervision in response to followers' organization-directed deviance (Chapter 3) and organizational citizenship behavior (see Chapter 4). Finally, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry did not show abusive supervision in response to followers' task performance (see Chapter 4). In sum, these findings indicate that followers may contribute to abusive supervision, but it depends on the specific behaviors they enact.

Theoretical Implications

The results of this dissertation have important theoretical implications and contribute to the literature on the antecedents of abusive supervision in the following ways.

First and foremost, the current dissertation enhances the understanding of how abusive supervision emerges from the leaders' perspective. Prior research has primarily examined abusive supervision from the followers' perspective (Mackey, Frieder, Brees, & Martinko, 2017; Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013; Tepper, Simon, & Park, 2017; Zhang & Bednall, 2016) but such an approach cannot take into account whether leaders are aware of their own abusive supervision and why and under which conditions they themselves indicate that they are showing abusive supervision. By investigating leaders' self-ratings of abusive supervision, the current dissertation provides meaningful information about leaders' self-

awareness of abusive supervision (Fleenor, Smither, Atwater, Braddy, & Sturm, 2010) and contributes to a more holistic understanding of abusive supervision that can complement the predominant focus on followers' perspectives. Leaders' self-ratings are an expression of leaders' underlying dispositions (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992) and provide useful insights into which leaders are likely to display abusive supervision. Accordingly, in the current dissertation, I found that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry were likely to admit that they intended to show abusive supervision in hypothetical scenarios (see the experimental vignette studies in Chapters 2 to 4) or that they had actually shown abusive supervision in the past (see the autobiographical recollections in Chapter 3). Finally, by adopting the leaders' perspective, I could investigate leaders' internal processes and could thus contribute to a better understanding of why these leaders show abusive supervision.

Second, the current dissertation was aimed at disentangling prior contradictory findings on the relationship between leader narcissism and abusive supervision. Whereas some studies indicated a direct positive relationship between leader narcissism and abusive supervision (Waldman, Wang, Hannah, Owens, & Balthazard, 2018; Whitman, Halbesleben, & Shanine, 2013), others did not (Nevicka, De Hoogh, Den Hartog, & Belschak, 2018; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). One reason for these inconsistent findings could be the use of different one-dimensional narcissism measures, which cover different characteristics of narcissism and do not differentiate between the bright and dark sides of narcissism indicated in the literature (e.g., Braun, 2017; Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Campbell, Hoffman, Campbell, & Marchisio, 2011; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Therefore, in the current dissertation, I employed the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ; Back et al., 2013), which assesses two dimensions of narcissism: narcissistic admiration (covering the bright side of narcissism) and narcissistic rivalry (covering the dark side of narcissism). According to the NARC, narcissistic admiration and narcissistic rivalry are associated with different

motivational and behavioral dynamics as well as with different social interaction outcomes, making this differentiation in abusive supervision research highly relevant. In this vein, I hypothesized and found across all of this dissertation's studies that leaders' narcissistic rivalry was positively associated with abusive supervision (see Chapters 2 to 4) and that the size of this association was moderately high (as indicated by the mini meta-analysis in Chapter 5). By contrast, leaders' narcissistic admiration was either unrelated to abusive supervision (see Chapter 2, both studies; Chapter 3, Study 2; and Chapter 4, both studies) or slightly negatively related to abusive supervision (see Chapter 3, Study 1). At least two important conclusions can be drawn from these findings. First, Back et al.'s (2013) two-dimensional conceptualization of narcissism was successfully applied to the work context, revealing that a differentiated view on narcissism is highly relevant in the study of social interactions at work- here, with respect to abusive supervision. It seems that abusive supervision primarily results from the motivation to protect the grandiose self-views of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry. By showing abusive supervision, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry can satisfy their inner striving for supremacy (e.g., by putting their followers down), devalue others in order to feel better about themselves (e.g., by telling their followers that they are stupid), and can act out their aggressive tendencies (e.g., by being rude to their followers). Second, this dissertation offers an explanation for the inconsistent findings of prior studies on the link between leaders' narcissism and abusive supervision (Nevicka et al., 2018; Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). The finding that only leaders' narcissistic rivalry, but not leaders' narcissistic admiration, was positively associated with abusive supervision suggests that it is important to differentiate between the bright and dark sides of narcissism. By contrast, one-dimensional measures of narcissism might bias the findings and could even cancel out diverging effects.

Second, the current dissertation extends prior research on the relationship between leader narcissism and abusive supervision by taking a process-view. Thus, unlike previous research (Nevicka et al., 2018; Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016), the current dissertation provides explanations for why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry show abusive supervision. The results from this dissertation revealed that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is associated with specific cognitive processes that can explain why these leaders engage in abusive supervision. More precisely, I found that leaders' narcissistic rivalry was positively associated with perceived self-esteem threats, and these led to self-reported abusive supervision intentions but not to follower-reported abusive supervision (see Chapter 2). Furthermore, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry tended to experience injury initiation motives toward some of their followers, and injury initiation motives in turn evoked abusive supervision (see Chapters 3 and 4). Contrary to this, the association between leaders' narcissistic rivalry and abusive supervision could not be explained by these leaders' performance promotion motives toward their followers (see Chapter 3). These results are in line with threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998) and the NARC (Back et al., 2013), according to which individuals high in narcissistic rivalry continuously strive to protect their grandiose self-views from real or imagined ego threats. These self-regulatory dynamics make hostile cognitive intrapsychic processes chronically salient and may ultimately result in aggression as a means to re-establish one's grandiose self-views (Back et al., 2013; Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Accordingly, it is likely that the described cognitive processes (i.e., perceived self-esteem threats and injury initiation motives) result from leaders high in narcissistic rivalry who are constantly striving to defend their grandiose self-views against real or imagined ego threats at work and might then translate into abusive supervision. In this vein, abusive supervision could be interpreted as a means for reducing the hostile and

unpleasant cognitive states of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry and might serve the overarching goal of re-establishing grandiose self-views. In sum, by taking a leader-perspective and by investigating leaders' internal processes, the current dissertation enhances our understanding of the intrapsychic mechanisms of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry that lead to abusive supervision.

Third, the current dissertation provides insights into the interactive effects between leader narcissism and follower behaviors. Prior research has already revealed that followers may contribute to abusive supervision (e.g., Mackey et al., 2017; Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2017; Zhang & Bednall, 2016). The current dissertation builds on these findings and extends them by showing how follower behaviors might trigger cognitive processes in leaders high in narcissistic rivalry and consequently evoke abusive supervision. The findings of this dissertation showed that not all follower behaviors contributed to abusive supervision equally. On the one hand, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry perceived self-esteem threats and showed abusive supervision intentions independently of followers' supervisor-directed deviance (see Chapter 2, Study 2). Thus, it seems that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry constantly feel threatened by their followers, and therefore, additional acts of followers' supervisor-directed deviance no longer make a difference. This finding is in line with the NARC (Back et al., 2013), according to which the antagonistic self-protection strategies of individuals high in narcissistic rivalry (e.g., negative thoughts about others) are constantly activated and lead to a general propensity to aggress (similar to Hansbrough & Jones', 2014, assumption that narcissists generally hold negative implicit beliefs about followers, and such beliefs make abusive supervision more likely). On the other hand, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry experienced injury initiation motives in reaction to specific (i.e., organization-directed and supervisor-directed deviance; see Chapter 3) and global forms of followers' deviance (i.e., followers' counterproductive work behaviors; see Chapter 4) as well as in reaction to

followers' organizational citizenship behaviors (see Chapter 4), and these translated into abusive supervision. These results are in line with threatened egotism theory (Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), according to which narcissists react to individuals who behave in ego-threatening ways with aggression (e.g., abusive supervision) as these individuals evoke negative thoughts (e.g., injury initiation motives) in narcissists. By directing the aggressive responses toward the source of ego threat, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry can restore their grandiose self-views, punish the source of the negative evaluation, and regain their status (Baumeister et al., 1996; Grapsas, Brummelman, Back, & Denissen, 2019). In sum, the conclusion here is that not all follower behaviors trigger cognitive processes in leaders high in narcissistic rivalry in the same way. This dissertation therefore shows that abusive supervision results from a complex interplay between leader characteristics, specific cognitive processes, and specific follower behaviors.

Limitations and Future Research

The current dissertation has limitations, which offer starting points for future research. First, one of the main goals of this dissertation was to disentangle the relationship between leader narcissism and abusive supervision. In line with previous research (Nevicka et al., 2018; Waldman et al., 2018; Whitman et al., 2013; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016), the focus of the current dissertation was on leader narcissism as a personality trait. However, narcissism has also been conceptualized as a personality disorder (termed Narcissistic Personality Disorder [NPD]) in the clinical literature (e.g., Cain, Pincus, & Ansell, 2008), and this form of narcissism might also be relevant in the context of abusive supervision. NPD is defined in terms of a sense of entitlement, interpersonal exploitativeness, a lack of empathy, and arrogant, haughty behaviors or attitudes according to the DSM-V. Due to these social impairments, it is likely that leaders with NPD have problems building positive relationships with their followers and might even show abusive supervision due to their exploitative and

arrogant behaviors and their lack of empathy. Besides this, both clinical and social-personality conceptualizations of narcissism distinguish between narcissistic grandiosity and narcissistic vulnerability (e.g., Pincus & Lukowitsky, 2010). In the current dissertation, I focused on narcissistic grandiosity (see the NARC; Back et al., 2013), which describes exaggerated, inflated self-views accompanied by grandiose fantasies and exploitative and arrogant behaviors. By contrast, narcissistic vulnerability describes depleted and insecure self-views accompanied by a fear of social dismissal and negative affectivity (Miller & Campbell, 2008; Miller et al., 2011; Pincus & Lukowitsky, 2010; Wink, 1991). Future research might also consider vulnerable forms of narcissism as antecedents of abusive supervision, as vulnerable narcissism is also associated with aggression (e.g., Okada, 2010) and might thereby lead to abusive supervision. At this point, it has to be mentioned that there is currently a discussion about whether narcissistic rivalry better reflects vulnerable narcissism (and not grandiose narcissism as suggested by Back et al., 2013), as narcissistic rivalry demonstrated substantial correlations with vulnerable narcissism measures (Miller et al., 2014). Accordingly, future research on the convergent and discriminant validity of the NARC is needed, and in addition, studies could test whether narcissistic rivalry incrementally predicts abusive supervision in comparison with general measures of vulnerable narcissism. In sum, future research could investigate different forms of narcissism (e.g., clinical conceptualizations and vulnerable forms of narcissism) as potential antecedents of abusive supervision.

Second, whereas the current dissertation offers insight into the interactive effects between leader narcissism and follower behaviors, the question of how contextual factors might shape these effects remains open. However, according to the Toxic Triangle (Padilla et al., 2007), environmental factors might influence the development of destructive leadership. Padilla et al. (2007) proposed that destructive leadership is more likely to evolve in conducive environments characterized by instability, perceived threat, particular cultural values, a lack

of checks and balances, and ineffective institutions. In this vein, prior research on abusive supervision has revealed that organizational factors, such as perceptions of organizational injustice (Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007; Hoobler & Hu, 2013) and psychological contract violations (Hoobler & Brass, 2006), aggressive organizational norms (Restubog, Scott, & Zagenczyk, 2011), and organizational downsizing (Neves, 2014) provide fertile ground for abusive supervision. Yet, we do not know whether these organizational factors might exacerbate the interactive effects of leader narcissism and follower behaviors on abusive supervision as well. However, it is likely that narcissistic leaders who feel that their organization has not treated them fairly might feel that their grandiose self-views are threatened (see threatened egotism theory; Baumeister et al., 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), which in turn might make abusive supervision even more likely to occur. From a displaced aggression perspective (Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939), these leaders might aggress against their followers instead of directing their aggression toward the organization. Future research might therefore investigate how environmental factors may strengthen or even buffer the interactive effects of leader narcissism and follower behaviors on abusive supervision.

Besides these theoretical limitations, the current dissertation also has some methodological restrictions that need to be addressed in future research. One concern is that the results of this dissertation only allow limited inferences about causality. The results of the experimental vignette studies (see Chapter 2 [Study 2], Chapter 3 [Study 1], and Chapter 4 [both studies]) allowed conclusions to be drawn about the causal ordering of leaders' narcissistic rivalry (which was assessed before providing the experimental vignettes) and of follower behaviors (which were manipulated systematically in the experimental vignettes) on respondents' cognitive processes (which were assessed directly after participants read the experimental vignettes). However, direct effects of leaders' narcissistic rivalry on abusive

supervision (which was assessed last of all) must be interpreted with caution, as the assessment of cognitive processes might have biased the abusive supervision ratings. Furthermore, the results of the field study (see Chapter 2 [Study 1]) and of the study with autobiographical recollections (see Chapter 3 [Study 2]) only allow limited conclusions about causality because the data were assessed cross-sectionally and could have been influenced by other confounding variables. Whereas the use of different methods enabled me to enhance internal (i.e., in the case of the experimental vignette studies) and external validity (in the case of the field study and autobiographical recollections study) across this dissertation's studies, future research could try to maximize internal and external validity within a single study. For instance, longitudinal field studies could be conducted with several measurement points separating the assessment of predictor, mediator, and criterion variables in time to ensure causal interpretations of the results. Another promising approach could be the implementation of diary studies (Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen, & Zapf, 2010), which allow researchers to study the dynamics of narcissistic leaders' cognitive processes as they evolve over short periods of time.

Finally, whereas a major strength of this dissertation was its focus on the leaders' perspective on abusive supervision, leaders' self-ratings might be biased (Fleenor et al., 2010) and might thereby not reflect leaders' actual behaviors. Therefore, leaders' self-ratings of abusive supervision were complemented by followers' ratings of abusive supervision in the field study that was part of this dissertation (see Chapter 2 [Study 1]). However, followers' ratings of leadership are also subjectively toned and therefore might also not be effective at capturing objective leader behaviors (Hansbrough, Lord, & Schyns, 2015). Consequently, future research could implement methods that assess leader behavior objectively (e.g., observational studies) to identify how leaders actually behave in the workplace.

Practical Implications

The research findings also provide a number of practical implications. As the primary focus of the current dissertation is on the leaders' perspective, most practical implications draw on the leaders.

Leader Selection

First, in leader selection, practitioners should be cautious when hiring leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, as the findings of this dissertation suggest that leaders' narcissistic rivalry is associated with abusive supervision. What makes this endeavor a bit difficult is the fact that the antagonistic behaviors associated with narcissistic rivalry often unfold over a longer period of time, and that at short acquaintance, narcissistic admiration is more visible (Leckelt, Küfner, Nestler, & Back, 2015). Yet, leader selection is a typical example of what Campbell and Campbell (2009) called the "emerging zone": a short-term situation in which evaluators have only a little time to get an initial impression of a job candidate and in which the bright sides of narcissism may overshadow the dark ones (see also Hogan & Kaiser, 2005). Thus, practitioners should be aware that job applicants' narcissistic rivalry might not be visible in the short-term context of job interviews. One way to overcome this problem could be to request references from job candidates' peers in order to obtain more information about candidates' interpersonal behaviors in long-term work relationships. Yet, as job applicants often apply in secret, obtaining references can be difficult. This gets easier when job applicants originate from the same organization because practitioners can then more easily approach the job candidates' followers or peers. Finally, because the leader perspective was taken in the current dissertation, I was able to show that leaders high in narcissistic rivalry were willing to admit that they showed abusive supervision. Thus, practitioners could make use of this knowledge in the leader selection process by including tests that assess job applicants' intentions to show abusive supervision.

Leader Development

Second, when dealing with leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, practitioners can implement leader development programs targeted toward (a) working on these leaders' cognitive processes, (b) teaching them how to deal better with followers who tend to bring out their abusive supervision, and (c) training these leaders to engage in more positive leader behaviors in general.

Leader development programs that focus on the underlying cognitive processes of leaders high in narcissistic rivalry could strive to decrease maladaptive processes or change them for the better. For instance, in the current dissertation, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry who perceived self-esteem threats were found to be likely to show abusive supervision intentions, presumably as a means for restoring grandiose self-views. However, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry could be trained to re-establish positive self-views in more adaptive ways. For instance, Thomaes, Bushman, Castro, Cohen, and Denissen (2009) found that a brief self-affirmation intervention in response to an ego threat reduced aggression in narcissistic youths. Similar to Thomaes et al.'s (2009) self-affirmation task, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry could therefore be taught to reflect on the values that are important to them and that make them feel like a valuable person in order to build stable self-views. This can prevent narcissistic leaders' grandiose self-views from being threatened and therefore prevent aggressive behaviors in the form of abusive supervision from manifesting.

Furthermore, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry could be trained to deal better with followers who show behaviors that threaten their egos. For instance, Konrath, Bushman, and Campbell (2006) found that narcissistic aggression in response to an ego threat could be mitigated by showing commonalities with the aggressor. Accordingly, commonalities between leaders and their followers should be established in order to reduce abusive supervision as a response to ego-threatening follower behaviors. Furthermore, Grapsas et al.

(2019) argued that interventions could be targeted toward reducing narcissists' vigilance for cues that signal status loss because this could help avoid triggering narcissistic rivalry and the corresponding antagonistic responses. Accordingly, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry could be trained to focus less on follower behaviors that potentially induce ego threats in order to suppress abusive supervision. However, instead of focusing only on leaders' coping mechanisms, interventions should also target followers. For instance, followers should be made aware that their own behaviors may fuel abusive supervision. Raising follower awareness may thus help to reduce abusive supervision. Additionally, followers should be trained to show fewer counterproductive work behaviors as the current dissertation showed that these behaviors might contribute to the emergence of abusive supervision.

Finally, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry could be trained to show more supportive supervision instead of abusive supervision (Gonzalez-Morales, Kernan, Becker, & Eisenberger, 2018). Grapsas et al. (2019) pointed out that narcissistic individuals will only successfully change their behaviors if the alternative behaviors are perceived as rewarding. Thus, practitioners must make behavioral change attractive to leaders high in narcissistic rivalry, for instance, by rewarding collaboration instead of competition (Grapsas et al., 2019).

In the long run, changes in cognitive processes as well as behaviors may even induce personality change in leaders high in narcissistic rivalry. Personality change refers to changing "the individual's characteristic pattern of thought, emotion, or behavior" (Tasselli, Kilduff, & Landis, 2018, p. 468), and meta-analytic results suggested that personality changes can be long-lasting (Roberts et al., 2017). Accordingly, organizations who initiate personality changes in leaders high in narcissistic rivalry through leader development may benefit from this in the long run (see also Tasselli et al., 2018).

Conclusion

In sum, the current dissertation enhances the understanding of the antecedents of abusive supervision. Building on a two-dimensional approach to narcissism (the NARC; Back et al., 2013), leaders high in narcissistic rivalry (the antagonistic facet of narcissism) were more likely to show abusive supervision, whereas leaders' narcissistic admiration (the assertive facet of narcissism) was less important in the context of abusive supervision. Furthermore, by taking a leader perspective, the role of narcissistic leaders' cognitive processes as underlying explanatory mechanisms were examined. Leaders' perceived self-esteem threats and injury initiation motives could (at least in part) explain why leaders high in narcissistic rivalry engaged in abusive supervision. Finally, leaders high in narcissistic rivalry were more likely to show abusive supervision in response to some follower behaviors but not to other follower behaviors. In order to prevent abusive supervision, it is therefore important to implement interventions that target both leaders and followers. Overall, the present dissertation provides a holistic picture of the antecedents of abusive supervision and emphasizes that abusive supervision results from a complex interplay between leaders' narcissistic personality, associated internal cognitive processes, and follower behaviors.

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