

Destructive Leadership and Management Hypocrisy

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Destructive Leadership and Management Hypocrisy: Advances in Theory and Practice

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*To our families and children-Idil Camgöz, Nil Camgöz and
Alper Ekmekci-who made our lives special during precious time together.*

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Preface

A bad leader lacks talent and skill. A destructive leader lacks character.

–Frank Sonnenberg.

A leader behaving in a way that is exceedingly self-interested and exploitative of others is a recurring notion in destructive leadership, but also an unexplored aspect that warrants further scrutiny (p. 1401).

–Schmid, Pircher Verdorfer, & Peus (2019)

The readers of this book would appreciate that today's competitive business environment and management of the modern workforce require a decent understanding of leadership to advance in productivity, quality of work-life and social welfare. On that account, for more than nine decades, a vast number of academic journals and books have been devoted to leaders and the leadership process. Beyond that, the popular media has generated remarkable stories about historical, political, and organizational leaders and their effects on their followers and society. While a strong interest in leadership is evident, the focus seems to be predominantly on identifying the paths to constructive and effective styles. On the other side of the coin, there exist the destructive and ineffective aspects of leadership, which have been relatively underrated until lately. Destructive leadership, a recent but appealing notion in the leadership literature, now stands as a stream that seeks further attention with its prevalence (Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2010) and its diagnosed unpleasant consequences (Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

Considering this increasing attention, this edited book initially aims to provide important insights into the theory pertaining to the dark and harmful sides of leadership. Such an endeavor is important since the destructive leadership literature is relatively in its early stages, lacks the integration of the diverse concepts, and as a result, problems regarding the inconsistencies of the terminology prevail (Tepper, 2007). Therefore, one of the objectives of the book is to provide a systematic review of existing research on destructive leadership focusing on the conceptualizations of this construct, its similarities with related constructs, as well as empirical studies. With such a design, we aim to provide a comprehensive

theoretical basis and guidance for future research, contributing to advance the research area, in general. Accordingly, we believe that the current book will be a useful source for those embarking on the dark leadership research for the first time by providing a comprehensive picture capturing conceptualizations, plausible antecedents, and consequences of the dark side of leadership on followers and organizations together with measurement issues.

The current book will not only provide a state-of-the-art overview of our knowledge on destructive leadership but also contribute to both academic and practitioner sides of the area. From the practical perspective, the identification of the leaders who can effectively lead and show constructive behaviours in various organizational settings (i.e., private, government organizations, small businesses, etc) across a variety of cultures has been the focus of many practitioners. Nevertheless, the identification of destructive leadership behaviors in organizations could be also valuable for managing and hopefully eradicating those unconstructive behaviors. Upon reading this book, we hope that human resource practitioners would be more careful, sensitive, and equipped with the selection of people in leadership and managerial positions.

The structure of the book has been designed to create a future focus as well as to provide a comprehensive view regarding the dark side of leadership. In particular, the book aims to highlight the current state of inquiry pertaining to destructive leadership, and discuss what we already know, what we do not know, yet should know, and what the possible interesting areas of inquiry to pursue in future research are. The chapters in the book will tackle several aspects of destructive leadership and search answers for the queries of:

- Is there a mutually agreed upon conceptualization of destructive leadership?
- How can destructive leadership be conceptualized from a holistic/macro perspective? Dynamic, cocreational approaches among leaders, followers, and environments.
- How can we systematize destructive and ineffective leadership?
- Which dispositional characteristics of the leaders can be pathologically destructive and abusive? What are the individual, follower, and situational antecedents of destructive leadership?
- How corporate psychopaths act and influence decisions in organizations?
- What are the possible effects of leader hypocrisy in organizations?
- What are the individual and organizational consequences of destructive leadership?
- How downward mobbing as a special type of dark leadership could affect an employee's stress-related growth?
- How Toxic Illusio manifests itself in the global value chain?
- How to measure destructive leadership?
- What are the cognitive biases of destructive leadership styles?
- What are the public myths related to heroic and demonic leadership?
- Is there convergence or divergence among destructive leadership behaviors across cultures?
- What are the causes and outcomes of nonprofit leadership?

In answering those aforementioned inquiries, *Destructive Leadership and Management Hypocrisy: Advances in Theory and Practice* is organized into three parts that provide comprehensive coverage of key topics. The first part focuses on the conceptualization of the dark side of leadership and introduces seemingly controversial constructs (e.g., abusive supervision, petty tyranny, derailed leadership, toxic leadership, pseudotransformational leadership) discussed around the concept of destructive leadership. The second part focuses on the individual and organizational consequences of destructive leader and management hypocrisy. Finally, the third part scrutinizes the emerging issues in destructive leadership including the remedies of how to deal with it. The brief descriptions regarding the contents of the chapters in each part are provided below.

Part 1: Definitional Issues and Conceptual Clarifications in Destructive Leadership

The first section of the book starts with *Christian Thoroughgood's* Chapter 1 taking the reader on a historical journey regarding a holistic view of the dark side of leadership over the 25-year. The chapter provides a critique of the destructive leadership literature and highlights gaps in understanding of leaders, followers, and environments in contributing to destructive leadership processes. The author discusses strategies for examining destructive leadership in a broader, more holistic fashion.

In Chapter 2, *Jan Schilling* and *Birgit Schyns* focus on two prominent types of negative leadership, representing two opposite ends of the continuum. The authors argue that though both affecting the perception of followers, abusive and laissez-faire leadership styles representing active and passive forms of destructive leadership are associated with different employee outcomes. Schilling and Schyns propose a meta-model of leadership, which allows for a more refined categorization of leadership and suggest four plausible areas of inquiry for research that could be useful for systematizing future research and acknowledging the different forms of destructive and negative leadership.

Ash Göncü-Köse, *Başak Ok*, and *Yonca Toker-Gültaş* as the authors of Chapter 3 aim to provide a summary of the definitions of the interrelated constructs (e.g. paternalistic leadership, pseudotransformational leadership) to outline the commonalities with and differences from the construct of “destructive leadership” as well as their differential effects on personal, group, and organization-level outcomes.

In Chapter 4, *Wallace Burns* explores compares the differences and similarities of three destructive leadership styles: pseudo-transformational, laissez-faire, and unethical leadership. This destructive leadership typology focuses on the predictors and causal factors of each style based on a thorough review of the literature.

Clive R. Boddy as the author of Chapter 5 sheds light on corporate psychopaths and psychopathic leadership outlining its importance. Building on the notion that the success or failure of organizations largely depends on the

personality of the leader, Boddy scrutinizes the influence of psychopaths and their presence as managers in corporations. The author also acknowledges the presence of “double jeopardy” effect that provokes when corporate psychopaths work together as managers and employees, and, thus, magnifies their destructiveness and results in a workplace environment marked by many adverse outcomes such as fake corporate social responsibility, greater schadenfreude, poor financial decision-making, and employee confusion.

This section of the book ends with Chapter 6, written by *Johannes Arendt, Erica Bettac, Josef Gammel, and John Rauthmann*. This chapter provides a comprehensive literature review of dispositional supervisor characteristics, individual-level antecedents, and correlates of destructive leadership together with boundary conditions. The chapter also proposes an integrated process model of abusive supervision and suggestions for future research.

Part 2: The Outcomes of Destructive Leadership and Leader Hypocrisy

The second section of the book starts with a discussion of the consequences of destructive leadership. The chapters aim to provide an integrated theoretical framework for the interaction process between leaders and followers. In particular, Chapter 7, authored by *Irem Metin-Orta*, focuses on the relationship between destructive leadership and its outcomes on followers’ psychological well-being. It provides insight into the research concerning the impact of destructive leadership on followers’ mental health including experiences of anxiety, depression, frustration, hostility, fatigue, loss of concentration, emotional exhaustion, affectivity, stress, and burnout.

Likewise, Chapter 8 addresses the detrimental effects of destructive leadership on organizational outcomes. The author *Serdar Karabatı* mentions both the direct and indirect outcomes of dark leadership, especially focusing on employees’ well-being and performance. The author ends his chapter with a brief evaluation of the individual and contextual factors that might shape and intensify the effect of destructive leadership.

In Chapter 9, *Arzu İlsev and Eren Miski Aydın* introduce the concept of leader hypocrisy that refers to the inconsistencies between the leaders’ words, promises, and their attitudinal, emotional, and behavioral actions with the deliberate intention of deceiving others. By conceptualizing the leader’s hypocrisy and differentiating it from leader integrity, the authors also outline the detrimental consequences of leader hypocrisy on the employees and organizations.

In Chapter 10, *Zeynep Aycan and Didar Zeytun* provide empirical research exploring the effect of downward mobbing on employees’ stress-related growth with both qualitative and quantitative study design. The authors provide comprehensive literature evidence regarding the destructive effects of downward mobbing and also discuss the mediator role of burnout, the moderator role of

organizational trust, personality hardiness, and support on the relationship between downward mobbing and stress-related growth.

In Chapter 11, the authors of *Mustafa Özbilgin and Aybike Mergen* apply the use of the destructive and toxic leadership theoretical framework into a global value chain perspective. Drawing on the netnography of toxic leadership cases in a global firm, the authors demonstrate how this global organization can avoid criticism and create the illusion of success while perpetuating toxicity and exploitation across its complex operations and value chain internationally.

Part 3: Emerging Issues in Destructive Leadership: A Special Concern to Measures and Remedies of How to Deal with It

The third and the final section of the book details and highlights the emerging issues in destructive leadership. This part begins with Chapter 12, in which the discussion turns out into conceptual and practical concerns regarding the measurement of destructive leadership. The authors *Pinar Bayhan Karapınar and Selin Metin Camgoz* consider the range of scales and instruments available for assessing the dark sides of leadership. This chapter outlines important methodological issues for the assessment of destructive leadership and concludes with recommendations for future research areas.

In Chapter 13, *Yonca Toker-Gültaş, Başak Ok, and Savaş Ceylan* outline an approach, in which they introduce the available literature on cognitive biases and justification mechanisms concerning destructive and toxic leadership and then offer a qualitative analysis of similar or additional biases of Machiavellian leaders.

Fran Myers, in Chapter 14, addresses public myths of heroic and demonic leadership by providing examples from the financial crisis of 2008–09 in the United Kingdom. The chapter examines the press coverage generated around the negative leadership stories and how villainy, illegitimacy, demonization, and ruined reputations in those coverages contributed to the shared myths of the crisis.

The emerging issues section continues with Chapter 15 in which *Özge Tayfur Ekmekci* and *Semra Güney* explore destructive leadership from a cross-cultural perspective. Drawing on the notion of the prevalence of destructive leadership in every society and context, there remains a paucity of research that examines such leadership in countries other than the West. Thus, this chapter provides valuable insight into the differences and similarities concerning the conceptualization of destructive leadership in Western and non-Western societies.

In chapter 16, *Pinar Bayhan Karapınar, Azize Ergeneli, and Anıl Boz Semerci* seek to contribute to the extant literature by revealing gender's effects on destructive leadership. The authors assume that the gender of the followers (i.e., subordinates) affects the perceptions of male and female managers and make empirical research about gender-destructive leadership. This exploratory research provides insights about: (1) overall evaluations of individuals about the destructive leadership behaviors of their managers, (2) male and female subordinates' perceptions about the female and male managers' destructive leadership behavior, and (3) evaluations of

the dimensional structure of destructive leadership in terms of the gender of both the participant subordinates and the leaders themselves.

Last but not the least, it is essential to examine the destructive leadership phenomenon in organizations aiming to serve communities and societies given that destructive leadership is observed not only in profit-based organizations but also in nonprofit organizations. *Marco Tavanti*, in Chapter 17, reviews several real cases of nonprofit organizations and nonprofit professionals who failed to articulate their mission and resulted in illegal, unethical and harmful practices. Besides addressing the main ethical challenges of nonprofit organizations, the author provides recommendations for nonprofit organizations and their leaders to avoid destructive and unethical behaviors and recenter on positive behaviors coherent to the nonprofit's social and public good mission.

In a nutshell, with a cast of distinguished academics from international contexts, *Destructive Leadership and Management Hypocrisy: Advances in Theory and Practice* book aims to contribute to the ongoing research stream of destructive leadership and to serve as a reference guide for the potential future research. Therefore, the potential audience of the book does not only include academics in the early stages of their career but also includes the researchers, practitioners, HR experts, and government executives currently working in the area. Readers will be able to evaluate destructive leadership notion from a wide perspective to critique its impacts on the individual, organization, and society.

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