

Chapter 20

Chaotic Interaction in Abnormal Leadership Processes from the Perspective of Leaders and Followers

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Abstract In this chapter, we will discuss a very different type of leadership called abnormal leadership, and the chaotic interaction between abnormal leaders and their followers. Abnormal leadership can be defined as a group's or organization's leader who encourages members to commit criminal or destructive activities. We can say such leaders are "abnormal leaders". The groups or organizations can be formal or informal in structure but the major aim of both is to benefit substantially from the continuing criminal activity. Abnormal leaders focus on criminal activities and encourage followers to commit crime. There are lots of such groups or organizations and can be formal or informal in structure but those groups are destructive to the followers, other people, countries and the earth. Abnormal leadership is a chaotic interaction field between leaders and followers. Chaotic interaction between abnormal leaders with their followers has been explained by five major assumptions in this chapter. Consequently, discussing this subject is of paramount importance especially given contemporary trends.

Keywords Abnormal leadership · Followers · Chaos · Criminal groups

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20.1 Introduction

Throughout history, lots of terrible events have happened on earth such as rape, sexual assault, violence, bullying, robbery, extortion, murder, car high-jacking and so on. Unfortunately, all these destructive experiences have extremely negative effects on individuals' psychological health and other aspects of human life. So these experiences create chaos and turmoil in human life of both followers and victims. Accordingly, people who live such destructive experiences and those who follow such organizations' leaders have started to perceive the earth with fear and more differently than usual. Those people's emotional, psychological and sometimes physical well being is alarming and life has become largely chaotic.

These criminal aspects sometimes have been carried out by individuals and sometimes by groups. There are organized criminal families, criminal cults, criminal gangs, street gangs, murder groups, drug mafias, organ mafias, sex trade, terror and so on. All these criminal groups have leaders and followers as well.

Leadership and chaos can be considered fundamentally interconnected, topics of chaos and leadership have been classified, unitized and graded in a variety of ways (Erçetin et al. 2013a). In this chapter, we will discuss a very different type of leadership called abnormal leadership, and the chaotic interaction between abnormal leaders and their followers. Abnormal leadership can be defined as a group's or organization's leader who encourages members to commit criminal or destructive activities. We can say such leaders are "abnormal leaders". The groups or organizations can be formal or informal in structure but the major aim of both is to benefit substantially from the continuing criminal activity.

Abnormal leaders are authoritarian figures on followers but use participative leadership style if necessary. They build totalitarian or narrowly dynastic regimes in the organization. They have destructive behaviors. Abnormal leaders can leave their followers worse off than they found them by seducing, imprisoning, terrorizing or killing them. So they violate human rights of others and the followers as well. They deliberately feed their followers illusions that enhance the leader's power and impair the followers' capacity to act independently, including depicting themselves as the only ones who can "save" the followers (Lipman-Blumen et al. 2005).

20.2 Why Do People Follow Abnormal Leaders?

According to Maslow's theory, there are four types of needs that must be satisfied before a person can act unselfishly, Maslow referred to the four lower needs as "deficiency needs" because their lack creates a tension within us. The needs are arranged in a hierarchical order, the most basic drives are physiological, after that comes the need for safety, then the desire for love, and then the quest for esteem and finally self actualization (Griffin 1994). There are lots of people who have lived in deficiency of needs. Some people follow abnormal leaders because of meeting their needs. Especially youth between the ages of 8 and 18 are vulnerable to joining

such groups because their lives are characterized by several risk factors, at-risk youth population that includes youth living predominantly in poor, urban areas without access to education, employment and other opportunities (USAID 2006). At the most primitive end, followers in such groups experience physiological needs for food, shelter and other basic necessities of life (Lipman-Blumen et al. 2005).

People also have existential needs. People face non-stop uncertainty, change, turbulence, crises and chaos in daily life routine. Because life is chaotic in nature, leaders who promise followers an orderly, predictable and controlled world can seem very attractive when everything around them appears to be disintegrating and also leaders mollify this desire by persuading them that followers belong to “The Chosen” (Lipman-Blumen et al. 2005).

Other reasons to join such groups and follow abnormal leaders are negative parent-peer relationships, abusive parents, weak family connections, lack of interest and affection in families etc. So, sometimes parents encourage their children to join such groups both directly and indirectly. Some members’ parents are aware of their children’s membership to such groups. In addition some people follow abnormal leaders with their families and sometimes parents are also abnormal leaders in organized criminal families. According to Aquino et al. (2005) followers who conceal or have concealed their gang membership from their parents, report some 41.3 % bomb/arson gang activity, this rises to 56.9 % among those gang members whose parents are fully aware of their gang membership.

Another reason to follow abnormal leaders for people is obligation. Abnormal leaders persuade some followers to join or attend to such groups by using different methods. Usually they find any reason to threaten members related to their families, criminal events that have not been announced, some secrets or addictions. For example generally drug sellers are drug addicts at the same time, abnormal leaders use this information as a threatening fact to followers. Of course, it is possible to hear “if you leave me, you don’t see your children again” kind of sentences from bully blackmailers if you decline to obey their rules (Forward 1998).

Furthermore, the other reason is authority addiction. Some people do not know how to protect themselves from harm and evils, they do not behave in a protesting manner as a something required to save themselves. They behave in daily life according to allegiance culture and they are scared of the authority figure.

Finally, we can say that negative family relationships, needs deficiency, bad life conditions, obligation and addiction to authority are trigger aspects to following abnormal leaders.

20.3 Chaotic Interaction Between Abnormal Leaders and Their Followers

According to Külebi (1986) a group is a community that consists of individuals who are connected with each other through a situation, benefit or feeling. Ozankaya (1999) defines a group as a community that consists of individuals in which there

are certain relationships between members, each member distinguishing the group's existence and symbols consciously and there is a relative continuity. Group is a community that consists of individuals who perceive themselves as the same group's members, share the same psychological meaning and significance with other group members and provide a social agreement about group membership's properties and values (Arkonaç 1988).

A group is a dynamic system. The energy that provides for communication and interaction within the group is that stimuli which is derived from perceiving two people as related to each other thus creating tension and anxiety within their spirits (Köknel 1997). In light of all these definitions of a group we can define groups which are managed by abnormal leaders as a community that consists of individuals with the aim of doing destructive activities to individuals and societies.

Abnormal leadership is a chaotic interaction field between leaders and followers. It is impossible to explain this complex phenomenon with only one assumption. So group or mass phenomenon is equally contradictory. There are lots of variables in the process of individuals' maturation in psychological and sociological dimensions. Followers' psychological maturation influences group dynamics and group interactions. We can explain pathologies about being "individual" and being "we" processes as reflections of group dynamics within sociological dimensions in five major ways:

1. *"We" consciousness in groups that consist of individuals who have been successful in being "individual"*: In such groups, group norms, group activities are shaped in the context of individuals' own life choices. These individuals prefer deviancy as their way of life. In such groups, abnormal leaders do not need to force followers into any activities; creating "we" consciousness in group is not so difficult with followers who have been successful in being "individual". Because such individuals can know and define themselves and they are aware of their own capacity, doings, goals, positives and negatives.
2. *Individuals who have been successful in being "individual" but losing individuality by "We" consciousness in the group*: Individuals can behave different than usual in groups by mass psychology. Followers who have been successful in being "individual" can lose their individuality and can behave like one person as a group and can easily adapt destructive activities of abnormal leaders. This situation is pathologic also. Because with mass psychology, followers can do anything the abnormal leader wants them to do without questioning, followers lose their individuality as a result.
3. *Groups that consist of individuals who have not been successful in being "individual"*: Followers who can not complete individualization process, self-actualization, choose anything consciously in life and can behave without questioning the group norms, rules and group activities. They can easily accept abnormal leaders' requests and attach leaders with high commitment.
4. *"I" formatted group after the "we" consciousness*: Mass psychology includes both passive and violent rising behaviors; because beliefs and excitement have contagion effects in mass—fear they can take the form of panic and anger can

turn to lynch—(Anzieu 2002). In such type of a group all followers behave like one person and focus on the groups' goals all together. It is called “butterfly effect”. According to the results of some researches that compare groups' tendencies to solve different problems, groups tend to have solutions that contain more risks and also although followers know the possibility of being damaged, they prefer being with the group and they have a tendency of taking all risks with the group (Sığrı 2011). Groups tend to take more risky decisions because any tendency becomes strong in a group process rather than in new or individual member setting (Tosi et al. 1994), and they also enjoy sharing responsibility among followers in a group (Sığrı 2011).

5. *Individual-group-society interaction*: Groups that are managed by abnormal leaders are not free from individual-group-society interactions. If the current social context within a community structure is not available for such destructive groups, would they have been prevalent? Can abnormal leadership and abnormal groups be evaluated regardless of societies' culture, values and traditions?

Abnormal leaders maintain their authority and followers' loyalty by creating chaotic situations. We can define abnormal leaders and followers interaction pathologies in psychological dimension in two major ways:

1. *Interdependency*: There is interdependency between abnormal leaders and their followers. Interdependency is an emotional psychological and behavioral situation that emerges as a result of individuals' falling into a series of suppressive rules which have been banned from questioning personal and interpersonal problems of individuals and also have been banned from expressing individuals' feelings explicitly for a long time (Beattie 2006).
2. *Psychopathology in abnormal leaders and their followers*: Each group has an identity, group members internalize this identity and they see group identity like their own, so a group has an egocentric viewpoint. In this sense, we can clearly see in groups as well as group members the “us and them” phenomenon. The question is “Why does an individual prefer joining Group A to Group B?” “Why does a follower prefer following Abnormal Leader X to the others? In groups that have been managed by abnormal leaders, in fact followers prefer to follow leaders like themselves. So, self-image of followers in the group has been proliferated, empowered, legitimized with the others image and this narcissistic image gives people confidence (Anzieu 2002).

Erçetin and Çayköylü (2007) and Erçetin et al. (2014) defined peace intelligence and suggested that narcissistic, paranoid, mazokis, sadistic, sociopathic, dependent, avoidant or histrionic personality patterns and/or personality disorders or paranoid featured psychotic disorders have been grounded in cases that decline or blunt peace intelligence at individual, communal, national or international level. In addition, they suggested that generating aggression projections of such cases can be at individual, communal, national or international level. Contemporary social scientists have recognized that some members of gangs evidently suffer from psychopathology (Short 1997).

The presence of chaos, change, poor management, and bullying in an organization may not therefore, be causally linked to each other but rather to the presence of Corporate Psychopaths who, as toxic leaders, cause each of these to exist simultaneously (Boddy 2011). Corporate psychopaths use humiliation to cause confusion, chaos and fear in order to hide their other activities (Hare 1999). All in all, we can say that if abnormal leaders have psychopathology, the followers also have the same.

We can define abnormal leaders and followers interaction pathologies in managerial dimension in five major ways.

1. *Commitment in abnormal groups*: The most important aspect of abnormal leader and follower interaction is commitment. Abnormal leaders' followers have to do whatever the leader expects of them. Leaders' "automaton" is basically a follower willing to do anything the leader asks them to do. According to Aquino et al. (2005) gang members describing themselves as "I do whatever I want regardless of what the gang expects me to do" report 48.9 % bomb/ arson gang activities cases; however, this rises to 56.9 % among gang members who describe themselves as "whatever the gang expects of me, I do". Such leaders encourage followers' behaviours to their own benefit and while they reward followers that see the abnormal leader as an idol, they equally have a tendency to torment followers who are critical of them (Kernberg 2002).
2. *Abnormal leaders' power usage on followers*: Abnormal leaders usually use authoritarian power on followers. Abnormal leaders are like dictators. Sometimes participative leadership roles are necessary. Modelling in criminal groups is described in Fig. 20.1.
3. *Managerial Structure of the Group*: Groups that consist of abnormal leaders and followers may be of a bureaucratic structure. All of the followers have deprivation experience on narcissistic challenge, oedipal competition, pre-oedipal period specific dependency and behavioral dependency all of which create aggression (Kernberg 2002). If inadequate managers of bureaucratic structure especially have significant amount of narcissistic and paranoid tendencies, they can convert an underdeveloped bureaucratic system into social nightmare. We can say this for abnormal leaders as well.
4. *Abnormal leaders' leadership strategy*: Abnormal leaders use both authoritarian and participative leadership strategy. This process is based on followers' needs. Abnormal leaders influence followers by their own behaviors. Contagion may imply willingness and shared goals but some may follow due to conformity

Fig. 20.1 Modelling in criminal groups. *Source* Porter (2013)

<i>Leader Strategy</i>	<i>Leader - Follower Interpersonal Style</i>	<i>Follower Reaction</i>	<i>Process</i>
Participative Action	Co-operative	Co-operative Imitation/ Contagion	Power with the group
Autocratic Orders	Dominant – Submissive	Submissive Obedience	Power over the group

pressures (Porter 2013). Abnormal leaders do activities with the group to influence followers. On the other hand, in fact abnormal leaders are authority figures and leaders' automaton is basic in the group while commitment of followers is a necessity of course.

5. *Group Norms*: Furthermore, there are some obligatory rules to obey for followers in such groups. These rules are usually of the leader's own making. Such groups have a special language, special rules, regular meetings, violence against its own members, killing its own members if necessary and so on. For example, *Crips* sets are among the most violent street gangs in the United States. All members are required to take an oath and go through an initiation process, so initiation is achieved in one of three ways-by committing an armed robbery, performing a drive-by shooting, or being beaten by members in a ceremony called a beat-in, kangaroo walk, or bull pen, initiation is intended to test the prospective member's courage and loyalty (NDIC 2002).

Leadership is an interaction field between leaders and followers (Erçetin et al. 2013b). Abnormal leaders and their followers have a chaotic relationship. Chaos theory purports that abnormal leaders revolve around a complex pattern of interaction, known as strange attractor, that serves to hold the system together. When events from outside or within the group occur that are intense enough to alter the stability of the current attractor, the interaction becomes less stable and begins to look for alternate means to regain its stability. For example when any follower does not obey the rules, abnormal leaders use violence against the follower or kill him/her to regain stability, because abnormal leader's authority and obeying his rules are crucial. The stability factor in such groups is commitment.

20.4 Conclusion

Chaotic interaction between abnormal leaders and their followers has been discussed in this chapter. Abnormal leaders focus on criminal activities and encourage followers to commit crime. There are lots of such groups or organizations and they can be formal or informal in structure but those groups are destructive to followers, other people, countries and the earth in general. Accordingly, this subject should be discussed in all its related aspects in order to find plausible solutions to the negative effects of abnormal leaders as well as abnormal leadership.

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