Chapter 7
Can Managerial Narcissism which Likely Leads to a Chaotic Process Be Measured? Managerial Narcissism Scale (MNS)

Şefika Şule Erçetin
Hacettepe University, Turkey

Mehmet Ali Hamedoğlu
Sakarya University, Turkey

Şuay Nilhan Açıkalın
Middle East Technical University, Turkey

ABSTRACT
Chaos is a source of life and also a reality for organizations and people as living and self-organizing systems. Management theory also deals with the internal struggle present in a tense, nervous person, and that such a person’s attempts to organize and control the world are actually attempts to control and organize him/herself. Narcissistic leaders can both positively and negatively influence organizations. In chaotic situations, how do leaders manage chaos according to managerial narcissism point of view? This chapter aims to find an answer to the question of how managerial narcissism affects organizations, and how this effect can be measured. To answer this question, a scale of managerial narcissism was developed. In the two stage scale we developed for Managerial Narcissism, it can be seen that there are strong, positive relationships between each sub-dimension and that all dimensions are related to each other. In other words, the scale is well suited to measure how managerial narcissism affects an organization.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-6070-0.ch007
INTRODUCTION

The perceptions of narcissistic managers regarding themselves and their organizations, as well as the affects of these perceptions on managerial actions can be referred to as managerial narcissism. Throughout history, the idea that narcissists are sources of inspiration, and that they shape the future has been discussed. In military, religious and political fields, in periods in which strong leaders have held sway over societies, we see people like Napoleon, Gandhi, Roosevelt, Edison and Ford—who gave a new structure to American industry at the beginning of the 20th century, and today we have people like Jack Welch, George Soros, Larry Ellison, Bill Gates, who determine the social agenda, and are sometimes described as narcissists. Such people are extremely well suited to earning support, taking on leadership roles and being a fresh impulse for cultural development (Maccoby, 2002, p. 37).

Doğaner (1996, pp. 342-343) writes that Freud defines narcissist’s fundamental interests in terms of libidinal types, while Tartakoff defines them in terms of “Nobel Prize Complex,” in which the emphasis is on being number one. Nemiah defines narcissists as people who are passionate about their goals, open to praise and who determine their own actions based on the value others place on them.

In general, when a group’s identity is in danger, when it is in a process of decline, it can be said that the likelihood that someone will rise to power who has an extreme love for him/herself and for the group is high. A leader’s belief in his/her own strength and in the group’s strength can give the group the feeling that they have found a savior (Fromm, 1982, p. 66). The bond between the leader and others can give every individual member of the group the feeling that they are connected to the leader as an equal (Freud, 2007, p. 14). This equality is defined via psychological mechanisms, which lead to a transformation into a different person, who shares certain emotional states (Miasonnevue, 2004, p. 33).

Political decisions, especially in terms of the leader and the larger group surrounding him/her, depend on a variety of complex and stressful conditions. In such cases, rational models of political decision-making processes are largely insufficient for explaining the situation. In such times, the leader must either consciously or unconsciously focus on protecting and perpetuating the group’s identity. Thus, the leader, while combatting the decline of the group, must either bring back into service the group’s old rituals or introduce a new set of rituals (Volkan, 2005, p. 256).

Leadership and personality are related (Erçetin, Açıkalın, & Bülbül, 2013). Morgan, (1998, p. 253) sees Taylor’s life as a perfect example of how personality can have an influence on organization. His knowledge management theory deals with the internal struggle present in a tense, nervous person, and that such a person’s attempts to organize and control the world are actually attempts to control and organize him/herself.

Social constructs like societies, organizations and leadership are chaotic, inter-dependent, non-linear systems that are closely tied to initial conditions (Erçetin, Açıkalın, & Bülbül, 2013). Crisis periods are important in chaotic essence of organizations. Because when the crises strike, the organization is facing the ultimate chaos (Cakar & Nadir, 2013). In all types of organizations, lots of crisis situations that create chaotic ambiance can be witnessed in daily routine of working life. Leaders sometimes can predict risky situations which create chaos and sometimes chaos in working environment is unpredictable.

Chaos is a source of life and that order is a transient state that can lead to problems if it persists (Erçetin, Açıkalın, & Bülbül, 2013). In chaotic situations, how leaders manage chaos according to managerial narcissism point of view?

Research has suggested that narcissistic leaders—typically characterized by dominance, self-confidence, a sense of entitlement, grandiosity, and low empathy—can both positively and negatively influence organizations (O’Reilly et