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Dark Sides of Organizational Behavior and Leadership

Edited by Maria Fors Brandebo and Aida Alvinius



DARK SIDES OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND LEADERSHIP

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and **Aida Alvinus**

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Maria Fors Brandebo (PhD, Karlstad University, Sweden) is a university lecturer at the Department of Security, Strategy and Leadership, Swedish Defence University. She has published journal articles, book chapters, and research reports within the field of psychology and leadership (especially destructive leadership and trust-building leadership), trust and job satisfaction.



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Preface

Leaders and managers are popular conversation topics when people meet. Especially bad leaders. And that is not that strange. We spend a great part of our lives in the workplace. How we feel at work is dictated to a great extent by our leaders and managers. They have the power to assign us our tasks and responsibilities, while deciding over benefits such as salaries and bonuses.

Scientifically, negative leadership has also gained more attention in recent years. It is well documented what behaviors are considered destructive and what the consequences of such behaviors are for the leader, the subordinates, and the organization. More focus has also been directed at the fact that the leader is a part of a context that influences the leader's behaviors and how the subordinates perceive the leader. The organizational culture and structures all play a part in this process.

In this book we have nine chapters, all addressing the issue of the dark side of organizational behavior and leadership. We gain knowledge and reflections from different contexts such as the military, the public sector, architectural design offices, and educational settings. Individual and organizational barriers are described as well as the social context in which negative leadership occurs. Negative leadership is also connected to people-centric approaches to management and service leadership theory.

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Introductory Chapter: Dark Sides of Organizations and Leadership - An Integrative Approach and Definitions

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to define and integrate previous research on negative organizational structures and destructive leadership in order to understand how negative organizational features can be framing factors for negative leadership behavior. This is a necessary theoretical grip in order to fully understand the dark sides of organizational and individual behavior at the workplace in general.

Negative aspects of organizational structures have been previously studied in the area of management and organizational behavior and slightly within the area of destructive leadership [1–5]. However, the focus has primarily been either on the individual level or on the structures within the organization. For example, there are studies of the impact of adverse working conditions in terms of health [6] and job satisfaction [7]. Other studies focusing on individual organizational members suggest that organizational dysfunction is the result of dysfunctional individual behavior as shown in organizational settings [8]. Besides the impact of the individual on organizational challenges, the other widely studied aspect in relation to dysfunctional organizational aspects is organizational culture [9]. This is essentially an endogenous explanation. Researchers draw similarities between dysfunctional organizations and dysfunctional individuals arguing that culture is a pivotal factor in how organizations function internally. Similarly, organizational culture is seen in many studies as that which creates or destroys an organization [8]. Despite such interest and attempts to understand organizational culture and its role in managing organizational challenges, we still know little about the processes that spur dysfunctional organizational behavior—the exogenous factors—and how it affects individuals within the organization.

Previous studies have primarily focused on the leader's impact on the ability of follower's acceptance of organizational change and management of organizational challenges [10]. Other researchers [11] suggest that leaders need to take a bigger responsibility and assume the role of chief architect of the organizational change process. But one question that remains is how organizational dark sides interplay with destructive leadership. First, we will provide a short presentation of organizational dark sides followed by definitions of destructive leadership.

2. Dark sides of the organizational behavior

Previous organizational studies have for decades focused on anorexic, narcissistic, and greedy organizations in order to explain organizational effectiveness and/or the well-being of the organizational members. Narcissistic organizations are characterized by many destructive behaviors denying facts about themselves or using propaganda campaigns. Organizations, just as humans, are able to develop justifications for their actions, to self-aggrandize by claiming their exclusivity, and so on. In anorexic organizations, staffing and material resources are kept to a minimum, and in greedy organizations, greater demands are made on individual stress coping, emotion management, competence, long working hours, constant availability, fixed-term employment contracts, and higher commitment. The common denominator for all three organizational dark sides is that organizations put high demands but offer their organizational members less in return. This can not only be a result of poor decision-making and destructive leadership but also as a consequence of political decisions, uncertainty, and insecurity outside the organization, bad organizational culture, and less transparency (see more information in [12]). Sometimes, negative organizational characteristics tend to be confused with destructive leadership behavior, as it is easier to look for scapegoats among individuals than for structural problems which may be the antecedents for negative organizational behavior. To avoid further confusion, we will provide contemporary definitions of destructive leadership.

3. Destructive leadership

There are several proposed definitions of destructive leadership. One of the first established definitions of destructive leadership was suggested by Einarsen and colleagues [3, 13]. They state that destructive leadership could be defined as "the systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organisation by undermining and/or sabotaging the organisation's goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates" ([3], p. 208). The definition was later developed by Krasikova, Green, and LeBreton [14] suggesting that destructive leadership should be regarded as harmful behavior imbedded in the process of leading (and by excluding behaviors falling under counterproductive work behavior), distinguishing between encouraging subordinates to follow destructive goals and using destructive methods to influence with subordinates, and by viewing destructive leadership as volitional behavior. Schyns and Schilling [15] proposed another definition arguing that destructive leadership is "a process in which over a longer period of time the activities, experiences and/or relationships

of an individual or the members of a group are repeatedly influenced by their supervisor in a way that is perceived as hostile and/or obstructive" ([15], p. 141). As noticed, there is a disagreement about whether or not intent should be regarded when it comes to destructive leadership. Does the leader need to have a negative intent in order for the behavior to be perceived as destructive? Several researchers argue that the intent is of less importance. Rather, it is the consequences of the behavior that matter [16–18].

Another issue dividing the research field is whether passive leadership behaviors should be regarded as destructive. Some debate that a concept should not be defined by its consequences and that passive behaviors are ineffective, not destructive. Others call to attention the negative consequences of passive behaviors and, in the light of the view that intent is of less importance, argue that it is a form of destructive leadership; see, for example, [16, 18].

What are the underlying factors to why leaders engage in destructive leadership behaviors? For some leaders, the answers can be found in negative personality traits (e.g., narcissism or psychopathy). In other cases, stress and heavy workload have been suggested to be the reasons [16]. Therefore, leaders working in anorexic or greedy organizations may more often use destructive leadership behaviors. It has also been argued that organizational structures and norms can be the cause of destructive leadership. In these cases, the leader may not be prone to use destructive behaviors but the behaviors are rather a consequence of organizational structures, etc. It can be assumed that the occurrence of destructive leadership is more common in some organizations than in others. Research indicates that co-workers in hierarchical organizations (like the armed forces) have a more negative view of the organization if their immediate leader is a destructive leader. This is related to the leader's behavior being perceived to be sanctioned from higher leaders [15]. Research also suggests that destructive leadership is more common in organizations that are characterized by structural and organizational instability [19, 20], insecurity/perceived risk [21], and great freedom of action; in organizations with limited control mechanisms and high growth; and in rapidly transforming industries [22]. Organizations without established ethical norms and guidelines are also pinpointed as contributing to destructive leadership behaviors. In the light of these suggestions, it appears as organizational structures may be a contributing cause to why leaders use destructive leadership behaviors.

As shown above, there appear to be several relationships between organizational behavior and destructive leadership behaviors. However, the characteristics of these relationships needs more research. Do organizations "create" destructive leaders or do destructive leaders contribute to destructive organizations?

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Dark Side of Leadership in Educational Setting

Seema Arif

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Abstract

Einstein said that darkness is absence of light. It is assumed that absence of leadership or misappropriation of leadership characteristics and behaviors results in Dark leadership, and it is the system that produces a culture in which dark side of leadership becomes acceptable. In this chapter, I would be exploring the role of middle leadership (school heads, district education officers, and administrative officers) of school education department in Punjab. The chapter is based upon a qualitative study with in-service school teachers and school heads. The critical incident technique was used to collect data, and interpretive analysis was used to interpret data at various levels from coding to themes generation and interpretation of the phenomenon, dark side of leadership. Goleman's Dark Triad comprising, authoritarian, narcissistic, and psychopathic, provide theoretical basis of the analysis. The results are shared in a story form progressively supplemented with the evidence generating discourse about the dark side of leadership in the educational settings of Punjab. The study acts like a mirror shedding lights into the deep and dark corners of leadership making them aware of their creepy existence and challenging them to create meaningful acceptance for themselves by coming into light and leaving the dark behind.

Keywords: dark side of leadership, control, supervision, victimization, teachers rights

1. Introduction

Industrial/organizational (henceforth: I/O) psychologists have begun examining the “dark” side of personality [1–3]. Machiavellianism, psychopathy and narcissism are regarded as socially aversive personality traits [4]. These three traits have been deemed to be socially undesirable and leaving antagonistic impression in the organizations [5]. Therefore, any person exhibiting any one of the dark personality traits, Machiavellianism, psychopathy and narcissism personality may be included in the “Dark Triad” (DT) [6, 7].

Researchers argue that “the dark triad is a constellation of three theoretically separable, albeit empirically overlapping, personality constructs” [8], which are considered maladaptive in interpersonal relationships. Many researchers tend to study each of the three traits of the triad in isolation but seem to agree upon their overlapping characteristics as well [5, 9, 10]. Therefore, the occurrence and manifestation of the DTs either singularly or mixed reflects multidimensionality and complexity of the constructs needing further deep investigation.

However, DTs are not such an unusual phenomenon [11]; Dark personalities embody many desirable traits like charm, leadership, assertiveness and impression management skills [12, 13]. Such leaders are masters of influence through “manipulation and they can easily force or push people toward achievement of their personal goals, such as they can easily manage teachers to work an extra hour or to work on weekends without getting compensation. Such people when in leadership position tend to change their workforce’s behaviors, attitude, needs and values in a beguiling manner [1, 12]. As Goleman has identified in his book *Social Intelligence* that there are three main types of Dark leadership, authoritarian, narcissistic, and psychopathic, the current chapter will explore the social context in which these leaderships emerge and become stronger overshadowing the positive qualities of charismatic and transformational leadership and resisting reform and change.

So far, research has worked on positive traits of teachers and principals that may complement or match with BiG Five traits and result in better school outcomes. Whereas, we have learned about the positive traits of leadership enabling quality culture in schools, the negative and dark traits of leadership have been substantially ignored causing teacher resistance to work with DT and being detrimental to the wellbeing and motivation of everyone witness to such situations, hence, impeding the progress of quality culture in a school. It is further noted that it is easier for Dark personalities to detect, remove, punish, and retrain employees of their choice [2, 3]; therefore, teachers become an easy victim of aggression by high Machs, manipulation by psychopaths and black charisma by narcissists [6].

In most jobs, one must interact with other people and one must cope with being a subordinate [14, 15]. Similar is the case with school teachers working in Pakistani schools. In an ideal world, people would work in jobs that matched their preferences and personality traits. Alas, most people do not live in this utopia and must make adjustments to their job choice. Fortunately, the ivory towers of the academy provide the opportunity to examine this hypothetical world by understanding “ideal” preferences for work and choice of workers. Being subordinates, the employees (teachers in this case) have to cope with people in power and if leaders possess Dark Traits, the bias toward a particular job or institution increases [15, 16]. Indeed, those high on the Dark Triad traits do appear to have this orientation to their social lives [1, 17] and it, therefore, seems reasonable that this bias would extend to the workplace.

Researchers [5, 18] have argued that dark Side of leadership is best explained through a “Triad” characterized by entitlement, superiority, dominance (i.e., narcissism), glib social charm, manipulateness (i.e., Machiavellianism), callous social attitudes, impulsivity and interpersonal antagonism (i.e., psychopathy). However, individuals may employ soft (e.g., ingratiation and reason) or hard (e.g., assertiveness and direct manipulations) tactics in

pursuit of their goals [1]; the display of characteristics is highly contextual. The behaviors are distinguished by emphasis on forcefulness, whether “hard” and pushing or “soft” and manipulative. However, leaders possessing DTs seem to occupy much stronger positions in the middle and upper hierarchy in any organizational set up, more than what could be desired for [1, 19–21] and schools are no exception. Therefore, a detailed study is needed that may assess the three Dark Traits simultaneously by comparing and contrasting their individual and interactive effect on the work environment in Pakistani schools. The idea of the research emerged from a research conducted to determine the cause of teacher resistance toward change in public school of Pakistan. The research concluded that the major factor influencing resistance to change [22] was related to the personality characteristics of the school leadership termed in literature as dark traits of leadership. Following that, I had classroom discussion with my students who were teachers in posh urban schools; their experiences were also not much different to my amazement. I had long wished to conduct research on the dark triad as explained in *Social Intelligence* by Goleman [23]. Therefore, I planned to conduct this novel study and share its results.

The article “Dark Side of Leadership in Educational Setting” is derived from school teachers reflections. It is assumed that these reflections will act like a mirror illuminating the phenomenon dark side of leadership in Pakistani Schools. The allegory of “mirror” & “reflection” does not refer to the traditional story of Narcissus. The “mirror” is contextualized the way the Sufi poet Rumi used it [24]. He says that mirrors are best gift for friends, and best friends are mirror unto us. Our friends are as critical about our social behaviors and personalities and would not bear a flaw in it just like a mirror who tells us what is right or wrong in our physical appearance and what kind of change or makeover we need to look better. Similarly, we are taking school as one whole where not only colleagues but teachers and heads should also serve as mirror to each other. The researcher aimed to collect perceptions of teachers about an intriguing incident, which had critical effect on their lives and ways of thinking about school leadership and management practices. The critical incident technique was used to collect data and analyze it as suggested by Bott and Tourish [25].

2. Critical incident technique

The critical incident technique was introduced by Dr. Flangan as a set procedure for collecting data through direct observations. He has defined CIT as “a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles” [26]. Since then it has been used both in quantitative and qualitative research using a variety of methods (observations, questionnaires, interviews and focus group). According to modern researchers, the technique can be customized to be applied to different research frameworks, suiting research, type, research questions and the relative phenomenon under study [25, 27, 28].

An incident is any human activity which is a complete whole in itself and can be observed as well as its experience can be recalled. The data, hence, collected can therefore be used for

certain analysis and predictions. The CIT was considered useful methodology for the phenomenon, dark side of leadership, because the techniques has built in inductive tendency, does not need a hypothesis, does not carry any cultural bias and yields impartial results for study [29]. It was used carefully with the 32 school teachers of Pakistani schools from both public and private sectors to explore the influence of dark traits of leadership on the morale and work attitudes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all participants who had willingly decided to participate in this study. The protocol was constructed in a way that allowed the teachers to choose any story from their past and narrate it to us without any cues from the researcher [28].

The participants were given total freedom to tell their story to any length, with probes to reach to a common understanding to their lived experience [30]. Hence, teachers chose those incidents from their life which carried certain significance in their lives and which they could easily relate to us [31]. The aim of using CIT was to use interpretivist approach not only for induction of suitable inferences from the data, but it provided us a fair chance to problematize existing theory and contribute something original and novel to the theory of Dark Triad of leadership. After transcribing all interviews, the suitable themes were generated. In the first step, dark triad of traits was identified through examples identifying the behaviors of supervisors and leaders. In the second step, the outcomes and implications of these behaviors are discussed. Thus, by applying these techniques critically, researcher was able to get new insight into the phenomenon of dark side of leadership and its impact on teachers that may not have been known otherwise [32]. In the following sections, the Dark Triad is discussed with relevant examples from critical incidents reported by the school teachers, the participants of the research.

3. Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism is linked with weakening organizational, supervisory and team commitment [33]; most of such managers are reported as abusive supervisors by the people who work under them [34]. All they want is 100% compliance; they cannot listen to what they have not expected and lose temper. Some incidents narrated by teachers are related below:

A teacher narrated an incident: she was writing something on board and could not pay attention to a boy's mischief; she did not miss the chance to insult me; she came into the class and delivered lecture on classroom discipline, whereas, she could have controlled the student herself with a simple eye gesture; but how would she get a chance to braggart about her knowledge. In another incident, a teacher of a boarding school went to attend a marriage ceremony. She had to return by 9:00 pm but she got late. Next day the principal called for a written explanation, which is usually taken on a major offense.

Another teacher told her story: Five months back, I was appointed as ESE teacher. I had experience of teaching but not in public institutions, that's why I took special one month training. I learned during training that learning is contextual and performance depends upon previous status of learning and there is always step by step improvement. We have to correlate our teaching strategies to the school environment is compatible with background of students. I was given the responsibility of class three. The previous class result was pathetic that's why I had to work hard to improve result. I did not have any idea of the expectations; neither school head told me any. I tried my level best to fulfill my duty

honestly. Next month result was 70%, but instead of appreciating me head teacher insulted me for this. This was unbearable for me. Harsh comments and personal attacks with a rude behavior are obviously an attack on the self-esteem of any teacher.

Managers with Machiavellian tendencies resort to holding power by hook or crook through using manipulative strategies [35, 36]. Machiavellians demonstrate cunning, wicked and dishonest behaviors aiming to deceive others [37]. Machs are self-centered, their prime focus is on personal benefit; they are unable to be empathetic and relate to emotions of others [11, 38]. It seems that they hate weakness, and aim to detest and punish weaknesses in their subordinates.

Machiavellianism is derived from the principle of Machiavelli that ends justify means [11] in total antagonism to Nicomachean ethics stating means justify ends, meaning a little attention is paid to universal ethics. This undermining of ethical issues leads to complex problems rather than problem solving needed at a workplace [39, 40]. The instinctive desire for absolute control over any situation let Machs tend to remain in focus and establish one's unchallenged writ at any workplace [41].

4. Narcissism

The narcissists differ greatly in self-adoration, self-evaluation, and sense of self-grandeur [42, 43]. They are perceived as vain, egocentric, and domineering personality who do not tend to look beyond where their nose ends. The narcissists have an endless desire to get recognized for their intelligence, superiority and excellent character and personality [1]. They want to prove that they are the best of all and can do what others cannot; narcissists invite envy, acknowledgment, approval and flattery [44, 45]. Narcissists exaggerate their creative intelligence, leading ability and capacity, in comparison with their peers [46–48]. Their preoccupations with themselves confuse and disturb others [1, 15]. Although narcissists are charismatic and most sociable of all DTs, their indirect need for power [47] seems unethical [49, 50] in managers.

Many teachers had disclosed that seniority is very much celebrated attribute in Pakistani schools. Most of the conflicts among teachers are about seniority and personal worth in terms of work experience and not diversity of knowledge; it seems all knowledge and experience is about managing negative attitudes of others, how to bear insults and injustice and how to tolerate degradation and zero appreciation of your hard work. There is a long and hard way to go to earn respect from other colleagues.

Some young teachers complained that they are more qualified than head teachers especially in case of freshly hired teachers who are MPhil. Their high qualification is often ridiculed, targeted to make them realize that they don't know enough and they are not doing things right, so that they can be disciplined unless someone is related to any high ranked officer or has some strong political connection.

A narcissist would never endear intellectuals near him/her—any person who is more intelligent or creative than them. A narcissist is the person who aspires to claim all credit unto him/herself. They would hesitate to say: we did it. He or she will keep the person tight folded and hard bound. Therefore, there is always lack of talent around them; either people deliberately underperform to remain at peace with them or remain wary of being discredited of their hard

efforts. Narcissists have a high element of pride attached with their work. They are good listeners; they listen carefully when people give feedback on their performance and later judge whether or not their remarks were sincere.

5. Psychopathy

Psychopathy may be divided into two basic categories: (1) primary psychopathy (demonstrating superficial charm, high degrees of selfishness, lack of empathy and ability to show affection and feel regretful over their wrongdoings and (2) secondary psychopathy (lawlessness, and antisocial behavior and lifestyles) [51, 52]. Psychopaths have a natural tendency to flaunt rules and regulations. They are unscrupulous in blaming others and making others responsible for their personal mistakes and negligence. Psychopaths demonstrate minimum responsibility at the workplace, which does not leave positive impact upon other employees [1, 9, 53].

A teacher told the researcher: "I asked the principal for paper pattern and she replied, don't you have any ability to do so."

Psychopaths do not stoop for something low; they aim on high positions indicating power, prestige and monetary benefits [54]. Many of their characteristics like black charisma and verbosity create an impression of an intelligent hard worker who helps others to improve their work and shine [51, 55]. Therefore, they get an easy access to top positions in leadership and management [56, 57]. Psychopaths' charm is often irresistible hard to defend; many of them remain successful in wearing black hat of charisma. They have better socializing skills and make good first impressions. They are hired because they show lesser anxiety during interviews; they can easily endure negative opinions of others and very well mask personal feelings. They win hearts by displaying an easy going and helping nature. They constantly try to mask their needs of being more charming, intelligent, savvy and lovable, however, they cannot control misappropriation of authority always wanting larger share [46]. On reaching high echelons of power their blackness tends to increase; they create a toxic unbearable work environment characterized by conflicts, bullying, inappropriate workload distribution resulting in poor job satisfaction, high turnover [58–60].

Researchers have further identified that employees get lesser instructions, trainings and help from their psychopath bosses [5, 51, 52]. Employees do not get appropriate recognition for good work, few incentives and little praise. A tense and uncertain work environment, poor communication levels and unfair attitudes of the boss create a sense of deprivation and loss of sense of wellbeing. At the height of psychopathy the managers may lose their self-control and emotional stability indulging in overly impulsive, violent and criminal behaviors. Sometimes, they exhibit double personality, one good face before a set of people and the other an evil one before one's victims [51]. Many of such people successfully hide themselves from certain checks and accountability and may construct their own underground networks with like-minded people. Psychopaths take the largest share in powerful positions, in the role of CEOs, corporate psychopaths indulging in white collar crimes, organizational psychopath keeping control over others through manipulation and deceit [56, 61].

A teacher told her story: One day principal called me in her office and told me that head of another campus wanted me to be transferred to him as an accountant but I don't want to send you so I myself must deny the offer as it was not much feasible either. Then she started telling me about certain negative factors about the other campus. She didn't want to deny the other principal risking her professional relationships. She wanted me to stay with her as I am shy and comply with her work demands and attitudes. She knew that I will adjust very well there but insisted on keeping me with her, in spite of the fact that I was very much interested in the transfer. I wondered that people are seeking personal benefit and completely ignoring what I had wanted.

Finally, I decided to join the other campus as an accountant realizing that teachers are less valued than the accountants. Before leaving I had to take 10 days training for accountancy, which I took but I was not passed in the test and could never go to other branch. Later, I had to do double duty for my madam, both of teaching and accountancy to stay in the job. I had to face such an ill treatment until she herself was transferred. People become vindictive for a life time if you oppose them even for a minor reason.

Psychopaths can target people for their specific aims; they enjoy making fools of others, unmindful of the harm and psychological pain they cause others [10].

A teacher recounted: Once an officer came for school inspection and the school head was not present there, she had gone on a visit to another branch. The officer commander her immediate return and reprimanded her without even listening to her. At last, when he cooled down and acknowledged that she was right, he did not apologize and left. The headmistress then turned toward us to displace her anger and blamed all of us for her insult. Where would we turn? To our students...?

The other told her story: The school head was on a usual school round; she saw a key book on a child's desk and started shouting that why are you using key book for teaching. She was told that it is necessary to teach grammar but she did not listen and insulted us all. She tagged me as rude and ill-mannered as I had tried to explain.

They are always scheming and planning to get advantage and would attempt to ruin whoever comes in their way. They are masters in diverting attention of others by successfully masking themselves in sweetness and smartness. They can lie shamelessly, as

one teacher reported that her headmistress removed all staff reporting to higher ups that the teachers were caught during helping students in cheating for their exams. Teachers are oppressed and depressed; there is a general comment: Nobody is accepting and respecting the role of teachers in education. Anybody can easily take a step against teachers. Another teacher reported that she went to the washroom for two minutes. The headmistress was on round; she came to her class and started to ask the students where your teacher is. When I returned, she started to insult me in front of the class.

6. Overlapping characteristics of the dark triad

DTs may demonstrate soft reaction (e.g., ungratefulness and irrationality) or hard measures (e.g., assertiveness and direct manipulations) while pursuing their personal goals [1]. Whether characterized by an impulse of using force, being "hard" and "pushing" or being soft distinguished by glib charm and manipulativeness. However, leaders occupy much stronger positions in the middle and upper hierarchy, more than what could be desired for [1, 53, 58].

Machiavellianism and primary psychopathy appear to be completely identical psychological concepts [62] for their uncontrolled ambition and aggression, exploitation, tendency to harm others both physically and psychologically. Psychopaths are more unscrupulous in taking

advantage of others and may use Machs to demonstrate control through verbal or physical aggression; inappropriate assigning of workload and screwing others for small mistakes are few examples, which create a terror at the workplace. While Machs and psychopaths hold others accountable for minor mistakes, they themselves are careless and irresponsible without a hint of mercy for others. Affection and empathy and compassion for them are weaknesses, which they must avoid at any cost. While they scrutinize the behaviors of others and harass and confuse them, they blandly refuse to accept any responsibility for themselves, of any sort of self-reflection and self-improvement [18, 63, 64].

Moreover leaders with DTs (high Machs with psychopathic tendency) have an innate disposition to perceive situations as threatening and alarming. They remain conscious and highly alert toward any slip of tongue, words or actions, which may appear offensive or derogatory to them [21, 65]. They would hardly bear questions or demanding clarification, or some contradictory opinion; they might perceive such behaviors as challenging their authority and self-esteem. Teachers demanding explanation and posing questions are perceived as competing and targeted for future punishment. The Narcissists, contrarily perceive workplace they work at as highly prestigious, so anybody who would try to shake their ideal would be inspected as criminal, labeled as an outsider.

As per teachers reports, the school heads do not ignore small mistakes, they do not counsel or mentor; instead they exploit teachers' self-esteem in negative ways. They refuse to realize that "to err is human." In village schools the conditions are worst, where the head and teachers belong to same school. Mostly the heads talk and scold in local language with lot of verbal abuse and everything can't be quoted here. Such a rude and rogue behavior of school heads and external supervisors, Executive District Officer and District Education Officers (EDOs and DEOs) cause resentment in teachers, which is a constant threat to teachers' physical and emotional wellbeing.

Dark side of leadership especially reveals lack of social skills, especially among high Machs, who prefer to resort to aggressive behaviors, failing either to control their tempers, or refusing to look for a reasonable cause in undesired behaviors. They simply seek desired perfection, but remain unable to quote their wishes into practical performance standards [66]. They know the problems but either they do not know how to solve it or they do not want to share it with subordinates, whom they consider too low, a lesser human, especially in case of a narcissist.

All managers and leaders possessing DTs are oversensitive about their "autonomy"; therefore, in order to avoid competitiveness, threatening to personal prestige and self-esteem, the work environment must remain restricted and constrained. One bad fish spoils the whole pond, hence, they must be caught at the earliest; they show linear thinking pattern where people must do what they are told to. "My way or the highway" is the favorite punch line of Machs; therefore, their sense of job satisfaction is very different from common employees. They want to achieve in their own way and narcissists would never allow over-performing or over-achieving; they set limits over personal achievement of their subordinates and peers, which may cause the talented human resource to leave the organization, or never show their real potential [15, 67].

The callous attitude of leaders with DTs, their ever increasing hunger for power, superficial charm and interpersonal antagonism (tendency to make more foes than friends) has been

much researched by the academia in an attempt to understanding what are the “ideal preferences” of these people for work environment, where personal entitlement, superiority and dominance reigns supreme [5, 17]. Indeed, those high on the Dark Triad traits do appear to have this orientation to their social lives [1] and it, therefore, seems reasonable that this bias would extend to the workplace.

Teachers in a group interview session agreed to the point: School heads believe that school is a work place where “everyone comes to earn money.” It is not deemed as learning center by many. Teachers are as much as workers as Ayas (maids) but for the worst reasons. A maid can tell this is my work and that is not; a sweeper can also refuse to clean a space or work after hours, but teachers can be called anytime and can be sent to any external duty, be it to supervise elections, go for a door to door campaign like a health worker to advise parents for vaccination or administering polio drops, or canvassing parents of out of school children to send their children to school. It is a national duty they would say on commandment of CM Punjab, never being mindful that teachers have families and their obligations too. They are paid for one job but are taken multiple duties sometimes paid for extra work and sometimes remain unpaid for ages.

Dark leadership engages in excessive interpersonal manipulation and exploitation [6] by making other people victims by assessing their emotional vulnerability [68]; however, it is little known how they assess their victim’s potential vulnerability. Gender differences also influence how DT will be perceived and coped with by employees. In contrast to males, females prefer teaching, which is a social and nurturing profession aimed at social service, and which also involves levels of authority, entitlement, self-worth and self-esteem. Whether or not teachers are able to achieve agreeable levels of autonomy, relatedness and self-esteem depends upon the feedback they get for their work. Teachers’ job commitment and professional commitment and willingness to work as team depend upon their professional appraisal and day to day feedback [69–71].

Many teachers reported that school heads begin to enjoy insulting and bashings. It gives them a sense of entitlement and pride and their hunger for it keeps on building. They seem sick while in a fit of verbal abuse, not at all mindful of the stress and tension they cause to teachers and staff. They only care about their own self-fulfillment, “Cruellas” they are indeed keeping only a few in their good books. They are moody and selfish; their behaviors keep swinging between favorable and unfavorable; a short time interest they develop for their ulterior aims and then through them away like used tissue papers. One remains in suspicion always whether I am a friend or a foe?

In the following sections the outcomes of dark leadership would be discussed.

7. Feelings of victimization

Human beings have inherently possessed the capacity to judge personalities, emotions, feelings and other’s intentions; this capacity has been improving over the course of time helping people to decide about their important relationships, distinguishing friends from foes, etc. [6]. Such ability has enabled people to categorize good personality traits from the bad traits and identify DTs in people. This ability of identifying DTs in others vary from person to person and culture to culture [68]. On the other hand, it seems that people with DTs have some extraordinary skill to judge the weak points of their victims, easily identifying their emotional

vulnerability [72]. It is yet to be learnt what strategies are used by these smart predators to catch their prey; how they eye their “feeble gazelle” and how many fish they can catch a time using simple baits.

The Dark personalities usually indulge in a dramatic relationship, short-term or long-term, it is manipulative of the emotional needs of the victim and exploitative of the resources he/she may possess. They are not wary of any moral scruples which may restrain or stop them from committing cunning atrocities. Sometimes, it appears that they seem to enjoy the helplessness of their victims. Leaders with dark personalities often use personal charm to attract their victims [73]. They rely much on their charming characteristics and tend to overuse and misuse it, indicating lack of innovation or heightened self-confidence. School teachers are already marginalized community with low self-esteem, no matter how much qualified they are. It becomes easier to victimize females belonging to poor socio-economic backgrounds or with high employment needs especially in case of single mothers or mothers needing fee concessions for their children.

DT scores show negative correlation with empathy [74]. Dark leaders lack empathy, yet they can succinctly judge emotional vulnerability of others. It means that Dark personalities have advanced understanding of emotions but they tend to exploit it for personal benefit and do not deliberately take any helping action for the sufferer, even if they can.

Teachers have commented: We have to obey our school heads without questioning it is moral or not. My principal punished me for not promoting the relative of an influential person beneficiary of the school. The ethics do not hold any importance before their personal interests. A teacher told she was promoted to the position of coordinator without any pay raise. At first, the principal was happy as I was working hard, but then she became envious as I was becoming popular among staff because of my problem solving and counseling ability as well as my helping nature. Her resentment continued to build silently and finally it was blown out in a conflict. The teachers backed me as I have always been supporting them. The principal got so offended that she got me transferred in a remote area charging me of neglect of duties and rude behavior. I felt so low and dejected as people kept gossiping about us and avoided any contact with me. I got socially isolated who was quite popular and respected among teachers.

However, this capacity for emotional judgment may vary from person to person in dark personalities; some cannot appreciate love, concern, compassion and similar emotions and others cannot estimate fear in others [75]. Perhaps there is something unique in the physical features or “demeanor” of the victims that Machs or psychopaths are irresistibly attracted to them [76] selecting some special person to victimize among many.

Another teacher narrated her experience: I was a trained science teacher in a private sector school and I was teaching computer and chemistry. The school principal didn't appreciate my style and always pointed out flaws in my work embarrassing me in front of other colleagues and students. I have never been able to understand why I was victimized. My morale was drowning and my self-esteem was challenged so badly that I had become doubtful of my self-worth and started thinking about quitting job.

Research has identified that many dark personalities do not appreciate weaker traits in others, such as low self-esteem, high levels of depression or anxiety, or possessing unusual and disagreeable characteristics [48]. However, how they may be rating their victims; they see something of their own benefit in them, may be it is about sex or money or shedding their extra load of work [60] or it may be hiding some of their inability). Definitely, some handsome

benefits are there and their charm is irresistible. Others think that it is not about any particular emotion, but over expression of some emotion, such as “fear” or under expression, such as “depression”, which offends dark personalities. They deem expression of emotion as “weakness” [74] and become vengeful because “weakness” somehow offends all Dark Triad personalities.

One teacher identified an additional director, who belonged to a very different culture known as “Thana culture” (who love to police around aimlessly) in our society. He has a background of banking environment and has no Education department background. He always tried to insult not only me but every other colleagues of my rank by making satirical comments of “Professor Sahib or Sahiba.” Listening to these comment don’t mean any humiliation but the way he taunts was not acceptable for me and others.

Mostly he used to tease us to show his authority. He asked us to stay after office hours or call us to office on holidays, even when there was no work to do. He majorly do all this to show us that we have to listen to him either we agree or disagree. Mostly his orders were only to tease us and not for the organizational benefit. Once in a meeting he called us to attend office on Saturday, without any official task. I openly disagreed to this and asked him to give the task in week days as being a mother it was difficult for me to come on weekends. Though, most of my fellows were of the same view as mine but they remained silent; most unfortunately I belled the cat! He took this personally and acted so mean that he appraised me in a very negative way. I discussed it with my director, and he promised to rectify and compensate, only to further anger the additional director and worsening relationships.

The reactions of Dark personalities are more autonomic and spontaneous than rational or deliberately programmed [77]. Like animals they take quick notice of the body language of their prey and make a speedy attack, may be of verbal abuse. Sometimes they themselves are surprised of the wrath springing out of them but they do not despise it but fall into love with their own aggressive self. They are power hungry. It comes natural to them, so they own it; they can sense and feel it coming from their grit [78].

8. Counter productive behaviors

Certain employee behaviors are uncalled for and may potentially harm the organization or damage its reputation. Such behaviors are called Counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs). CWBs comprise variety of acts which are either directed toward organizations (CWB-O) or toward other people (CWB-P). CWBs include aggressive behaviors, deviation from rules, vengeance and reprisal. Other behaviors entail, damaging organizational property, vandalism and theft, absenteeism, and neglect of work [79]. Organizational behavior theorists claim that such behaviors can be the outcome of the oppressive behaviors of DT personalities [2]. CWBs have been found to be the main cause of decrease in employees’ job satisfaction and increase in stress and intentions to leave the job [80].

Psychopaths are known to escalate conflict and bullying and may blow sense of employees’ wellbeing and commitment [20]. Such conditions may lead to the poor perceptions of organizational justice and ineffective leadership. There exists positive and high correlation between CWBs and destructive leadership [37]. This is why CWBs are becoming a prime concern for all organizations around the globe. Positive job attitudes may not be achieved if

workers are encountered with dark leadership traits such as limited empathy and alexithymia [7]. Perhaps, this is the reason many teachers fail to show empathy to individual and special needs of students.

9. Raised need for accountability

Accountability is “perceived need to justify or define a decision or action to some viewers having no prospective incentive or consent power” where such incentives and consents are contextualized or contingent on accountability conditions [81, 82]. Others have described “accountability” as “felt” need to have one’s actions and decisions justified by others. Therefore, accountability perceptions are usually subjective depending upon personal standards rather than organizational norms or universal values [83].

Almost all teachers demanded for fair accountability of school managers and supervisors. The teachers found it very unfair that the supervisory staff is not well qualified; Only Matric or FSc (High School) passed JCOs (junior commissioned Officers) from Army have been appointed to check presence of teachers and students and report to district office. They are not well mannered and do not respect female staff, some even try to harass teachers. School committee members are not qualified either. They do not understand the needs of education and do not have awareness of educational problems. Private school teachers complain of unfairness more than public school teachers, who complain more about rude and harsh behaviors of district managers. Teachers expect some relief from them but they add an injury to insult.

Accountability is deemed essential for effective management of any organization [84]. Every organization needs some ethical principles on which accountability of all employees would be carried out. Accountability, by no means is an agent for control to be used by supervisors to discipline workers [85]; it is needed more for managers and supervisors to know how they are supervising? Supervising does not mean policing around and it is observed when people are left to their personal discretion, some of them tend to use power according to their own understanding, using it to gain personal interests rather than focusing on larger good [83].

10. Thwarted personal and professional improvement

A young teacher remarked during interview; a sad and dull atmosphere prevails in our schools and they call it discipline. I call it “No life.” Such a regressive and traditional style of teaching can halt one’s personal transformation. During the very beginning of my professional career, I spent a great amount of time observing senior staff members to know how they approach pupils. Whether it was delivery of a lesson, or communication with students, I consciously tried to observe how a teacher would react or communicate to the pupils in a variety of situations. Consequently, I began to apply certain behavior management strategies that I had learned through my observation. I had noticed that senior teachers keep themselves at a distance and used firm tone with a louder pitch. I adopt the same firm tone of voice and higher pitch and became more strict and formal with my students. Unfortunately, it did not

worked for me; I had not become a better teacher instead I was losing attention of my students; I had not expected this reaction of the students. I was often frustrated and shouted at them. At last, I consulted a senior coordinator; she observed me during class and pointed out at the artificiality of my pseudo firmness. She advised me to keep up with my natural style. This observation acted as a wake-up call for me, and things only got better after I reverted back to being my “old self.” I reverted back to talking to the challenging pupils on a one-to-one basis. There was a huge sigh of relief; what would have happened if I had not dared to seek guidance from my senior and I wonder how many can dare the same due to prevailing hot conditions.

11. Serious threats to human rights

Many principals especially in private schools take undue advantage of teachers’ weaknesses, especially, the ones who are needy for jobs or have their children attending the same school either for free or on concessional rates. School heads keep such teachers in loads of extra work, give extra work to do and those work which is not for teachers. Teachers are lower than Aya (maid). Aya knows that which portion is mine to clean but teacher does not know where the principal sent to her in any time.

Many teachers suffer in their pregnancies; the head teachers know but do not favor teachers. A teacher reported that she felt severe sickness, nausea and vomiting, but the head teacher did not allow her an off time and made her stand in the class. It was so embarrassing. Yes! No teachers can sit in a classroom; there are no chairs for teachers. Is not it dehumanizing, one teacher remarked; why a teacher is forced to stand all the time before the students, who are sitting and relaxing. Frequent incidents are reported about miscarriages or immature deliveries of teachers, but no records are kept about these mishaps; neither are they correlated with any stress at work. Here, we are not talking about the back aches, joint pains, early onset of arthritis or osteoporosis and other ailments connected with standing for prolonged hours.

Teachers repeatedly complained that teachers rights are not priority for any one; our promotions are delayed; we are fined on absenteeism; our salaries get suspended due to some technical mistakes be clerical staff but none is punished but the teachers. The expectations from the teachers are ever rising; the qualification prerequisites are also high, but teachers are posted in the same grades as 15–20 years ago they were posted after bachelors (14 years of education), even after completing MPhil (18 years of education).

12. Dark shadows of district supervision

Teachers are wary of supervising by external authorities like EDO (Executive District Officer) and DEOs, which keep teachers to their toes. They do not listen to the teachers and pass their verdict and teachers are always on the fault. The district office as directed by the Chief Minister Punjab (province of Pakistan) demand high efficiency from school heads and when

this order is translated into action, it means that school teachers must be present in school not just for school hours, but as directed by the district office or as wanted by the head.

The external bosses wear “boss is always right” attitude. You can never dare to point fingers at them. A teacher reported that once she was teaching Urdu (national language of Pakistan) as a subject in class five; EDO came for inspection and started shouting: Why you are teaching in Urdu and not English? I tried my best to explain to her that I am teaching the Urdu grammar and a few students do not have books because they cannot buy, but she will not listen to me. My only point of concern was that if she had to insult me she should have done it privately and not in front of the class. In such conditions, how teachers can enjoy self-esteem or teach their students to become self-confident and even-tempered individuals.

Once, the district executive officer (DEO) came while I was working as temporary substitute of my headmistress; he was all sore seeing me in this position; verified from other teacher the information I provided about the headmistress, but on affirmation acted contrarily. He marked the headmistress present and me absent in the attendance register. I kept wondering how I had offended him that he was so rude to me. Such insults create a lasting impression of mistrust on teachers. Similar incident was reported by another teacher that once an officer came for the inspection of school and she was present but he marked her absent; in fact changed her presence marked on the attendance register to absence. She had not taken a single leave in whole year and she was shocked and disappointed. She took her case to the district authority quoting she was being punished without any crime, but none paid any heed. Teachers cannot be angels but they are ultimate sinners. Yes!

In another reported incident, the teacher was conducting December test and DEO madam came and I was busy in my work. There was pin drop silence in the room; I was checking the completed test of students and could not pay immediate attention to her. She just ripped off and suddenly started to insult me without any reason. Many teachers felt they are treated as if they were “rangroots” (rookies) and can be disciplined any way. The teachers had left the school just 2 min earlier from their scheduled time; incidentally, DEO arrived on the scene and ordered all teachers to be called back from their homes and we had to do so.

The teachers were very upset when they commented that they are not granted any leave, even in special cases of sickness, death, or some other special event. Lately, the school education department has directed all school heads that a teacher will have to be present in school even when they are on maternity leave. It means that they cannot enjoy 45 days leave peacefully at their homes.

13. Conclusions

The detailed discussion of the phenomenon shows that no one trait dominates the situation. A mix of traits are working, mostly Machiavellian control dominates with poor value system (psychopathy). Dark shadows are more apparent in the external supervision than

in immediate supervision of school heads. Greater resentment was found at the weak leadership role of bureaucracy and greatest disappointment with policies of the political governance.

Teachers were adamant on their point that flattery is not their business and they suffer because there is no accountability for school managers against some code of ethics. All rules and procedural justice are part of policy and law but not part of implementation. Supervisors and managers belong to old school of thought and believe in forcible control and are not well versed in modern management strategies. Therefore, younger and qualified teachers get more upset than seniors.

DT tends to activate certain biases and prejudices in employees, especially junior ones to quit pursuing their ideal professions and desired institutions. When dissatisfied with their jobs, first they begin to voice, but when unheard, resort to neglect. Many teachers want to quit jobs in their first 6 months or 1 year, especially in private schools or switch institutions causing turnover, another loss to organizational productiveness or school effectiveness.

Dark leaders not only search for victims they create ones for themselves, especially Machs.

In the same gender environment the Machs and Narcissists whether male or female tend to be bossy and aggressive in the same way showing little or no difference in their repertoire of behavior. In a mixed gendered environment women tend to keep lower profile, especially in traditional culture like Pakistan they prefer conforming to soft and timid behaviors and display submissiveness. Patriarchal society of Pakistan contribute much in creating feelings of oppression in female teachers, because district officers are mostly males and in order to save their skin from district supervisors, the school heads turn antagonistic toward teachers.

It is inferred from the stories so far told by many teachers that some school heads act like sadists. There is a vicious circle going on. People tend to deny personal responsibility and blame the system. Everyone feels that he/she is victim of the system. Who is the system, those who run the system or those who dictate policies? The policy makers when questioned about the efficacy of the system will blame poor management and policy implementation responsible for every ill. The managers would say the workers are not willing. Nothing seems to be in place in the system; when rules and roles are not clear, the leadership looks dark. When people get aware of their roles and responsibilities, the darkness is removed. Better knowledge, better education and better training can bring light both in hearts and minds. Let us all look up for that light.

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Situational Incompetence: An Investigation into the Causes of Failure of a Large-Scale IT Project

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Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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Abstract

Information technology (IT) projects in the government (public) sector experience significant challenges. Despite decades of research, the adoption of formal methods, the use of external suppliers and packaged software, these remediation attempts have not appeared to have reduced nor mitigated the problems faced when the public sector undertakes large IT projects. Previous studies have examined the causes of IT project failure, in particular these have focused on factor analysis. A relatively limited number of studies have investigated the contribution of IT competence, and even fewer have considered the role and contribution of non-IT executives in IT project outcomes. This study sought a deeper understanding of what drives the behaviour of large-scale IT projects, and has identified a lack of technical competence and narcissistic leadership as drivers of poor project outcomes.

Keywords: IT project failure, public sector waste, failed projects, governance, project management, critical success factors, situational incompetence

1. Introduction

'There are many ways to make large software systems fail. There are only a few ways of making them succeed'.

Capers Jones (2004)

The primary question of this research is why. Why, despite all of the experience; the research, the training, the consultants and software companies focusing attention and billions upon billions of dollars expended, IT projects continue to fail. Despite a significant body of research into the contributory factors (reasons) of these failures little consensus exists [1] as to both the rate of actual failure or even how to measure failure.

Given the immense cost of these high levels of failure [2, 3], it is puzzling that greater progress has not been made to ensure that IT Projects are more consistently delivered to specification and customer satisfaction.

One of the reasons for explaining this high rate of failure is that it has been assumed that IT project failure is due to shortcomings in generic project management capability, rather than due to attributes of IT projects in particular. For example, 'most of the improvement efforts have focused on advancing variations of the traditional project management paradigm, such as (that which) is embodied by the Project Management Body of Knowledge' [4].

Two questions arise regarding IT project failure research. First, why is the success rate of IT projects so poor? And secondly, why, despite the efforts of many, the situation fails to improve? This problem is known as 'Cobb's Paradox' [5], which states: 'We know why projects fail; we know how to prevent their failure—so why do they still fail?'. Cobb made the observation in 1995 while attending a presentation by the Standish Group (authors of the Chaos series of reports) while working at the Secretariat of the Treasury Board of Canada. Cobb's observation that 'we know why projects fail' should not be taken in a literal, completely black and white sense, rather it should be considered to be a reference to the collective body of expert commentary, opinion, research and project practitioners that have offered solutions. Despite the successful implementation of major IT projects, repeatable success continues to be elusive [6].

Cobb was not alone in observing that there is a great deal studied and written about project failure, and that consulting firms propose methodologies and remedies but little actual progress appears to have been made. The International Federation for Information Professionals (IFIP) Working Party 8.6 ran a conference to address this specific issue asking 'why our scholarship has not been more effective. Is the fault one of theory and inadequate understanding? Or is the problem one of knowledge transfer, the failure to embed research knowledge in the working practices of managers and policy-makers' [7].

2. What is project failure?

For the purposes of consistency this research has adopted the widely understood term for project failure as being projects that fail to be delivered on time, on budget and with the required scope and functionality.

Previous research has identified high-level issues, in particular lack of senior management involvement [8] or a lack of clearly identified deliverables. The 'problem of poor requirements engineering and management has been repeatedly and widely discussed and documented for at least 10 years as a contributing cause of project failures' [9] yet the continuous research and new technologies on these topics 'has not resulted in a practical solution to the problem'.

IT project failures 'have been extensively documented and studied' but with little progress actually being achieved makes 'Cobb's paradox as topical today as it was a decade ago' [10].

It is clear that despite decades of industry experience and practice, decades of research, consulting and advice, there exists little consensus as to why projects continue to run over-budget,

over-time and deliver less than what was required. Cobb has argued that 'we know why projects fail' suggesting that there is a failure to transfer that knowledge into practice. The US military has questioned that premise and intimidated that it is possible that no paradox exists at all, but in fact we simply have not yet identified why IT projects continue to fail [11].

3. Methodology

The primary focus of this research was to address the lack of clinical studies in the literature on IT project failure, and to understand the failings that have occurred in a 'sticky, practice-based problem' [12].

The primary case study documents comprising the raw data collection were drawn from two sources:

1. the published files of the Queensland Commission of Inquiry into the Queensland Health Payroll Project [13], and
2. documents obtained under Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to the Department of Health Queensland, and to the Queensland Treasury Department.

The total number of pages of witness statements amounted to 3850. In addition there was a collection of project documentation gathered through Freedom of Information requests that exceeded 5000 pages of emails, reports, project plans and other data.

The data and its collection were independent of the researcher and have been drawn directly from the project and from a Government led inquiry into the project. Witness Statements were taken under Oath by representatives of a Court.

The data collection was rigorous and extensive, with thousands of pages of material examined thus supporting 'triangulation and sampling' [14]. The large amount of data collected allowed the researcher to minimise influences that might occur in a small data-set. The large volume of both project data and witness testimony ensured that bias had been removed from the source data (as far as practicable), and that subsequent observations could be compared and contrasted across the multiple statements and project records providing, as far as possible, a balanced perspective to emerge.

4. Findings

Information Technology projects fail, and the cost of these failures is staggering [4, 15–18]. This concern has been highlighted and repeated for more than 40 years [19–26].

The Standish Group [18] has found that for 'development projects that exceed \$100 million in labour costs, only 2% are successful, meaning on time and within budget. Another 51% are considered challenged or over budget, behind schedule or did not meet user expectations. The rest, 47%, are seen as outright failures' [6].

The question that this research examined was not which factors were evidenced in the project studied, but why managers continue to make the same mistakes despite all the advice and training that is available. What this research found was that senior departmental leadership, which included the governance board and Department Head, ignored all the evidence and advice that was presented to them. They conducted themselves in a manner that implied that the project was running well, and that they did not require any input from their own team members. It appeared in fact that they distrusted their own staff relying instead on external vendor input. The leadership team of Queensland Health exhibited strong indicators of organisational narcissism resulting in situational incompetence.

Situational Incompetence exists where an otherwise experienced manager is placed in a position of authority over a domain of activity for which they are neither educated nor experienced. Their lack of knowledge leads them to overestimate their own abilities and to underestimate the challenges. Their lack of expertise results in an inability to identify competence in others, and an inability to intuit an appropriate response when the project experiences challenges.

5. Timeline of events

The Queensland Health Payroll Project had its foundations in another project by the Queensland State Government - the creation of a shared service initiative (SSI). The SSI was a business unit of Queensland Treasury and was named CorpTech. The idea behind the SSI was that all of the administration and back-office services required by each Department could be more efficiently undertaken by a single agency.

With this as the foundation, it was the charter of the shared services to deliver a human resources and payroll capability to several government departments, including the Departments of Education and Health.

In about 2005, the SSI commenced work on implementing a universal payroll solution for all Queensland Government Departments and agencies, starting with the largest two, the Department of Education and the Department of Health.

'After the whole-of-government decision around 2005 to implement (software from) SAP (corporation), Queensland Treasury decided that they were going to be the systems implementation lead' [27]. Accenture, as an external party, were engaged on a time and materials basis to provide resources to this SSI project [27].

By mid-2007, there were multiple parties involved in providing resources to the whole-of-government project, including Accenture, IBM and Logica. By March of 2007, it had become apparent to senior Department officers that the SSI was facing significant challenges. The Service Delivery and Performance Commission had reported [28] that organisational change was necessary as the project was behind schedule and over budget. The under-Treasurer' of the Department commissioned a review to identify potential courses of action' [28]. The report was delivered to the Department on the 18th of April 2007. What evolved from this was the idea of engaging a 'Prime Contractor' that would take responsibility for the ongoing

project. Subsequently a Request for Information (RFI) was issued on the 2nd of July 2007, with initial responses received by the 12th of July 2007. Of the ten companies invited to respond only four did so: IBM, Logica, Accenture and SAP.

A more detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) was sent to these four companies on the 25th of July 2007. An Invitation to Offer (ITO) was issued on 12th of September 2007. Responses were received from IBM, Logica and Accenture. SAP had withdrawn from the procurement process.

IBM was the successful tenderer and a contract was entered into on the 5th of December 2007. The Queensland Health payroll project was seen as the priority, and the 5th of December contract between IBM and the State Government included a 'fixed contract' to be completed by 31st of July 2008 at a cost of A\$6.194 million.

By October 2008 it was reported that 'IBM had not achieved any of the contracted performance criteria' [27]. By this stage IBM had been paid A\$32 million of a revised A\$98 million contract and was forecasting completion would cost A\$181 million [28]. The A\$6.194 million dollar contract that had been entered into less than 1 year previously had now grown in magnitude to an estimated A\$181 million.

On the 14th of March 2010 'after ten aborted attempts to deliver the new payroll system it went live' [28]. The project, originally scheduled for completion on the 31st of July 2008, was now 2 years late.

The 'go-live' was 'catastrophic' [28], requiring 1000 additional manual staff to enter pay adjustments. The project costs by this time had been estimated at \$1.2 billion over the next 8 years of operation.

6. Chaos in the Queensland Government

The Queensland State Government did not appear to have a consistent plan for the solutions for HR, payroll, rostering and recruitment. Different technologies were being deployed across different Departments at the same time, utilising the services of multiple vendors. Some vendors were operating as parts of a single project (on occasion), independently on other projects, and competing against each other for additional business. The overall environment appears to have been chaotic.

CorpTech initially went to market 'to seek products which could be delivered across Government and meet government-wide needs for HR and Payroll' [28]. IBM was awarded the contract after proposing a 'consortium of products - SAP was used as the core, and included Workbrain for rostering arrangements, Recruit ASP for recruitment solutions and SABA for knowledge management' [28].

Prior to the commencement of the Queensland Health payroll project there are what appear to be conflicting projects awarded to different vendors. One contract, to IBM, to implement four software products to provide a state-wide HR and Payroll solution, and a second contract, awarded to Accenture, to implement HR and Payroll for the Department of Housing.

The IBM proposal [28] included four solution components: SAP ECC5, Recruit ASP, Workbrain and SABA. From the witness statements it is apparent that contention arose as to the transparency and appropriateness of the selection process for these products. For example, Mr. Waite, the head of the government agency tasked with implementing these solutions, stated that 'to the best of my recollection, no choice about Workbrain had been made by the State before the November 2005 contract' [28]. In the memorandum [29] dated 28th May 2007, it was noted that Workbrain was going to be implemented in 2008 as the replacement rostering solution. It is therefore clear that the intended use of Workbrain predates the IBM proposal and ultimate contract in December 2007.

The choice of solutions architecture for the Queensland Health Payroll project does not appear to have been determined with consideration of the business or technical needs of the Department. According to KPMG [30], 'as of 2005, the Whole-of-Government system for payroll had been identified as SAP ECC5 and Workbrain. As a result, it was decided that QH would replace the Lattice/ESP system with SAP ECC5/Workbrain as part of the Whole-of-Government Shared Services Initiative' [40]. Other eyewitness accounts placed the decision to adopt a combination of SAP ECC5 and Workbrain at a much later date (during the 2007 proposals and presentations). 'The presentation provided by IBM indicated that the Workbrain system would become the award interpreter (in lieu of SAP) the presentation was potentially a game changer' [39]. The issue of product selection would become an issue as the project progressed. Integration between SAP and Workbrain became a significant constraint on the project [38]. As these two accounts indicate, even on what should have been a clear and uncontroversial issue; who made the choice of products and when that decision was made is open to many interpretations. One that does not seem to have been resolved by the end of the Commission of Inquiry.

Towards the end of 2008 the 'IBM team, working in collaboration with the CorpTech Enterprise Architect, obtained and reviewed the documentation for relevance to clarifying the business drivers underpinning the SSI' [39]. This document, created several years after the commencement of the project, appears to be the first and only document to address the business drivers and explicit requirements of the project.

At the point of issuing the invitation to offer, having already been to market with a request for information and a request for proposal, the Queensland Health/CorpTech team did not have an 'Initial Statement of Work'. The Government sought [28, 30], and the vendors responded with, fixed price commitments to a project that was devoid of even the most basic of project components—a statement of requirements! In essence, IBM had agreed to undertake a project, at a fixed price, for which no statement of work existed and no detailed planning of any description had been undertaken.

While no explicit business case appears to exist for the project, and none could be sourced either from the Witness Statements or via Freedom of Information requests, various memoranda [31–35] collectively cite various justifications that could be retrospectively viewed as business case-like rationales, such as the risks facing the existing LATTICE system, and the need to replace it [28]. In May of 2007, the Manager of HR Operations wrote to the Executive Director of Queensland Health Shared Services [29] to outline these risks and make recommendation

as to what actions should be pursued. The overriding reasons stated in this communication for a replacement of the LATTICE system with the new SAP/Workbrain solution was the 'prohibitive costs of maintaining the LATTICE system and its cessation of support in June 2008' [27]. In essence then, the business case for the new system was that the old system was about to lose its maintenance and support from the vendor. No evidence has been sighted to suggest that any greater understanding of costs and benefits was undertaken before the contract was awarded to IBM for what became a 1 billion dollar disaster.

The solutions design and architecture appears to have been set by some sort of default when the tender responses confirmed the solutions architecture. The time scale was set by virtue of a fixed price quote for work to be completed by the 30th of July 2008, but the tasks and activities were unknown when the contract was signed. The winning tenderer had committed to meet the time and budget using the products preferred by the Queensland Government [28]. A representative of Accenture responded during the Commission of Inquiry that he 'observed that price and scheduling were key drivers in the decision to award the tender to IBM' [27]. Commenting further, the Accenture representative could not 'determine what price IBM was suggesting in terms of the fixed price or the total expected price' [27]. Accenture had proposed an initial scope of work and pricing much more in line with IBM's amended quotation some months later of A\$180 million. In meetings with senior Department executives Accenture made it clear that they thought IBM's price would escalate dramatically once they (IBM) understood the scope of work required [27].

The externally engaged legal firm [36], in preparing their advice with respect to each of the proposals from Accenture, IBM and Logica, stated that 'we believe on balance that IBM's Offer gives rise to a greater number of material issues and less thought has gone into IBM's Offer regarding contractual mechanisms that will assist the customer or enhance the working relationship between the parties' [36]. This shows further evidence that the experts engaged by the Department were highlighting the risks of the IBM proposal, but these concerns were being ignored.

At this stage of the Queensland Health Payroll project, the Queensland Government had accepted a contract to implement an IT project to a business problem for which no business case existed and no technical solutions architecture had been provided. The IT project was shown by the evidence tabled at the Commission [28] and by the analysis of documents, to be a solution to fulfil an unknown set of requirements for a fixed price and timescale, and oddly one already in government use on an existing challenged project. Furthermore, senior management was acting against the advice of their technical experts [37] and external legal advisors [36].

7. Governance and oversight

Why did senior management of the Department appear to simply ignore the findings of the report(s) that they had commissioned? Did they not believe the findings? Did senior management trust the promises of the vendor to produce an outcome despite what they were being

told by the external review? It is not immediately obvious why this situation was allowed to unfold in the manner in which it did. The project appeared to comply with all the appropriate governance structures and reporting requirements, yet an historical or retrospective view would allow that the project was never managed effectively. Indeed, the findings of the Commission of Inquiry [28] state that 'Its (Queensland Health payroll) failure, attended by enormous cost, damage to government and impact on workforce, may be the most spectacular example of all the unsuccessful attempts to impose a uniform solution on a highly complicated and individualised agency'. The Commissions conclusion was that there were two primary causes for the failure of the payroll project (1) 'unwarranted urgency' and (2) a 'lack of diligence on behalf of State officials' [28]. The Commissions report elaborated further on lack of diligence, describing it as 'poor decisions made in scoping the Interim Solution, in their Governance of the project, and in failing to hold IBM to account' [28]. The Commissioner further reported that 'the problems are systemic to government and to the natural commercial self-interest of vendors' [28] which supports the observation that Normalisation of Deviance was at play throughout the conduct of this project. However, these findings by the Commission do not explain what motivated senior management to ignore the lessons learned from immediately preceding projects, to ignore the warnings and advice of their own personnel. It is unclear, from the Commissions report, what specific steps a subsequent project might implement to ensure that they too did not all into these traps.

8. The big question ... WHY?

These are the clear and obvious failures of the project: project management failed, there was a lack of requirements definition, management was in conflict. All of the issues which appear in the literature on failed projects—nothing new or unexpected!

Of potential significance is that the evidence provided by witness statements mapped to the project chronology showed that issues related to the identified themes were raised by staff and consultants throughout the project phases, and yet they still they remained as issues that were not resolved nor remediated at the time they were raised. The evidence is that management was made aware of these failures. So it was not a lack of awareness of the failure risks, and therefore highlighting these as the contributory factors of project failure lacks explanatory completeness.

As was evident from the analysis of the witness statements - management was regularly informed of what was going on with their project by both staff and external consultants [37]. Management knew that the project was facing problems (or at least should have known). The reports on the 2005 Whole-of-Government initiative [38], the KPMG Report [30], the KJ Ross report on testing [39], the IBM and CorpTech report to 'reconstruct' the business requirements [31] and the 2009 Queensland Audit Office report [40] all provided clear statements identifying where the project was failing and what needed to be done to remedy the situation. Yet the problems persisted until the total project costs had blown out to beyond A\$1 billion. Faced with the clear and certain statement that the project was performing badly, and with specific statements of where the project was failing, successive managements failed to act appropriately to stem the problems. The only conclusion that can be drawn from this failure to act

is that senior executives of the Department, the Governance and steering committees, the Executive Director did not know what specific actions were available to them, or what they specifically needed to do in order to be effective. The Management and oversight of this project were at a complete loss as to how to effectively manage an information technology project.

To examine the case study from the perspective of a timeline of events, of data and the advice that was available at the time to the participants, the researcher has reconstructed the project from the information sourced by FoI. This method of investigation is referred to as being 'inside the tunnel'; 'this is the point of view of people in the unfolding situation. To them, the outcome was not known (or they would have done something else). They contributed to the direction of the sequence of events on the basis of what they saw on the inside of the unfolding situation. To understand human error, you need to attain this perspective' [41]. In examining this case, and in identifying the contributory factors to project failure the researcher has set aside any preconceived notions or ideas as to why the project failed. The contributory factors explained in greater detail below are drawn from the perspective of what was occurring in the project at the time. What did the management of the project know, and why they were motivated to pursue the decisions that ultimately led this project to a disastrous outcome.

9. Project executives lacked domain expertise

'Organisational artefacts such as mission statements, goals and objectives, strategic plans and the like function as tools to reduce choice, not to guide it' [42]. In the same manner, the specification of requirements, the business case, the architecture and solution design of the project are all intended to constrain choice to deliver 'order'. In the QH project 'order' should have been represented by a defined scope of work, a defined project plan which sets out not only what work will be done, but also what work will not be done, and by an agreed contract. None of these things existed on the QH payroll project, and any efforts to enforce them were resisted by the vendor with the support (tacit or otherwise) of Departmental executives.

The issue of transparent flows of information between parties, of experts being able to make informed decisions utilising tacit information compared to less experienced people needing to 'follow the script' [43], of actors controlling the release of information, and of stakeholders presenting different versions of themselves across multiple stages becomes critical when one considers both the makeup of the governance and management of the QH project and the individuals involved. 'The involvement of non-IT stakeholders can actually work detrimentally and confound and confuse proceedings, even causing error' [15]. Non-IT experienced management, placed in a position of authority 'may be influenced by some suppliers or colleagues to whose IT knowledge they had access, and insist on a certain course of action' [15] which may result in confusion, delay or inappropriate decision-making, and contribute to the risk of IT project failure.

An appropriate lens through which to view this performance construct is referred to as the Dunning-Kruger Effect [44]. This effect is where the less competent an individual is with respect to a particular domain then the more they are likely to overstate their perceived knowledge and ability. This may be referred to as a 'confidence/competence dissonance'. Individuals that lack competence in a particular domain (incompetent) but are not self-aware

of their lack of competence, generally perceive their performance to be not significantly inferior to those who possess significant competence, training and ability (the experts).

This phenomena has also been described as the Unskilled and Unaware Problem (UUP) [45]. Essentially UUP argues that individuals that are unskilled in a particular domain overestimate their own competence in both absolute terms and relative terms. Top performers underestimate their absolute and relative performance. Kruger and Dunning [44] found that an unskilled person was more likely to dramatically misstate their absolute and relative competence. Ehrlinger et al. [46] have argued that UUP is a persistent feature of decision-making. Furthermore, and potentially much more concerning for complex IT projects, Kruger and Dunning [44] determined that the skills necessary to do the job, are the same skills necessary to identify competence in others. This facet of the UUP research is particularly important when an unskilled individual is placed in a position of decision-making authority, in this case with respect to an IT Project. Where an unskilled individual possesses neither the skills necessary to do the job, nor the skills necessary to identify competence in others they are not in a position to make informed decisions on complex issues. The application of this principle to the Queensland Health Payroll project would suggest that the Executive Director, the Department Secretary, and the governance boards lacked the skills needed to identify competence in others, and to comprehend informed advice when it was provided, preferring instead to rely upon those with similar personality attributes as themselves.

Engelbrecht et al. [15] aimed to 'identify whether a causal relationship exists between the various components of business managers' IT competence and IT success'. What they found was that a 'business managers' IT competence can, and does, exert a substantial influence on project success'. They reported a 'surprising' finding where a lack of knowledge or competence was likely to have a negative impact on project outcomes, 'although one would have expected a positive relationship and a positive impact, it has been reported that the involvement of non-IT stakeholders can actually work detrimentally and confound and confuse proceedings, even causing errors'.

Engelbrecht et al. [15] also found that 'business managers may be influenced by some suppliers or colleagues to whose IT knowledge they had access, and insist on a certain course of action. If that business manager is particularly influential in an organisation, then there could be similar confusions, delays, and even inappropriate decisions'. This finding is reflective of the behaviours referred to in the Witness Statements. The senior executives of Queensland Health deferred to the advice of the vendor, rather than their own staff. The researcher in this instance has neither the data nor the training to consider the role of amoral actors in this project, and has elected instead to make the assumption that the entire collective management must have been acting with the best intent for the Department (even if individual actors may have been compromised). This leads the researcher to conclude that it is a lack of knowledge of information technology projects, and the executives inability to parse the information being presented that lays the foundations of a theory to explain how the Queensland Health payroll project became so dysfunctional and ended in failure.

Given the importance of information technologies to business success, and their presence in almost every endeavour, one would expect to see an increase in technically literate, skilled or experienced managements to provide effective oversight and governance. Coertze and von Solms [47] found that 10% of organisations had Chief Information Officer (CIO) or equivalent

representation at board or executive level of organisational governing management. Only 15% of organisations had board members with any IT-related qualifications, and in their United Kingdom (UK) sample, no organisation exhibited board level oversight of organisational IT through qualified representation directly as a board member. A focus on general business competence over specific IT competence continues at the CIO level where less than 50% of CIOs in the United States of America (US) public sector had primary qualifications from technical or engineering backgrounds [48]. Management and leadership is devoid of the skills needed to understand or lead complex information technology projects.

10. Narcissism and leadership competence

Narcissism, in modern terms has been defined as 'a person who possesses an extreme love of the self, a grandiose sense of self-importance, and a powerful sense of entitlement' [49], and while generally applied to individuals, the concept of narcissistic personalities has also been applied to groups and organisations [50]. Of significance in this research is that 'the narcissistic personality is characterised by the denial of a difference between the ideal and the actual self' [50] which segues directly into the studies of competence versus confidence by Kruger and Dunning [44] and Ryvkin, Krajc and Ortmann [45]. The narcissistic leader that holds 'very inflated self-views and (is) preoccupied with having those self-views continuously reinforced [51], was a behaviour which was evident on the Queensland Health payroll project, where the evidence suggested that the project was in trouble this was discounted or ignored because it did not fit the 'self-image' of the project leader that everything was under control.

Narcissistic leaders in organisations are more likely to engage in behaviour which might lead to failing standards and reduced ethical and moral behaviour [52] which could be seen to be an antecedent for the 'normalisation of deviance'. As standards fall, decision by decision, what is considered normal behaviour slowly erodes until a 'new normal' gradually and almost imperceptibly emerges.

Narcissism is growing and becoming more prevalent and we can expect to see an increase in organisational narcissism as a direct consequence. Twenge and Foster [53] found that 'there has been a 30% tilt towards narcissistic attitudes in US students since 1979', and that 'The Narcissism Epidemic' [54] breeds 'the idea that being highly self-confident is the key to success'. Twenge and Campbell [55] were at pains to point out that there is no correlation between confidence and successful outcomes. Kremer [54] reported that 'over 15,000 journal articles have examined the links between high self-esteem and measurable outcomes in real life, such as educational achievement, job opportunities, popularity, health, happiness and adherence to laws and social codes' and found no correlation or causation. Highly confident, narcissistic project leaders are likely to exhibit behaviours that would put projects at risk. They over-estimate their own abilities, and are incapable of observing competence in others and learning by observing others. Narcissistic project leaders will be 'blind' to evidence that does not support their distorted view of their own abilities and of the status of the project for which they are accountable.

'Over the last 30 years confidence has replaced competence' [54]. Positive thinking has replaced knowledge. An increase in narcissism correlates with the unskilled and unaware

problem (UUP) in that 'individuals become so self-obsessed they cannot identify their own weaknesses or learn from others' [44]. This narcissistic self-belief and confidence may go some way to explain why an executive with little knowledge of information technology and no formal training or experience in information technology would agree to take on the responsibility of running 'the largest organisational reform undertaken within the State Government' [28]. When it comes to the QHP project, it was stated very clearly by the Deputy-Secretary of the Department that the Executive-Director was not skilled in information technology but was a very experienced people manager with greater than 30 years in the public sector [56] mostly in Human Resources.

The potential risk that this lack of (Information Technology) domain expertise causes for Information Technology projects generally, and the Queensland Health project as a specific example is encapsulated by the Dunning-Kruger Effect, 'that incompetent individuals lack the metacognitive skills that enable them to tell how poorly they are performing, and as a result, they come to hold inflated views of their performance and ability'. They are therefore potentially prone to ignore mounting evidence of their contribution to project related issues, to over-estimate their own ability to diagnose and resolve issues, and to listen to and take advice from unreliable sources. All of which were evident in the witness statements.

Of even greater concern is the UUP findings [45] that not only do the domain illiterate individuals tend to overestimate their own ability relative to their actual performance, they are also at risk of being deficient in identifying relevant domain competence in others, 'participants who scored in the bottom quartile were less able to gauge the competence of others than were their top-quartile counterparts' [44]. Furthermore, they found that 'incompetent individuals fail to gain insight into their own incompetence by observing the behaviour of other people. Despite seeing the superior performances of their peers, bottom-quartile participants continued to hold the mistaken impression that they had performed just fine' [44], which also aligns with the observations of narcissism in leadership positions.

A possible explanation contributing to the Queensland Health Payroll project failure is that where managers are not technically competent, but perceive themselves as managerially capable, not only are they potentially at risk of overestimating their own ability and underestimating the relative competence of the skilled workers on the project, they do not have the skills to discern the quality of advice being given to them. Essentially, the evidence suggests that they are at high risk of not being able to assess the difference between the veracity of a confident but incompetent colleague or vendor providing advice, in comparison to a competent but less-confident colleague.

These managerial perceptions about domain expertise, confidence and competence carry the risk of significant contribution to poor project management decision-making and governance with implications for overall project failure and success. The decision-making senior project manager with accountability, responsibility and authority needs to be able to assess the information provided to them in order to make well-informed decisions. It is contended in the interpretation of the QH project data presented in this study that the consequences of placing domain-challenged persons in positions of project-critical authority is likely to lead to unsatisfactory outcomes where:

- managers who lack domain expertise will act the part that they perceive they need to adopt;
- these managers tend to be incapable of identifying the skilled and competent individuals that can be trusted for expert advice;
- these managers will not have the cognitive or experiential tools to determine an appropriate course of action when faced with a project related crisis; and
- these managers are likely to confuse confidence with competence and may be subject to undue influence by other incompetent actors.

In summary, the Queensland Health Payroll project was potentially placed at significant risk by failing to appoint management, governance and oversight that comprised sufficient domain expertise appropriately matched to the size, complexity and nature of the project.

11. Situational incompetence

The question of most concern to this researcher has been to uncover why, despite all of the preceding research, publications, education, training and certification that is available to individuals and organisations undertaking project management of an information technology system, a project could still display all of the mistakes, errors and failings that have been identified in the literature.

In order to understand what occurred on the Queensland Health payroll project, a case study analysis was undertaken following a multi-grounded theory approach. The purpose of the research being conducted in this manner was to allow themes to emerge from the data, and to test theories against observable project related behaviour.

The theme that was the most consistent throughout the project was that senior management was repeatedly made aware of project risks and failings. Reports had been written about the whole-of-government project prior to the creation of the Queensland Health project that specifically enumerated the challenges and risks that needed to be kept front-of-mind to the QH project team [30, 57]. The literature provided no plausible explanation to describe the fact that senior executives responsible for the direct execution of the project, and departmental executives with governance and oversight accountability apparently ignored all of the advice that they were presented with.

What emerged from the data was that the executives in charge of the project, those executives that operated above the hands-on technical level, were manifestly incompetent when it came to issues of information systems project management. The executives simply did not understand the information that was being presented to them, and interpreted professional concerns raised by Queensland Health team members as 'personality conflicts'. These executives were presented with several formal reports outlining risks and issues, and acted in a manner that under conventional wisdom, would defy rational explanation - the witness statements and project documents provide no evidence of any action being taken to address the issues raised. In fact, when the vendor complained that employees of Queensland Health (that were

trying to hold the vendor to its contract), were interfering in the project senior executives of the Department ordered their removal, at the specific request of the vendor. No credibility was assigned to the concerns of the departmental staff, and no investigation appears to have been undertaken by senior management as to why the vendor was unhappy.

Engelbrecht et al. [15] suggests that inexperienced managers will seek advice and guidance from inappropriate sources. Kruger and Dunning [44] offer the observation that the Unskilled and Unware [45] are incapable of identifying their own failings, incapable of independently observing and learning from the competence of others, and incapable of identifying competence in others.

These findings have led this researcher to postulate a new theory: Situational Incompetence.

Situational Incompetence applies when an otherwise experienced executive is placed in a position of authority or accountability for which they lack experience, training or specific skills. In this new role they are effectively incompetent and incapable of providing reasoned advice, guidance or management.

Situational Incompetence has implication for how leaders are selected for complex tasks requiring specialist IT domain knowledge and technical competence, it may also apply to the disciplines requiring specific knowledge of the technology in that domain (e.g. accounting, medicine, engineering, science).

Kruger and Dunning point to potential approaches to remediate this failing. They experimented with providing simple mathematical training to unskilled test subjects which resulted in marked improvements in their ability to recognise competence in others, and to more accurately assess their anticipated performance on a comparison scale.

It is proposed that future research test this theory and apply specific training in information technology to senior executives and measure the impact that has on project outcomes for which those executives have a governance, oversight and user-engagement accountability.

'Someone implementing IT needs to know which levers to pull, in which context, and at what time' [58]. 'uring out which levers to pull, in which context and at what time requires competence and the intuition borne of experience - without this we are left with Situational Incompetence.

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We Are Asking the Wrong Question about Leadership: The Case for ‘Good-Enough’ Leadership

Tom Karp

Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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Abstract

This chapter presents the argument that leadership is not always effective, even though we know a great deal about what makes leadership effective. Consequently, we are asking the wrong question when we inquire into what makes leadership effective. A more interesting question is that when we know so much about effective leadership, why are leaders sometimes unable to exercise effective leadership? Why do not they do as they should? The answer discussed here is that leadership is often ineffective because people are imperfect, including leaders. Therefore, there are individual and organisational barriers to effective leadership, as well as constraints in the environment. Better education and training programmes for leaders, as well as more robust and transparent methods of recruitment and selection of leaders, may remedy this to some extent. But it is perhaps more important to accept the fact that leadership is often ineffective and that we should settle for ‘good enough’. This perspective offers us the opportunity to investigate the barriers to effective leadership and what may be done to reduce them. This is a better way forward for researchers and practitioners than the present dominating focus within leadership literature on unobtainable ideals involving flawless acts carried out by perfect human beings operating in rational organisational environments.

Keywords: ineffective leadership, imperfect, biases, irrationality, ‘good enough’

1. Introduction

People are capable of great things, but they are also imperfect. The Nobel Prize-winning author John Steinbeck [1] wrote in his novel, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*, that ‘there is a strange duality in the human which makes for an ethical paradox’. Steinbeck goes on to say that human societies tend to share more or less universal descriptions of good and bad human qualities;

that is, the good qualities are often associated with ‘wisdom, tolerance, kindness, generosity and humility; and the qualities of cruelty, greed, self-interest, graspingness and rapacity are universally considered undesirable’. However, in some contexts in modern society, the people who possess those so-called ‘bad’ qualities are successful, while those who possess the ‘good’ qualities fail, he argues. Steinbeck continues that ‘perhaps no other animal is so torn between alternatives. Man might be described fairly adequately, if simply, as a two-legged paradox’. Following Steinbeck’s argument, we might also refer to the Latin expression: *Errare humanum est* which translates into English as to err is human. But in the leadership literature; however, the focus is not on ‘to err’ and not always even on ‘human’, but on people’s strengths, their good qualities and their potential, and it tells us what will result in effective leadership. Leaders should achieve goals with efficient use of resources, while at the same time conserving and developing resources. Yet in reality, this is not always the case. This book looks at dysfunctional leadership. Dysfunctional leadership often consists of behaviour that is controlling, autocratic, arrogant, reckless, critical, and that uses threats, lies and distortion, as well as appealing to people’s bad consciences [2]. Dysfunctional leadership has therefore been examined by researchers from both psychoanalytic [3–10], as well as from critical, perspectives [10–19].

Leadership is sometimes effective, sometimes dysfunctional and sometimes ineffective; however, it is the latter that is most common in everyday organisational life. Even though the literature in the field of leadership includes normative prescriptions for what leaders should do, leaders often do not act as they should; consequently, there is a disparity between rhetoric and reality [20–31]. The simple explanation is that there are barriers to effective leadership, such as environmental, organisational and personal ones. I will therefore argue in this chapter that leadership is not always, and more often than we like to believe, effective. It is thus important to understand what the barriers to effective leadership are and what can be done to minimise these, at both individual and organisational levels. This issue deserves more attention and will provide an important contribution to further research and understanding of the leadership phenomenon. It is also important for leaders to have something other than unattainable ideals and normative models to relate to. Consequently, the premise in this chapter is that we are asking the wrong question about leadership. The more pertinent question is if we know so much about what constitutes effective leadership, why do not leaders exercise more effective leadership in organisations?

2. Human beings are imperfect

Human beings are imperfect, this we know. People may certainly be described as unique and special, yet they are nevertheless imperfect. There seem to be no limit to what the human brain can solve regarding practical and theoretical problems; however, regarding its limitations, the brain is poorly equipped to understand itself. Simply put, it is not so difficult to trick the brain, and the brain is also capable of tricking itself. Consider, for instance, the effects of mental shortcuts that the brain uses to produce decisions or judgements. Such cognitive biases take on a variety of forms and affect beliefs, decision making and behaviour in general. Such biases are studied in psychology and behavioural economics, and the cause

is commonly attributed to theoretical explanations such as bounded rationality, attribution theory, cognitive dissonance and heuristics [32–39]. In general, biases arise from too much information, not enough understanding, the need to act quickly, the limits of memory and information processing capacity, emotional and moral motivations, as well as social influence. Some examples are people who rely too much on a single piece of information when making decisions; or they self-reinforce collective beliefs; or they opt for risk-seeking choices in order to avoid negative outcomes. Other biases are more of a social nature such as the tendency to be influenced by authority figures and to give preferential treatment to those perceived to be members of own group. People's memories are also biased, for example, people often retroactively ascribe choices as being better informed than they were when they were made.

Individuals create their reality from their perception of the input. The construction of reality governs people's behaviour. Thus, such biases may lead to perceptual distortion, inaccurate judgement, illogical interpretation or what is broadly called irrationality. It needs to be said that such biases may lead to more effective actions in a given context, as well as faster decisions when timeliness is more valuable than accuracy. However, the fact that humans are not only rational, utility-maximising individuals, but also have [often contradictory] wishes, internal conflicts, defensive mechanisms, as well as feelings such as anxiety, insecurity, fear, anger and pain—sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously—is only to a small extent discussed in leadership literature [40]. Good intentions do not amount to anything, because of forces affecting people's behaviour preventing them from being effective. If we are to understand why people do not always do what they should, then we must understand the conflicts, protection mechanisms, tensions and feelings that affect behaviour. Most people are equipped with a defensive structure that controls impulses, thoughts and ideas. Common defensive reactions include projection, denial, displacement, repression, rationalisation and extended use of humour. Defensive structures operate outside of consciousness, and people may not be aware that something which they do create reactions in other people, since they are blind to such disorders. Human behaviour is also driven by unconscious motivations and needs which determine people's operational codes. These systems are shaped by innate and learned response patterns, the role of significant caretakers and how the individual recreates positive emotional states in infancy and childhood. During childhood, mental schemas that regulate behaviour emerge as a result of these [41–44]. When needs are not taken care of, negative and eventually overwhelming emotions may develop, which can give rise to a wide range of ailments and symptoms. Such internal forces are rational in isolation, but may lie behind behaviour that may be considered irrational.

Emotions correspond to a distinct and dedicated neurological circuit, and contain processing of the body's signals and are not just hormonal impulses, but are based on assumptions of what will happen [45, 46]. When people feel pain, fear and other difficult feelings, these emotions thus have a purpose—they help them deal with social or physical dangers. During the course of maturation processes, people develop particular schemes in their inner world that reflect important wishes and contribute to their personalities. These schemes translate into the patterns by which they relate to others [47] and people bring such schemes into the context of workplace relationships. They project their wishes on others, and anticipate how others will react. This may result in ineffective behaviour such as conflict avoidance, micro-management, manic behaviour,

inaccessibility and internal politicking. People also create psychosocial immune systems to protect and preserve their belonging and standing in the groups upon which they depend [48]. This system keeps those emotions outside their awareness that they may find too threatening, embarrassing or shameful to expose to others. Even though people may desire a more effective and open interaction with others, they may avoid experiences that might expose them to vulnerability. The risks of losing value in others' eyes, losing power, losing status and losing membership of a social group thus govern interaction between people, and result in ineffective action and counter-action. The implication of this somewhat darker side of human behaviour is that people often misperceive situations and conversations and act in inappropriate ways. Disciplines such as psychodynamics, but also psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, developmental psychology and neuropsychology, contribute to an understanding of the above [41, 49–52]. The premises in such fields are that a considerable portion of the regulation of people's behaviour takes place outside the domain of conscious awareness. This gives rise to defensive reactions, innate response patterns and scripts that in many cases have outlived their effectiveness. The result may be that people withdraw from difficult discussions, they close themselves off or they use different types of destructive behaviour in their interaction with others. This is related to Freud's [53] most enduring idea about the 'battle' between the conscious and unconscious mind.

3. Imperfect organisations

Imperfect people work in organisations, which means that work organisations on a system level also experience short-circuits, processing errors, conflicts, protection mechanisms and tensions, and are affected by people's emotions and needs. Imperfections at the individual level adds up to the system level, but is also held in check by institutional practices, collective processes, values and norms. An organisation is a social system that is deliberately designed to realise certain goals, and behaviour and processes in organisations are the result of constructed realities [54–56]. One might think that people in organisations act rationally and that organisations collectively process activities cognitively. However, this is not necessarily the case. Alvesson and Spicer [57] point to the limits of rationality and knowledge in organisations, which they claim is due to power and internal politics. The symbolic aspects of organisational life are emphasised, instead of the substantive. Manipulation of symbols and exercise of power block effective communication and action.

3.1. Organisations are not always rational

To describe some of people's behaviour in organisations, Morgan [58] uses archetypal metaphors such as machines, organisms, brains, cultures, political systems and psychic prisons. In the metaphors political systems and psychic prisons, there are relationships other than the rational that affect interaction—a consequence of people being imperfect, as discussed above. This fallibility also emerges in organisational life. Morgan also compares organisations to living organisms; the latter are concerned with survival. Similarly, employees in organisations have needs that must be satisfied, in order for them to function well. Organisations are also political systems where people have different interests. Conflict is inherent and fostered by beliefs,

mental programming, stereotyping or arising from competition for scarce resources. Finally, organisations may be regarded as psychic prisons, where people are trapped by their incomplete understanding of reality, by their successes or failures or by groupthink. According to Morgan, unconscious processes trap people and lead to ineffective interaction. Processes are not rational and barriers hinder efficiency. Organisational processes is, therefore, not only a result of rational actions, but include complications and unforeseen events characterised by the results achieved, but also by mistakes, resistance, ambivalence, cynicism, lack of trust, conflict and political games [59–61]. Organisational reality is thus characterised by a high degree of complexity that makes it difficult to order, organise, influence and thereby lead. The idyllic picture painted by leadership literature is often at odds with the messy and imperfect organisational reality. Also, an organisation's environment influences its processes and the order that emerges through interaction and negotiation. Organisations are affected by the environment, just as organisations affect the environment. This mutually dependent relationship is characterised by resource transactions, exchange, impact, legitimacy and uncertainty. Organisations are thus targeted by a number of forces making claims and demands on operations and development. Such external pressures and internal conditions are often much more significant than any specific actions carried out by powerful individuals [62, 63]. These forces may range from broader economic, legal and social constraints impacting business cycles, regulations or ethical standards, to concrete market demands that organisations need to acknowledge. Much has been written about how globalisation, technology development, ecology and demographic changes affect; how society develops, markets work, businesses are organised and leadership is exercised. Transparency, information speed and technology development create discontinuity, restlessness and short-termism. These are fundamentally different conditions from the continuity and long-term perspective which in some cases are needed in order to lead organisations effectively.

3.2. Why do we follow leaders?

One may argue that leadership and followership is a basic human behaviour [64, 65]. Human beings are social animals, and certain features of the human condition make leadership and followership necessary. The processes whereby people lead and follow have emerged over the course of human evolution to deal with the need to coordinate issues within small groups [66]. Van Vugt and colleagues [67] note the fact that people lived for a period of 2.5 million years in small equitable communities has had an effect on how people relate to leadership. The human mind still employs the mechanisms used by early man in order to solve problems geared towards improving the survival and reproduction of the species. These mechanisms include skills, which were needed as groups consolidated and coordinated their actions, as well as resolving conflicts, punishing outliers, waging war and teaching and promoting social cohesion [68]. The patterns of leadership and followership support the contention that both these have evolved psychological mechanisms to deal effectively with coordination problems associated with group life, and conflict and competition both within, and between, groups [69–71]. Selection theory suggests that most people are flexible enough to be either a leader or follower, and they make their choices according to context and situational variables. Others, more controversially, propose that evolution produces an optimal and stable ratio of leaders and followers in a population [72, 73]. Evolutionary psychologists thus argue that people are

conditioned for leadership and followership. Is this the case? Why is someone inclined to follow someone else—willing to subject themselves to direction from others? One explanation is that leadership may be a product of the followers' need for leadership. They need someone to take on the responsibility for the group. One of several ways whereby people manage their fears and anxieties is by following people that somehow confirm their worldview, making them feel part of something larger than themselves [74, 75]. Also, several studies have shown that people follow authority figures, whether it is formal or informal authority, and people's amenability to organisational imperatives that make them inclined to obedience [76–78]. In addition, people follow others because they have preconceptions regarding the characteristics and behaviors that are preferable for them to follow—they think it pays off [79, 80]. People categorise other people as being a person they will follow or not to the extent that their traits and behaviours match prototypical characteristics they see as being favourable [81]. Once categorised as someone to follow, people's internal schemas lead them to perceive and encode information about the other person's effectiveness that fits with their schemas. Another explanation is that people expect leadership when they feel vulnerable [82]. When someone is needed to take charge of a challenging situation, people are more likely to follow the person who can influence the specific situation [83]. Interaction between people tends to be governed by practical situations, rather than by prior considerations. People follow those who can react in any given situation that emerges, and who are able to identify what needs to be done next [84]. Finally, social identity theory suggests that people's self-concepts and self-esteem are strongly influenced by the group to which they belong [85, 86] meaning that their social identity is a function of the group to which they belong. These social identities include prototypes that characterize the group that belongs to and which distinguishes it from other groups. When someone strongly matches such prototypical properties, people in the group identify more strongly with that person [87, 88]. Highly prototypical group members are thus more influential than less prototypical members, and more likely to lead others, as they are more liked, their status is higher, they are more trusted and they are perceived to behave in a more group-serving manner.

4. What does research teach us about effective leadership?

Psychology has been influential in the field of leadership research. The literature includes theories and findings regarding effective leadership. There are, however, no clear definitions of what is meant by effectiveness, although reference is made to the extent to which the performance of a group or organisation is improved and objectives reached [89–91]. Many claim that effective leadership depends on a combination of, and the interaction between personal and situational attributes [91]. The field of psychology thus provides us with normative answers to the question of what constitutes effective leadership important for the development of society, organisations and groups. We want the foremost and the best suited to lead us. However, if we accept the premise that people are imperfect, then so are leaders. What is leadership research's response as how to minimise imperfect leaders leading organisations, so that we can minimise ineffective leadership?

4.1. Leaders have the characteristics needed for the job

Individual leaders are commonly selected and chosen based on characteristics such as personality traits, characteristics, behaviour, values, skills, competencies, ambitions, capacity, experience and past results. Individual-oriented research within leadership has listed many attributes that are deemed relevant to leadership. This includes personality traits such as self-confidence, extroversion, emotional maturity, conscientiousness and agreeableness [92–94], as well as effective behaviour relevant to leadership [95], including, for example, task/relationship-orientation [96], change-orientation [96] and transformational leadership [97]. Values are another category when selecting leaders; leaders should have the 'right' or politically correct values. Values are internalised attributes of what is considered right or wrong, ethical or unethical and moral and immoral. Examples include fairness, honesty, freedom, equality, loyalty and excellence. Various configurations of self-concepts are also a common parameter for selecting leaders and typically include self-identity, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-mastery and self-worth. Skills are yet another category often discussed when somebody is singled out for leadership positions, and refers to the ability to do something in an effective manner. Leadership skills commonly include: (i) technical skills such as knowledge about methods, processes, procedures and techniques, (ii) interpersonal skills such as having knowledge of human behaviour, inter- and intrapersonal processes, and also what may be called [iii] conceptual skills such as analytical ability, logical thinking, critical thinking and problem solving [98–101]. However, selecting and choosing leaders based on individual capabilities is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, it is difficult to find causal links between a leader's individual attributes and effective leadership. Moreover, characteristics that may be useful in one situation may not be useful in a different situation. Furthermore, two leaders with different attributes can be successful in the same situation. A particular type of leadership behaviour may therefore be characterised as being good or bad, depending on the different outcomes. Thus, context also plays a role; other factors such as the specific industry, as well as cyclical differences, can determine which characteristics can result in effective leadership.

4.2. Leaders influence interaction

Given that most definitions of leadership concern influence, then it should be assumed that influencing is one of the most important things that leaders do. Yet, there are many sources of influence in organisations. Employees in organisations are influenced by their leaders, clearly, but also by colleagues, customers, the working environment, organisational structure, organisational culture, subcontractors, markets, systems, procedures and rules, as well as by external events and unforeseen circumstances. Thus, it is difficult to specify what is due to effective leadership when results are achieved. Blom and Alvesson [102] emphasise the dynamics between leaders and followers. They propose using the expression 'leadership on request' to emphasise situation dependency and the importance of context. Leadership is therefore a more collective phenomenon than individual-led leadership researchers propose, and is a function of actions and interactions within dyadic and network interlinkages [103–105]. It is the importance of leadership, not the leader, which is crucial, representing a refocus from presumed extraordinary individuals to what ordinary people accomplish as they interact.

Leadership are thus not solely dependent on one person—a leader—to mobilise action on behalf of others, but rather on a process that emerges *in situ*, in the situation, and in social interactions, deploying itself via different activities. When relationships between leaders and employees are established, it may also be unclear whether it is the leader or employee[s] who exercise leadership. That is, whether a co-worker/employee can act as a leader and the leader act as a co-worker will often depend on the tasks being performed, where leadership will be divided between members of a team or other organisational units [106].

4.3. Leaders are selected

There are sources of error in the methods used to internally or externally select or recruit leaders. A recent study by Rogstad and Sterri [107] shows some of these. There are parameters other than formal competence and documented experience which play a role when appointing leaders. It constitutes a source of error when recruiters, who are also prone to errors of judgment, believe that they are a good judge of character. They commonly have preconceptions regarding characteristics and behaviors that they deem to be leadership qualities, as well as attributing characteristics to others according to their own schemas, beliefs and values. Assessment of potential leaders is often based to a great extent on arbitrary discretion, and the indeterminate ability of those appointing leaders. There are usually few objective criteria for discretionary decisions and, decisions are often not transparent. It is also the case that leaders are selected and recruited on the basis of internal promotion, that is, candidates considered to be suitable are appointed to a more senior position. However, what is regarded as ‘suitable’ is often vague and unclear. It may be the case that candidates who are good at positioning themselves, and projecting that they have ‘what it takes’ are those who are promoted. Pfeffer [20] emphasises this aspect when he claims that it seems that good performance is not always enough. He therefore ironically recommends that people with ambitions should project their power and success, as they then are likely to be singled out as ‘leadership material’ and rise up through the ranks.

4.4. Leaders and moral values

An examination of the language used in descriptions of leadership yields insights which may be found in attribution and implicit theories of leadership. Many scholars seem to write as if they are describing actual leaders, but on closer examination they are prescribing leadership ideals [108], which often implicitly or explicitly include high moral values. Philosophers throughout history have emphasised moral values in their ideas about leaders. Leaders must be morally brave and able to stand up for their principles as a common argument, but this seems to be ideal that many leaders have difficulty living up to [109]. *Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power*, said the 16th American president, Abraham Lincoln. Power may corrupt leaders, and studies have shown that leaders seem to believe that if they have power, they can cross moral boundaries, grant themselves benefits, adopt double standards or set higher demands for others than they do for themselves [110]. Power can also go to leaders' heads: they may feel that they control more than they actually do, and they can overestimate themselves and their actions [111]. Philosophy literature chronicles the history of human ideals and aspirations. These ideals and aspirations are embedded in the language we use when making sense of leadership; in many cases, the

word 'leader' has a built-in normative aspect to it, meaning that a leader only leads if he or she possesses high moral values or meets certain ethical standards. Organisational dilemmas, market conditions and strategic choices are, however, rarely black and white—exercising leadership often concerns navigating through shades of gray. Human behaviour has the capacity for great variation, and although we may have inherent moral values, human behaviour often adjust itself according to the current perception of what is normal and acceptable [112]. Subsequently, people are able to show good and bad sides of themselves depending on the situation, their ability to understand the situation and the culture they are part of; and that ability is not always optimal, given human limitations and barriers.

4.5. What ever the problem, leadership is the solution

Common explanatory models of effective leadership include the trait approach, the style approach, the situational approach, neo-charismatic theories, such as charismatic leadership, transformational leadership, authentic leadership and contemporary relationship-oriented leadership styles. Some of these have been subject to criticism, but they still have support within the academic community. They prescriptively define qualities of leaders, or explain that leaders should be able to choose the right style or type of action depending on the situation and the people involved, and, based on this, exercise effective leadership so that organisational objectives are reached. Alternative approaches are becoming more current, for example, within critical and practice-oriented approaches to leadership. But, such studies are still relatively few; the great volume of leadership theory focuses on a presumed causality between individual qualities and actions, and organisational results. Also, the amount of theory produced has grown significantly in the past four decades. It is a 'leadership theory industry'. The major players are reputable business schools and large international consulting companies. They live off developing and selling new theories and tools for a growing market. This leadership industry is hence a self-reinforcing one. Leaders, head hunters, consultants, media, leadership developers and researchers have a mutual interest in creating interest in the phenomenon of leadership, as well as inflating the importance of leadership. In her book *The End of Leadership*, Kellerman [113] thus confronts leadership as a phenomenon—and the leadership industry's inflated understanding of the profession. Kellerman claims that we must stop believing that everyone can lead; that better leadership is the solution to every problem; and that everyone can become leaders by completing expensive leadership development programs offered by consulting companies or business schools. There are several ways to organise organisational work, leadership is just one of them. And, leadership is not always the solution, but sometimes the problem if one rely too much on this.

5. The case for 'good-enough' leadership

Can we teach and train leaders so they lead more effectively in order to remedy ineffective leadership? Many think so, but this premise needs to be further qualified. Firstly, there is a difference between learning and teaching, and learning to be a leader is about learning how to become a leader in situated experiential contexts. Leaders are commonly educated and

trained to cope with leadership tasks through formal education or development programmes. However, in many organisations, opportunities are not always provided to facilitate learning, experience-sharing and optimal learning arenas. There may be too little time for reflection, too few opportunities for risk-free testing of new knowledge and behaviour, as well as a lack of creating room for new insights that challenge current practices. Moreover, most popular MBA programmes offered at business schools have a strong focus on operational and functional competencies, although they are often framed in terms of leadership [114]. In 2005, Bennis and O'Toole wrote in an influential article in the *Harvard Business Review* that the methods that are used for teaching leadership at many schools are 'useful, necessary, even enlightening. But because they are at arms' lengths from actual practice, they often fail to reflect the way business works in real life' ([115], p. 99). In the literature about the subject, and in training programmes, leadership is commonly presented as an ordered and controllable activity, but many of these models are of limited use in real life situations, where leaders have to cope with divergent demands, complexity and uncertainty. Leadership takes place in environments where there are a multitude of conflicting expectations, and a leader's work is more likely to be characterised by uncertainty, fragmentation and a hectic pace, than by order and control [29]. Consequently, there may be too much emphasis on teaching leadership in functionalistic ways predicated on essentialist, rationalist and individualist assumptions [116]. The rhetoric of leadership tends to be universal, but leadership programmes and educations are commonly designed around technical and functional expertise, a reflection of the dominance of positivist research which privileges rationality, quantification and techniques in order to identify universal models. Such models, however, ignore the complex lived experience of those supposedly learning to become leaders. Learning to lead is also about learning how to learn. This involves some form of disruption to ways of thinking and acting, where taken-for-granted assumptions, practices and competing discourses must be acknowledged and supported—a process that may begin in the classroom, but that must be extended outside to leaders' own lived experiences. Learning leadership—in contrast to teaching leadership—is thus framed as a more experiential process that often involves forms of vulnerability and disruptions [117, 118].

Effective leadership seem to be an ideal that is difficult to realise. Work environment surveys show that 60–70% of employees experience stress in relation to communication with their managers [25]. Meanwhile, around 60% of managers in the US fail in their roles [27]. Ineffective leadership may explain why only 30% of employees are committed to their work, while 50% are uncommitted and 20% may be characterised as 'unproductive' [27]. A poll of workers in the UK found that only 43% of employees were fully engaged in their work [28]. Another recent UK survey showed that 70% of employees had left a job because of an incompetent manager and that 54% of those surveyed had at some point had a problem with their manager's leadership style [28]. In Norway, a large survey revealed that 34% of employees were not satisfied with the performance of their managers [30]. There seems to be a mismatch between the idealised leadership realities referred to in theories of leadership and real life leaders' everyday work situations [21, 29, 119–122]. Moreover, everyday life in most organisations is characterised by ineffective leadership. Leadership is not ineffective because leaders intentionally abuse their power, behave destructively or otherwise sabotage good interaction between people, but ineffective because humans are imperfect—even though they may have the best intentions of making their contribution towards achieving the organisation's objectives.

Researchers who have addressed the above have various suggestions. Birkinshaw [22] states that leaders should make the best of an imperfect world. He argues that leaders should develop awareness: of what employees need, of their own biases and limitations and of how their organisations function. He notes that this will require a considerable amount of self-discipline and personal development. Alvesson and colleagues [23] argue the case for more reflexive leadership. They say that part of the problem is caused by leaders relying on simple recipes and concepts that are more likely to create problems. The researchers say that what is needed are leaders who can think independently and use their own judgment, and who are sensitive to and open-minded about local processes—and then act accordingly. Tengblad and his co-researchers [29] think that leaders must be better at dealing with complexity and avoiding paralysis. They suggest that leaders develop an experimental and learning attitude of how to deal with messiness, and that they learn to work with risk management issues. They also propose that leaders should be more aware of the hidden aspect of leadership. By this they mean the confusion, emotions, politicking, dubious ethics and selfish behaviour often found in organisations. Kellerman [113] refrains from giving any specific advice, but says that leadership is in danger of becoming obsolete. Her suggestion is to end the leader-centrism that the leadership industry seems to love. This is in line with the ideas of researchers such as Raelin [104] who argue that leadership is not dependent on any single person to mobilise action on behalf of everybody else, it is rather a collective accomplishment. It is not cognition as an isolated condition located within the mind of the leader that mobilises leadership, but the interaction with the environment through both individual and collective sensorimotor processing. Pfeffer [20] has a similar line of argumentation and points to some of the disconnections between what leaders say and what they do; between prescriptions and reality; between the multidimensional nature of leadership performance and the simple answers many people seek, and between what would make organisations more effective and the rate at which such prescriptions are implemented. Pfeffer thus argues that such disconnections serve powerful interests and that they tend to make leaders unaccountable for messed up workplaces, poor performance and bad behaviour. To restore some of these connections, leaders should keep themselves grounded in the realities of what they are doing and why they are doing it. Following the above, Storch and Shotter [123] hence claim that there are no ideal forms of leadership. They suggest instead the notion of 'good-enough leadership', that describes the process whereby individuals respond to other people's needs and the 'tryings' and 'failings' of people's interactions in doing this.

What if we disregard the ideal of effective leadership, and agree with Storch and Shotter that 'good-enough leadership' is what is needed? This implies accepting the premise that most people are imperfect and that the reality most leaders face is demanding, leading to a gap between realities and ideals. This means that researchers and practitioners need to lower expectations of what leaders can accomplish. The concept of leadership is inflated—many romanticise about leadership and they want heroes who can sort things out for them [124]. This does not happen in everyday organisational life, except perhaps in the world of airport leadership literature. If we set aside such ideals, leadership research can, to a greater extent, be based on the reality faced by most leaders, and an examination of the barriers to effective leadership. For leadership research, this will entail more use of methodologies such as shadowing, action-based research, ethnographies, time-bound observations, informal interviews, as well as use of multi-methods and triangulation, and data collection including video-taping, blogs, diaries and critical incidents.

Leadership research then also has to include the doings of leadership, and should investigate questions such as what is leadership work, how is leadership work done, what constitutes common barriers to leadership, and what can be done to remove these? This will open up the possibility of fresh understandings of the barriers to effective human interaction.

For leaders, this is liberating, in so much as they would not need to focus on unattainable ideals. Developing oneself based on one's strengths, but also on one's weaknesses, and doing one's best to improve, as well as accepting some of one's own faults, is a more effective strategy for most leaders. Becoming aware of their barriers and doing what they can to minimise them is a better way forward that triggers personal and professional development. Developing oneself requires self-insight, honesty about oneself and the will to work with one's own patterns over time. This may lead to leaders developing an awareness of their own practices, and the organisational practices they are part of. This is the best advice that can be given, along with lowering expectations as to how much they can achieve as leaders within a limited time-frame. And what about employees, what is good enough for them? Certainly, as Gabriel [125] argues, employees may want a leader who cares for his/her followers, who is accessible, who is omnipotent and omniscient or who has a legitimate claim to lead others, perhaps because they themselves as employees have high expectations of their own performance. However, such wishes are problematic as there is a gap between the words and actions of leaders and how employees experience leadership in practice [22]. It breeds an underlying cynicism: a sense that leaders are out of touch with reality and therefore not to be fully trusted. Such cynicism creates a dangerous disconnection between leaders and employees—a disconnection between ideals and reality. A recent study of 3500 employees in Norway investigated how leadership influenced job satisfaction over time [126]. The researchers surprisingly found that a good leader did not necessarily increase job satisfaction. Employees took leadership for granted as long as the leader avoided laissez-faire behaviour. This type of leadership behaviour was stress-inducing as well as demotivating. The researchers also found that passive and active destructive forms of leadership seem to have a stronger influence over time than constructive forms. The picture is obviously mixed, but in many cases, avoiding laissez-faire behaviour is perhaps the best answer to what is good enough. Leaders should clear away obstacles so employees can do their job. Accepting that there are not always clear answers. Accepting that one as a leader can say that he or she does not know what to do. Binney and colleagues [127] claim that vulnerability is a key element in leading, but this is not easy. Too much vulnerability and a leader is of no use to others, no vulnerability and employees will not engage with them. Holmberg and Tyrstrup [84] have argued that the most typical everyday leadership situation experienced by leaders is one the researchers label 'well then—what now?' This is a problem-oriented situation where leaders are not certain how they got there, where they stand and what the situation means. It is hard for them to assess how the situation fits with previous intentions, to tell what has been completed, to understand what is going on or to figure out what is still to be accomplished. Nevertheless, leaders still need to act, and, at least, to identify the next step in the process. Moreover, this is good enough. Can a leader accept their own shortcomings while at the same time be good enough in the eyes of the employees? Yes, it is imperative that a leader accepts their own imperfections, as well as being aware of their strengths; this is the only way a leader can minimize some of their own barriers for effective leadership. People want to be led by human beings, not flawless superheroes. Obviously, there

is a risk associated with such a strategy, but it is a greater risk that the concept of leadership is further and further detached from the realities most people in organisations experience, if we do not deflate the concept. Then it will be 'the end of leadership' as Kellerman postulates [113]. Leadership is certainly demanding, and developing oneself as a leader is challenging, and a process that requires trial and error, where there is no universal blueprint. It is not always possible to facilitate optimal learning arenas in the workplace; especially not for leaders who have a hectic workday. There may be little time for reflection, few opportunities for risk-free testing of new knowledge and practices, and little opportunity to gain new insights that can challenge current practices. Educational institutions and leadership developers can help in this respect, not as a competing alternative to practice-based learning at the workplace, but as a supplement. They can do this best by offering learning arenas where leaders can reflect and raise their awareness about their own practices, share experiences with each other, discuss, receive feedback and create new insights which challenge assumptions, mental maps and attitudes.

6. Conclusion

When we know so much about leadership, why do not leaders exercise more effective leadership? The simple answer is that leadership is ineffective because people are imperfect, including leaders themselves. There is certainly something to gain from creating better education and training programmes for leaders, as well as more robust and transparent methods of recruitment and selection of leaders. Moreover, in the future, technological developments will be able to minimise biases and ineffective behaviour by providing leaders with better decision support, more real-time data about organisations and environments, better and more precise methods for selecting upcoming leaders and talents, and more information about leaders themselves and others. However, until this becomes a reality, we must accept the fact that leadership is often ineffective and that in many cases we should settle for 'good enough'. We need to humanise leadership. And this is, perhaps, a better way forward than the present dominating focus on unobtainable ideals involving flawless acts carried out by perfect human beings operating in rational organisational environments. This type of thinking only supports a self-reinforcing leadership industry consisting of actors who have self-interest in inflating the phenomenon of leadership—so they can increase their profits, acquire new consultancy assignments, create better careers for themselves, acquire more citations in academic journals and expand their network. Because many of us strive for the perfect, we love to believe that we are led by the best. To think otherwise is worrying. Therefore, many are clinging to the feel-good understanding of leadership—one that is influenced by normative leadership theories, inspired by exciting Ted talks and by lectures given by leadership gurus; and by the airport literature that provides them with the 'holy grail' of what effective leadership is all about—may be because this is the more comfortable option.

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest in preparing this chapter.

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Negative Leadership in Architectural Design Offices

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Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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Abstract

Building projects performed by a design team, which include the architectural, structural, and building services teams. The success of the project depends on the performance of each team. When a large number of people are working on a project, a high level of successful teamwork is required. As in all teams, an architectural design team needs a leader and, in this case, the owner of the office is the formal leader of the design team. Generally, architects are leaders of both the architectural design team and the design team. As the leader of both groups, the relationship between the leader architect and the groups directly related to the project's success. If the personal objectives of every team member united with the team objectives, members will be more eager to achieve the team objectives. The behaviors of the lead architect are important factors in the performance of the design team in a construction project. The purpose of this study is emphasizing the importance of leadership in architectural design teams. The chapter will mainly focus on the effects of negative leadership on architectural design offices and on how leadership behaviors affect the performance of the design team.

Keywords: negative leadership, design team, architects, trust, team performance

1. Introduction

Leadership has been contemplated and a topic of interest, speculation and debate since the days of Greek philosophers, especially the time of Plato. It is one of the most popular research topics in organizational behavior subjects and in organizations around the world, from massive conglomerates to small custom fabrication shop. When organizations, groups or teams fail, their leadership gets too much of the blame and when they are successful, their leadership receives too much of the credit. Leadership is a critical variable in shaping organizational effectiveness and leaders do make a difference. Effective leaders help their followers define

their goals and find ways to achieve them. Leaders ensure that followers have the motivation, role clarity and suitable work environment to achieve specified goals. [1, 2] Contemporary leaders are most helpful to their organizations, when they are flexible, experimental and open; and they need ways to acquire the understandings and skills necessary to do that [3].

Leadership affects performance of the organizations in different ways, and while sometimes can lead positive effects; some other times can lead negative effects. Architectural design teams, since they are also a kind of organization, effected positively or negatively by the leadership style of their managers. However, architectural design teams have some different properties, when compared to other types of teams. Architectural design teams are project-based organizations that rely heavily on human resources, but they are not brought together on a temporary basis such as project-based organizations, although architectural design project is temporary, the team is permanent.

The architectural design is concerning the size, shape and organization of the spaces within the building and the design process defined by the nature and form of the building construction and its services. The leaders of the architectural design teams are generally the owner of the office. The leader architects must not only be a good designer, but also an effective leader for the success of the project. Leadership styles of the owners of the officers affect the performance of the team positively or negatively.

The purpose of this chapter is emphasizing the importance of leadership in architectural design teams and discussing the negative results on the performance of the architectural design team.

2. Leadership

Leaders exist within all organizations, but they may be managers or non-managers. Leaders stimulate a great deal of effort for obtaining individual, group and organizational performance. [1] Leadership is necessary for effective management, but leadership and management are somewhat separate. Management is a mechanical process using techniques, responding to directives from elsewhere and controlling those managed [4]. There are various leadership definitions, and while some of them based on leader characteristics, the other leader behaviors or still others on outcomes or results. A leadership definition is the process of influencing people and providing an environment to facilitate the attainment of organizationally relevant goals [1, 2]. The people led the task, the people performing and the environment in which the people and the task exist are the three important variables with which every leader must deal [1].

Traditionally, leadership is not only seen as a function of hierarchical positions holding status and power, but it is also a complex and controversial topic with many paradoxes. Increasingly, leadership seen as attaching itself to a wider range of individuals lowers down an organization's hierarchy and led to traditional leadership structures challenged, with the emergence of broad organizational structures and team working [4]. Leading others along a way, guiding is another leadership definition. This definition suggests that the leader must help the organization to choose the right path (vision, goal and plan) and help to motivate people [5]. Generating

truss, purveying hope, favoring action and risk taking are other common characteristics of leadership. Leaders are proactive and willing to take risk, and provide direction to their followers, remind people what is important, why and what makes an important difference. Leaders are purveyors of hope and in both symbolic and tangible ways reinforce the notion that success attained. Leaders are challenged by many changes occurring within and outside of the organizations. It is very important to be an effective leader, efficiently use and manage the available information technology so that the organization can compete. A leader faces everyday properly aligning the human resources of the organization with the changes occurring requires an understanding of the organization's environment, individual characteristics, group behavior, organizational structure and design, decision making and organizational change processes [1].

Leadership is the combination of motivation, trust and power and affected by the national and organizational culture.

2.1. Motivation

One of the key ingredients in employee performance and productivity is motivation. Effective leadership is much more than developing an appropriate vision for the company. Motivating people to follow that vision is critical [5]. People will not get the job done without sufficient motivation to achieve work objectives, even when they clear work objectives, the right skills and a supportive work environment. Motivation is the forces within a person that affect his or her direction, intensity and persistence of voluntary behavior. Motivated employees exert intensity, a particular level of effort; for a certain amount of time, towards a particular goal [2].

Walker [4] defined the motivation for managers to understand the motivation of employees, so that managers can influence employees' behavior and provide motivation, leads to greater job satisfaction and higher performance. Individuality and complexity of people creates many dimensions leading differences in their motivation. The subjective perceptions and preferences of individuals place different values on rewards and the different perceptions they have about the probability of achieving them. [4]

Direction, intensity and persistence are the three distinct components of motivation. When an individual presented with a number of possible alternatives, what an individual chooses to do and preference for a particular outcome related with direction. The employee is motivated, regardless of which option selected. The strength of the response once the direction made and the amount of effort to achieve refers to the intensity component of motivation. Persistence is an important component of motivation and refers to stay power of behavior, how long a person will continue to devote effort, and the strength of the urge to persist when they face obstacles. Managers' influence is not so much one of increasing motivation occasionally, but off creating an environment wherein employee motivation channeled in the right direction at an appropriate level of intensity and continues over time [1, 4].

2.2. Trust

Trust is ambiguous, complex, paradoxical and perplexing. Trust is a particular level of subjective probability with which an agent assess that another agent or group of agents will perform

a particular action, both before he can monitor such action. In construction, focus on trust is evident in the increase in conciliation and other more benign dispute resolution processes and particularly as a major element in the use of relational contracting as a procurement method. Particularly, since the move from the traditional dependence of formal contracts between parties due to the advent of collaborating, the issue of trust affects significantly on the construction industry. Trust between the parties depends upon a greater degree in construction collaborating. Collaborating requires the members of the partnership to have a shared culture based on trust. Seeking cooperation and collaboration through shared cultures will provide a platform for individuals in each organization to trust each other [4].

Each representing a different level and form of relationship, there are three types of trust, along with whom to trust. Calculus-based trust is minimal level of trust and refers to an expected consistency of behavior based on deterrence. Knowledge-based trust based on the other parties' predictability, and developed by the meaningful communication and experience. Identification-based trust grounded on mutual understanding and emotional bond between the parties. Calculus-based trust grounded on each party's beliefs that the other will deliver on its promises because punishments will be administered if they fail. Knowledge-based trust grounded on consistency of the leader's behavior. When employees know leader's past actions, they can predict more accurately, what the leader will do in the future. When one party thinks like, feels like and responds like the other party, identification-based trust occurs. Calculus-based trust is the weakest and identification-based trust is the most robust of all three. Knowledge-based trust developed over time and more stable than calculus-based trust. [2]

In several leadership theories, trust has become a key concept, including charismatic leadership, leader-member exchange theory and transformational leadership. Klausner [6] discussed the emergence of trust and mistrust in leadership relationships from a processual perspective and defined trust as an interactional state characterizing the relationship that trust occurs when both individuals trust each other. Trust results from ongoing leadership interaction and viewed as a state of relationship in general. As a characterization of social relationships, trust is always in motion and not a static phenomenon. Behavior repeatedly perceived as fair by both individuals is a necessary condition on which trust can emerge, since trust based on positive expectations regarding the behavior of the interaction partner. Assuming that fair and unfair behavior are uniformly distributed, mistrust is more likely to occur than trust. In leader-follower relationships, abusive supervision can be understood as a specific form of mistrust [6].

2.3. Power

Power defined as the capacity of a person, team or organization to influence others [2] or the capability to get someone to do something [1]. Managers and non-managers use power and it is pervasive part of the fabric of organizational life. Leaders use power to accomplish goals and most of the time to strengthen their own positions. Power is an aspect of the relationship that exists between at least two people. Power must exist in relation to some other person or group; no individual or group can have power in isolation [1]. Power can be used positively or negatively. According to French and Bell [7], in the face of conflict, such that self-interest and others' interests balanced or accommodated to promote a nonzero-sum approach is using power positively. Alternatively, in the pursuit of self-interest alone, a zero-sum approach in which the less ethical tactics of deceit, secrecy, etc. are common for using power negatively [8].

In project organization, the importance of leadership and power is apparent, since project organization focuses on people [9]. Construction projects bring a diversity of individuals and organizations together, in which power is important. Construction organizations more formally structured with more rigid hierarchies than are design organizations such as architects and specialist interior designers. Members of the architectural design team may be more inclined to conspire to override authority in pursuit of idealistic ideas could be contrary to the objectives of their firms and their clients. Traditionally architects, but sometimes project managers, select the consultants with whom they will work. This gives the architect or the project manager power over the consultants, as they will be unwilling to go against the desires of those who may hold the future work. The potential of future commissions from new sources give power to architects or project managers. The four sources of power found in construction, but expert power is a major force on construction projects. It is likely that the specialization of professional skills contributes to the effectiveness of expertise as a power base. A reputation as an experts gather support from colleagues against less expert members of the team. Referent power particularly reinforced by charisma and the influence that people exercise is because people believe in them. An architect with an international reputation for the design of famous buildings is in a strong position and has a referent power [4]. Fellows et al. [8] investigated aspects of leadership style and power within quantity surveying in both clients' and contractors' project teams in Hong Kong. Power distance is unrelated to either preferred or adopted leadership style; however, relate to the impact of leadership style on perceived performance and group morale as well as subordinate satisfaction. They found that expert power is the most important source of power for project quantity surveyors and supportive style is the most preferred leadership style; since, national culture of Chinese people are low individualism, harmony and paternalism [8].

2.4. Organizational culture

A nation's culture affects organizational transactions, such as reward programs, supervisor employee interactions or marketing, conducted. Respect, flexibility and knowledge are important factors for coping with national culture differences are important factors for managers to consider in their plans. It becomes fundamental today for managers to understand both the national culture and various organizational culture characteristics [1]. Both national culture and organizational culture have a profound effect on leadership styles [4].

Different cultures have different ideas of the nature and different models of management of organizations. Hence, every organization has its own culture or shared systems of meanings. An organization can differentiate its members from other organizations' members with its own culture [10]. The effectiveness of leaders considerably differs across cultures [11]. Hofstede [12] argues that cultural dimensions differ between Western and Eastern nations. Attributes of Western cultures are task-oriented, with relatively low power distance, individualistic and uncertainty avoidant. On the other hand, Eastern societies are high in people-orientation, collectivism, long-term orientation and have high power distance [12].

Organizational culture defined as the basic pattern of shared assumptions, values and beliefs considered being the correct way of employees thinking about and acting on problems and opportunities facing the organization. Organizational culture is a deeply embedded form of social control that influences employee decisions and behavior. Employees motivated to

internalize the organization's dominant culture because it fulfills their need for social identity. Organizational culture defines what is important or unimportant in the company and assists the sense making in the process. Employees can understand organizational events and get on with the task rather than spend time trying to figure out what expected of them. They can reach higher levels of cooperation with each other and communicate more efficiently, since they share common mental models of reality. Culture is one of the few means to tie people together [2]. Culture only sensed or felt through a person's attitudes, emotion and perceptions; it is a part of organizational life, that influences the behavior, attitudes and overall effectiveness of employees; but it cannot be seen. Organizational culture provides and encourages a form of stability and a sense of organizational identity [1]. Bass [13] demonstrated the relationship between the two concepts by examining the impact of different styles of leadership on culture. The ability to understand and work within a certain culture is a prerequisite to leadership effectiveness [14]. Many parts of organizational theory show that leadership studies are unlikely to be of any additive value unless they take into account organizational culture. The relationship between leadership and culture represents an ongoing interplay in which the leaders shapes the culture, and in turn shaped by the existing culture [14, 15].

It is useful to distinguish strong and weak cultures. Employees share core values in a strong culture. When core values shared and accepted more by the employees, the culture becomes stronger and more influential on the employee behavior [1]. Culture is a complex outcome of external pressures, internal potentials, responses to critical events, and, probably, to some unknown degree, changes factors that could not be predicted from a knowledge of either the environment or the members [15].

Ankrach et al. [16] undertook research into culture within a construction project organization. They found that in terms of factors influencing culture, one of the most important determinants was leadership. In terms of relationships, behaviors, attitudes and organizational systems associated with the culture, one of main dimensions found to be associated with leadership. Clearly, leadership together with other attributes affect performance outcomes [16].

Culture is a powerful force and particularly complex because of subcultures in the construction industry. Subcultures form the base for the dominant culture of most organizations. When an organization becomes larger and more complex, the more likely that subcultures will form. Subcultures often defined by departments and geographical locations and tend to form to reflect specializations, common experience and problems. Although construction industry defined as macho, uncompromising, uncaring, opportunistic and adversarial and a culture of control and command, they are not common to all construction firms contributing to construction projects. Architects and other designers perceived to have a predominantly esthetic culture; engineers a culture of inflexibility; contractors of practicality and adaptability [4].

3. Negative leadership

The two main organizational approaches of leadership are positive and negative. The positive organizational approach focuses on enabling positive social exchange relationships among organizational members, foremost of which are between leaders and their subordinates and

emphasizes enabling subordinate performance through exercising positive, supportive influence tactics. Various influence tactics used, some of them are downward which include task commitment and individual effectiveness. Hard and soft categories of leader influence tactics are the other types. Hard tactics associated with member compliance or resistance, and soft tactics with member commitment. [17, 18]. Negative influence tactics conceptually similar to hard tactics and lead leaders to believe that they control their subordinate's behavior and performance [19]. In particular, offering just a positive vision of leadership carries the risk of neglecting consideration of the dark sides of leadership, which reflect the hidden aspects of human nature. Leadership is a complex and detailed process marked by lights and shadows, and examination of lights and shadows of leadership allows us to have a complete understanding of a phenomenon much more difficult and problematic than a mere enumeration of features, principles and values to follow [20].

When the leadership style adopted is positive, a culture of empathy and trust [21] developed and the management and staff within the organization become an effective team [22]. However, the cognitive and organizational factors within the partnership can lead to negative leadership behavior then a culture of violent innocence pervades [23] and the organization ultimately fails [24]. Emotions are an important and deep-rooted aspect of organizational life. It is essential to managerial work creating and nourishing a healthy working climate and positive interpersonal relationships [25]. It is obvious that management activities should aim for establishing mutually beneficial interpersonal relationships where partners are able and willing to regulate and adjust emotions [26]. Zineldin and Hytter [27] showed that leadership styles related to subordinates' overall psychological health and well-being. Leaders establish strict regulations and monitor and control subordinate performance, show a negative relation to subordinate well-being [27].

Toor and Ogunlana [28] stated that negative personal attributes of the leader contributing to leadership ineffectiveness be regarded as passive or laissez-faire leadership where the leader takes a very passive approach towards leading and does not show interest in fulfilling his or her responsibilities and duties [29, 30]. In the view of Einarsen et al. [31], laissez-faire leadership is in clear violation of organizational interests as it results in poor efficiency and possibly undermines well-being, motivation and job satisfaction of subordinates [28].

The term "negative leadership behavior" refers to generally denounced and detested behaviors on the part of a leader. Ashforth [32] considers negative leadership as ineffective leadership or absence of leadership. According to Einarsen et al. [31], negative leadership regard to as destructive leadership which means behavior that violates or/and undermine the legitimate interest of organization and well-being of subordinates. Organizational leadership is related to, and predictive of, health and safety-relevant outcomes in employees. The quality of leadership linked to an array of positive or negative outcomes within occupational health psychology. Psychological well-being and organizational safety climate are among the positive outcomes. Employee stress, cardiovascular disease, workplace incidents, injuries and health-related behaviors such as alcohol use are among the negative outcomes [33]. Tepper [34] linked abusive supervision in particular with diminished job satisfaction, increased employee distress and defined employees' perception as the leader engaging in a sustained display of hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors, excluding physical contact. According to Tepper et al. [35], abusive leadership manifests itself in the public ridiculing of subordinates, blaming

subordinates for mistakes they did not make. Keashly [36] added the use of derogatory names and intimidation. Schilling [37] considers insincere, despotic, exploitative, restrictive, failed, avoiding active or passive and laissez-faire leadership among the eight dimensions of negative leadership behaviors.

Conger [38] defined dark side of leadership that such events taking place whenever a leader's behavior exaggerated, become vehicles for purely personal gain, or lose touch with reality, then the possibility of the behavior harming the leader and the organization increases. According to Hackman and Johnson [39], the leadership that does not have the ethical components of moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation and moral action is called unethical leadership. [40] Abusive leadership is on the dark side of leadership that abusive supervision empirically linked to impaired well-being burnout, feelings of helplessness, diminished levels of self-efficacy, self-esteem, affective commitment to the organization and increased employee strain [33, 41, 42].

Blair et al. [43] investigated if highly narcissistic individuals frequently engage in behaviors that are associated with unethical leadership, or not. Unethical leaders operate frequently with an egoistic intent, utilize controlling as opposed to empowering strategies to influence followers, fail to abstain from vices [44] and acting in manipulation and exploitation [45]. Yukl [46] defined unethical leadership behaviors including falsifying information, provoking distrust among others, blaming followers for their own mistakes and showing favoritism in exchange for self-serving actions. Conger [38] defined unethical leadership behaviors, such as making exaggerated claims for the vision, and narcissistic leadership behaviors, such as using anecdotes to distract from statistical information and making exaggerated claims regarding information. According to Hovel and Avolio [47], unethical leaders use power for personal gain, promote their own personal vision, censure opposing views, demand their own decisions accepted without question, engage in one way communication, show insensitivity to follower has needs and rely on convenient external moral standards to satisfy self-interests [43].

Negative attributes or impediments for effective leadership, sometimes it is called negative leadership, toxic leadership, abusive leadership or destructive leadership, and can affect followers, organizations, external stakeholders and even leaders themselves [28]. Several negative personal traits lead to ineffectiveness of leadership. Both anti-subordinate behaviors such as intimidating and bullying subordinates, and anti-organizational behaviors such as laziness, lack of appropriate management skills, failing to build teams, being unable to think strategically and spending more time occupied with matters other than their work assignments are among the personal behaviors of leaders that lead to ineffectiveness [48]. On the other hand, according to Lombardo et al. [49], inability to build a cohesive team, over- and under-managing, being overly ambitious, not supportive and demanding of subordinates, being overly emotional, being sensitive, cold and arrogant, and maintaining poor relations with staff and overriding personality defects are the characteristics contributing to the incompetence of managers. According to Schaubroeck et al. [50], personal insensitivity of leaders and excessive demands seen to interfere with performance of subordinate and create strain. Charisma, personalized use of power, narcissism, negative life themes and an ideology of hate are among the personal attributes conceptualized by Padilla et al. [28, 51].

Destructive leadership is another style of leadership, which is on the dark side. According to Ferris et al. [52] destructive leaders are workplace bullies. Hauge et al. [53] found that tyrannical (and laissez-faire) leadership styles related to workplace bullying and suggested that bullying is more likely in environments characterized by tyrannical leadership and is particularly prevalent when supervisors do not intervene to prevent and manage bullying [33]. Destructive leaders potentially do a lot of damage due to their influence over others such as their health, etc. [54].

4. Architectural design teams

According to Schön [55], the designers, the design task and the design process are described as an integrated cognitive activity. Teamwork in design process is fundamental with an emphasis on identifying supportive organizational forms or successful interactive arrangements. The design group executes specific design activities, structure design communication, assign and solve problems, as well as document activities [4, 56–58]. In the view of Ogot and Okudan [59], design teams characterized by a high degree of interdependence to achieve common goals, and rely heavily on the dynamic exchange of information and resources among members. Architectural design is a knowledge-intensive activity, and in the design process, architects work as a team. Architectural design relies on effective interaction between project actors and stakeholders, and it is a collaborative act. Team building, resolution of minor differences and conflicts, subsequent sharing of values and discussion, question asking and the creation of trust between team members are just a few of the factors that are crucial to the smooth running of projects and which are reliant on the ability of the actors to communicate effectively and efficiently. Design teams are for architectural projects defined as multidisciplinary, temporary and network-based organizations. One of the design team members, usually the architect or a project manager delegated by the client, manage these grouping of specialist designers [60]. A specialist designer can be the representative of a collaborating design organization, an individual or an independent designer. According to Schön [61] and Lawson [62], they are usually designers with a management task or managers with an additional designing task and are characterized as visionary, specialty aware, creative and abstract thinking practitioners with a high level of technical knowledge and experience [63].

Architects have a complex role, rather than being the leader of design team, that they are responsible for building space use, appearance, relationships among users and spaces, finishes, and the overall coordination of all parties to the planning and design process. Architectural design teams play a significant role in the inception, planning and design, and the construction phase, of a development project, within the complexity of the construction industry. The purpose of an architectural practice is delivering shelter, functional for human habitation, creating a representative enclosure that illustrates certain values such as culture, belief and function, and providing investment purposes to the building [64]. Architectural design team is one of the members of design team and design teams often work with each other repeatedly—frequently with the same individuals—improving their ability to be effective and efficient. Design teams are temporary, multi-organizational and considered as a homogenous organization in relation to the project.

Design teams should work cooperatively to achieve effective and efficient performance. Symth [65] showed that trust in the market place is of great significance.

Organizational culture of an architectural design team is the result of interactions between a group of individuals that develop and exchange ideas, beliefs and experiences just like the other teams. Depending on the national cultures of teams, organizational cultures can be similar or different. Lai et al. [64] revealed the status of organizational culture in the architectural design teams in Malaysia that operate slightly different in term of the status of organizational culture, despite similarities to Western and developed countries. In Scotland, organization culture of an architectural design team described as informal and decentralized; the members free to give suggestions, the organizations are willing to tackle risk and uncertainties and members allowed to plan and manage their tasks independently [28]. Turkish Architectural design teams portrayed individualism, assertiveness and freedom as key constituents of their organizational culture. High degrees of freedom and tolerance to risk are the cultural aspects of the most in demand among Turkish architects [64, 66].

4.1. Creativity in architectural design teams

Creativity is the ability to break away from habit-bound thinking and produce novel and useful ideas. Giving people opportunity and freedom to think in unconventional ways, encourage and develop creativity within organizations [1]. Developing an original product, service or idea makes a socially recognized contribution [2]. Originality and usefulness are the criteria for judging creativity according to conception of creativity [67]. Another definition for creativity is a process by which an individual, group or team produces novel and useful ideas to solve a problem or capture an opportunity [1]. Creativity refers to the production of new and useful ideas and the production of a product, novel and appropriate response, or solution to an open-ended task. The response cannot be merely different, but must be new, valuable, feasible, correct or somehow fitting to a particular goal. The response must also be appropriate to the task to be completed or the problem to solve. Moreover, rather than having a single, obvious solution, the task must be open-ended [68]. Creativity is part of most non-programmed decisions and not something we save for special occasions. Creative process is for finding problems, identifying alternatives and implementing solutions [2]. Intrinsic motivation is the most important determinant of individual creativity according to componential theory of creativity, because it makes the difference between what an individual can do and what an individual will do. Intrinsic motivation is the motivational state that an individual driven by his or her interest in the work and engages in it for the sake of the work itself. Leadership behavior considered as an important contextual factor that enhances or constraints individual creativity through promoting or diminishing intrinsic motivation [67].

In construction, creativity has great resonance and most seen in the work of architects [4]. The study reported by Meng et al. [67] drawing upon the components theory of creativity, cognitive evaluation theory and social exchange theory, confirmed the role of negative leadership in the process of diminishing an individual's intrinsic motivation towards a creative task. Groups and teams have more creative potential than individuals do, especially when the task is complex and novel and there is uncertainty. Because of possessing combined expertise, resources and experience, groups have creative potential [1]. In architectural design teams, as

in all teams, leader architects expected to unite the team's objectives and employee architects' objectives. Motivating young architects achieved by allowing them to exercise their creativity, since architectural design teams focus on creativity. Kratzer et al. [68] based a study on engineering design teams and confirmed that leadership promotes creativity when it is moderately centralized in the workflow network, decentralized in the problem-solving network, moderately centralized in the awareness network and very central in the external information network. Working with experienced architects is a way for less experienced employees to learn and continue their education in the field of architecture. Because the level of professionalism among architects is high, this approach may work. Atwater and Carmeli [69] shed light on high-quality relationships between leaders and followers and found that feelings of energy can encourage employees to become involved in creative work. Because creativity is a mentally demanding behavior, people need to feel aroused and energized to perform work tasks creatively. Both leader and followers are architects in project design teams, so the behavior of the leader has to support the followers' increasing creativity in work. The organizational variables that are likely to vary the demands on leaders and require specific leadership behaviors include firm size, the organizational environment and the type of strategy, technology and organizational forms. It is likely that either the differential importance of behaviors or different behaviors will be associated with differences in organizations [70]. The leadership of the employer architects is an important source of motivation. An employer architect must be a leader and an efficient organizer. Clearly, the success of the design project depends on the design team working effectively. The way the architect leads directly relates to the performance of the team and the style of leadership. Individual characteristics such as motivation and personality, as well as environmental factors such as superior's leadership and job control, considered among the causes of creative behavior [71].

4.2. Leadership in architectural design teams

Architects are assuming roles of project designers, project team leaders and project supervisors. Construction industry is multi-disciplinary team-based industry and architects required to have key project management competencies to enable them to perform effectively and efficiently with other professionals. Kwofie et al. [72] found that efficient team leadership is the first critical factor influencing effectiveness of construction projects. In project teams, the project leader considered responsible for the success or failure of the project and thus provides planning and conditions to realize project goals and clear direction, and thus provides project success. Leadership is a factor, which yields desirable interpersonal effectiveness of the team for project success [72].

After the completion of the project, the organization usually continues to work on a different project and does not disband. Still, the structure of architectural design teams differs from that in manufacturing industries, which is characterized by permanent organizational structures. The task is the architectural design project, but the organization does not disband like the other project-based organizations after the completion of the task. In an architectural design team, unlike in the manufacturing industry, a single project undertaken may need a large capital investment. An architectural design team is different from other organizations in the construction industry, and a new style of leadership may be needed. One of the necessities for improving the performance of the architectural project is uniting employees around team objectives. It is not easy to create trust among team members and focus them on team objectives. An

architectural design team or other design teams are part of the construction industry, but they differ from other parts of the industry in many ways. In architectural design offices, although the task is temporary, the organization is not a temporary organizational structure.

Architects require a high degree of people skills and social competence to lead. A high level of social competence is required to work in a team and to be able to deal with all kinds of people. Whether it is the partners involved or the tradesperson who will work on implementing the building project, the architect will encounter a large number of professional partners in the course of the project. When a large number of people are working on a project, a high level of successful teamwork is required. Architecture is an attractive profession not only because of the creative design possibilities, but also because there are so many different challenges [73]. Leadership is not only an interpersonal influence, exercised in situations and directed through the communication process, but also consist of more than being an administrator or a manager. Orchestrating the totality of the enterprise with creativity traits of passion for work, independence, goal setting, originality, flexibility, wide range of interests, intelligence and creativity and motivation is effective leadership [74]. If members of the design team do not trust and believe in the owner, the fact of being the owner is not enough to ensure effective team leadership. Charismatic leaders are not widespread in construction-related organizations, but examples found, particularly among architectural practices [4].

Leadership is significant when conflicts occur during the design process. The design project team, as do all working groups, goes through various social action phases. Expectant politeness often marks the initial phase, because the team members tend to be excited, curious and keen to get to know each other better. There may be professional and personal conflicts. In confrontations and tension, people should never lose their objectivity: the architect can be required to be a mediator as well as a coordinator. In this orientation phase, it is necessary to reach the mutual understanding that everyone is working towards the same goal, and this is achieved only by working together and maintaining respectful forms of interaction and behavior. Thus, the design project team can work effectively, powerfully and purposefully towards realizing the project aim. Therefore, it is an essential part of the architect's work, along with effective project management, to direct the planning team with this end clearly in sight, and without it, the planning team may lose sight of its goals [73]. It is necessary to unite the team members around the team objectives. It is not easy to create trust among team members and focus them on team objectives. If the personal objectives of every team member is united with the team objectives, the members will be more eager to achieve the team objectives. It is the leader of the team, who will find solutions to problems. One of the necessities for improving the performance of the project that the leader architect should carry out is uniting the employees around the team objectives. As is true for all groups, it is important for the members of the design teams to trust and believe in their leadership and for the leader to be true to his or her stated values and beliefs. Effective leadership will be lacking when authenticity is lacking [75]. An architectural firm's owner is the formal leader of the design team and the lead architect's behaviors is a main contributor to the performance of the architectural design team.

In most design firms and other knowledge-based or project-based organizations, it is a common practice that leaders, supervisors and managers are appointed based on their technical expertise and not on their leadership skills. In an empirical model for design consultants,

Cheung et al. [76] suggested the use of charismatic and participative leadership behaviors by design team leaders. Participative leadership behaviors include the use of appropriate delegation, value and reward constructive alternatives, to encourage participation from design team members, while charismatic leadership includes behavior that act as role model for the subordinates and enables them to feel proud to affiliate with team [76].

5. Effects of negative leadership on the performance of architectural design teams

Benson and Hogan [77] stated that bad leadership inevitably lead to long-term problems and dysfunctional performance, although result in short-term performance is success. Bad or negative leadership has consistence adverse effects on followers, in terms of job satisfaction, affective commitment and psychological well-being [77–79]. Over the long-term, negative behaviors destroys the ability of people to work together productively in an organization. Leaders affect the performance of individuals, groups and the organization through the work climate that they create. The discussion around the negative leadership tended to narcissism, which clearly recognized as an individual trait. Higgs [80] found Narcissism, similarly, has a negative impact on the internal climate and thus could have an adverse effect on long-term performance outcomes.

In construction industry, teams are the primary unit, and a construction project of any scale can never realize without a team of people with diverse skills and knowledge created and operate together. When team performance improved, the performance of the industry and the project improved. A project team in the construction industry is group of construction professionals and personnel from one or more organizations. Teamwork is prerequisite for the successful delivery of construction projects and the project team come together to fulfill the necessary design, detailing and construction functions involved in the project. When the projects grow more complex technically, organizationally and contractually, team effort more required. Pectas and Putlar [81] declared that a successfully management of design is critical to quality, cost-effectiveness and timelines of projects with regard to design teams. Arditi and Gunaydin [82] found that collaboration among parties ranked first among the many factors that affect quality in design phase. Good team working practices in design organizations is important in order to enhance the performance of the projects [83].

The success of the project depends on the performance of each group. Architects are leaders of both the architectural design team and the design team. As the leader of both groups, the relationship between the leader architect and the groups directly related to the project's success. First, an architect is the leader of an architectural design team, and conversely, an architectural design team's members are architects. Coordinating design projects, structural projects and service systems projects is the responsibility of the architect as the team leader. In the design team, the architect is the leader of a team whose members are from different fields and the leader expected to unite them around team objectives, to create an atmosphere that enables team members to perform better. The leadership style of the design team leader affects the productivity of the design team and therefore performance of the construction project. The leadership of an architect is naturally required in all the phases of construction

during the interaction of the architect with these different teams and individuals. An architect must not only be a designer, but must also have the ability to coordinate and lead different parts of the construction team. Building projects performed by a design team and the architecture team is a member of that team. The design team members include the architecture team, structural design team and service systems design teams. There are different teams working on plumbing, air conditioning, electricity, central heating and cooling for the design of service systems. Coordinating architectural projects, structural projects and service systems projects is the responsibility of the architect as the team leader. This complicated coordination process requires an effective leadership, hence when the number of teams increases and the members of the teams are from different fields, an effective leadership is a key to solve the disputes.

Leadership and power important are fundamental and intimately related. They are culturally dependent behavioral characteristics with extensive consequences for organization success, performance, and, ultimately survival. Although, leadership and power are separate and individual constructs, each of which merits separate examination to foster appreciation of their operational variables as well as the interactions between them. National and organizational culture underpin both power and leadership, and thus determine the contexts and international environments in which they exercised. Sometimes it becomes a necessity-evolving environment, which means suggesting changes in power structuring and leadership roles within project organizations and so the organizational cultures of constituent firms are likely to respond to those dynamic forces [84]. Leader architect is the owner of the office most of the time, have legitimate power. Sometimes, since the leader is the boss, use coercive power. However, probably, power is more affective among the employee architects, if the leader has expert power. When she/he is a well-known architect, successful in most of the projects, architects can have expert power easily; it becomes easier for them to an affective leader. Cultural differences can result different behaviors on the team members. Tepper [85] declared that the practice of hard influence tactics can be perceived abusive supervision and abusive supervision might be more common in a culture with a higher power distance than in one with a lower power distance. Abusive supervision is among the many negative leadership concepts and can be harmful to organizations and their members. Hu et al. [86] measured equivalence/invariance of the abusive supervision measure across workers from Taiwan and the United States, and investigated whether or not employees from different countries, Taiwan and the United States, differ in their conceptualization of abusive supervision and in the calibration of their responses to the abusive supervision measure. In societies with strong traditional values such as Taiwan, workers have a higher tolerance towards abusive supervisor. This may be explained with supervisors tend to have a high level of authority and experience fewer restrictions on how they treat lower ranking individuals, and additionally subordinates have little or no authority expected to accept and rationalize supervisory behaviors even if the may regarded as abusive [86]. Liu and Fang [9] stated that performance-oriented leadership has a direct effect on project team performance, and does not rely on motivation and power sharing. Managers' behaviors affect team members' performance indirectly and their extrinsic and intrinsic motivation towards achievement of the goals [9].

Architecture is a profession that requires creativity, and not only the leader architects but also members of the architectural design team required to be creative. Creativity seeks out new work and novel ideas related to developing new opportunities [87]. Hence, seeking new opportunities forces employees to disagree with leader [88], supportive behavior of leader

to perform a non-routine role of creativity is important for the employees [89]. There is a negative relationship between controlling/authoritative leadership and employee creativity at workplace [65–68]. According to Tierney et al. [90], leaders are an important facet of the work context for creativity. Leaders are not only models for employees, they are also in charge of evaluating subordinate's performance, assigning tasks, recommending candidates for higher positions and distributing resources [91]. Thereby, subordinates, especially in high power distance countries, should be more likely to admire their leader's advantages and then devote more attentions to observe their behaviors, in the virtue of the power held by leaders. Therefore, it is rational to presume that the employees can improve their creativity by observing the leader's creative behaviors [92]. Andrews and Farris [93] found that the leaders' technical skills were the best predictor of the group members' creative performance. Mumford et al. [94] reported that the leaders' creative problem solving skills reported to related to the creative performance of the subordinates. A considerable effect on the employee's creativity emerged from the leader's cognitive style [90] and witnessing the leader's creativity facilitate the enhancement of the employee's creativity [92]. Weymes [95] declared that the success of organizations vested in the formation of sustainable relationships, with the primary purpose of leadership to influence the feelings and emotions of those associated with the organization. It is not difficult to create a harmonious family-like organization, since an organization is no more than a group of people comes together for a specific performance and their interactions dictate performance. Through honesty, openness and integrity, an environment of comfort, fairness and trust will emerge thus it will be possible to create a successful organization. The chemistry that generates the essence of a sustainable and successful organization is a calm coordinated environment that portrays an atmosphere of trust and harmony, where individual passions merge to create intensity and invincibility where anything is possible, when action and awareness merge, when there is total concentration on the task and time passes unnoticed [95].

Tang et al. [96] aimed to examine the relationship between 360° assessment of leadership derailment factors and leadership effectiveness, differences across position-levels and impact of self-other agreement. Since, derailed managers can engender a negative impact at the individual, team and organizational levels, such leaders do not build cohesive teams, or achieve desired business results, windless the morale of coworkers, and fail to meet business objectives. According to Tang et al. [96], derailed managers and executives shared one and more of the following characteristics, such as having problems with interpersonal relationships; failed to effectively hire, build and lead teams; experienced difficulty to adapt or change; failed to meet business objectives; and/or possessed too narrow of a functional orientation [96]. Architectural design is a complicated process and failure of the design process, means failure of the construction process. Hence, success of the construction depends on a successful design process. A successful process of construction begins with a successful architectural design process. Since, architectural design process carried by the design team, success of the team depends on the performance of the architectural design team. Most of the time, when managerial skills of the leader architect are not as good as his/her architectural qualifications team performance can affect negatively. The key problem is architectural qualifications not enough to motive the team members through the objectives of the team, the success of the project and unite personal objectives of the team members with the team objectives. When the leader architect is the owner of the office, leader have the legitimate power, but when the

leader architect is a well-known architect, architectural qualifications of the leader architect help the leader architect have the expert power.

Cheung et al. [76] suggested the use of charismatic and participative leadership behaviors by design team leaders. Their results found that charismatic and participative leadership behaviors as the most critical leadership behaviors as far as satisfaction are concerned. Charismatic leadership behavior includes acting as a role model for the subordinates and enables them to feel proud to affiliate with team. Nevertheless, when the leader use coercive power, the team members affected negatively. Participative leadership behavior includes the use of appropriate delegation, value and reward constructive alternatives, to encourage, participation from design team members. It is significant for the success of the project that the design team leaders should make every endeavor to set a good example in team working to the other members and provide the design team members with more opportunities to participate throughout the design process [97]. Architecture is a profession that involves not only team working, but also individuality. Most of the architects do not like to share responsibility of design. In architectural design teams, participation means designing with the team and sharing responsibility of design with the team. Most of the time, employee architects are not satisfied with their job, when they do not participate in design. In architectural design teams, there may be different results, when there is an effective leader on the positive side, or when there is a leader on the negative side. Most of the time leaders of architectural design teams are not aware of the serious results of their behaviors, even their leadership role in the teams. Most of the time unaware of their negative behaviors, they affect negatively the performance of their teams. Since, most of the team members are young architects; the results of their negative behaviors can become serious than predicted.

Negative leadership behaviors can cause demotivation; especially since the fragmented nature of design, tasks require a competent team leader to manage various tasks among design team members. Oyedele [97] citing Cheung et al. [76] highlighted that if design team members are not satisfied with their team leader, the morale of a design team can adversely affected. Being ruthless, asocial (self-centered), irritable (malevolent), loner (self-centered), egocentric, non-explicit (face-saver), non-cooperative (malevolent) and dictatorial (autocratic) contribute to inept leadership behavior that causes demotivation to employees. Inadequate leadership support, lack of open interaction between superior and subordinates, display of no interest in subordinates' work and non-recognition of effort, lack of synergy between organizational goals and leadership behaviors and changing project priorities by supervisors are other relevant criteria. According to the findings of Toor and Ogunlana [28], both negative personal attributes and organizational impediments or neutralizers can be detrimental to the effectiveness of leadership in construction projects. Wrongful use of power, poor ability to communicate, lack of experience and lack of ability to control complex circumstances are among negative personal attributes. Organizational impediments or neutralizers are such as lack of resources, lack of planning and control, lack of strategic management and lack of top management support. Therefore, it is important to not only develop the positive personal attributes of leadership in project managers, but also pay attention to reducing the factors that negatively affect their performance and effectiveness [28].

Leader of the architectural design team is not only responsible for the success, but also failure of the projects. When the team members do not trust and believe in their leader, the leader cannot manage the team effectively. Architectural design involves creativity and affective teamwork. It is the leader who create productive working environment. Since, architectural design process involves creativity, and creativity of the team members are affected by their emotional state, depending on the behavior of the leader architect, the performance and productivity of the team can be affected negatively. When the team members do not motivate, and share team objectives as their own objectives, or do not combine their personal objectives with the team objectives, the project success will be affected negatively. Sometimes ruthless, egocentric, irritable behaviors of leaders or personality characteristics will affect negatively the success of the project. It is possible; also, team members lose their desire and motivation to work, sometimes instead of working they may prefer to look for alternative jobs. Negative leadership behaviors within an organization can cause demotivation among the design team members. A competent team leader is required to manage various tasks among design team members, because of the fragmented nature of design tasks [97].

6. Conclusion

Although leadership has always been a popular topic in every field, a growing interest and a broad range of discussions continued on the subject in recent years. The focus of the studies was its positive effects on the performance of the teams. Effective team management becomes important in architectural design teams, since the design process is complex and involves creativity. Architecture, as a profession involve creativity, although depending on the national and organizational culture of the team, behaviors of leader architects may change, but when the behaviors of their leader affect negatively, it is inevitable that their performance and success of the project is affected negatively. The importance of leadership, styles or behaviors of leaders, the relationship of motivation, trust, power or culture are all attract attention. Effective leadership needed to enable effective team management. Leadership style of the architectural design team leader can affect the performance of the team and productivity negatively. If architects do not aware of their negative behaviors, sometimes they do not aware of the negative results of their behaviors, especially the negative effects on the performance of the team.

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The Havoc of Good Intentions: Destructive Leadership through the Gender Lens

Irja Malmio and Sofia Nilsson

Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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Abstract

One important objective of the Swedish Armed Forces, which is expressed in the plan for implementing gender mainstreaming from 2015, is to increase the number of women in the organization and especially in the higher ranks. Recruiting more women to the officers' program, while at the same time ensuring that women who have already enrolled as officers will remain in their occupation, is therefore of utmost importance. This chapter is based on a previously made qualitative study where six female cadets were interviewed regarding experiences of their time in training to become officers at the Swedish military academy, as well as how they perceive a future career in the Swedish Armed Forces. The result that emerged was analyzed as three factors: ambition, culture, and visibility. When reviewing the material from a leadership perspective, destructive leadership behaviors at strategic levels were identified as influencing the experiences of the cadets. Seen through a gender lens, destructive leadership in the Swedish Armed Forces describes a pattern where the design of equality work, which is based on good intentions, in some cases fosters leadership behaviors that have a negative impact on the room of action of women in the organization.

Keywords: gender mainstreaming, Swedish Armed Forces, recruitment of under-represented groups, destructive leadership

1. Introduction

Leadership is a complex social phenomenon, which is hard to define and measure since it is an intricate task to separate specific leadership behaviors from more general labor achievements. However, it is evident that even if positive leadership behaviors have a certain effect on the motivation of followers, then the lack of it carries a definite negative effect on the motivation of the followers as well as the well-being for that organization [1].

The ambition with this chapter is, therefore, to elucidate destructive leadership from a gender critical perspective through the experiences of six female cadets of their time in training to become officers at the Swedish military academy. This helps to describe some of the mechanisms found in the social construct of organizations that contribute to form destructive leadership behaviors, where the intention behind that behavior was to promote gender equality, but the result, in fact, had the opposite effect. Indeed, one could argue that destructive leadership is an organizational construct, which usually also is integrated into a larger set of symptoms sprung from gender inequality. The aim of elucidating destructive leadership through a gender lens is thus to acquire insights into some of the mechanisms that can create negative impacts of leadership while at the same time contributing with an understanding of how effective leadership can reduce its existence.

In 1980, applying to the Swedish Armed Forces became a possibility for women in Sweden. The purpose behind this was foremost to widen the recruitment base, but was also partly a response to a changed societal milieu initiated through the ending of the cold war, which called for a greater emphasis on diversity [2]. However, in spite of being one of the most gender equal countries in the world, the number of women working in combatting positions in the Swedish army still remains low, and women are also markedly underrepresented higher up in the hierarchy [3]. From the date that women started to enroll into the army, there has been a growing awareness of the problem with female representation and several attempts have been made to increase their numbers. In recent years, the Swedish Armed Forces (also referred to in the text as SAF) has undergone a profound transformation work, in large parts implemented as a response to the UN resolution 1325 that was passed by the UN Security Council in 2000. The conversion to this new framework also corresponds with the overall changes in the world where new technology is creating a new set up in many areas. In the military, this is seen as a reorientation of purpose introducing a new focus toward peace-keeping operations rather than the preceding emphasis on operative combatting abilities, as well as a closing in on the gap between civil and military spheres that constituted a prominent feature in the past [4]. As a response, the recruitment of women to join the defense system as well as increasing the number of women in leading positions is a highly prioritized item in the agenda of SAF. However, despite the fact that there is a firm political consensus and an outspoken determination from the supreme levels in the military regiments to focus on these matters, the ambitions have not been realized. In fact, in the year of 2015, only 5% of all the officers in the Swedish Armed Forces were women, with 10–12% found in other military positions [5]. What is also bothersome is the fact (as reported in the Swedish Armed Forces annual reports from 2016) that fewer individuals than what is needed to ensure staff provision for the military has enlisted to the officers' program. At the same time, a large number of the officer corps is expected to retire during the coming 15 years [6].

Since the year of 2008, the Swedish officers' program has been conducted as a 3-year education program by the Swedish Defense University, which leads to an officer's degree consisting of 180 academy points. The education is mostly carried out at the military academy, and in order to be accepted to the program, the applicant first has to undergo basic military training.

The number of seats available to applicants has varied between 100 and 150 in the last few years, and it has been a great challenge to fill those seats with candidates who possess the right qualifications [7].

1.1. Women in the Swedish Armed Forces

The military as an organization appears as being a highly hierarchical and traditional institution with a distinct division of different decision-making levels [8]. Military organizations carry a strong masculine connotation and can be said to exemplify organizations that are highly gendered with a stereotypical allocation of labor. Historically, the military has been powered by men and access to women has been greatly limited. Men in the military are also in a clear numerical advantage and their dominance is even further accentuated higher up in ranks [9].

Since the beginning of the last century, women have been employed for different tasks in the military to a more or less extensive degree. From the beginning, they were deployed in different volunteer organizations where their main function was to relieve the men from less demanding assignments so that they in turn could focus on military matters. However, the demand for more manpower in the midst of the cold war opened up the discussions for women to participate in the military. In 1980, the discussions eventually led to opportunities for women to function as soldiers to a lesser degree, but in 1989, all obstacles were removed [10]. Voluntary and gender-neutral conscription was realized in 2011, but it was not until 2017 that a general conscription law, which applies to both men and women alike, was put into force [11].

Women in the Swedish Armed Forces are foremost represented in the lower ranks and are greatly outnumbered higher up in the hierarchy. Another characteristic is that most female military personnel are located in the air force where they occupy more supportive functions [5]. Berggren puts forward that the recruiting process in itself represents a problem. Besides a "glass ceiling" for women who want to climb the corporate ladder, there is also a "glass corridor" where women through the recruiting processes are being allocated to occupations of less importance, where their career is moving only in one horizontal direction [9]. Some researchers have pointed out another reason for the low representation of women in the military, namely, that the organization itself is "greedy." A greedy organization demands everything from its coworkers, which would make it challenging for women to fit in since they generally take on more responsibility for social activities outside of work [3].

According to the Swedish Armed Forces plan for implementing gender mainstreaming from 2015, the work for gender equality is carried out in two trails. Gender and UN resolution 1325 concerning military operations is one of them, and the other is gender mainstreaming in a nationwide supply of personnel and equality perspective. A conclusion made in this plan is that the work on gender equality is not seen for some employees as a vital part of the military assignment and is thus not prioritized, in spite of having a firm political and judicial anchorage [5].

1.2. Culture and social identity

Culture is a concept that has many different meanings depending on the context. From a psychosocial and institutional discourse, culture functions as a merging binder for different conducts that simultaneously recreate and challenge norms in the society. As such, it can be identified as visible and invisible norms and values that patterns human acts and behaviors and can be both including and excluding for certain groups [12]. Discrimination on basis of gender is often hidden in the cultural climate that permeates the organization as a whole, and relates to mechanisms that shape a typical attitude rather than specifying a certain action itself [13]. In order to fit into the cultural setting, a modification of behavior in ways that are acceptable to the dominating culture is needed, and the modification process transfuses the individual with masculine or feminine qualities. At the same time, the adjustment legitimizes a natural way of being, captured in the concept “doing gender” [14].

In order for a specific organizational culture to flourish, it is necessary that the members of an organization identify with the general concept of what that organization embodies. An explicit corporate identity can transfer itself to the self-image and is an important aspect of power and control in organizations [12]. This process is described by social identification theory put forth by Ashforth and Mael in the 1980s and relates to the identification of the individual as a part of a certain social group. Social identification emerges from different categories consisting of the individual, the distinctiveness of the group and its perceived prestige, and is also affected of how prominent other groups are regarded in comparison. The process of identification conducts in harmony with activities that reflects the social identity and is expressed in stereotyped assumptions based on the individual and his or her relation to others. An organization that is more well-known with a pronounced distinctiveness has a greater tendency to provide a specific social identity to its members [15]. A part of the social identification is that of role congruity described by Diekmann and Eagly as a powerful force that foster different motivations for men and women as well as different methods of fulfilling those motivations. This concept relates to human desires to feel acceptance and that they fit in to their social environment, and can push an individual to strive for conformity in order to gain acceptance from a boss or colleagues [16].

1.3. Gender and the organization

The scientific discourse on gender was originally not concerned with how gender is created and maintained in working environments but was more focused on the family and its social institutions. Today, however, many researchers agree that the organization with its hierarchies and functions constitutes an important building block in how gender is being created and maintained [17].

Rosabeth Moss Kanter put forward a primal theory based on a case study of an American company in the middle of the 1970s, which explains how the structure is created in gender-biased companies. One of the most important concepts in her theory deals with the distribution of numbers, where an effect of being the minority is that women are made into “tokens.”

This position views them as representing all women while at the same time posing as the great exception, described by Kantner as the “visibility effect.” The minority situation also accentuates perceived differences between men and women, and makes the majority group defensive of their prominent position. In order for women to cope with the minority situation, assimilation into different stereotypes on how women should behave is likely to follow [18]. Kantner received some critiques for her supposition that the distribution of numbers is the only thing that matters, since gender equality according to this principle should be easy to apply if you balance the numbers. In reality, however, when the volume of the discriminated group increases, the opposite effect has been shown to occur, since the majority group feels threatened and will then defend their position. A lot of researchers also agree that gender is a most significant factor for the reasons behind the imbalance of numbers, where negative consequences only occur when the minority group belongs to a category that has a lower social status those in the majority group [19].

Joan Acker suggests that there is a gender-based division of labor, hidden in the concept of organizations as being “gender neutral” but implicit in the work itself, and is affected by perceived responsibility, the complexity of the work and where it is positioned in the hierarchy. These silent expectations are crucial for deciding who is to be considered most suitable for the position. Both work and hierarchy is considered to be impersonal and gender-neutral, but because of the binary demarcation between the masculine and the feminine qualities that are applied to different work categories, they are treated differently [19]. In order for women to function in a male-dominant working environment, they can adopt different coping strategies. The conformist strategy emphasizes the similarity with those of the majority group, while at the same time spacing themselves from other women and relating to the men instead. Women can also apply a positive strategy, which accentuates the advantages of belonging to a group of scarce numbers, where, however, the positive advantages of being in a minority situation are products of a negative system that greatly limits women’s possibilities to power and influence [17].

Another concept important to theorizing of gender in organizations was brought forward in the 1980s by Raewyn Connell who formulated a theoretical concept called hegemonic masculinity, which describes mechanisms that create masculinity. The concept implies an idealized notion that men relate to while at the same time provides a justification that men as a group is superior to women. The hegemonic system is seen as a process contingent of its historical and cultural setting and needs the approval of other men and women who are not a part of it [20]. In this research, Jeff Hearn made out the strong association between men and the military, where in fact, the obvious connection makes the masculinity neutralized and invisible. In this way, the military incarnates the very concept of masculine hegemony [21]. Closely related is the concept of homosociality, which describes how men relate to other men and is often expressed in rituals where the purpose is to indicate the superiority of the male group. Heterosociality on the other hand describes how women relate to and confirms men for example by being negative toward issues on gender equality [17].

1.4. Destructive leadership

The research on leadership has emerged from a long tradition, which has one-sidedly focused on the positive aspects of leadership. Nonetheless, in the article, “Bad is stronger than good,” it is suggested that negative experiences have a profoundly more far reaching and long-lasting effects than the positive ones [22]. In fact, there is a great need for a paramount force in numbers of good experiences in order to overcome one single bad event. The reason for this is explained through an evolutionary reasoning that it has been more beneficent from a survival standpoint for humankind to be more vigilant toward dangerous situations rather than memorizing positive events [1].

Einarsen, Aasland, and Skogstad define destructive leadership as the systematic and repeated behavior by a leader, supervisor, or manager that violates the legitimate interests of the organization by undermining the organization’s goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness, while also having a negative impact on the motivation, well-being, or job satisfaction of subordinates. Furthermore, destructive leaders may not intend to harm, but due to their thoughtlessness, insensitivity, or lack of confidence, they effectively do so [23]. Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser bring the focus of the leader and suggest that destructive leadership occurs in a synergy of leaders, followers, and environmental contexts described as the “toxic triangle” [24]. Several studies have also pointed out that destructive leadership consists of both active and passive forms of actions and behaviors, and both active and passive forms of destructive leadership have a greater effect over time on coworkers’ job satisfaction than on constructive forms of leadership [25]. In fact, passive forms of destructive leadership, so-called laissez-faire leadership, have been shown to be more inclined to cause frustration and problems with the coworkers than active forms of destructive leadership in terms of the leader creating a work environment characterized by uncertainty, role ambiguity, and conflicts [26]. These behaviors are also more difficult to detect, which can cause the negative effects on the organization and co-workers to last for a longer period of time [1]. An interesting study by Yan et al. concluded that laissez-faire leadership is particularly destructive when it comes to organizational learning, as this is obstructing the feedback process and inhibits open communication [27].

A somewhat neglected part of leadership studies, which historically has been more concerned with the top-down, leader-centric processes, is the role of followership. Focusing on the interaction process between followers and leaders is, however, helpful when identifying as well as curbing destructive leadership in organizations [28]. From a gender-critical point of view, this is also an interesting perspective to take into consideration, since female and male leaders are perceived differently by their followers [29], which in some cases can breed an unhealthy imbalance.

The organization itself is a factor contributing to destructive leadership, and one big indicator of an unhealthy organization is so-called narcissism. When ascribed to an organization, this indicates a culture of self-aggrandizement, where failing to take responsibility for organizational failures or admitting mistakes is current, as well as perceiving oneself as more worthy of attention than other organizations. These characteristics can be applied to military organizations and can fertilize the existence of toxic leadership and unethical behavior [30].

2. Method

This chapter is based on a previous research study that focused on acquiring insights into six female cadets' experiences of their training to become officers at the military academy. A qualitative research method with a thematic analyze was applied in the original study. The data collection consisted of semistructured interviews and open interview questions, where the purpose and question formulations directed the selection of informants to be deployed in the study. Data were there after interpreted and put in relation to prior research and relevant concepts, which then constituted the result where the implications were based on.

2.1. Participants

Conducive to the aim of this study, six female cadets ranging from age 21 to 29 were chosen for the interviews. The cadets represent the three grades as well as the three combat forces, the army, the navy and the air force in order to give a wide variation of experiences. Access to interview persons was assisted via a contact who is currently working at the school. Lists of female cadets enlisted to the program were also handed down, which helped with the selection. The selection can be described as a comfort selection, since participants were selected who were available during the time the study was planned to take part [31].

2.2. Data collection

The initial contact with the informants was taken via email. Two of the interviews were conducted at the military academy in Stockholm, two at the Swedish Defense University, and two via Skype, since the informants were not currently present in Stockholm, Sweden. One of the authors was present during the interviews. The interviews were introduced with a recap of information previously given on the purpose of the study, that participation was voluntary, and that the participants could chose not to answer a question they did not feel comfortable with. Permission to record the interviews was asked for, which was made with the assistance of an iPhone 6s. The interviews emanated from a preconstructed interview guide with a set of themes and open questions and took approximately 1 hour to conduct.

2.3. Data analysis

Processing data was initiated with a transcription of the recorded material, where audial data are transferred into written text before the analyzing process takes place. The transcribing work was made in sequence to the conducted interviews, and adjustments that emerged from new information were made accordingly. The process of analyzing data was set up in accordance with thematic analyze, with examining the interviews and comparing them to find similarities and disparities in expressions, speech, and quotes [32]. The overall theme emerging from the data was the female cadets' experiences of their situation at the military academy while studying in the officers' program and from their time in the Swedish Armed Forces. Factors that affect that experience are the ambitions of the individual, the culture of the organization, and visibility, which will be further investigated below. In order to exemplify (see

Significant unit	Subcategory	Category
My knowledge that I actually want this. I do not do it for anyone else, but for my own sake and that is what is most important. This is something that I want to do and I am not giving up. I am going to move forward and I really want this.	Personal objective	Ambition
/.../ I believe that due to this male jargon that exists, in order for a woman to be recognized as a part of the team, you almost have to become like one of the men, both subconscious and deliberately /.../	Personal treatment and jargon	Culture
There is a lot of focus when combat camera has filmed an exercise that an even though only a small part of consisted of women, they are the only ones who are seen.	Gender before performance	Visibility

Note that the symbol /.../ is sometimes present with regard to single quotes in the result section to indicate that parts of that quote have been left out in order to make more sense in the context.

Table 1. Example drawn from the study's data analysis.

Table 1), opinion-bearing units were made from quotes where similar aspects were coded and categorized into one theme.

When analyzing the results in terms of destructive leadership, we need to first address the question: what in the experiences of the female cadets can be linked to destructive leadership? There are several quotes where one could argue for the presence of active forms of destructive leadership, but it is also hard to tell if these behaviors have been repeated for a long period of time or is just instances of bad judgment on behalf of the supervisor. Following the lines from the definition of destructive leadership, the destructive behavior needs to be repeated over time [25]. The passive forms of destructive leadership have been easier to spot, and will therefore be the focus of this chapter.

2.4. Ethical considerations

In accordance with the ethical principles described by Bryman as the requirements of science, which is information, consent, confidentiality and usage [31], the study respondents were given thorough information beforehand on the purpose of the study. The participants were also informed that participation was voluntary and that they at any point in the process could terminate their involvement, or to pause a question they did not want to answer.

3. Results

The three factors that were identified in the original study as most significant in describing the shared experiences of the interviewed female cadets at the military academy were ambition, culture, and visibility. Ambition describes motivation and reasons for choosing a career initially within SAF as well as future aspirations, which also includes thoughts on family planning. Culture is connected to traditions, narratives on special treatment, personal treatment and jargon, the ideal of masculinity present in army culture, and adaption strategies.

Visibility deals with how women are made visible in marketing campaigns as tokens, visibility in the form of transformation work, and the invisibility of achievements. All of these factors can be seen as the indirect result of leadership failures, which will be further investigated in the discussion below.

3.1. Ambition

The informants of this study describe SAF as a natural choice of employer since they share a deep sense of meaningfulness in the work conducted by the military and reciprocate the values that the organization incorporates. Working as a team toward a common goal and having a varied job description was also stated as reasons why the informants thrive in SAF and why they initially chose the military profession.

The initial expectations of the informants on the educational contents of the training were high and were to a certain extent influenced from what senior commanders and colleagues had told them of their own experiences at the academy. Other contributing factors that have formed pre-existing expectations were the information given by the Swedish Defense University and military academy and from SAF. The informants also expressed expectations that the education would have a profound relevance to their future employment as officers and leaders. However, the impression of the informants is that these expectations have not materialized. One quote illustrates the general opinion:

I had enormous expectations actually. /.../ My bosses that I look up to had all attended the military Academy. Now in hindsight I have understood that maybe not all of them attended the Military Academy but just belong to the older generation, but I expected a lot more of everything.

The physical demands at the military academy are experienced by the informants as a certain problematic area. The heavy significance put on physical capacity forms a general idea that how well you perform physically has a great influence for your social status at the school, and even tends to put a shadow over other achievements. The informants also experience that there is a great lack of acceptance for different biological prerequisites that individuals possess when it comes to the physical performance, captured by one informant in this quote:

There was one teacher who I still recall.../ he said to me that 'if you cannot manage to bang up your 80 kg fighting comrade with full combat gear over your shoulder and run away with him then maybe you shouldn't be here' /.../ At first I did not really get that 'wow, did he just say that to me' but it got me more afterwards. I was more in a state of shock but laughed it off.

The informants share high ambitions regarding their future career paths within SAF, as well as having an explicit career goal, which is a great motivation in pursuing their aspirations. A cloud of worry regarding future career aspirations centers around thoughts on how to combine a military career with raising a family. One of the informants stated that in order to make a prosperous career within SAF, it is crucial for women not to have children and that women who choose to plan for a family get slighted in terms of promotion or positions that are viewed as more demanding.

Regarding ambitions, expectations and aspirations, the overall impression is that the participants express a certain disappointment. They feel that the information they were given

beforehand is not corresponding to the reality, and that their expectations on what has been described as “one of the best educational programs on leadership in Sweden” have not been matched on any level.

3.2. Culture

There is a certain cultural environment, or a collective social identity, at the military academy, which is referred to in the interviews as the “Essence of Karlberg,”¹ and which is reproduced through different social activities based on tradition and historical anecdotes. The majority of the informants appreciate these traditions and feel that they contribute to the creation of affinity among the students and strengthen the overall cohesion. At the same time, however, there is a sense that this culture also creates barriers, which has been experienced by the informants in various ways.

The cultural climate at the military academy is also greatly centered on an estimation of the masculine ideal, which is evident in several ways. First, there is a strong emphasis of the most male-dominated military force, namely the army, where large contents of the education are focused on this area. Former experiences of the cadets are evaluated with reference to previous army experience where affinity with an army troop is considered to carry a more prestigious implication. Second, the masculine ideal is eminently implicit in the military lingua, which invokes the soldier with a masculine connotation. The masculine majority in SAF and at the military academy contributes to a feeling in our informants and that there is a masculine ideal that you have to conduct yourself too, and if a woman wants to be fully accepted as “one of the boys,” she needs to act in a more masculine way. One informant reflects on this:

I believe that much of the male jargon that exists here is due to the fact that in order for a woman to be accepted as a part of the group she has to become almost like the men, consciously and subconsciously. That is what I have reflected on from outside of it all, that the women who maintain their female approach get more contested than the ones who try to behave as the men.

Third, the masculine ideal contributes to a culture where women get exposed to assumptions that they have an easier time than the men in the army or are receiving advantages just because they are women, and many of them have received comments that they are only being where they are because of gender quotas or positive special treatment.

In order to adapt to a culture that glorifies the masculine ideal, two adaption strategies were most common. The first can be described as a positive strategy with a heterosocial approach, exemplified by comments such as “that it was nice to bypass fussy quarrels amongst women, intrigue and drama.” Another adaption strategy was identified as silently accepting a certain jargon, simply because the women felt outnumbered by the men and did not have the energy to confront a colleague every time they felt that the comments were offensive. It can also be a sort of survival mechanism to consciously and subconsciously ignore the negative experiences in order to socially fit into a masculine environment.

¹Name of the location of the Academy.

Personal treatment at the school and in SAF in general is described by the informants as both positive and negative, where the positive treatment is described by the informants as a good camaraderie and affinity. The adverse treatment on the other hand arises from both teachers and other male soldiers, officers and fellow cadets. The initial reflection made by the informants was usually very positive regarding personal treatment in general, but when asked questions on other topics, several instances of situations where treatment had been experienced in a negative manner were revealed. One informant who initially said that she never had experienced any problems with ill treatment said later in the interview that:

I have experienced things where I had to grab that person and say 'now you better calm down, because if you do this to the wrong person you can lose your job'.

During the time when the interviews were carried out, several scoops in the media appeared, which focused on negative treatment that some women have experienced in SAF, and a "me too-appeal" was released in the form of a debate article in one of the most distributed newspapers in Sweden, "Dagens Nyheter" [33]. Therefore, a part of the data made from the interviews centered around experiences of the "me too-appeal," and the informants shared recollections of episodes that either happened to themselves or to other female cadets who had experienced sexual harassment, bullying, and other offensive special treatment, as exemplified by this quote:

When you consciously subject individuals to bullying or harassment because you do not share the same opinion or want that person there /.../ I know of a situation where a guy expressed to a girl that 'I have bullied you during the whole time during studies because I did not want you here' /.../.

3.3. Visibility

Visibility originates from two aspects. First, that of belonging to a minority, which brings out a feeling that all your actions are more visible. Second, it deals with the manner in which SAF works on promoting gender mainstreaming where the informants experience that "all the lights are being put on women," which in turn has both positive and negative impacts. The negative aspects of the visibility correspond with a feeling that as women, they constantly need to prove themselves and defend their position both in the academy and in the organization. One informant reflects:

I have to prove that I belong here /.../ in some situations you have to bang your head into the wall in order to get respected.

The fact that women often are singled out as the main attraction in advertisement campaigns while still being scarce in numbers in the rest of the organization, makes the informants feel that they are made visible mainly because of their gender rather than for their achievements, which brings some feelings of frustration.

The informants also voiced critique on how SAF is working with integrating equality work in the organization, where the feeling is that the work is being conducted in an unsystematic way. The intention behind this is generally good, but the outcome has a negative result. With few opportunities to follow up on a failed gender mainstreaming agenda, this actually contributes to create a general adverse sentiment where gender mainstreaming is seen as a

source of annoyance. Therefore, a more structured plan that focuses on equality and gender issues as an integrated part of the curriculum is desired, rather than ad hoc lectures thrown in last minute. Getting the tools for practically implementing the value system into the daily routines after finishing the education is something that one informant claimed would be of huge benefit from a leadership perspective.

4. Discussion and conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter was to elucidate destructive leadership patterns in the Swedish Armed Forces through the experiences of six female cadets during their training at the officers' program. We will now continue to analyze in more detail the content of the results three factors: ambition, culture, and visibility, and how they can be understood from a perspective of destructive leadership.

The factor identified as ambition revealed that the participants of this study display high levels of ambitions and have clear-cut aspirations for their professional careers. They start their training with an ambitious outlook on career goals, but experience disappointment as their expectations are not substantiated. The informants also expressed a desire to be recognized on grounds of their competence and ambitions, with the aspiration to be accepted as soldiers. The ambition of reaching out for high set career goals, however, gets conflicted by that of becoming a mother. According to the informants' own perception, these roles are hard to combine and the mutual feeling is that women who start a family do not get promoted or considered for more demanding positions. Behind this notion lies stereotypical gender role that still appears sustained within SAF, where women are seen as naturally associated with communal qualities, which implies that they are not suited to the general conception of leadership [34]. Another hindrance to women lifted by the informants is the physical demands, since they are not adjusted to different biological conditions or even corresponding to the ones set by the different army forces, which can also be perceived as a way to confirm a stereotypical image of SAF as, in essence, masculine, and can in fact lead to performance decrements [16].

The study identifies the second factor culture, as a perception of a collective identification formed by hereditary traditions that sustain and preserve "the essence of Karlberg." Culture in this way is expressed symbolically and contributes to the framing of the military as a distinctive organization liable to its own set of rules and provides a unified social identity for its members [15]. Seen in this way, the cultural framework can also help to explain the context that contributes to forming destructive leadership behaviors, since the exclusivity brings an exclusion for those who belong to a deviant category or for some other reasons do not want to participate in the social activities. The identification process also adds to the formation of the masculine ideal, a sort of "male glorification" as stated by Regnö [35]. The strong masculine connotation of the soldier fits like a glove with the ideal of hegemonic masculinity [20] and aids the construction of attitudes on men and women in the military. Evidence for this pattern is seen in an idealized image-making of the male-dominated army troops, which not only dictates the basic training at the academy, but also renders employees that has a professional background from the army with a higher social status. Taking into account Ackers theory on

the internal division in masculine and feminine categories [19], a binary division in core activities (the army) and supporting activities (air force and navy) is identified, also substantiated by the research made by Persson [36]. The masculine ideal corresponds with a depreciation of feminine aspects apparent in the experiences of the informants who feels that a female soldier or officer does not have the same prominence as their male counterparts. The degradation construct is further created and sustained through the spreading of myths and rumors where female militaries are suspected of being the recipients of positive special treatment and thus having an easier time in the military than their male colleagues.

The result also brought up personal treatment and jargon as culturally contingents, where jargon or negative treatment is neutralized and ignored. This can be seen as a coping strategy since depreciatory discourse on women has a profoundly negative impact on the self-image [37]. Another adjustment strategy that was identified is the accepting approach where women put up with an existing jargon. This strategy proceeds from a cultural setting, which defines boundaries for what is approved topics of conversation. Questions concerning equality and sexual harassment are approached with great caution, corresponding well with the process of social identification where strong bonds are created with unwritten contracts of what you can and cannot reveal to outsiders. Another explanation that describes the cultural setting is that the military organization itself is greedy, demanding everything from its associates [3], a notion that can also be linked to the concept of self-image since a greedy organization also demands great conformity to its own set of ideals. The image construction of the military as being a peculiar kind of organization, and as such liable to its own set of rules also reveals a “narcissistic” organizational trait. It appears that there is a prevailing culture of silence on sensitive topics, and sometimes a lack of follow ups on actual mistakes [30]. This in turn can have effects on the leadership, especially in terms of learning from errors, which according to Yan et al. involves: “*identifying, analyzing, and transforming an error into experience and utilizing the knowledge to correct actions and improve performance*” [27]. At the same time, admitting to mistakes can damage the collective identity, more so if there are narcissistic tendencies in that organization.

The third factor visibility derives from personal experiences of the women at the military academy as well as in SAF that they receive a high visibility because their sex is female. This visibility is enhanced by the exposedness of being in a minority position, and highlighted in the marketing campaigns of SAF where female soldiers often are the focal point. Behind this policymaking, one can clearly detect the good intentions gone awry, manifested in a desire on behalf of the strategic levels of leadership to make the women more visible in order to improve their situation and also to attract more women, which is not a bad idea. The impending dilemma though for the women who already are in the organization, this visibility further increases the pressure to maintain their position, while at the same time removes the focus away from actual performance. Visibility in this way consolidates the general acceptance that the soldier is a male construct, which makes women that hold this profession to stand out as an anomaly. It also aids to the commonly accepted image of the military as a male construction, closely intertwined with hegemonic masculinity, where one significant function historically has been “to turn boys into men” [21]. The deviant group, which in this case consists of the female cadets, is made visible because they do not belong to the normative group, which

means that the individual woman becomes a representative for all women, a token [18]. SAF heightens the visualization on female employees in the marketing campaigns both externally and internally. Questions on what grounds the female employees are being highlighted for fertilize the spreading of myths and rumors on gender quotas and special treatment where personal achievements and competence are set in the background. The image of SAF and its operations as a work reserved for men only will be further established if the focus of marketing campaigns is perceived as showing off women just because they are women. The visibility effect is identified in the implementation plan for SAF from 2015 as a negative aspect of gender mainstreaming [5], but there is no suggestion of how to overcome this dilemma. A sentiment shared by the informants is that the visibility consolidates the idea that women are seen as the abnormality, a norm further reconstituted by the equality work. At the same time, however, this work needs to take place.

It is our conclusion that all three factors are the result of destructive leadership patterns that are forming at the strategic levels of leadership in SAF, and that this particular type of destructive leadership has its origin in what appears to be a benign wish to take proactive steps to improve the situation of women in SAF. The ambition of SAF to increase the number of female employees partly through implementing a new set of values at the very heart of the organization has indeed run into a few problems. One dilemma is how the new values appear to have been practically put to use where the informants of this study feel that there is a great discrepancy with what is said in writing and what the reality actually looks like. Instead of being a common goal for employees to strive for together, the work on gender mainstreaming has become a symbol of the void between management and administration and the remaining organization where the activities are of more operative nature [4]. One important part in the definition on destructive leadership is that what makes leadership destructive has less to do with the leader's intentions than with the outcomes of the leaders' behavior [1]. A leader can have the best of intentions, but if his or her actions have a negative result, it is still considered a destructive behavior. Considering the experiences of the female cadets, it is evident that although the intention of the strategic leadership of promoting women is most benign, the result of, as well as how it has been carried out has had a negative impact on the working conditions of women in SAF. This fits well with the notion that destructive leadership is seldom absolutely or entirely destructive. Both constructive and destructive forms of leadership exist side by side, and can in fact be seen as two sides of the same coin [25].

Another feature that stands in the way for gender mainstreaming in SAF is the basic understanding on what the military profession in its essence signifies. This image construction is created around the notion that the military is a distinctive and particular organization with its own set of values and rules, an idea that hinders gender mainstreaming. However, this exclusivity is becoming less and less prominent as societal and political demands on transformation are increasing, while the gap between the civil and the military sphere at the same time is shrinking [26]. This conversion has been hard for SAF to adapt to, which in the case of the organizations highly held ambitions on gender mainstreaming appears to have led to some destructive outcomes for those achievements. In the lines of arguments put forth in this

chapter, destructive leadership can be interpreted as the havoc of good intentions, a manifestation as well as a creation of gender inequality, and as such it is a most intricate problem to solve. The only way forward, however, is to admit to mistakes, learn from them, and figure out a better way to approach the issue, where an open communication with those involves a far better strategy than putting all the spotlights on women.

5. Practical implications and further research

Practical implementation made from this study would be to introduce a better follow up on how the agenda with gender mainstreaming in reality is affecting the situation of women in the organization. A major obstacle is that the discussions on gender mainstreaming and sexual harassments are most profound high up in the hierarchy, where, in order to gain more momentum, individuals from the lower ranks of the hierarchy need to be included. One way of achieving this is to integrate a more structured implementation plan for carrying out the value system into the curriculum of the officers program. Effective leadership tools suggested is clear and open communication with an emphasis on developmental leadership, as well as with ethical leadership styles [1].

The women in the study asked for mentorship that enhances the function of female role models. The already existing network for women in the military, network officer/employed woman (NOAK) is perceived by the informants of this study as greatly associated with the precarious situation of being a woman in SAF.

Another suggestion on the basis of this study is to nuance the emphasis on women in the advertisement campaigns. Equality issues involve both men and women, and it is essential to put a gender neutral protocol on all individuals on all levels. It would be interesting to study in further detail how the current recruitment strategy and exposure of women in the communication internally and externally is affecting the working environment of the women in SAF. Highly relevant to destructive leadership is the occurrence of complaints of sexual harassment and negative treatment, where, in the wake of “me too” campaign revealed that as much as 10% of all women in the SAF shared the experience of sexual harassment and special treatment [38]. Further research should be made in order to illuminate how the male-dominated culture is affecting the working environment for women.

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Dynamic Capabilities for People-Centric Management in Turbulent Times

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Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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Abstract

We have all observed examples of poor leaders who exhibit dark side behaviors like destructive and negative leadership, narcissism, greed, and more. Sometimes it seems like some powerful Sith Lord from Star Wars has seduced managers and leaders to the Dark Side of The Force. Powerful forces inside and outside of the organization combined with the leader's personality traits can combine to bring out the dark side of many managers and leaders. The question becomes, can a management structure be created to combat the Sith Lord to make good leaders Jedi Knights and steer weaker leaders toward the good side of The Force. We believe that a people-centric approach to management design can do exactly that, but it is not easy. Developing the dynamic capabilities needed for a people-centric approach to management requires reflection and objective evaluation of many intangible, unseen, forces that are constantly at work in all organizations. Readers of this chapter are exposed to a model for people-centric management and asked probing questions to encourage them to consider many elements of a dynamic people-centric organization. I hope that with reflection, readers can gain insight into their organizations and find ways to develop Jedi Knights to defeat the evil Sith Lord.

Keywords: people-centric management, dynamic capabilities, culture, leadership, systems

1. Introduction

I have always been fascinated by leadership. I have wondered for decades what compels people to go above and beyond expectations and in a military context inspires people to perform acts of bravery that seem totally illogical to any sane and rational person. What are the leadership qualities that inspire followers to achieve and perform in such outstanding ways? For

nearly 40 years, first in business and then as an academic researcher, I have sought for understanding of this complex dynamic called leadership. Are outstanding leaders born or taught or some mix of both? Conversely, are poor leaders naturally poor. Why, and can they be taught to be good leaders. In other words, can leadership be taught? It would be great to be able to identify and discuss the behaviors of effective leaders that I have observed over the years. Sadly, this chapter would be short indeed since the vast majority of the managers I had contact with exhibited dark side attributes of leadership. Sometimes it seems like some powerful Sith Lord from Star Wars has seduced managers and leaders over to the Dark Side of The Force.

In the popular Star Wars movies, an invisible Force flows through all things and can be used for good or evil. Jedi Knights are highly trained and disciplined warriors who use The Force for good to protect others and defend those who cannot defend themselves. The Sith Lord uses the Dark Side or evil side of the force to gain power by any means necessary. The Sith Lord attracts noble Jedi Knights to do his evil bidding by seducing them to the Dark Side by targeting personality weaknesses with promises of power and the ability to use the Dark Side of The Force to achieve some deeply personal objective. Once the noble Jedi Knight commits to the Dark Side, it is very difficult if not impossible to turn back. I have seen similar behavior among young, emerging leaders, who are seduced by the promise of wealth and power and compromise their principles in favor of material gain or power. Wealth and power are powerful forces for which people and entire organizations are willing to ignore what is right in exchange for personal advancement.

Over the decades, I can identify many examples of destructive and negative leadership, destructive organizational behavior, narcissism, greed, and far too many examples of managerial incompetence to mention. In fact, there are numerous studies that provide evidence supporting my observations and suggest that my personal experience is not unique. For instance:

- More than 75% of participants in various employee satisfaction surveys indicate that dealing with their immediate boss is the most stressful part of their job [1, 2].
- A study published by the *Harvard Business Review* indicated that only 30% of businesses had “healthy and respectful” work environments. The majority of organizations in the study had dysfunctional or unhealthy work environments [3, 4].
- The vast majority of organizational change initiatives fail to yield expected results primarily due to managerial incompetence [5]. Some researchers place this failure rate as high as 90% [6].
- In 2012, three Italian researchers demonstrated mathematically that if the base rate of management incompetence is between 50 and 75%, then random promotions would yield more efficient organizations. The researchers were awarded the Ig Nobel Prize for demonstrating that organizations would be better off by choosing people for promotions by pulling names from a hat than from a lengthy and convoluted evaluation process [7].

The first overwhelming unanswered question is how can this possibly be when a bachelor’s degree or MBA is almost a universal prerequisite for advancement in managerial ranks. We know that most managers at least at some point in their careers sat in classes on management,

organizational behavior, leadership, ethics and/or similar courses where attributes of effective and ineffective managers and leaders are routinely explored. The follow up question is how is it that, so many intelligent people simply ignore the teachings of experts from highly recognized universities worldwide. And, more importantly, the problem seems to be getting worse, not better. In the last few decades of my business career, before entering academia, it seemed to be more and more difficult to connect to and inspire new entrants to the workforce and to identify people with the skills needed to be successful leaders if advanced into higher management levels. Again, it begs the question, **WHY?**

We, as educators and influencers of future generations of leaders should reflect on the results of **NOT** attempting to answer this question. Is it possible to create organizational structure that helps reduce the risk of creating another Enron where Lay, Skilling, and Fastow were able to seduce and corrupt an entire company in the pursuit of vast riches? How about Bernie Ebbers who seduced the Board of Directors at WorldCom to advance him loans to prevent him from selling vast amounts of stock to fund a lavish lifestyle. The Board feared that such large stock sales would depress the stock price and this along with other fraudulent accounting practices only delayed the downfall of WorldCom. The high-profile rogue's gallery includes people like Angelo Mozilo at Countrywide who was a key player in causing the mortgage industry melt down that pulled the entire USA into recession and John Rigas at Adelphia Communications who siphoned over \$100 million from Adelphia to fund other family owned businesses. Of course, these famous examples that hit the headlines are just the tip of the iceberg. Leaders and managers at all levels are faced with opportunities and forces that are capable of seducing otherwise upstanding individuals to pursue the Dark Side. The forces that influence dark leadership are not confined to the C-suite. They exist throughout the organization and individuals respond in ways to meet their own self-interest too many times.

"If the hammer is your only tool, then every problem is a nail."—Abraham Maslow

Perhaps the root of the problem is represented in the volumes have been written about differences between millennials and the post-World War II baby boomers who remain the dominant managerial force and who shaped the corporate structures and philosophies being used in practice and taught in universities today. If one compares the contents of a management textbook from 25 years ago with those currently being used at universities reveals striking similarities. Universities continue to promote concepts and methods developed and used in an industrial twentieth century in a twenty-first century environment that is vastly different. Who can blame current executives? It is what they have been taught by "so-called" experts. Differences in the world view between millennials and their leaders may just be the beginning. Consider how work has changed from sweating in a factory to sitting in front of a computer screen trying to figure out a problem or develop the "next big thing." Technology has changed the way we communicate and interact and share knowledge. The pace of change has accelerated with knowledge and experiences now being shared at light speed around the globe. Consider the concept of stakeholders versus stockholders in management. While introduced into management thinking in the 1930s the concept of stakeholders was not firmly associated with management strategy until the mid-1980s by R. Edward Freeman in *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach* [8] and did not emerge as a popular issue until the mid-1990s.

Over the past 15 years my colleagues and I have worked with hundreds of senior executives in many industries across the globe and asked what has changed. When we ask if the way we work with people has changed, has the nature of the work being done by our people changed, have the interests and goals of stakeholders changed, and is the environment that the organization operates in different, the overwhelming response is either “Big changes” or “Very big changes.” Yet when we then ask if we have changed how we organize and manage the people and the organization the response is overwhelming “Very small change” or “Small change.” **Figure 1** illustrates the feedback that we have gotten. Knowing that managers and executives continue to structure organizations and handle people using outdated concepts and methods, the existence of so much destructive, negative, inflexible, and incompetent leadership should not be surprising. Nearly every profession and discipline on the planet has experienced massive change in recent decades, all except management and leadership which are firmly rooted in methods and ideas of the industrial twentieth century.

It seems unlikely that ethics or managerial psychology courses, at any level, have been able to mitigate the pressures for performance and success that bring out the greed and narcissism inherent in the fundamental personalities of many people. The need for personal gratification seems to be a basic human condition and is accentuated in many individuals who, given the opportunity, will take satisfying their ambitions to extremes or may simply lack sufficient emotional intelligence to realize the damage their actions are causing to others and the organization. Maybe minor insecurities become magnified as the pressure and stress that comes with greater titles become major debilitations. The good news is that after nearly two decades of observations and study, we have concluded that all is not necessarily lost! Organizations cannot eliminate many of the forces that result in destructive and incompetent leadership. However, senior leaders and business owners **can** create a managerial system with an environment to help mitigate dark leadership behaviors while simultaneously improving the ability of the organization to adapt and change in a world that is volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA). A few courageous Jedi Knights can combat the



Figure 1. What has changed?

evil Sith Lord and Dark Side of The Force by adopting people-centric management practices to meet twenty-first century needs.

2. Dynamic capabilities of people-centric organizations

In the twenty-first VUCA century, organizations of all types, sizes, maturity, industry, etc., must identify new processes and structures and be aware of the importance that people have on the success or failure of the organization. Okay, most of us would agree that everyone knows that people are your most important asset. In reality, this is a nice buzzword that is largely overlooked or ignored in practice by many leaders in many organizations. It sounds great and looks good on the company web site and is almost a required statement. Can you imagine a company saying anything like “Our mission is to make as much money as possible at the expense of our employees, suppliers, or the environment.”? Clearly, a statement like this would be a death blow to any company, but I suggest that many people reading this chapter have experienced organizations where this was the “real” mission statement. I, and my colleague, Lukas Michel, view leadership as an integral part of a complex, dynamic, managerial and organizational system where each part influences the others which is driven by interactions among people. Lukas Michel in *The Performance Triangle: Diagnostic Mentoring to Manage Organizations and People for Superior Performance in Turbulent Times* described what he calls the Performance Triangle shown in **Figure 2** [9]. The dynamic system consists of organizational culture, systems, and leadership and is powered by people through their shared purpose, relationships, and collaboration. What this means is that effective leaders are simultaneously a function of and contributors to the culture and systems but the power for the entire system comes from people both internal and external to the organization.

Success comes by finding the right balance among the various dimensions of the Performance Triangle model. Success can be achieved by constantly evaluating many elements that make up the dimensions to make subtle changes throughout the organization quickly and effectively. Too often, leadership effectiveness seems to be evaluated in isolation and we forget that in addition to dealing with their own personal ambitions and demons, leaders and leadership behaviors are strongly influenced by other factors, many of which they may not even be aware of. I have observed and participated in many leadership development programs where leadership qualities and attributes are discussed. However, the discussion is almost always directed in a way that suggests that leadership is somehow insulated from the rest of the organization or that the leaders dictate how to behave or react to the rest of the organization. Every reader knows leaders who were successful in one situation but were abject failures in a different setting. I suggest that this is because of the complex interactions and power of the culture, systems, and most importantly, **people**. Lukas and I know from our research that there is a very high correlation among the dynamic capabilities of the Performance Triangle model and success [10]. Dimensions and underlying elements of the Performance Triangle that remain unseen to the untrained eye either inhibit or enable success of both the leader and the organization as a whole. Further, in a turbulent VUCA world these unseen forces become critical factors that either inhibit or enable superior performance.



Figure 2. The performance triangle.

Rather than preach, I will offer a brief introduction of our logic behind each dimension. Then I will phrase the discussion of the various elements that make up the dimensions of dynamic capabilities in the form of a question. The idea is to stimulate introspective thought to answer the question and to encourage readers look at themselves and their organizations and attempt to gain insight and new meaning. Hopefully, some readers of this chapter will gain a level of perspective that will allow them to appreciate people-centric management principles and avoid some of the dark sides of leadership in their careers.

3. Structure and dimensions of the Performance Triangle model

3.1. Success

Too often, success is measured solely by stock price, cash flow, growth rates, profits, or other financial measures. We feel that this practice is too limiting since it applies to for-profit companies only and encourages near-term thinking that feeds into behaviors that bring out the dark side of leadership. Pressures for immediate results from shareholders and a multitude of other stakeholders create an environment that is unforgiving and intensely competitive where poor leadership is overlooked in exchange for short-term profits or stock price. Enron might be the poster child and best example of how an inordinate focus on financial performance, stock price in this case, can influence and warp an entire organization. We prefer to evaluate success using the following elements:

- Responsiveness—If your employees and the organization as a whole are responsive to the needs and expectations of customers, clients, or beneficiaries. You might be successful.
- Alignment—If your employees and the organization as a whole are aligned and working together to achieve a common goal or purpose. You might be successful.
- Capabilities—If your employees and the organization as a whole have the technical capabilities and proper tools to service the needs or provide services. You might be successful.
- Motivation—If your employees and the organization as a whole are highly motivated and engaged to deliver superior products or services. You might be successful.
- Cleverness—If your employees and the organization as a whole are encouraged to be creative to find innovative solutions then allowed to implement them. You might be successful.

“I believe the real difference between success and failure in a corporation can be very often traced to the question of how well the organization brings out the great energies and talents of its people.”—Thomas J. Watson, Jr.

While there are undoubtedly many other factors that influence success of any organization whether for-profit, not-for-profit, governmental organization, or other form, these five elements for success are among the most critical and keys to success.

3.2. Culture

The culture of the organization creates shared context, enables or inhibits knowledge exchange, and defines invisible boundaries of collaboration. A vibrant culture establishes shared context as the common ground with a shared agenda, language, mental models, purpose, and, relationships [11]. Shared context describes a shared mindset and the behavior of individuals based on shared norms, beliefs, values, and assumptions. The organizational culture becomes the invisible force that, like gravity, shapes all interactions within the universe that the organization exists. Everyone, including the CEO, is strongly influenced by the inexorable force of the organizational culture. Similar to The Force in Star Wars, the culture permeates everyone and everything in the organization and shapes every action or reaction. While senior executives can influence the culture, it is extremely difficult to function effectively if executives are out of step with the beliefs and shared assumptions of the rest of the company. CEOs can force changes, but these changes commonly become temporary, and the organization reverts to its former behaviors when the executive leader is gone. The classic example is Lee Iacocca at Chrysler. Iacocca is widely credited with saving ailing Chrysler in the 1980s, but the company reverted to its former ways shortly after he left the company in 1992 which ultimately led to the ill-fated marriage of Chrysler with Daimler-Benz in 1998. The failure of the merger of Chrysler and Daimler is widely attributed to cultural differences between the two organizations. Iacocca demonstrated that it is possible for a strong leader to force behavior changes through incentives or punitive action but when the force from the leader is removed, the people and the organization revert to their former behaviors.

“The effectiveness of organizations could be doubled if managers discovered how to tap into the unrealized potential present in their workforce.”—Douglas McGregor

Organizational culture either enables knowledge sharing or is a barrier to sharing even simple pieces of information [12]. Suppiah and Sandhu found that 90% of organizational knowledge is tacit in nature, meaning that the vast body of knowledge is contained in the minds and experience of employees [13]. Any condition that inhibits the free flow of knowledge among people throughout the organization acts like an infection that diminishes the ability of the organization to use that knowledge. Peter Drucker said that “Culture eats strategy for breakfast” which means that the force of the culture can overwhelm and derail the best laid plans or actions by leaders. We suggest that many leaders revert to detrimental leadership behavior in response to the intense force of the organizational culture.

Knowledge that is not shared, exchanged, and transferred both vertically and horizontally has no value to an organization. Therefore, collaboration, the base of the Michel model in **Figure 2**, is critically important. The challenge for any executive is to help influence as well as function within a culture that facilitates people working together on tasks that add value to the organization. Effective collaboration requires a shared problem and commitment with people working together with shared way of doing things.

With this brief discussion of organizational culture, here are the elements within the Performance Triangle model and questions to consider and reflect upon:

- Understanding—Do people share an understanding of where the organization is and where it is going or attempting to go?
- Intent—Do people share a common intent of how to move the organization forward to meet goals and objectives?
- Agenda—Do people share a common agenda on what needs to be done to move the organization toward meeting goals and objectives?
- Aspirations—Do people share a common sense of purpose to meet goals and objectives?
- Norms—Do people share a common set of norms of behavior needed to get ahead within the organization?

Consider that these intangible elements cannot be touched, observed directly, and are very difficult to quantify which is why, we believe, that organizational culture takes a back seat in university curricula to data-driven decision-making models, six-sigma, or other numbers driven methods. A current management textbook that is used in many universities dedicates only 34 pages (6%) out of 545 pages of the content to organizational culture. Research shows that 80% of all multi-national mergers or acquisitions fail to yield expected results due primarily to difference between the two cultures involved. Surprisingly, 90% of key decision-making executives indicate that cultural differences between the two organizations is a key success factor while less than 10% provide any resources or effort into understanding and integrating the cultures in either the due-diligence or implementation phases of the project [14]. We believe this is at least partially due to the heavy emphasis on data-driven decision-making models that are hammered into college and MBA students combined with the pressure to be able to document and prove performance. We believe that the heavy emphasis on data for

both decision-making and performance measurement is also a strong force that encourages destructive leadership behaviors.

Consider the common thread through these elements of organizational culture, **knowledge sharing**. A key enabler or inhibitor to knowledge sharing is trust. There is a substantial body of research indicating that trust, or lack thereof, may be the single most powerful force in the culture and possibly the entire organization [12, 15]. Think about it. If I do not trust you, I am not going to share what I know with you and if you do not trust me, you are not going to share what you know with me either. We have observed many organizations lacking in trust and I expect that anyone reading this has had similar experiences. Leaders with personality insecurities or narcissistic tendencies contribute to the shared belief that others cannot be trusted. On the other hand, it is possible that solid leaders enter an organization with great intentions and high aspirations and are told of day one “do not trust so-and-so”. This may or not be true, but the new leader adapts their behaviors accordingly in response to the culture. This also, may be one of those classic “chicken or the egg” scenarios. Did leadership behaviors create the lack of trust or did a shared belief, whether justified or not, shape behaviors that reinforced the lack of trust. Either way, the culture influences and may reinforce bad leadership behaviors. The Great Place to Work Institute identifies three dimensions of trust: credibility, fairness, and respect which collectively make up the “Trust Index” [16]. We believe cultures that have high levels of the Performance Triangle elements of culture and trust can help good leaders become great leaders. Leaders who might be seduced by the Dark Side of the Force can become effective leaders by removing some of the forces that encourage poor leadership by nurturing a dynamic people-centric management environment.

3.3. Leadership

Leadership, in the broadest sense, is characterized by effective communication and interaction with others at all levels throughout the organization. Successful leadership varies by organization and situation. A leadership style that is successful in one organization in a specific situation may not necessarily be effective if applied in a different organization or situation. Effective leaders interact with people on a personal level, relate to others to facilitate meaningful collaboration, and establish a supportive work environment based on trust [17]. The importance of effective communication skills and interaction with followers are recurring themes in the literature [18–20]. Effective leaders, therefore, must develop effective communication and interaction skills that are natural and unique to the leader, the organization, and the situation. Ultimately, what is important is that true leaders champion creativity and experimentation and help mold an environment where the individuals in the organization adopt a shared vision, collaborate in a culture of trust, and engage multiple personalities to solve problems and add value. Specific communication and interaction strategies will vary from organization to organization and leader to leader. However, the overriding, primary, objectives are for the shared vision, collaboration, and positive relationships to become integrated into the culture of the organization.

“Our attention has a short time-span. It takes passion to keep it awake.”—Claude Adrien Helvétius, 1715-1771

With this brief discussion of leadership, here are the elements within the Performance Triangle model and questions to consider and reflect upon:

- Sense making—Do leaders have the capability to sense changes in internal and external environments and interpret its meaning?
- Strategy conversion—Do leaders have an understanding of why the organization has established strategic goals and are goals founded on lessons from the past?
- Performance conversion—Do leaders have a clear understanding of whether the organization is on track, what needs to be done to remain on track, and what needs to be done to achieve superior performance?
- Contribution dialog—Do leaders have a clear understanding of what they can do to contribute toward moving the organization forward? Do leaders clearly understand their role?
- Risk dialog—Do leaders have a clear understanding of the potential risks and the level of risk that the organization can tolerate?

While our research indicates that all five of the elements that define effective leadership in the Performance Triangle model are important, we find that two are particularly significant; sense making and risk dialog. We have observed many leaders who fail to sense significant changes occurring in the internal or external environment early enough. When they do, in many cases there appears to be a knee-jerk reaction as the leader attempts to make up for lost time or opportunities or to cover his or her oversight. Many times the reason seems to be the strength of the organizational culture that guides a leader to accept a foregone conclusion despite a wealth of indicators. A classic example of this behavior is the rejection of digital photography by executives at Kodak. By the time executives at Kodak realized their error, it was too late. Another reason seems to be that the leader is being constantly bombarded with information and confronted with an unending stream of issues so they lose focus on what is important. The constant barrage of information and the stress of dealing with day-to-day issues interferes with the leader's sense making ability by desensitizing them to what is happening until it is too late. The other major contributor, which we call "risk dialog", relates to the appetite for risk-taking that the organization has. Any project, initiative, or new effort involves risk and too often we observe environments, created primarily by shareholders, that punish failure to deliver. In an environment where failures to deliver are punished, leaders will minimize risk and choose safety or demonstrate the dark side of leadership in order to mitigate risk and prevent failure. In a people-centric management environment, risk-taking is encouraged and failures are applauded with "Good try! We know what would happen if we did nothing. Next time it will work!"

3.4. Systems

The role of systems is to create meaning while balancing top down direction with bottom up creativity. Systems support implementation with the right balance between freedom and constraints to maintain control. To support collaboration among people, systems make information available to help people find purpose and support the decision-making process. In the

Performance Triangle model, systems represent the institutional framework with rules, routines, and tools that set the stage for rigorous and disciplined leadership. Technology based information systems accumulate, store, process, provide access to information, and facilitate immediate feedback. Human systems in the form of rules, routines, and guidelines of many types provide frameworks that give technology structure and relevance.

“You cannot understand a system unless you change it.”—Kurt Lewin

With this brief discussion of systems, here are the elements within the Performance Triangle model and questions to consider and reflect upon:

- Information—Do decision makers at all levels have access to timely and relevant information to know what is going on inside and outside the organization to make informed decisions?
- Strategy—Do leaders and followers clearly understand the rules of the game and what is needed to achieve strategic and operational objectives?
- Implementation—Do decision makers throughout the organization clearly understand what actions are needed to be successful?
- Beliefs—Do decision makers throughout the organization have a shared ambition to support organizational objectives?
- Boundaries—Do decision makers throughout the organization have a firm understanding of boundaries or limits to their decisions or authority?

Peter Drucker said, “The purpose of information is not knowledge. It is being able to take the right action.” From our research we have seen too many leaders make informed decisions using data that is not relevant, many times generated by a legacy system with data that had meaning 10 years ago but not today. We have seen good leaders make bad decisions because they did not have timely or relevant information, or, they did not understand or share the same objectives as the rest of the organization. twenty-first century leaders, particularly in established organizations, might be well served to reflect on these questions relative to their organizations and if the answer is “no” or “I do not know” or “maybe,” they should dig deeper. We suggest that a little skepticism is healthy and leaders who honestly search to answer these questions can make needed changes to get the right information to the right people at the right time, which would help mitigate many of the dark leadership behaviors what we see so often.

3.5. People

Control systems are needed to manage both evolutionary and revolutionary change by formalizing beliefs, setting boundaries on acceptable strategic behavior, defining and monitoring performance variables, encouraging debate, and discussion about uncertainties, communicating new strategies, establishing targets, and securing attention to new strategic initiatives [21]. Peter Drucker observed that “So much of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to work.” Unfortunately, most traditional management systems and leadership

behaviors do more to interfere with the ability of people to perform than to enhance performance [22]. Interactive leadership and diagnostic systems play an important role in creating a work environment where people succeed in “playing the inner game” [23].

Individuals perform at their highest potential by winning their “inner game” by overcoming self-doubt, fear, bias, limiting concepts or assumptions that distort perceptions, decisions, behaviors, actions and stress that interfere with, and diminish, performance [23, 24]. People who master their “inner game” become winners and have awareness about what is going on around them, the freedom to choose the best solution, and trust in others to help people focus attention on tasks and problems. Reaching a state of flow, the state where performance and creativity are at a peak, must be a primary leadership objective at all levels of the organization [25]. As the research shows, more leaders demonstrate behaviors and methods that prevent people from achieving “flow” than to create an environment to encourage it.

“There are managers so preoccupied with their e-mail messages that they never look up from their screens to see what’s happening in the non-digital world.”—Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

With this brief discussion of people, here are the elements within the Performance Triangle model and questions to consider and reflect upon:

- Focus—Are people allowed to focus attention and energy on tasks? Are interferences preventing people from focusing their abilities to complete tasks?
- Awareness—Are people aware of forces that influence actions and decisions?
- Trust—Do people trust co-workers and management to be treated fairly and with respect? Is management credible?
- Choice—Are people allowed the freedom to use their own creative ability to solve problems, respond to customers, or to be innovative?

In our research and observations helping create an environment where people can focus their energy, are aware of the world around them, trust each other, and have freedom of choice may be the leader’s single most important task. Here again, trust emerges as the single most powerful force. It is difficult to earn, so very easy to lose, and very difficult to regain once lost. Yet, the preponderance of leadership behaviors and methods do exactly the opposite. I encourage readers to reflect deeply on how their actions or inactions enable or prevent people from winning their “inner game.” It takes a long time and a lot of effort to create an environment that is high in these elements, particularly trust. Too often, leaders ignore their people and these elements until a crisis emerges and the “Call to Action” memo’s start to flow, or the critical action team is created, both of which, we feel, fuel destructive leadership with pressure from stakeholders. Effective leaders in the twenty-first century must take a people-centric approach and be proactive in helping people throughout the organization focus their energy on value adding tasks, be aware of what is going on around them, trust others and themselves, and have freedom of choice which also involves an element of risk and potential failure.

3.6. Collaboration, purpose, and relationships

Work environments with effective and intense collaboration, a high sense of purpose and trusting relationships have a stabilizing effect on organizations known as “resilience” or “robustness” [26, 27]. Resilience allows an organization to absorb unanticipated events or disruptions and then respond quickly and decisively. Organizations reach higher levels of resilience with cooperative strategies, again powered by people [28]. Effective leaders support, promote, and encourage collaboration [29], purpose, and healthy relationships [30]. Ineffective leaders demonstrate behaviors or introduce processes that inhibit the development of these attributes thereby making the organization less resilient.

“Most discussion of decision making assume that only senior executives make decisions or that only senior executives’ decisions matter. This is a dangerous mistake.” —Peter Drucker

With this brief discussion of collaboration, purpose, and relationships, here are the dimensions within the Performance Triangle model and questions to consider and reflect on:

- Relationships—Do co-workers and management have and maintain healthy, trusting, relationships?
- Purpose—Do people share a common higher purpose for the organization and organizational objectives?
- Collaboration—Do people collaborate effectively by sharing knowledge to achieve common goals and objectives?

The importance of nurturing a resilient organization in the twenty-first century VUCA environment cannot be emphasized enough. With rapid advances in technology and changing consumer expectation driven by Facebook, Twitter, and other media, threats, and opportunities emerge at almost literally light speed. Ineffective leaders, usually inadvertently, create environments that discourage or inhibit the dimensions that make the organization resilient. Readers should consider these questions carefully and as objectively as possible and ask yourselves, “What do I do (or not do) that promotes the development of trusting relationships, common purpose, and knowledge sharing through collaboration?” Too often we have seen well-meaning leaders who believe in competition introduce performance goals or quotas with performance measurement systems that stifle the development of trust and collaboration. So, called “stretch goals” many times provide the fuel that encourages poor leadership behaviors in exchange for short term performance, bonuses, or recognition. The long-term effect can be debilitating, particularly when confronted with an unexpected disruption.

4. Closing comments or what have we learned?

Clearly, individuals who demonstrate poor leadership are complex. The reasons for dark side behaviors like destructive leadership, narcissistic leadership, toxic leadership, incompetence,

greed, and a host of other behaviors that have negative effects on other individuals and the organization are also complex. Complex interactions between leader's personalities, ambitions, training, combined with forces like pressure from stakeholders and the inexorable force of organizational culture may shape and bring out the bad in even the most stalwart individual. Leadership should not be evaluated in a vacuum and treated as if the leaders exist in isolation from the rest of the organization. Rather, leadership, good or bad, should be evaluated as an integral component of a dynamic system with complex interactions that the leader can affect but also must work within.

"The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence; it is to act with yesterday's logic."—Peter Drucker

I believe that many potentially good leaders fall victim to forces both inside and outside of organizations that play on fears, personality weaknesses, or ambitions that bring out dark side leadership behaviors or excuse them in favor of earnings or some other quantifiable measure. Business owners, founders, and top-level executives can help mitigate poor leadership and promote superior leadership by actively developing organizations with a people-centric management style. People with a shared purpose and healthy, positive, relationships collaborate effectively and share their unique knowledge. Before this can happen though, business owners, founders, and top-level executives must become aware of the invisible forces generated by the organizational culture and systems that shape leadership behaviors. The old saying "what gets measured gets done" may not necessarily be good particularly when what is being measured encourages bad behavior. Unseen forces can derail the best or well-intentioned leader, but they can also help make average leadership, good. It goes both ways.

"You can analyze the past, but you have to design the future."—Edward de Bono

Becoming a truly people-centric organization is not easy and takes a great deal of time and effort, and yes, money. It takes a lot more than including the standard "people are our greatest asset" in the corporate mission or purpose statements particularly since people within the organization can easily see through the façade making the statement more of a demotivator rather than a motivator to the people. Decision makers up and down the organizational hierarchy should reflect on the elemental questions that make up the dimensions of a people-centric organization presented in this chapter and attempt to assess the levels of each. If the answers are "I do not know" or "probably not" then they have work to do. Our research shows that organizations that increase the levels of these elements are successful and enjoy superior performance. Further, average leaders can become good and good leaders can become outstanding by accessing the shared body of knowledge in people both inside and outside of the organization [10, 12]. Paying attention to developing the people-centric management can decrease pressures on leaders that influence poor leadership. Nobody can totally eliminate poor leadership. But, a truly people-centric management approach and awareness of the complex forces affecting leadership behaviors can promote good leadership behaviors and help reduce the poor or destructive behaviors. Be aware of The Force within your organization to develop Jedi Knights as leaders and fight the seductive influence of the Dark Side and the evil Sith Lord.

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The Dark Side of Service Leaders

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Abstract

The rapid growth of service economies calls for effective service leaders. According to Po Chung (Co-founder of DHL International and Chairman Emeritus of DHL Express (Hong Kong) Limited), effective service leaders should possess competence, character and care (3Cs). In addition, a lack of these qualities constitutes the dark side of service leadership. In this chapter, the dark side of service leadership is examined at three levels. First, “viruses” in leadership are examined through the lens of the Service Leadership Theory. Second, attributes of the dark side of leadership with particular reference to problems in competence, character and care based on the existing scientific literature are outlined. Finally, the dark side of service leadership with reference to Confucian virtues is addressed.

Keywords: dark side of leadership, Service Leadership Theory, Confucian values, viruses in leadership

1. Introduction

Humans work in networks. We run large-scale cooperative networks that link individual, communities and organizations. The most successful networks are characterized by good leadership, which unites people to work together and better. Good leaders have become increasingly vital to organizational success because they keep the group focused and united. However, the dark side of leadership can damage a person, a team, an organization and even the whole society.

Because of its prevalence and role in causing organizational failure, there is a growing interest in the dark side of leadership in the scientific literature on leadership. Researchers have used different terms, such as destructive leadership, toxic leaders and abusive supervision to describe the dark side of leadership [1].

According to the Service Leadership Theory developed by Chung [2], the dark side of leadership in an organization is like a “virus” in a computer system, which is often tiny, but contagious and fatal. The viruses in leadership often emerge when there are problems with the three essential qualities underlying effective service leadership, which include competence, character and care. Similar to destructive computer viruses, viruses in leadership also lead to organizational dysfunction and ineffectiveness. According to the Service Leadership Theory, viruses in leadership are anti-virtues, which repel the followers, destroy the relationship and undermine the organization benefits [3].

Existing empirical studies have demonstrated the negative outcomes of the dark side of leadership in terms of a lack of essential qualities. Incompetence of leaders often causes organizational ineffectiveness [4]. Immoral and uncaring leadership behavior are considered more destructive, and often negatively related to individual outcomes, such as employees’ working attitudes, task performance, and psychological well-being [5], as well as organizational outcomes, such as commitment, relationship and performance [6, 7].

Besides these harmful effects, the dark side of leadership is also contradictory to social and cultural values. In Asian cultures, where Confucian values play a leading role in shaping organizational climate and interpersonal relationship, the dark side of leadership is generally sanctioned. For example, Confucianism suggests that a “superior man” (“jun zi”, 君子) should be benevolent, kind and loyal. On the contrary, a person possessing dark dispositions, such as uncaring, disloyal and unkind attributes, is considered an “inferior man” (“xiao ren”, 小人).

The overarching aim of this chapter is to explore the dark side of leadership. There are three sections in this chapter. First, “viruses” in leadership are examined through the lens of the Service Leadership Theory. Second, the dark side of leadership with particular reference to problems in character and care is examined based on existing literature. Finally, the dark side of service leadership is addressed with reference to Confucian virtues in the Chinese culture.

2. The dark side of service leadership according to the Service Leadership Theory

The twenty-first century is the era of service age [8]. Different from manufacturing economy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, service economy requires companies to be service providers. As the service is delivered through people, stronger leadership to lead, motivate and involve people has become the key to organizational success.

Po Chung, the co-founder of DHL International, proposed the concept of “service leadership” and the Service Leadership Theory based on existing leadership theories, contextual philosophies and his own experiences [9]. The Service Leadership Theory has responded to the global call for service leaders, integrated the advanced notions from existing leadership theories and emphasized specific contextual values in practicing leadership. According to Chung, service leadership means “satisfying needs by consistently providing quality personal service

to everyone one comes into contact with, including one's self, others, groups, communities, systems, and environments" [2]. Strong service leadership brings more harmony and competitiveness which are the key to personal, tribal, team and organization's success. In this section, we review Chung's work on the dark side of leadership based on existing literature [3, 10] and an interview with Po Chung [11].

2.1. Basic tenets of the Service Leadership Theory

According to the Service Leadership Theory, successful service leaders possess competence, character and care [2]. Competence means having the right skills and abilities to do the job well, and to inspire followers to do the same. Character means having a good set of moral values that allows an individual to build trust in others, dispel distrust and function well among other people. Care means having an emotional, unselfish bond that communicates respect, concern and a willingness to act, as well as pride and ownership in the things that they do.

Service leaders should possess all of the three fundamental characteristics. A lack of any of these indispensable qualities constitutes the dark side of leadership. A lack of competence signals an inability to perform or compete in the open marketplace. In a competitive environment, an incompetent leader fails to convince followers why he/she should be followed. For example, a lack of spiritual well-being would mean a lack of meaningful direction for the team [8]. A lack of character means a lack of values which fosters distrust in a leader's moral fiber. When a follower has reasons not to trust a leader or to disrespect them in return, then they are more likely to leave. A lack of care shown to one's followers signals a lack of interest or empathy, or even a willingness to abandon followers. Lacking care erodes confidence among followers, and gives them less of a reason to keep following the leader. Imbalance of the 3Cs can also lead to failure, and the more extreme it is, the more critical may be the consequence. For example, very competent but seriously unethical leaders can cause more damage the higher they move up in the organization.

2.2. The essence of viruses in leadership

"Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way". This famous quote by Leo Tolstoy was introduced by Jared Diamond as the Anna Karenina principle. Chung applied this principle in the field of leadership [10]. More specifically, successful leaders are "all the same" because they have been able to pin down all the requisite characteristics of being a leader. On the contrary, unsuccessful leaders failed because they were unable to attract followers, providing the level of care, character or competence required of them. Chung claimed that the failure is often attributed to the fundamentally repulsive "viruses" of leaders, which repel followers from the very beginning. According to Chung, viruses possess negative, repellant qualities, which are anti-virtues, and the antithesis of what makes people good, moral beings.

Chung has adopted purposely the IT language to explain the problem of moral failings in leadership so as to make it more readily recognizable to young people. The term "virus" is borrowed from the context of computer programming, which in turn is taken from the biological

sciences. To explain the viruses in leadership, Chung proposed the notion of Personal Operating System (POS). Human brains are like personal bio-computers with an operating system, collecting and processing information and taking actions [3, 12]. Like a computer virus, a virus can corrupt an individual's POS as well [3]. Similarly, leadership works best in workplace when all parts function together in harmony, which enables the best of an organization to come to the fore. However, viruses destabilize the harmonious and proper functioning of a system, and ultimately work to push its constituent parts apart.

In the computer and biology analogies, viruses are often small and malignant elements which attack their hosts by making copies of themselves. In the leadership context, viruses can also start small, such as treating an employee unkindly and dealing with integrity issues lightly. Left unchecked, these viruses replicate and reinforce themselves through repeated behavior, becoming bad habits and, ultimately, moral flaws. Once these moral flaws take root in a significant way, they actively repel followers. The example of treating employees unkindly, for instance, could manifest and grow to treating all perceived subordinates unkindly, whether in the organization or not. This then spreads and becomes arrogance and general nastiness, which is certainly not a good way to encourage people to follow the leader.

However, it is not always easy to identify when exact behaviors are viral under specific situations. For example, people also make mistakes, particularly when they are one-off. However, mistakes do not necessarily reflect corrupted character. Something is done wrongly does not mean that there is an active intent to do it that way. Different from mistakes, viruses refer to deeper set values, which are the opposites to virtues. When someone acts and is motivated by one of these viruses, for instance, by being disrespectful because they believe that the other person deserves no respect, then this type of behavior is considered repellant and viral.

For leaders, being free of viruses is a minimum requirement on the road to leadership, because leaders are foremost free of the negative values—the viruses—that repel followers. Leaders attract followers not only by exhibiting characteristics that are attractive, but also provide something to followers in return. For one thing, being free of the repellant qualities of viruses means that leaders are able to attract, and more importantly retain, followers. For another thing, the process of removing viruses is an important step to becoming a leader with upstanding moral virtues, such as character and care.

2.3. Virus in leadership and Confucian thoughts

As mentioned earlier, the Service Leadership Theory highlights three fundamental characteristics, namely competence, character and care. These qualities provide lessons on how to make oneself a better person, how to treat others well and ultimately how to achieve a harmonious and functional society. They are at the heart of many of the world's philosophical and religious teachings, and can be considered global values. Consequently, a lack of these fundamental characteristics has also been criticized by global values and cultures.

In the Chinese context, the dark side of leadership often reflects the opposites of Confucian virtues. According to Chung [11], viruses are behaviors, attitudes and values that repel followers, peers and people in general. They are the “negatives”, contradictory to virtues, which

attract people, and signal high moral character. Chung has listed 13 virtues and their corresponding “negatives” or viruses (shown in **Table 1**). According to Chung, it can be more effective today to teach moral and ethics by encouraging “double negatives”, such as “do not be unkind”, than to inculcate virtues.

Chung believed that the notion of “double negatives” has a very long history in Chinese thoughts. Confucius advocated “do not do unto others, as you would not have them do unto you” (“ji suo bu yu, wu shi yu ren”, 己所不欲,勿施于人). The principle is not doing things that would repel other people, if ones would not like to have those things done to themselves. For example, if one does not want to be lied to, does not lie in the first place. The concept of dark side of leadership with reference to Confucian values will further be discussed in the third part of the chapter.

2.4. Origins and consequences of viruses in leadership

Chung [11] argued that the origins of “viruses” are multifaceted. Sometimes individuals come to their new job already “infected” with some corrupt ethics. It is possible that they never had a solid belief about being an ethical person, or the environment they have been living in has given tacit consent to unethical behaviors [3]. In addition, a person who lives an unexamined life and does not take steps to constantly enlighten or improve oneself is more prone to falling victim to viruses. Chung [11] suggests that the continuous learning, feedback from others and self-improvement could help to remove viruses and develop virtues, while doing the opposite will allow viruses to take root and multiply. Companies which pursue profits at all costs, use it to justify all means and neglect the things not directly increase profits, are more than likely to be morally corrupted.

Virtue	Virus
Kindness (“ren”, 仁)	Unkindness
Righteousness (“yi”, 义)	Unrighteousness
Respectfulness (“li”, 礼)	Disrespectfulness
Wisdom (“zhi”, 智)	Being unwise
Trustworthiness (“xin”, 信)	Untrustworthiness
Loyalty (“zhong”, 忠)	Disloyalty
Courageousness (“yong”, 勇)	Cowardice
Incorruptibility (“lian”, 廉)	Corruptibility
Having a sense of shame (“chi”, 耻)	Shamelessness
Filial piety (“xiao”, 孝)	Being unfilial
Brotherly love (“ti”, 悌)	Having no brotherly love
Self-correction (“gai”, 改)	No self-correction
Forgiveness (“shu”, 恕)	Unforgiving

Table 1. A list of 13 virtues of Confucianism and the corresponding viruses.

Viruses reside within certain people and their POS [3]. For leaders, the simplest and most unavoidable consequence is that viral leaders repel peers, followers and customers. When an organization is losing good employees, it can scarcely hope to maintain competitiveness and excellence. In addition, like a computer virus, unethical behavior can spread quickly through a habitat and undermine the achievements, because unethical people exploit the rusting nature of healthful business habitat [3]. When even a few employees fall into the trap of unethical behavior, the company environment begins to suffer and collapse. Even in the cases that these behaviors have not been imitated by people widely, the reputation of the organization or the leader is undoubtedly undermined. The virus has caused great damage from the perspective of customers [3].

2.5. Ways to prevent and reduce viruses in leadership

Considering the tremendous negative effects caused by viruses, Chung [11] proposed several ways to prevent viruses in individuals and organizations. For individuals, education and a good family upbringing, particularly in the formative years of your youth, are very important to prevent viruses, as these environments set the scene for how moral and immoral behavior are learnt and dealt with in later life. In addition, surrounding oneself with people, communities and tribes that possess a strong sense of moral values will help reinforce one's own sense of moral values, and better ward off potential viruses. It is important to understand and learn in the context of being moral. For organizations, sincerity and dialog among people should be valued, particularly when it comes to values and viruses. When people disagree that certain viral characteristics are viral, it is likely that they possess these viral characteristics.

For the people and organizations already possessing viruses, Chung suggested that the habitats can exercise a renovating effect and restore its moral fiber [3]. There are some active steps that people can take to remove the viruses. The first step is to understand one's own qualities and the way to interact with others. This involves a great degree deconstruction, self-reflection and understanding of thoughts, intentions and actions. The second step is to start sowing the seeds of becoming a better person, and to start the process of removing the viruses. This involves articulating who you want to become, what values you would like to live by and redesigning habits, mindsets and behaviors that reinforce virtuous behavior. For example, stopping toxic behaviors like being rude, abrasive or exaggerating to the point of dishonesty immediately cleans up the viruses that may have been corrupting one's personal brand [8]. The last step is to repair the relationship with other people. After understanding how viral traits in an individual can impair relationships and repel others, one can rebuild these relationships that are achieved through virtuous behavior.

For organizations wishing to clean the viruses and restore the moral fiber, the process is similar to the case of individuals. First, there must be an awareness and a commitment by those in positions of leadership to change. Then there must be a process of discovery and awareness of the viruses that exist, including their origins, forms and potential negative influence on culture and performance. The second step is about to change these viral behaviors, habits and cultures after reflection and understanding. Finally, the organization must be able to prove to its clients, competitors and potential collaborators outside that it has truly restored its moral fiber, and is ready to prove itself as an organization with care, character and competence.

-
- Tenet 1: Leaders without competence, such as emotional quotient and spiritual quotient are problematic leaders, because they show an inability to perform or compete in the open marketplace.
 - Tenet 2: Leaders without character such as integrity and honesty are problematic leaders, as they lack values which foster trust in a leader's moral fiber.
 - Tenet 3: Leaders without care are problematic leaders, as they lack interest and/or empathy for followers and/or even show a willingness to abandon followers.
 - Tenet 4: Competence, character and care are global values, and also have their foundation in Confucianism.
 - Tenet 5: Using a computer analogy, every leader has a Personal Operating System (POS). Viruses in leaders' POS reflect undesirable qualities that are anti-virtues, and constitute dark side of leadership.
 - Tenet 6: The origins of "viruses" are multifaceted. The POS can be infected from previous habitat or peers, or due to an unexamined life one lives.
 - Tenet 7: Leaders with viruses in their POS repel peers and exploit the nature of a habitat.
 - Tenet 8: Education and positive environment will help to prevent virus infection. Moral fiber can be restored by reflection, taking action and repairing relationship. However, deeply infected POS should be removed.
-

Table 2. Dark side of leadership based on the Service Leadership Theory.

Chung [11] further recalled the health analogy to understand this renovating process from another perspective. It should be noted that preventing all sickness is not possible and undesirable. The process of falling sick helps the body strengthen its immune system, and to grow stronger as a result. The same is true with the POS and the presence of viruses. The process of identifying one's viral traits, understanding them and embarking on a process to rectify them involves developing the ability to understand oneself, critically reflect and improve. However, if those bad behaviors are embedded in the POS, a company should remove the virus by dismissing the person who got significantly corrupted. Therefore, one should always keep alert to the possibility of virus infection. As Confucius indicates "only after improving yourself, can you manage your household; only after managing your household, can you govern the country; only after governing the country can you bring harmony to the world". In short, the concept of virus in leadership and its nature is summarized in **Table 2**.

3. The dark side of leadership in the scientific literature

Leadership theories have tended to adopt a one-sided view of leadership, focusing on its bright, positive and constructive aspects [13, 14]. Early research in leadership traits and research trying to unveil the managerial success and organizational effectiveness often adopt this perspective [15]. In contrast, the dark side of leadership has not been given enough attention in leadership research until recent decades [16].

There are several reasons for the growing interest in the dark side of leadership. First, destructive forms of leadership behavior are highly prevalent nowadays [14]. As revealed by Hogan and Kaiser [15], 65–75% of the employees report that their immediate boss is the worst part of their job. In addition, leaders behave in a destructive manner often costs organizations a lot in legal, personnel and property expenses [5]. Second, increasing research on the dark side

of leadership has deepened the understanding of organizational effectiveness [17, 18]. On the one hand, organizational failure is more related to possessing undesirable qualities than lacking desirable qualities [17]. In other words, the presence of dark qualities alone is enough to cause organizational failure. On the other hand, organizational success requires not only the presence of positive leadership characteristics, but also the absence of the “dark” characteristics of leadership [18].

If we look back into the history, “dark leaders” are not uncommon. Adolf Hitler is a typical example, who possessed the charisma, manipulated people and eventually led the world into war. Another example is Charles Keating, who was the Chairman of the Lincoln Savings and Loan Association, a famous financier, banker, lawyer, but later caught in the center of the unprecedented financial scandal in the 1980s for being convicted of fraud, racketeering and conspiracy [16]. These examples may lead to a conclusion that “dark leaders” tend to have a strong need for power and they are harmful to people and the society.

In fact, conceptualization of the dark side of leadership is not as clear as that of its bright side. As the research in this field is still in the early stage, the major problem is the inconsistency of the terminology [14]. The concepts and terms used include destructive leader [1], negative leadership [4], abusive supervision [5], supervisor undermining [19], toxic leadership [20], tyrannical leadership [21], supportive-disloyal leadership [1], derailed leadership [22] and unethical leadership [23].

Some researchers have developed frameworks in this rather scattered landscape to better capture the nature of the dark side of leadership [1]. When defining the dark side of leadership, researchers often see this concept as the opposite of positive or constructive leadership. Schilling [4] argued that the dark side of leadership includes ineffective leadership and destructive leadership. The former is often characterized by incompetence. The latter, however, is often closely related to problems in ethics of a leader [4]. This argument is supported by Krasikova et al. [24], who claimed that incompetence of leaders shows their inability to achieve organizational goals or lead people to achieve the goals, but without possessing the harmful intention. Eisenbeiß and Brodbeck [25] further pointed out that unethical leadership center on actively destructive leadership attributes, which are different from ineffective leadership. Ethics is considered the essential distinction between constructive and destructive leadership [4]. This classification echoes Chung’s ideas that lack of competence, character and care constitutes the dark side of leadership. The terms used in existing literature, the undesirable leadership qualities and the lack of corresponding characteristics are summarized in **Table 3**. **Table 3** also shows the negative attributes with reference to the Service Leadership Theory.

As to ineffective leadership, it is often associated with incompetence that does not contribute to organizational improvement. Ineffective leadership presents a leader’s natural incompetence, low level of motivation and indifference. Kelloway and colleagues [26] used the term passive leadership to describe the leaders possessing poor managerial skills and employing passive management. As a typical form of ineffective leadership, laissez-fair leadership is also seen as the least harmful form of dark side of leadership [4].

As shown in **Table 3**, most destructive leadership behaviors constitute unethical and uncaring attributes. Brown and Mitchell [23] pointed out that though many existing literature has

Term	Author(s)	Dark leadership qualities	Conception in the Service Leadership Theory
Destructive leadership	Einarsen et al. [1]	Violate interest, undermine effectiveness and satisfaction	Character and care problems
Negative leadership	Schilling [4]	Undermining, bullying, abusing, commanding, lying, humiliating, disloyal, unethical	Character and care problems
Abusive supervision	Tepper [5]	Hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors, excluding physical contact	Competence and care problems
Supervisor undermining	Duffy et al. [19]	Negative emotion (anger, dislike), criticism	Care problems
Toxic leadership	Frost [20]	Noxious, drains vitality; incompetence, infidelity, insensitivity	Competence, character and care problems
Tyrannical leadership	Ashforth [21]	Use power oppressively, capriciously and vindictively	Character and care problems
Laissez-fair leadership	Lewin et al. [27]	Incompetence, abdicated from the responsibilities and duties designated	Competence and character problems
Derailed leadership	McCall and Lombardo [22]	Insensitive to others, abrasive, intimidating and bullying style	Competence, character and care problems
Unethical leadership	Brown and Mitchell [23]	Illegal or violate moral standards	Character problems

Table 3. Terms used in the scientific literature on the dark side of leadership.

not explicitly described destructive leader behavior as “unethical”, but in fact these behaviors are immoral and vicious. They defined unethical leadership as “behaviors conducted and decisions made by organizational leaders that are illegal and/or violate moral standards, and those that impose processes and structures that promote unethical conduct by followers” [23]. Eisenbeiß and Brodbeck [25] further provided a collective definition of unethical leaders: dishonest, unjust, egocentric and manipulating others. Some unethical behaviors are easy to identify, such as deviant acts of leaders, which include theft, sabotage, fraud and corruption. Other unethical behaviors may be less distinguishable. For example, supportive-disloyal leadership often exaggerates interest in the welfare of subordinates but neglects or undermines the interest of the organization (e.g. ignore followers’ absenteeism) [1]. It focuses on short-term results, encouraging or allowing low work ethics, misconduct and inefficiency [1]. Therefore, supportive-disloyal leadership is also unethical.

Destructive leadership behaviors are also often associated with a lack of care toward people. Many studies have used care (e.g. concern for people or pro-subordinate behaviors) as a dimension to distinguish constructive and destructive leadership [1, 28]. According to Einarsen et al. [1], pro-subordinate behaviors include listening to subordinates, praising, showing respect and appreciation. On the contrary, uncaring leaders tend to derogate, undermine the subordinates’ well-being through ridiculing, blaming and being rude to them [5, 29]. An example of uncaring leadership is tyrannical leadership, referring the oppressive, capricious and vindictive use of formal power and authority [21]. It is often characterized by belittling subordinates, displaying little consideration and using punishment to achieve

organizational goals [5]. Another example is abusive supervision, which means “sustained forms of nonphysical hostility perpetrated by managers against their subordinates” [5, 30]. Obviously, the lack of care may also happen as a result of lack of competence, such as the lack of communication and reflective skills. The worst case would be a leader that is unethical and uncaring. McCall and Lombardo [22] indicated that derailed leaders are cold, unreliable, and fail to staff effectively due to their insensitivity to others. Similarly, toxic leaders use extremely harsh and malicious managerial tactics which cause serious and enduring harm to subordinates [31]. They are doubtfully the opposites of ethical and caring leaders.

Several authors have discussed the negative effects of the dark side of leadership on individuals and organizations [4, 5, 16, 30]. Incompetent leaders may avoid leading, or fail to find the right direction to lead the followers [32]. Laissez-fair leadership contains behaviors, such as indifference, that neither help to increase followers’ satisfaction and performance, nor fulfill the organizational goal achievement [4].

Unethical leadership often hampers effective processing and viability of organizations [23]. Existing research shows unethical leadership negatively influences employees’ work attitudes [5, 6], task performance [33] and psychological well-being [5, 30]. Unethical behavior inconsistent with moral norms would increase followers’ stress and work conflicts, especially when subordinates have a strong moral identity [1]. The permission of unethical behavior tends to undermine leaders’ trustworthiness perceived by followers. Moreover, acting as negative role models, unethical leaders tend to directly increase the occurrence of unethical behavior of followers by facilitating, rewarding or just ignoring this kind of behavior [7]. Subordinates may believe that such unethical behaviors are appropriate or acceptable, and consequently engage in them as well [23].

Uncaring leadership involves behaviors of mistreatment of subordinates, such as bullying and harassment [1]. Many studies have shown that uncaring leadership behaviors have directly negative influence on subordinates’ health outcomes, such as decreased well-being, increased depression, stress level, insecurity and fear [5, 30, 34]. Chi and Liang [35] argued that subordinates’ emotional exhaustion at work tends to be higher when they are chronically mistreated by leaders. This is because abusive supervision demands additional coping recourses on subordinates. In addition, it undermines subordinates’ work motivation and job satisfaction. Employees suffering from abusive supervision tend to report a higher level of dissatisfaction, stronger turnover intentions, decreased leader-follower relationship and increased work conflicts [21, 29, 33]. Uncaring leadership has been found to indirectly increase deviant behaviors of subordinates. Tepper and colleagues [6] have found that abusive supervision reduces subordinates’ affective commitment, and consequently increases organization deviance. Moreover, the negative implication of uncaring behavior is far-reaching. Hoobler and Hu’s [13] research reported that uncaring behaviors of leaders may have negative effects on subordinates’ personal life, like marriage, work-family conflict and even parent-child relationship.

Recently, there is a growing call for the awareness of the destructive power of the dark side of leadership [31, 36], though the picture is still unclear [14]. As Lipman-Blumen [31] has pointed out, leadership is a relation built between the leader and followers rather than simply imposed by the leader. For one thing, toxic leaders exploit the followers’ basic needs and fears. For another thing, human naturally propels people who offering grand visions and strong leadership. However, the cost of following an alluring toxic leader is often high. Baumeister and

Level of the negative impact	Areas of the negative impact	Examples of the negative impact
Individuals	Work-related	Negative influence on employees' working attitudes, such as motivation [5, 6] Increased depression, stress level, insecurity and fear [5, 30, 34] Decreased task performance [33] Decreased satisfaction and psychological well-being [5, 30]
	Life-related	Marriage problem, work-family conflict and parent-child relationship problem [13]
Organizations	Relationship-related	Poorer leader-follower relationship [29] Increased work conflict [33]
	Climate-related	Increase in deviance behavior [7] Intensification of unethical climate [23]
	Effectiveness/performance-related	Increased turnover rate or intentions [21] Decreased organizational commitment [6]

Table 4. The negative impact of the dark side of leadership on individuals and organizations.

colleagues' review [36] has revealed that negative events in social relationships often cause a stronger psychological effect than positive events do. In the field of leadership research, Fors Brandebo et al. [37] also confirmed the power of destructive leadership. They found that destructive leadership behaviors are positively related to negative outcomes such as emotional exhaustion, while the relation is negative for constructive behaviors. However, the power of the relation for destructive leadership is stronger than that of constructive leadership. Further research is still needed to deepen the understanding of the comparison between constructive and destructive leadership attributes.

In summary, empirical studies have shown the negative outcomes of the dark side of leadership, echoing Chung's argument that incompetence, unethical and uncaring behaviors constitute the dark side of leadership, which directly or indirectly lead to negative work- and life-related outcomes at both the individual and organizational level. As appealed by Einarsen et al. [1], preventing the dark side of leadership is as important, if not more important, as improving the bright side of leadership. The negative outcomes of undesirable leadership qualities are summarized in **Table 4**.

4. The dark side of service leadership and Confucian virtues

Contemporary literature on organization and leadership has widely acknowledged the importance of social norms and cultures in understanding organization processes. In many

Asian countries, Confucianism is considered the dominant ideology guiding organizational, managerial and leadership practice [38].

With particular reference to the Chinese culture, Confucian virtues include different virtues, such as “ba de” (eight cardinal virtues) and “si wei” (four pillars of society). Shek and colleagues [39] have thoroughly discussed 11 virtues covered by “ba de” and “si wei” under the framework of leadership, including loyalty (“zhong”, 忠), filial piety (“xiao”, 孝), benevolence (“ren”, 仁), affection (“ai”, 爱), trustworthiness (“xin”, 信), righteousness (“yi”, 义), harmony (“he”, 和), peace (“ping”, 平), propriety (“li”, 礼), integrity (“lian”, 廉) and shame (“chi”, 耻). These virtues cover the most important principles in Confucianism that one should follow to become a “jun zi” (superior man).

On the contrary, a person lacking these virtues will be regarded as “xiao ren” (inferior man) and should be avoided by people who want a healthy interpersonal relationship. For leaders or organizations, a lack of these virtues constitutes the dark side of leadership. As Chung and Elfassy [8] clearly pointed out, no one would sincerely like to follow a person who is disloyal, dishonest, unethical or shameless. In the following paragraphs, we will briefly introduce each virtue and the corresponding anti-virtue quality, as well as the undesirable outcomes.

4.1. Loyalty (“zhong”, 忠)

Loyalty means “do one’s utmost in keeping one’s heart unbiased upon making a decision” [39]. Confucian leaders continuously reflect their loyalty and work to fulfill the whole organization’s long-term interests [38]. Loyalty reflects the commitment to the organization and the followers. Wu and Wang [40] found that followers’ loyalty was positively related to their perception of the leader’s charismatic leadership and their own work performance. Chung and Bell [3] suggested that disloyalty is a “virus” to be avoided in one’s conduct. Disloyal people refer to the ones who make fake promises, solely aim for the benefits without any fulfillment in action. This misbehavior is called “being disloyal in giving counsels to others” (“wei ren mou er bu zhong”, 为人谋而不忠) [39]. Disloyal leaders or followers tend to misbehave in workplace, such as neglecting or undermining the achievement of organizational goals [1].

4.2. Filial piety (“xiao”, 孝)

Filial piety originally refers to the respect toward one’s parents, but it also includes key relationships outside the family, such as respect for authority. According to Confucian values, the followers are expected to show “filial love” to the leader [41]. Shek et al. [39] has pointed out that filial piety has a close relationship to loyalty. People are educated to be loyal to the authority, emperor and the country as the way they are filial to their parents and older people. In addition, as respecting rituals and obeying authority are critical virtues in Confucianism, people would like to follow the leaders who obey rituals and social norms regarding ancestor veneration [38]. In modern term, leaders having filial piety and taking care of the seniors are also role models for followers. However, leaders without filial piety may greatly challenge the followers’ ethical standards, and gradually lose their respect, supports and commitment. These leaders may have a weak bond with their organizations, reflecting a low level of commitment.

4.3. Benevolence (“ren”, 仁) and affection (“ai”, 爱)

Benevolence is often paired with affection in Confucianism [39]. Benevolence means “a feeling of humanity towards others and self-esteem for oneself” [39]. Its simplified interpretation is to love people, reflecting the core concept of affection. According to McDonald [42], benevolence can be understood as the integration of empathy and excellence. Guided by these two concepts, benevolent leaders do the very best for collective benefits [42]. In line with the virtue of piety, benevolent leaders act like parents of their followers and care for followers’ welfare and development [43]. Reciprocally, their followers should obey, be loyal and show piety to the leaders. Similarly, people with affection treat one’s interpersonal relationship with care, respect and humanity. Zhang et al. [44] stated that benevolent leaders allow followers to correct mistakes, teach and mentor them and promote their professional development. This echoes Chung’s work of care [10].

According to Chung and Elfassy [8], being caring means being able to be empathetic. As a leader in overseeing groups of people, it is important to care for the peers and organization. Moreover, it is also important that the leaders care about how people interact with others outside the organization. Being unable to care or lacking feeling is a viral trait that deeply violates Confucian values. The carelessness or indifference of leaders toward others will break the bonds between them, undermine the leaders’ authority and trustworthiness, and jeopardize the achievement of organizational goals. Leaders without the quality of benevolence or affection would impair their followers’ well-being, such as increasing their depression and stress [5, 30, 34]. Chung [11] suggested that uncaring leaders or organizations cannot sustain long-term health and survival of their tribe. He argued that these leaders are probably good in ordinary manufacturing organizations where the top-down model works instead of organizations with distributed leadership in the service age.

4.4. Trustworthiness (“xin”, 信)

Trustworthiness means honesty, reliability and faithfulness. Guided by Confucian virtues, leaders should win the trust from their followers first before governing their followers and acting as a role of leader [42]. On the contrary, the subordinates will not sincerely follow a reliable leader who cannot keep his or her words. As Chung has pointed out, a high degree of trust is required in organizations with distributed leadership, because it is the trust guiding the people but not the contract does in these organizations [10]. However, dishonesty is also a reality that every company has to take seriously, because dishonesty reflects a lack of character, and is considered a virus in people’s POS [3]. Bass and Steidlmeier [32] discussed pseudo-transformational leaders, who see themselves honest and trustful, but are deceptive and unreliable in their behavior. Their behaviors are immoral because the leaders exhort their followers to trust them but deliberately conceal the information harmful to followers from them, offer bribes, practice nepotism and abuse authority [32].

4.5. Righteousness (“yi”, 义)

Righteousness means the ability to “fitting” or do the “right” things. The principle of righteousness guide people to abide social orders and moral principles, while law and punishment

shall only serve as secondary instruments in maintaining social stability [39]. McDonald [42] stated that righteousness underlies the moral capacity of Confucian leadership. This virtue requires leaders to adopt respectful approaches to lead the followers and facilitate their development. Leaders without the virtue of righteousness may chase short-term or personal benefits at the cost of others, lead the organization to the wrong directions, and eventually harm the organizational and the followers' long-term interests. Righteousness is related to social responsibility and justice in leadership [43].

4.6. Harmony (“he”, 和) and peace (“ping”, 平)

Harmony means to keep balance in general. Peace refers to a quiet state of mind or a sense of calmness and peace. These two concepts are closely related to each other as they both emphasize the peaceful and balanced status in oneself or in the relationship. The virtue of harmony requires leaders to listen to different opinions of people and maintain a harmonious work environment [42]. Cheung and Chan [43] concluded that Chinese leaders are required to maintain harmony with their subordinates and peers because of the emphasis on conformity in the Chinese context. Leaders who are unable to keep a good balance would increase work conflicts. Moreover, Confucian leaders should control their emotion and mind well, show forgiveness to the followers, and educate them patiently to improve their virtues. If a leader is easily overwhelmed by extreme emotions and fails to keep calm, the leader may be driven by the burst of emotion, and consequently make biased decisions.

4.7. Propriety (“li”, 礼)

Propriety means the rules of proper action, the guides to relationships and the principles of social and life order [39]. Propriety emphasizes the importance of ceremonial and ritualistic requirements. Confucian leaders should show reverence, respect, listening and consideration in interpersonal relationships, and to comply with social norms [42]. Chung and Bell [3] argued that for managers trying to build the team, the best first step is to show respect, including active listening, idea solicitation and appreciation for the individuals one supervises. Respect is one of the “hidden ingredients” that distinguish a successful service leader from an unsuccessful one [10]. However, irreverent leaders often use disrespectful approaches to lead their subordinates, which will reduce their motivation and efficacy, and increase their stress and dissatisfaction. Being inappropriate or rude is considered viruses in the POS according to Chung and Bell [3]. This kind of behavior will harm the social relationship with others. Chung and Elfassy [8] explained that the danger of not having a strong social relationship dimension is that leaders push people away or people will drift apart from leaders.

4.8. Integrity (“lian”, 廉)

Integrity refers to a sense of moderation in material goods and in emotion, and also a frugal way of living [39]. The leader without the virtue of integrity would be extravagant and greedy, which may lead to deviant behaviors or corruption. González and Guillén [45] argued that ethical leaders with integrity can sustain a positive influence over their subordinates. Being

corrupt reflects a lack of character, and should be taken as a virus according to Chung [3]. In the Chinese context, “guanxi” is defined as a special relationship or particularistic ties. The dark side of business “guanxi” leads to corruption or social loss [46]. Though corruption exists in all economic systems, “guanxi-related” corruption reflects unique Chinese characteristics [46].

4.9. Shame (“chi”, 耻)

The sense of shame requires people to have self-awareness and self-reflection regarding unethical conducts. Confucianism suggests that even a sage makes mistakes. Therefore, the sense of shame is a critical virtue of a superior man. Without this virtue, leaders will not look back and learn their lessons. They may also tend to blame others for their own faults. Chung [11] suggested that to clean viruses in leadership need a sense of self-reflection. Self-reflection can raise leaders’ moral perspectives through increasing their self-awareness and moral judgment exercises [47]. According to Chung, shame is the abstract platform of sins. Since the Chinese do not have god as Judeo-Christians do, the self-enforcement power comes from “shame”, which can be regarded as a social sin. Some scholars suggested that shamelessness may contribute to an increase in unaccountability [48].

Some researchers have adopted an integrative framework to analyze the relation between Confucian virtues and leadership behavior. For example, Chan [41] argued that Confucian ethics shares some core values with contemporary Western leadership ethics. Similarly, Ma and Tsui [38] concluded that Confucianism is one of the cultural-philosophical roots of contemporary leadership practices.

In the Chinese context, the judgments of leaders reflect some unique contextual and cultural characteristics. In general, the expectation of leaders is relatively high because Chinese people believe that “sage” can be cultivated. As suggested in *Di Zi Gui* (弟子规), neither be harsh on oneself, nor give up on oneself; to be a person of high ideals, moral standards and virtue can be gradually attained (“wu zi bao, wu zi qi; sheng yu xian, ke xun zhi”, 勿自暴, 勿自弃; 圣与贤, 可驯致). Leaders should serve as role models of their followers to promote virtues in the society. Second, leaders are expected to apply the doctrine of the mean (“zhong yong zhi dao”, 中庸之道). In addition, Chinese people expect leaders to keep a good balance between law, reason and affect (“fa, li, qing”, 法, 理, 情). Therefore, the importance of negotiation and compromise is widely acknowledged (“wan shi you shang liang”, 万事有商量). As such, harmony and the dialogues between leaders and followers are highly emphasized in the Chinese context.

In the Chinese culture, while people judge the quality of a leader in terms of his/her intention, it is more often to judge their qualities in terms of competence, character and care about the followers. Whether a leader is considered destructive or to have dark side greatly depends on social judgment, which is apparent in the hearts of people rather than solely rely on leader’s and followers’ perceptions (“gong dao zi zai ren xin”, 公道自在人心). Chinese people also have a faith in justice (“gong li”, 公理) and the truth of the sky (“tian dao”, 天道), which a leader should not be against. In addition, extreme leadership behaviors (such as over-demanding or over-protective) are undesirable. Chinese people believe that there is no perfect person, just like there is no absolute pure gold (“jin wu zu chi, ren wu wan ren”, 金无足赤, 人无完人).

Chinese people believe that “sages” can be cultivated through self-reflection and deliberate practice if one strives for excellence.

Moreover, the dark side of leadership can be more harmful in Asian cultures than that in Western cultures. This is because how people react to the dark side of leadership differs across different cultures. A recent study by Zhuang et al. [49] revealed that Chinese tend to be unwilling to report the unethical behavior of leader than peers. The authors suggested that a low tolerance of the unethical acts of peers may be attributed to collective loyalty to the organization, while the unwilling to report the unethical behaviors of leaders may be due to the respect for authority [49]. As stated earlier, the respect for authority has been linked to paternalistic leadership, which is a legacy of Confucian values and prevalent in Chinese cultures [38]. More specifically, the norms of individual behaviors and relationships are ruled by five cardinal relationships of Confucianism, which include emperor-minister, father-son, husband-wife, elder-young and friend-friend relationships. As such, Chinese followers seldom challenge their leaders. An extreme case is that Chinese would even tolerate the corrupted leaders in late Qing dynasty. We could argue that the absence of fatherly benevolence, authoritarian supervision and moral integrity will deeply disappoint the followers in a Confucian society. Meanwhile if the followers obey destructive leaders possessing authorities, they may experience strong moral conflicts [38]. In **Table 5**, we summarize the Confucian virtues with reference to the related work in the leadership literature.

Confucian virtues	Related leadership literature
Loyalty (“zhong”, 忠)	Organization loyalty [40] Committed to organization [50]
Filial piety (“xiao”, 孝)	Respect of authority, paternalistic leadership [38, 44]
Benevolence (“ren”, 仁)	Paternalistic leadership [44], servant leadership [51]
Affection (“ai”, 爱)	Paternalistic leadership [44], authentic transformational leadership [32]
Trustworthiness (“xin”, 信)	Reliability [52] Integrity [42]
Righteousness (“yi”, 义)	Fairness and justice [53]
Harmony (“he”, 和)	Harmony [42] Conformity [43]
Peace (“ping”, 平)	Agreeableness (tendency to be peaceful and gentle) [54]
Propriety (“li”, 礼)	Propriety, politeness [42]
Integrity (“lian”, 廉)	Integrity [45]
Shame (“chi”, 耻)	Self-reflection and social emotion [48]

Table 5. Summary of Confucian virtues with reference to the western scientific literature.

5. Conclusion

According to Chung and Bell [10], the Anna Karenina principle makes clear that no quantity of “good deeds” can make up for or prevent the consequences of one devastating error. Hence, a lack of any of the three fundamental qualities, namely competence, character and care, can constitute the dark side of leadership. Viruses arising from the POS also constitute to the dark side of leadership.

In the scientific literature, there are different conceptions of the dark side of leadership. Interestingly, most of the conceptions are related to the lack of competencies, character and care, echoing the emphases of the Service Leadership Theory, which highlight the lack of these qualities as well as the emergence of viruses as the dark side of leadership. Empirically, the negative outcomes brought by the dark side of leadership have also been well discussed in research studies. Finally, through the lens of Confucian virtues, one can further understand the dark side of leadership. In particular, linking the dark side of leadership to Confucianism allows us to understand this issue in a specific cultural and social context. Sim [55] argued that Confucian ethics can supplement Aristotle’s insufficient discussion on human relations. In addition, the framework of the Service Leadership Theory addresses the limitations of many contemporary leadership theories, which often neglect the importance of cultural values [56].

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Toxic Leadership: The Most Menacing Form of Leadership

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Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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Abstract

Recent misuses of power in politics, corporate and religious arena have invigorated interest in dark side of leadership. This chapter sheds light on a menacing type of dark leadership—*toxic leadership*. Owing to the dearth of a comprehensive delineation of “*toxic*” leadership from its related phenomena, this chapter addresses the paucities and clarifies the nature, process, reasons and consequences of “*toxic*” leadership. It reviews, summarizes and integrates the existing literature on toxic leadership to draw nomological distinctions amongst different constructs of dark leadership and eventually presents stimulators and behavioral symptoms of toxic leadership. Few contemporary myths and detoxification measures are discussed to combat toxicity in a leader for a sustainable organization. The goal of the chapter is to reach our readers’ curiosity, enhance their frame of reference and bring new insights to educate them by providing guidelines and awareness about toxic leadership.

Keywords: toxic leadership, behavior, stimulators of toxic leaders, myths, detoxifying toxic leaders, positivity in gray area

1. Introduction

“Leadership is about character and substance” [1].

The decades of the twenty-first century is tinted with a long list of horrendous scams in the field of corporate, politics, spiritual or otherwise that could be traced back to the judgment made by ambitious people in positions of authority. Such cases raise questions on the very intent and content of leaders and victims wonder whether the failures were intentional or the

upshot of incompetent big-headed and reckless leaders. Toxicity in leadership has been running in nerves of the organizations and in societies from their inception.

In some point in our professional careers, we have experienced choking situations which heave the stress and anxieties leaving us with low self-worth. Then we try to locate reasons for our problems and finally the blame is shared between circumstances and the environment we work in, but hang on, is it actually only the result of toxic environment? Maybe we are so honey trapped by some toxic leaders who by virtue of their personality and style leave us in a worse-off situation than where they found us. They are venomous and bad to the bones of the organizations. What contaminated that environment? A recent report by workforce consulting firm "Life Meets Work" [2] claims that 56% of employees endure a toxic leader and his venomous behaviors leading to an obnoxious environment. Another research [3] by psychologist Nathan Brooks and Dr. Katarina Fritzon of Bond University and Dr. Simon Croom of the University of San Diego claims that around one in five bosses are found psychopaths in the upper echelons of the corporate world. That is a scary figure, which surely reveals that the problem of toxicity is so prevalent in the corporate corridors which gradually decay their subordinates' morale, motivation and self-esteem.

For many of us we are no stranger to such situations directly or indirectly. However, still we wonder how we get trapped and how we were mistaken about the style of our leader. Media reports are full of numerous cover stories of corporate scandal or political scams unveiling the leaders that violated public trust.

Let us begin with a small case of Mr. Shetty, a revenue breeding executive director in an IT firm. He was not the easiest person to deal with. Although he had many awards and recognitions appreciating his excellent technical qualities and industry knowledge, his unpredictable behavior and culture of fear got on to people's nerves. Shetty was manipulative, unethical, had angry outbursts, and critical about almost everything that others had done. He never shared credit with teams and was always involved in some sought of vengeance, compelling people to adhere to his instructions. Does this sound familiar? Beware, you may find lots of situational similarities within the literature; just fasten your seat belt to start a journey of exploring this lethal style of leadership.

2. Mapping the origins

The existence of the dark side of leadership could be traced back to the human civilization, but leadership as a concept has always been a synonym of positivity. Up till now, very few researches have really explored the dark side of leadership. Military has been the major research area for the construct until last decade. Even though this concept has been evolving, it is still indistinct. Certainly, authors do not convey an understandable picture of it and label this dark side differently: destructive [4], bad [5], evil [6], charismatic [7], narcissist [8], aversive [9], bullying [10], abusive [11] and toxic [12, 13]. The origin of the construct could be traced from the progress of research of the similar concepts of dark leadership.

Toxicity is acutely sniping. Toxic derives from Greek mythology: *toxicus* means “poison.” Dr. Marcia Lynn Whicker was the first to link toxicity with leadership and discussed in her research three types of leaders within workplaces: “trustworthy (green light), the transitional (yellow light), and the toxic (red light).”

The repertoire of toxic leaders covers a broad spectrum; it depends more not only on what they really are but also on how people perceive them. For some, they might be toxic and for some a charismatic hero [12]. It is quite difficult to craft a differentiation between destructive leaders that are genuinely toxic, bad leaders that are not toxic but are incompetent only in managerial skills and leaders with mental disorders and good leaders that are wicked people. The present state of research in the related concepts of dark leadership could be drawn together in the form of **Figure 1**. It clearly defines toxic leadership as an umbrella term including all other dark leadership constructs.

Much earlier, Reed [15] enquired the symptoms whether subordinates feel humiliated or de-energized after interpersonal exchange and whether the less powerful are victimized more than the powerful? Study justified both the symptoms of followers of toxic leadership. The approach was phrased as the “kiss up and kick down tendency,” where the toxic leader presents himself as a responsible and responsive follower to his superiors but acts miserably to his own subordinates.

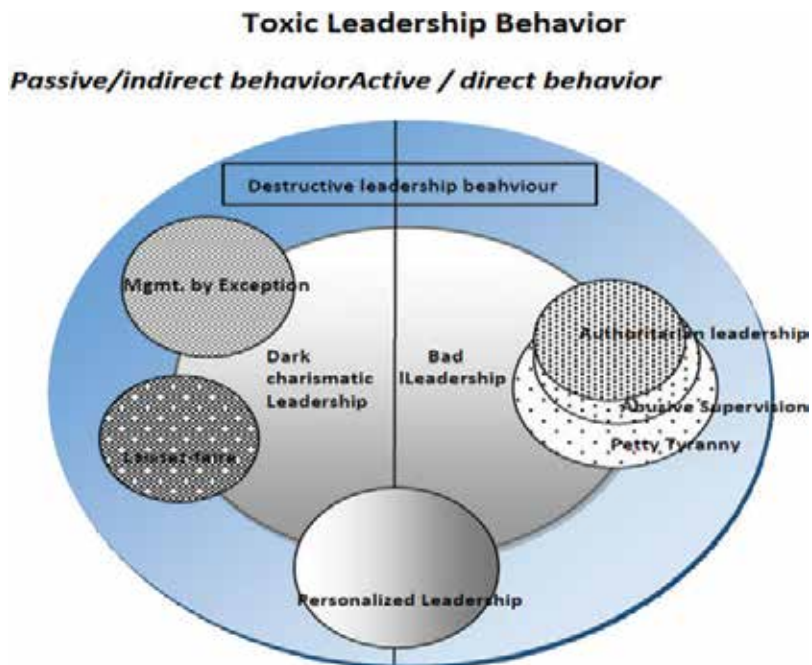


Figure 1. Illustration on the research of the related constructs under the gamut of toxic leadership. Source: adapted from Thoroughgood et al. [14].

Lipman-Blumen [12] analyzed toxic leadership as having serious outcomes in the long run rather than in the short term. Their strong personality may mask their deliberate ill intentions in the short term but have detrimental after-effects on individual and organization in the long run. Identifying a toxic leader is not a cake walk. One must evaluate the consequences, rather than the transitional effects of the leader's influence on the follower. Recent studies by Mehta and Maheshwari [16] and Singh et al. [17] also reaffirm these thoughts.

An extensive literature available does not put toxic leadership in the normal category of impaired mental health, evil intentions or casual mismanagement. However, it could be construed as maliciously intended leadership behaviors that spitefully burn down efficiency and enthusiasm of the subordinate in inevitable ways.

Our empirically doctoral research on the dimensions of toxic leadership in Indian IT professionals deciphered the construct as a multidimensional construct. It could be described as "those narcissist, self-promoting leaders who by their derisive supervision, managerial incompetency and erratic behaviors intentionally tend to erode their self-esteem, burn out their employees, breed counterproductive performing subordinates and future overbearing bosses." Toxic leaders' authoritative and abusive methods not only present long-term risk for the organization but also trickledown to the society and the nation.

3. Behaviors and qualities that make a leader toxic

Once we are able to define and distinguish the construct of toxic leadership, our wary minds would ask for the behaviors and qualities of toxic leaders. There is overlap of the bad qualities in toxic leadership from various dark leaderships. Even though most of the behaviours hold true to a toxic leader as well, but an exception that they are excellent masquerades which shadows their ill intentions beautifully. A wolf in sheep's clothing, one may find him extremely helpful who, charmingly contravenes basic standards of human rights by consciously reframing toxic agendas as noble endeavors.

While you comprehend these traits of toxic leaders, you will be definitely able to mirror few reasons behind your stressful work life. As recently suggested by Work Life consulting survey [2], 73% employees agree to having worked under a toxic boss leading to a traumatic work experience. Toxic leaders like to be aggressive toward their subordinates, be critical of them, blame them and try to intimidate them. Their actions are always dedicated to personal interest. They never renounce promoting self over the vision, mission of the organization and, worst of all, the interest of followers. Toxic leadership is evident when leaders demonstrate aggression toward their employees' personalities and abilities [18]. A leader is considered toxic if he/she creates serious long-term harm to their employees [19].

Unfortunately, some leaders allow their current moods to create the climate of their organization, as illustrated in Green's study [20]. Common characteristics found amongst such leaders include, but are not limited to, ethical failure, incompetence and neurosis. Furthermore, Mahlangu (as cited in Sasso [21]) stated that there is a plethora of negative effects that toxic

leadership has on teaching as well as learning in schools. These include intolerable working relationships amongst stakeholders, which in turn produced a multitude of negative effects.

While contrasting old and new leadership, Green [22] emphasized the transition of effective leadership from a reliance on power to a reliance on trust. Without risk, learning cannot happen. Without trust, risks become a rarity. Toxic leaders can be self-destructive sometimes because they lack interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence. Believe it or not, they are hoarders as well. They dig out information, resources and tasks to their subordinates in order to maintain tight-fisted control on them. Their modus operandi is culture of fear. The subordinates are threatened with negative consequences which seems interesting sometimes as a direct and easy technique to achieve the task but infuse toxicity to the organizational climate.

Authoritarianism is the favorite terminology in a toxic leaders' dictionary. They do not care about the learning of a subordinate or team building, instead at every given opportunity, they denigrate them and act as if the subordinate is disposable and nothing more than a tool for them to use. Forget about the subordinate's view point, even their agreement to official decisions has also no relevance as they are bound to follow a toxic leader's decision. They like to micro-manage.

Kellerman [5] in his study placed the bad leader's behavior on a band ranging from ineffective/incompetent to unethical/evil. When they embrace authority, toxic leaders—those who enjoy bullying others with their abusive behaviors and command total control—can be distinctly effective. However, regardless of some short-term benefits, toxic leaders bear out to be highly malicious and jeopardize the organizational success and sustainability, reveal many latest researches.

A toxic leader appears like a negative ninja who finds pleasure in turning every other thing and situations to a negative one. Such leaders are always finding ways to inflate the dark aspect of any situation or project, dragging down the morale and enthusiasm of their subordinates. For them counterproductive performance holds even greater credence than other positive performance while rating their overall performance.

One of the most damaging types of abuse is the marginalization of employees over non-merit factors or feelings of jealousy for those who have developed more advanced levels of critical thinking, and are viewed as threats to those in current leadership positions. "If work is perceived as a zero-sum game of winners and losers, then toxic leadership is a sensible strategy for presenting oneself as a winner," states Kenneth Matos, the vice president of research for Life Meets Work. "However, if an organization depends on long-term collaborative work to succeed, toxicity advances the leader at the expense of the organization."

4. What stimulates a leader's toxicity?

The overall literature available highlights one important aspect of toxic leadership and that is, in leadership study the focus is often on individual leaders rather than on the process assimilating both follower and the context. Although we need to probe individual antecedents

before devising an antidote for toxicity in organizations, these behaviors do not happen in isolation. A look into the past of toxic leaders shows that they do not develop toxic tendencies in a day; in fact, their style evolved over a period of time. By now you must have realized the difference between toxic leader and toxic leadership. Click your refresh button and recollect that toxic leader is a person with dark and destructive personality traits but in order for toxic leadership to thrive, other conditions need to be met as well. According to the Padilla [4], “negative organizational outcomes are not only the product of dysfunctional leader behaviors but also susceptible followers and the contributing environment in which they interact.” He termed it as, “toxic triangle.” The three components of the toxic triangle and their interaction with each other determine the intensity of toxicity existing in the organization. Authors like Uhl-Bien et al. [23] have also held toxic triangle responsible for the germination of toxicity in a leader. With no further detailing, look for **Figure 2** to understand it.

It indicates two kinds of a subordinate’s contribution in the toxic triangle. A “colluder” happily follows toxic leaders because of similar worldviews and high ambitions whereas the “Conformers” adhere to such leaders to avoid incongruities for risk of reprisal.

From King Henry VIII to Jeff Skilling, the history of politics and enterprise is crammed with toxic leaders who emerged as slow poison for their organization. Blaming immoral leaders for their foibles is easy, although a toxic boss is difficult to find without their followers’ compliance.

Prof. Lipman-Blumen [12] made an interesting point in describing the reason why we still continue to follow such destructive leaders. We not only tolerate but also even prefer and create a toxic leader. We always look up to some god-like figure human or divine to take care

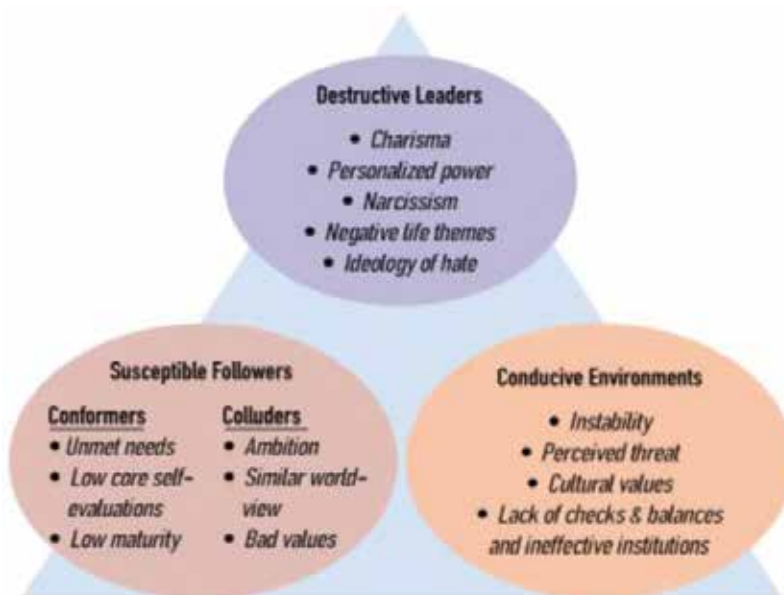


Figure 2. Toxic triangle. Source: Padilla et al. [4].

of us, to create an illusion that we are the heroes and that we are amongst the chosen ones. We can be at the center of the action and thus inspired to join them. These illusions are the conduits through which toxic leaders reach in and grab us.

There are also some psychological reasons that make us vulnerable to toxic leaders. We want immortality and to live forever, if not physically, then symbolically. So, if a leader can promise us that by joining his so-called noble vision or that imperative cause then we will be doing something that will be memorable and engrave our name in history.

One of the common reasons identified for the emergence of toxic leadership is perceived threat to the status, power and controls that may prompt toxic behavior in vulnerable leaders to sprout. The ambition to attain power and authority could also become an addiction for some leaders. Their personal agendas gain priority over the long-term welfare of the organization [24]. Impatient and grouchy leaders who are always on the verge of anxiety at workplace could also breed toxicity. These leaders develop a habit of throwing temper tantrums, often erratic behavior, shout, use abusive language, demean employees openly and make unreasonable demands.

The unquestioned supremacy can also be held responsible for sprouting toxicity in some rigid leaders ascending the organizational power ladder. The higher they ascend, the stronger is the impact and influence of their behavior. At such power positions, their inflated egos make them intolerable to others' views and ideas and are unpredictable. This, together with an obstinate narcissist personality, could make them ignorant of their own attitude as well as the behavior that leads to dysfunctional outcomes to those around them.

The bottleneck competitive corporate corridors sometimes turn into breeding ground for toxicity. Few dark leadership traits meddle with leaders' effectiveness in maintaining high-performing teams and efficiency in generating soaring bottom lines for organizations. Pressure is created on leaders for a profitable transformation in the organization. As exemplified by researchers, an extremely competitive environment tends to escalate the stakeholder pressures on corrupt behavior and justifies the emergence of the dark side of leadership. Lipman-Blumen [12] thus concluded that organizations could also become an incubator of toxic behavior, through counterproductive policies and practices, including unreasonable goals, excessive internal competition and cultures that encourage blame game. Thus, virulent strain by toxic leaders tax heavily on the creativity, innovativeness enthusiasm and sovereignty of the people around them aiming at the fulfillment of only the leader's interest.

5. After effects of toxic leadership

Difficult people flout rules and logic. Some are blissfully unaware of the negative impact that they have on those around them, and others seem to derive satisfaction from creating chaos and pushing other people's buttons. Either way, they create unnecessary complexity, strife and worst of all stress, sometimes compelling few to participate in counterproductive acts and others surrender to conform with the unethical, malicious acts.

A rational way to check the severity of toxicity in an organization is to estimate the dent on the culture of the organization. Statistical figure held toxic leadership responsible for 48% decrease in work effort and 38% in work quality. Another survey in 2017 by Life Meets Work consulting revealed some scary number as large as 73% turnover due to a toxic leader. It is reaffirmed time and again through various researches that the harmful after effects of toxicity may or may not seem prominent in short time but widens the dangerous ditch gradually over a period of time, claiming the very foundation of the organization. Such leaders mostly top the charisma list, therefore making it difficult to confirm their toxicity, which gradually surfaces with time. Perceived toxicity is individual specific; thus, a toxic leader for one may be a hero to another.

The reality of physical and psychological damage to the vicinity of destructive leadership has been proved empirically and theoretically through many research studies in the past. The penalties at both subordinate and organizational levels are estimated by souring figures of counterproductive work behavior and employee deviance working under the aegis of toxic supervisor.

Webster [25] included reduced employee satisfaction and commitment reason for augmented employee turnover. Organizational cynicism is fueled by toxic leaders. Aloof and distant autocratic managers, who prefer self-promotion and impress upper-level management, contribute immensely to ruin the organizational culture and its human assets. The sycophant approach to leadership and management is a clever con game causing extensive damage that stagnates performance and morale within the organization.

As Ross et al. [26] indicated, toxic leadership takes a toll on both the mental and physical health of employees, in addition to an increase in counterproductive work behavior, coming to work late, resignation, or transfers.

An array of detrimental effect of toxic leadership has been discussed by few studies [5, 27, 28]. At an individual level, the effects are more prominent and deep. On top of the stack is decreased self-esteem and self-insight which raises their doubt on self-capabilities leaving them with feelings of low self-worth. Consequently, some psychological reactions are but obvious including sense of threat, distress or sense of betrayal, a sense of mistreatment and lower motivation, helplessness and burnout compelling them to voluntary quitting. A number of survey reports that about 90% of all hospital visits are majorly stress and related problems like that of heart diseases and if persistently exposed to stress, lethal diseases as cancer. An empirical study by Yen [29] affirms that an organization stuck with toxicity may appear normal and progressive externally but the inside story is alarming and full of chaos.

If such toxic behavior trickles down the organization through the culture, the so-called leader with no true leadership qualities would be the main contributor to the crisis. A person who is incompetent in his leadership role seizes support from culture of fear and chaos to control and bully his subordinates. This type of sadistic philosophy, aids such pretending pirates to endorse lack of knowledge of professional directions creating the dependency of subordinates for all the professional answers and directions. This control tactic creates great crisis in the organization.

Feeling of helplessness, no opportunity for participation in innovation, no professional sovereignty, abridged efficiency, lower job satisfaction, job insecurity leading to an array of psychological and emotional problems such as anxiety, depression and frustration are few amongst

the deleterious effects a toxic leader have on individuals. This may not always be silent or solitary. The abused employee's tit-for-tat approach may persuade them to retaliate their supervisor's exploitation through aggressive and counterproductive work behavior. It will be mediated by a distorted leader-member exchange further soaring the turnover intentions of the dejected employee, confirms a doctoral dissertation on the subject by Singh [30].

According to the theory of displaced aggressions [31], employees often tend to take out their anger on the organization, their subordinate and the colleagues when they cannot openly retaliate against the supervisor. The impact of power difference and their inability to face the abuser generates hatred and resentment, which finally affects the organization.

Toxic leaders tempt people to choose sides, although they have no other alternative than to comply with his orders than to perish from the system. They rule the system, so they oblige employees to "join his army or be ready to face it." Consequently, people plan to leave, raising the turnover rate in organizations. This puts extra financial burden on organizations for recruitment and training of new employees. Not to mention the inexplicable talent drain they face. But the remaining intrepid hovers are also not good news for the organization. Those are either conformers or colluders who might not be loyal and committed to organizational goals and success.

Black [32] recently in his research concluded, "the experience of a toxic leadership is an institutional cancer with the high-propensity to metastasize, leaving destruction, poison, and scars in its path and beyond." It is an established fact now that the influence of toxic leadership is severely damaging and its effects are far beyond the subordinates, project goals and organization. It percolates deep into the very roots of society jeopardizing growth of a progressive nation.

6. Common myths about toxic behavior

When the captain of a ship feels contented and inspired, he/she encourages his/her employees to take risk and innovate creating a blissful and engaging work environment. After going through pages-long discussion about such menacing form of leadership, few matters of concern surface from the corporate world. Working professionals breed certain myths about the toxic leaders. Few could be listed as below:

Myth 1: We would easily identify if there is someone toxic in our team.

Really!! Can we? On a second thought "No," it is quite a challenging task. Such people are quite charismatic, witty and proficient in masking the toxicity for their advantage. Thus, it is sometimes not easy to make out from their overt behavior until you have spent quite long time in industry.

Myth 2: If their behavior continues immoral and ruthless, subordinates would not accommodate them.

Ahh! Is it possible always? Such critical pressure in corporate world leave subordinates with no choices. Owing to their pragmatic needs, insecurity and lack of courage, subordinates

sometimes willingly or unwillingly put up with bad leaders. Their allure does not allow subordinates to doubt his means to ends. Toxic leaders generally display enormous energy levels and are able to overcome exigent circumstances and obstacles with effortless ease. His unethical means are overshadowed by the successful end of the task.

Myth 3: We cannot eliminate such people from our system, they are profit makers.

Surely we can, with little timely and vigilant actions. While toxic leaders' need for recognition and power propel them to adopt any unethical means to attain professional targets successfully and gather accolades from top management, later it affects the bottom line through the brain drain of high-performing human assets of the organization. This is because; toxic leaders are self-destructive as well. Their stumpy interpersonal trait fails to reap rewarding performances and team spirit.

Myth 4: Toxicity in leader is a short cut to ascend success ladder and achieve a rewarding corporate career.

Ironically, sometimes it syncs in the highly competitive corporate corridors. But, as it is said, there are no shortcuts to success. Toxicity is not long lasting and has enduring harm to the individual as well as to the organization. Like a slow poison, it not only ruins the veins where it runs but also the whole body of the organization. The thin line between a transformational and toxic leadership should be dealt cautiously. The tempting short-term gains could not be claimed over the long-term ethical professionalism and leadership gained otherwise.

Myth 5: Bad leaders cannot be dealt individually.

Forlornly, it is not completely untrue. Shared efforts from both management and subordinates would expedient the counter process. But, yes, a whistle-blower is enough to get him identified in the system. First individual approach and then systems approach will be highly effective to curb toxic leaders from contaminating the organization.

Myth 6: A toxic person is a prerequisite to deal with another toxic manager.

Not necessary. Reed said. "We seem to have a band of tolerance for certain leadership styles that are not positively impacting our organization, and that could be the crux of the problem." A senior manager could point out and discuss the toxic behavior with them and make them realize as it is challenging for them to self-realize their mistakes. An antidote could come from any source before the trickling effect of toxicity starts endangering the organization.

7. Let us ascertain a ray of hope: The positivity in gray areas

One of the most fascinating findings of a recent study by Life Meets Work revealed that 68% of employees working for an over-demanding, self-promoting and self-centered boss are highly engaged, compared to just 35% of workers reporting to nontoxic leaders. In addition, employees working for a toxic leader stay working for those bosses for an average of 7 years, compared to just 5 years for employees who work for someone less demanding.

Even if a leader seems positive, there could be issues causing chaos within the organizational structure to include personality differences based on many philosophies of leadership or not as no one individual is a demigod. No leader is infallible, but it would be great to empower their followers.

While a number of studies have highlighted the negative effects that various dark side traits can have, some researchers have pointed out that there are times that these dark side traits can have “bright side” consequences. [33, 34]. It was established that certain dysfunctional personality styles correlated with leadership and effective leadership behaviors. Some researchers also discussed four possible implications for leader emergence and leadership effectiveness of traits as shown in **Table 1**.

Narcissistic individuals are typified by self-absorption, self-serving behaviors and aggression. They maintain exaggerated views of their own self-worth, but these behavioral traits sometimes have some positive associations in the leadership process. In an empirical study of 300 military cadets, the best rated leaders were those who were high in egotism and self-esteem, two positive aspects of a narcissistic personality [35]. Study has shown that to condense ego threatening conflicts, narcissistic leaders may adapt their interpersonal interactions for positive impressions on the people they want to control [36]. Moreover, narcissistic leaders favor aggressive, gallant and magnanimous actions which will uplift their image as a leader. This in turn acts as an advantage for subordinates and organizational performance.

Machiavellianism: The term is coined after Machiavelli’s famous book “the Prince” describing dark traits of individual [37]. Machiavellianism is used to describe individuals who are manipulative or cunning, with a strong need for power [38]. They tend to have high motivation to lead and are often distinguished as charismatic with willingness to empower their own social capital for the sake of accomplishment of their group goals.

Social desirability	Actual effects in specific context or situation	
	Bright	Dark
Bright	Socially desirable trait has positive implications for leaders and stakeholders. Example: Conscientious leader displays high ethical standards in pursuing agenda in long-term interest of organization.	Socially desirable trait has negative implications for leaders and stakeholders. Example: Self-confident (high CSE) leader pursues risky course of action built on overly optimistic assumptions.
Dark	Socially undesirable trait has positive implications for leaders and stakeholders. Example: Dominant leader takes control of ambiguous situation and assumes responsibility for the outcome.	Socially undesirable trait has negative implications for leaders and stakeholders. Example: Narcissistic leader manipulates stock price to coincide with exercise of personal stock options.

Note: CSE = core self-evaluations.
Source: Judge et al. [41].

Table 1. Framework for discussion of implications of personality traits for leader effectiveness.

Hubris: Hubris are people with excessive pride and self-confidence who socially play on impression management. In a leadership position, they are likely to project power, strength and authority in difficult situations, stimulating confidence amongst their group and peers. Indeed, hubristic leaders are more confident and committed in their tasks, support innovation [39] and test the limits of their organization's productive capacity.

Social dominance: The literature reveals that the people who get high scores on ratings of dominance are the most preferred and suited for the authority and leadership positions. They display a strong desire for achievement and control [40], making them attractive to enthusiastic followers.

While discussing the dark side of leadership, a prominent fact that could not be ignored was that the so-called "bright side" can also have damaging outcomes for organizations and subordinates when taken to the extreme.

To discuss a few, highly **conscientious** leaders tend to be disciplined, cautious, inflexible, highly critical of subordinate performances and analytical, and therefore often resist any change or innovation and avoid taking risks [10]. This sometimes results in poor organizational performance, missing the apt opportunities and failure to make the best use of organizational resources.

The bright trait of **core self-evaluation (CSE)** capture one's fundamental judgments about his potential and functioning in the world; extremely positive self-views can have the same adverse effects associated with narcissism and hubris [42].

Extraverted leaders are bold and quick decision-makers, so may be less expected to implore input from subordinates and peers. This aggressiveness often alienates the group members who deserve the credit and attention [10].

The leaders with high degree of **emotional stability and agreeableness** are often lenient in their team handling and performance evaluation. In order to minimize the conflicts in the interest of their peers their decisions are often skewed [43].

The **charismatic** leaders, through their excellent skill of public speaking, inspire unconditional devotion from followers even in radical situations. It is evident in the literature and the society around that in some bizarre cases, especially persuasive charismatic leaders misuse their interpersonal power for personal gain and exploit followers who are vulnerable to their manipulative appeal.

Instances of such deviant behavior are termed as personalized "dark side" of charismatic leadership [44, 45].

These findings from the literature strike a chord that both "bright side" and "dark side" traits can have positive or negative effects on individuals and the organization depending on the situation and the individual's levels of the various traits.

8. Detoxifying the leaders

After such a fascinating journey of whereabouts of toxic leadership it would be unjustified if we do not dedicate some time and literature to get an antidote for such venoms. Now you will

not get any brownie points to guesstimate the severity of the toxic behavior on the employee and organization. In order to combat such a lethal form of leadership, organizations need to first come to standings with and accept that it exists and that there could be a problem from within. "Once the light is shined on it, people can begin to talk about it. No one wants the badge of toxic leader" [15].

It is premature recognition in leader's career also shrink the probability of building severe toxic behaviors later. As said "prevention is better than cure," if diagnosed at right time the treatment becomes easier.

The subordinates working closely with the leader may prove to be the best judge and identifier of the toxic behavior in the leader. Thus, a 360° performance and personality evaluation of such leaders is asked for by the executive mentors. They should minutely monitor and ensure that a toxic leaders' interaction with subordinates garner a healthy work environment. Also, welcoming and hassle free complaint windows and whistle blowing should be encouraged for any wrong doing in the organization. Once toxic leadership behaviors have been exposed, recognized and appropriate action taken within the organization, such lessons learned can become an integral part of the selection or promotion process for future leaders.

Prof. Lipman suggested for creation of enriched organizational and personal policies to regulate the risk and brunt of toxic leadership. On a personal front, someone experiencing toxicity should endeavor to not lose calm, distillate oneself from such filthy environment, concentrating more on their own assigned tasks, creating a coalition and evading solo confrontations.

A pinch of advice for the guardians of the organization is to cautiously formulate checks and controls for prompt identification of toxic leadership behavior persisting in the organization. It will render them some extra time to intervene and assist in reorienting those deviant leaders. This could be as early as at time of recruitment. Few of the personality and attitude tests along with technical assessment could help better understand personality shade of the interviewee. This could save organization from future catastrophes. Even restructuring of some aspect at performance appraisal procedure could aid up to certain extents.

Sometimes such circumstances arise in organizations when a good performer is gradually exposed to a high-risk zone of emergence of toxic traits. It is a high-alert situation for the human resource manager and signal to recheck organizational policies and its implementation. History is bursting with examples of organizations perishing to their aggressive and recursive policies that concentrate only on the upsurge of financial numbers. It prompted leaders to become toxic and yield profit, as in corporate scams like those of Enron, Lehman Brothers, Bear Sterns and WorldCom. A developing economy like India too has no exceptions to corporate and government project catastrophes like that of Satyam Computer Services Ltd. and Common Wealth Games, Coalgate scams to name just a few.

Other steps to generate an antidote of toxicity are interpersonal and technical skill development training programs. HR strategies should be aimed to counter the components of "Toxic triangle" at primary level. Only fixing toxic behavior could be too meager a step to resolve the grave crisis organizations go through. Perhaps it solicits a strong dedicated group of key opinion-shapers from within the firm to confront and counsel them. Proper verbal and strict written warnings to the nuisance creators should be raised from the appropriate authorities on time.

In case organizations do not have mechanisms to monitor toxic leadership behaviors, they can seek professional intervention by external counselors for helping the victims and also reeducating the deviant leaders. Even if after multiple warnings the behavior has not changed, HR must decide what to do. If the person has skills useful to the company and is a good worker, you may consider transferring him/her out of a managerial position but keep him/her in the company. Some people just do not work well with others, but may blossom when working in a narrower sphere of interaction. The last option available with an organization, after the intervention and follow-up period, is to offer for the safe exit of the leaders responsible for spreading toxicity.

Once you have addressed your current toxic managers, you have to make sure that much do not spring up in future. To begin with, make sure job descriptions include treating employees in a gracious and appropriate manner. Clearly define the behaviors that will not be tolerated and hold them accountable for turnover. Vigilant monitoring and effective policies can alone eliminate huge percentage of the risk of toxicity development in an organization.

9. Importance and conclusion

The ratio of toxic leaders to effective leaders is unbalanced and, thankfully, the majority of leaders are not toxic. LTG. Walter F. Ulmer estimated in an article entitled "Toxic Leadership" [46] that 30–50% of leaders are essentially transformational, while only 8–10% are essentially toxic. The unfortunate reality is that one toxic leader in an organization can do such incredible damage; he or she can bring down an entire culture without even realizing it. As one rotten apple can spoil the whole basket, one toxic leader is enough for menace.

Leadership toxicity may be an omnipresent facet of organizations; however, it attracts far less consideration than it merits. It is inevitable that a pacesetter as a social personality always stays slanted to the vulnerabilities regardless of their position, professional and educational experience and capability. Many a times, the workplace culture and environments are what prompt leaders toward toxicity to some degree. Leadership toxicity is by all accounts an unavoidable part of organizational life undermining individual and organizational performance.

Toxic leadership may be portrayed as a silent killer as it positions leaders as invincible to sabotage, cease, and punish those who question such supremacy. In sum, toxic leadership is an expensive anomaly. It incapacitates individuals, groups and organizations, even nations. Neglecting to bargain unflinchingly with the multifaceted strengths that encourage our passive consent to toxic leaders will only endorse the decimation such leaders create.

People and the organization define a nation. Toxic leadership could be held responsible not only for organizational but also for the kind of political and economic turmoil South Asia beholds in the present decade. Conflict in interest and intentions of senior leaders of nations and political catastrophes are results of toxicity in leadership. Alarming growth in terrorist organization is due to misguidance of present youth. Even though they are taught good leadership, toxic leadership is more appealing to the masses than the good leaders, be it because

they have such strong emotion for power that their energy pull followers into their wake or because they manage to fool people.

Before we conclude our chapter and let you free to observe and tackle the toxicity around, it must be borne in mind that toxic leadership is enormously treacherous not only to individuals that bear the brunt of it but also to the sustainability of the affected organization. It may not directly distress you but the ashes of the fire are surely going to bother you. Thus, make efforts not to let people showing traces of toxicity or dysfunctional behavior take charge of you and contaminate the organization, the society and the nation as a whole. Percolating and growing of such weeds should not be permissible in an organization under any state of affairs. Although, our chapter tried to assist you to assimilate the construct and clear out the hazy picture of the most menacing form of leadership, that is, toxic leadership, however, scope still persists to design/develop and implement specific methods and mechanism to identify, control and even eliminate toxic leadership behavior before it becomes the new culture of the organization. The basic objective of this chapter is to amplify awareness and promote positive social change within organizations. This may encourage and assist others to lend a hand to sufferers of toxic leadership and also minimize stress on their subordinates. This eventually will endow subordinates with proficiency to counter and make a toxic leader more accountable and ethical, which might in due course reduce the prevalence of toxic leadership and increase organizational success and well-being.

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In recent years, scholars have focused more on the “dark sides of leadership.” Both the negative and positive aspects of the relationship between leaders and followers are considered. But the relationship between leaders and followers is also influenced by the context in which the relationship occurs. Organizational aspects such as culture and structures are studied in relation to how negative leadership develops. Organizations, just like humans, are able to develop justifications for their actions, to self-aggrandize by claiming their exclusivity. In this book, the dark sides of organizational behaviors and leadership are considered from different aspects and contexts. The book contributes knowledge of how negative leadership develops, what part organizational structures play, and what the consequences are for the leader, the subordinates and the organization.

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