The 'dead goat syndrome' in organisations

Emmanuel Osafo

WSU-Extension,
Washington State University,
404 W Clark Street,
Pasco, WA 99301, USA
Email: emmanuel.osafo1@wsu.edu

Robert M. Yawson*

School of Business,
Quinnipiac University,
275 Mt. Carmel Avenue,
Hamden, CT 06516, USA
Email: robert.yawson@qu.edu
*Corresponding author

Abstract: The use of metaphors to explore the connection between theory and practice in organisation and leadership studies has proven to be highly effective. This paper discusses the *dead goat syndrome* (DGS) as a benchmark in discussing the importance of metaphor in organisation life and to identify the various leadership types that conform to the DGS metaphor. The dead goat syndrome emanates from a popular Ghanaian metaphor literary meaning a goat that is already dead does not fear to be thrust with a knife. Using this metaphor, we present a new lens for looking at leadership effectiveness and identify the basis for certain leadership behaviours in organisations. We illuminate some definitions of metaphor by briefly reviewing the literature on the classical views on metaphors, metaphors in organisational theory development, and how the DGS metaphor can be utilised to identify certain leadership behaviours in organisations.

Keywords: complex adaptive systems; systems change; metaphors; wicked problems; altitude sickness; organisational leadership; self-concept; systems; organisation effectiveness.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Osafo, E. and Yawson, R.M. (2021) 'The 'dead goat syndrome' in organisations', *Int. J. Business and Systems Research*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp.143–162.

Biographical notes: Emmanuel Osafo is an Assistant Professor of Leadership and Youth Development at Washington State University, USA. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology with Philosophy from the University of Ghana, a Master of Science in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from the Missouri State University, Missouri, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. He has worked with various organisations both in Ghana and the USA. His research spans across areas related to leadership development, human resource development, performance, ethics, and community development.

Robert M. Yawson is an Associate Professor of Management at the School of Business, Quinnipiac University, USA. He has a BS in Chemistry and MPhil in Biochemistry, University of Ghana; Post Graduate Certificate in Food Management, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; MS in Science, Technology and Environmental Policy, Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota; and PhD in Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development, University of Minnesota. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Academy of Human Resource Development; member of the Board of Governors of the Eastern Academy of Management; and member of the Executive Committee of the Public and Non-Profit Division of the Academy of Management as the Chair of the 2019 Best Book Award Committee. His current research is on using the ‘wicked problem construct’ of leadership for organisational development and change and also using a systems approach to human resource development for emerging technologies.

This paper is a revised and expanded version of a paper entitled ‘The ‘dead goat syndrome’ in organizations’ presented at Academy of Human Resource Development International Research Conference in the Americas, Louisville, Kentucky, 14–17 February 2019.

1 Metaphors and organisation theory

Metaphors have become an integral part of organisation and leadership studies such that, whole conferences have focused on the use of metaphors and meaning in organisations. For example, the “Look both ways: Narrative & Metaphor in Education” Conference was held at the Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam in the Spring of 2017 to help provide a comprehensive account of the “intricate relationship between narrative and metaphor in and of education”. Incorporation of metaphors in the Academy of Management Meetings (Chicago, 1999, Toronto, 2000, and Washington D.C., 2001), and several articles that use metaphors to develop new insights about organisational life are all indications of the importance of metaphors to leadership, management, and organisational studies (Essex and Mainemelis, 2002). Considering the attention given to metaphors at conferences and peer-reviewed journals, we assert that metaphors are indeed as exigent to organisation and leadership studies as any organisational/leadership theory.

In this paper, we present the *dead goat syndrome* (DGS) as a powerful metaphor for studying and evaluating leadership and managerial attitudes in organisations. Next, we will discuss briefly the origin of this metaphor with examples that relate more to political leadership before we dive into the focus of this paper; metaphors in leadership and management in organisations.

The DGS emanates from a popular Ghanaian metaphor, *Odwanfunu nsuro sekan*, literary meaning a goat that is already dead does not fear to be thrust with a knife. The DGS is an experiential-based metaphor (a metaphor-based on the gestalt observation of an individual’s lived experience) that is used to explain how experience overtime makes people develop a sense of *superbity* or *laxity*, where they believe that no circumstance can coerce them to act in contradiction with their belief. Over the years, this metaphor has been used to describe concepts such as *bravery*, *contempt*, and *accomplishment*, among other things in the circles of the Akan people of Ghana. However, the DGS gained international media prominence when in September 2015 the then president of the

Republic of Ghana, John Dramani Mahama, in an address to Ghanaian expatriates in Botswana said:

"I have seen more demonstrations and strikes in my first two years. I don't think it can get worse. It is said that when you kill a goat, and you frighten it with a knife, it doesn't fear the knife because it is dead already. I have a *dead goat syndrome*." (Gadugah, 2015)

As much as Mr. Mahama was using the DGS metaphor to create humor and express his immunity to strikes because of his perennial experiences with such actions, the international media carried the literal meaning of his speech and made a hoot out of it (Quist-Arcton, 2015). For example, one Derrick Akwasi Brobbey used the heading, 'A Dead Goat Syndrome' to discuss how political leadership neglect in a coarse manner the concerns of the people after they are elected to office. In a statement as part of his contribution to a news bloc, *MC Modern Ghana*, Brobbey (2015) stated that:

"Devoid of all odds, the meaning of "leadership" today has no value and is empty as it carries no weight in terms of the masses expectations and expeditions. Upon principled ideology, numerous reforms vividly give it a clear indication that as Africans, one of the tip-hole crises is lack of competent and well-minded leaders. The symbolic development of Africa and its people can be assured if we are able to fight against this incompetent and hollow style of supposed propaganda leadership."

Brobbey (2015) concluded by stating, 'come 2016', referring to the subsequent general election in Ghana, "the tune of discomfort will be played, and we will all see whether the *dead goat* will dance to that or not." The *dead goat* mindset can potentially edge leaders on to shed their responsibility with the belief that they are immutable, however, in a democratic system where continuous stay in office is dependent upon the masses, such a view can lead to exceptionable outcomes. Uncharacteristic of a president seeking a second term of office since the inception of the fourth republic of Ghana in 1992, the incumbent president, John Dramani Mahama, lost the election to the opposition leader, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo at a margin described as unprecedented by many media groups. We do not in any way suggest that the use of the DGS metaphor by John Mahama played a role in the outcome of the presidential elections.

Similar to political leadership, the *DGS* is pertinent to organisation, leadership, and management studies such that, its heterogeneous nature helps in leadership and managerial strategy. Thus, effective leaders and managers who win with making unpopular decisions, as well as ineffective leaders and managers who adopt a transactional approach, can gain the trust and commitment of their subordinates. Trust and commitment from subordinates can potentially result in improved productivity and higher job satisfaction. Consequently, such leaders may gain the confidence of their superiors who are the key decision-makers; thus, they get everyone on board to believe in a common purpose and build a profile of indispensability.

Linking the DGS to leadership and managerial studies, we looked at the traditional leadership styles; autocratic, democratic, coaching, strategic, transformational, laissez-faire, and charismatic leadership as well as Kellerman's dimensions of *bad leadership*, thus, incompetence, rigid, intemperate, callous, corrupt, insular, and evil (Kellerman, 2004). The heterogeneous nature of the DGS metaphor makes it applicable to both *bad* and *traditional* effective leadership. For example, the incompetent leader; a leader that lacks the skill or will to be effective can develop *DGS* such that, they see no hope in sight

to make them effective, but, for the desire to remain in charge, they adopt a strong-person approach and eventually become insensitive to change. Such leaders can use their personality or other contextual manipulations to build strong interpersonal relationships with people in key decision-making roles to remain in charge. On the other hand, a transformative leader who has survived an upheaval, social or economic, or gained high recognition for high performance may develop a sense of indispensability. Once they have gained commitment from subordinates and trust from decision-makers, they can make unpopular decisions and remain relevant to the organisation, so long as such decisions result in short-term and/or long-term benefits. Our notion of the *DGS* in organisations connotes leadership and managerial immunity to situations that would ordinarily distress others.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to use the *DGS* as a benchmark in discussing the importance of metaphor in organisation life and to identify the various leadership types that conform to the *DGS* metaphor. Our goal is to present a new lens for looking at leadership effectiveness and to establish the basis for the various leadership behaviours that make them effective or otherwise. We will proceed by illuminating some definitions of metaphor, briefly review the literature on the classical views on metaphors, metaphors in organisational theory development, and how the *DGS* metaphor can be utilised to identify the leadership types in organisations that are deemed immutable or indispensable. We will then relate the metaphor to the level of effectiveness to specific characteristics such as status, level of achievement, and other relational issues that may enhance or mar performance in an organisation. Also, relevant to our discussion of the *DGS* are situational factors that create immutable pitfalls and roadblocks that interfere with leadership functioning in organisations. Thus, the way organisational members or decision-makers perceive a leader can inspire them to develop a self-concept that may or may not be beneficial to the organisation.

3 What is a metaphor?

The word metaphor has been defined as a novel or poetic linguistic expression where one or more words for a concept are used outside of its normal conventional meaning to express a similar idea (Lakoff, 1993). Metaphor refers to the use of language to represent something different from what it was originally applied to, or what it 'literally' means, to suggest some resemblance or make a connection between the two things (Knowles and Moon, 2004).

3.1 Classical views of metaphor

In Aristotle's view, in addition to *episteme* (scientific knowledge), knowledge can be acquired through *phronesis* (practicality) and *techne* (craftsmanship). Some types of knowledge are difficult to transfer through training or learning – they are acquired through lived experience, shared values, and action in context. They are usually unwritten but passed on from generation to generation through verbal transfer. In Ghana, for

instance, most traditional ecological knowledge is not documented in writing but is transferred through symbols and metaphors that require in-depth knowledge of the culture and traditions to fathom. Typical examples are the *Adinkra Symbols* and the underpinning metaphors that have been used by the people of Ghana to preserve traditional ecological knowledge over centuries.

The two main views on the classical theory of metaphor are 'similarity and substitution' (Boys-Stones, 2003). To this effect, Aristotle and other philosophers dubbed metaphor as 'carrying across' or 'transference' [Boys-Stones, (2003), p.7]. According to Boys-Stones, classical theory regards metaphor as merely a means of expression – basically or entirely a form of ornamentation. Thus, "its use does not change the essential meaning of a passage but substitutes one term for another to set up a comparison of two things which are perceived as alike" [Boys-Stones, (2003), p.8]. In classical theories of language, metaphor was "a matter of language not thought. Metaphorical expressions were assumed to be mutually exclusive with the realm of everyday language" [Lakoff, (1993), p.202]. In the classical sense, metaphor was defined as "a novel of poetic linguistic expression where one or more words for a concept are used outside of its normal conventional meaning to express a similar concept" [Lakoff, (1993), p.202].

Early philosophers such as Socrates and Plato used numerous metaphors to help incite their contemporaries to engage actively in public discourse. For example, in the *Apology of Socrates*, the metaphor of the *master-craftsman* of the soul and the *subordinate-craftsman* were used to describe the gods and the servants, respectively. Socrates indicated that "just as a master-craftsman offers guidance, nourishment, and tools to his servants when they ask, so the gods are expected to aid us in a similar way" (Simpson, 2000). Other early philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle also used metaphoric expressions in most of their public discourse. Plato for instance in his deliberation of the need to educate people stated that:

"The purpose of education is to drag the prisoner as far as out of the cave as possible; not to instill knowledge into his soul, but to turn his whole soul towards the sun, which is the Form of the Good. Once out of the cave, the prisoner is reluctant to descend back into the cave and get involved in human affairs." [Butcher, (1907), p.25]

This metaphor was used to express the importance of education and the relief it brings to people in their daily encounters. Such metaphoric expressions were deliberately used in most of the Platonic dialogues to elicit discussion on matters of public interest. Aristotle explained the metaphor, *sowing the God-created light* by indicating how spreading seed on the field, which is referred to as *sowing*, is equivalent to the spread of the sun rays (Butcher, 1907). Aristotle summed it all up by stating that, "the greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor...it is the mark of genius – for to make good metaphor implies an eye for resemblance" [Butcher, (1907), p.87]. We agree with Aristotle that one greatest asset of an effective leader is a mastery of metaphor.

Metaphors continue to be pertinent to human discourse and create the ambiguities that stimulate human thinking and prolonged dialogue on critical societal issues. Lakoff (1993, p.202) interrogated the various classical views of metaphor and asserted that "the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way, we conceptualise one mental domain in terms of another". In our view, metaphors are *ad rem* to every judicious leadership asseveration.

In contrast to the classical views, contemporary views focus on using metaphors to create an interaction between philology and cognition. In modern theory, metaphor is viewed as a figure of speech in which a word or a phrase literally describing one kind of object or idea is used to represent another to suggest a monotony or analogy between them (Cleary and Packard, 1992). According to these scholars, metaphors provide a concise way of relating the cognitive and perceptual features of a subject. A metaphor is not a simile for comparison, where something is said to be 'like' another but instead, simply a statement equating one thing to another.

"Metaphor is one of the most powerful engines in the construction of human speech, and without it, we can hardly imagine how any language could have progressed beyond the simplest rudiment" [Muller, (1871), p.385]. Pundy (1983) indicated that metaphor provides a clear paradox, in that it can simultaneously facilitate change and reinforce traditional values. This may be subsequent to what Donnellon et al. (1986) referred to as metaphor's enhancing 'equifinal meaning' in which different interpretations of reality (events) are made but similar behavioural implications are drawn, possibly leading to closure on agreed outcomes.

3.2 Some contemporary views of metaphor

Contemporary theories of metaphor are believed to have emanated from George Lakoff's *cognitive-linguistic framework*. The central assumption of Lakoff's (1993) framework is, a metaphor is simply a matter of language and thought – "metaphor is a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system" (p.203). Steen (2011) improved on Lakoff's work and developed a three-dimensional model that comprised of linguistic, conceptual, and communicative properties of metaphor. Cameron and Mengler (2009) argued for the inclusion of a social dimension to the study of metaphor. The social approach elicits research interest in the systems and complexity thinking about metaphor.

The use of metaphors to explore the connection between theory and practice in organisational leadership studies has proven to be highly effective (Singh, 2010). Semino (2008) simply described metaphor as the phenomenon whereby we talk and potentially think about something regarding something else. It will not be amphibological to state that metaphor is essentially the root of human communication. Mullen et al. (2005, p.1) have asserted that metaphors "provide an organisational framework for expanding understanding and reflective inquiry of complex concepts" and that "metaphorical pedagogy facilitates the concept of reflection for producing insight into the human experience that shapes future action". According to Muller et al. (2005), human intellectual life would be stagnant without metaphor.

The classical and contemporary views of metaphor together draw the curtains and expose the importance of metaphors to everyday life, particularly in organisational theory development.

4 Metaphor in organisational theory development

The use of metaphor is a common phenomenon in organisational theory. One scholar who has done extensive work on organisation metaphor is Gareth Morgan, a Distinguished Research Professor at York University in Toronto (Morgan, 2016;

Örtenblad et al., 2016). His inimitable interest in organisational science inspired him to conduct extensive studies of organisational life and proposed eight metaphors that have been used broadly in organisational studies and related fields. They are the metaphors of *Machine*; *Organismic*; *Information processors or the brain metaphor*; *Cultures*; *Political organisations*; *Psychic prisons*; *Adapt and change*; and *Instruments of domination* (Morgan, 1980). According to Morgan (1980, p.605), “a radical humanist critique suggests that the discipline of organisation theory has been imprisoned by its metaphors”. By inference, the unwavering power of metaphors in organisation theory development and application is unquestionable.

Metaphors have been used in *organisational behaviour* (e.g., Mio et al., 2005; Rowe and Hogarth, 2005); *organisational development (OD)* (e.g., Marshak, 1993; Tell, 2000); *organisational communication* (e.g., Geiger and Finch, 2010; Hogler et al., 2008; Kaarst-Brown and Robey, 1999; Katz, 1996; Koch and Deetz, 1981; Oates and Fitzgerald, 2007; Sergiovanni, 1994; Urwiler and Frolick, 2008); and *organisational theory* (e.g., Andriessen and Gubbins, 2009; Cornelissen, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c., 2008; Jacobs and Heracleous, 2006; Kamoche et al., 2003; Schoeneborn et al., 2016). Metaphors have been used in responding to critical economic issues such as major financial crises. For example, in the past, some economies in serious crises have been referred to as the ‘sick man of Europe’ (Penninck, 2014). Next, we will briefly discuss the application of metaphors to the various aspects of the organisation mentioned above.

4.1 *Organisational behaviour*

In a drive to help change and improve healthcare delivery in the United Kingdom (UK) National Health Service (NHS), Rowe and Hogarth (2005) used the *Complex Adaptive Systems Metaphor* to observe change “as inclusive, evolving, and unpredictable... rather than linear and mechanistic”. Rowe and Hogarth (2005) used this as the basis to develop a program to change and improve healthcare delivery that resulted in a considerable “change in professional behavior and service delivery and transformational change in the organisational structures and processes” [Rowe and Hogarth, (2005), p.396]. In a study to explore the sensitivities related to workplace bullying, Tracy et al. (2006) found that metaphor analysis creates a condition for understanding the mechanisms used by abused employees to assimilate the composite and disconcerting emotions that comes with workplace abuse.

4.2 *Organisational development*

Marshak (1993) used the machine metaphor to explain how OD professionals effect change. Symbolising the organisation as a machine and the OD professional as a repairer, Marshak (1993, p.7) asserted that:

“People understand the abstract phenomena of organizational change as if a broken-down machine is being returned to smooth-running performance through the assistance of a repair person who was called in and who works under the direction of the machine’s operator or engineer.”

Marshak (1993) indicated that the machine metaphor is not the only strategy to effect change. He constructed four symbolic representations to help create a clearer

understanding of metaphoric analysis about organisational change. Thus, *fix and maintain* – predicting deficiencies and fixing them before they escalate and create bigger problems. *Build & develop* – inspiring a need to improve performance even though the existing conditions are working okay. *Move and relocate* – moving from the old ways of doing things to adopt a new strategy to improve performance; this may inspire boundary spanning. Finally, *Liberate and recreate* – identifying and adopting mechanisms to reduce extraneous contingencies and re-think about the essence of the organisation. Also, Tell (2000) used the *Learning Network* metaphor to coordinate an inter-organisation project to empower employees to alter the status quo where necessary.

4.3 Organisational communication

Koch and Deetz (1981) emphasised the power of metaphor in message delivery and retention of information. These scholars indicated that symbolic interaction is key to constituting, sustaining, and modifying the consensual social reality, which is core to organisation life. Katz (1996) asserted that metaphors are powerful tools for arousing emotions. For example, calling a leader ‘Hitler’ has implications for followers. Speeches such as Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I have a dream,” Winston Churchill’s “iron curtain,” and Enoch Powell’s famously divisive “rivers of blood” were constructed on metaphors intended to inspire supporters. Keizer and Post (1996) described metaphors as the catalyst for organisational change. In agreement with the views expressed by numerous scholars of organisational studies about the critical role metaphors play in an organisation’s life, Hogler et al. (2008, p.393) argued that: “Communication exceeds the theoretical reach of the postmodern perspective, which requires a new conceptualisation of metaphor as epistemic and capable of signaling meaning that is inseparable from its unique and discrete form”. Thus, metaphors are tools for inspiring knowledge-driven discourse in organisations.

4.4 Organisational theory

Andriessen and Gubbins (2009) conducted a systematic metaphor analysis to study the concept of social capital and relationships in organisations. In an attempt to build a theory around the concept of social capital, Andriessen and Gubbins (2009) reviewed three scholarly articles on social capital and identified “seven metaphoric concepts for relationships” (p.846). According to Andriessen and Gubbins (2009), metaphors serve as the provenance for theory construction. Using the ‘organisational identity’ metaphor as an example, (Cornelissen, 2006a) demonstrated that in addition to the diverse structure of the hypothetical perspectives resulting from the metaphorical correlation between the concepts, they also provide theoretical reasoning for viewing organisations. In a study to investigate the strength of a metaphor in theory building, Cornelissen and Kafourous (2008, p.365) asserted that two conditions are pertinent; (1) “the degree to which that metaphor is seen to capture multiple salient features of organizations and (2) the ease with which the metaphor is understood”.

Having established the critical role that metaphors play in all aspects of organisational life, we proceed to discuss the DGS as a powerful metaphor for addressing critical issues of leadership attitudes in organisations.

5 The DGS

The DGS shares some common meaning with the first line of the famous poem by John Bunyan; *he that is down needs fear no fall*. However, unlike the former which is a unilateral concept with a single clear meaning, the DGS is a heterogeneous metaphor that can be used to generate ambiguity in any sociopolitical dialogue. Thus, the DGS can be used to imply negativity or positivity, depending on the participants and the context of the dialogue. The DGS is a relevant metaphor to consider in discussions about leadership attitudes and actions. Different leadership types: those who have accomplished so much in a particular field, those privileged within a particular realm, those in non-competitive positions, or those who have lost hope in their ability to perform can fall under the DGS.

In Ghana where the DGS is believed to have originated, the metaphor has been used to describe influential Chiefs and Kings/Queens whose reign are deemed life-long and can only be replaced upon inexcusable violation of societal values, a phenomenon Fischer et al. (2010) refer to as *character failure*, or after they pass on. Also, the metaphor has been used to describe leaders who have failed in their deliberations with the people who are deemed to have no hopes of regaining their *amour-propre*. In simple terms, the DGS is used to describe leadership characteristics such as a state of high accomplishment, ineptness, obstinacy, valour, or preeminence. The DGS if employed appropriately has the potential to change the organisation and leadership studies epistemology, because, as it is uncommon to find a songbird as competitive in singing varied songs as the canary bird, the DGS metaphor can be used to explain various leadership types.

The multidimensionality of the DGS makes it unique and ideal for studying systemic and complex issues related to leadership and organisations. DGS in organisations is exhibited in many forms and shapes. There are three basic patterns, which are particularly common, and they overlap in many ways. They are performance, attitude, and self-concept. "The self-concept has emerged as an important component of organizational paradigms" [Gardner and Pierce, (1998), p.48]. Self-Concept has a positive effect on employee performance and job-related attitudes and *vice versa* (Gardner and Pierce, 1998). Using self-concept as a mediator variable, we present the following propositions to explain the DGS concept. In our estimation;

- P1 Low performance with bad job-related attitudes may lead to weak self-concept.
- P2 High performance with bad job-related attitudes may lead to normal self-concept.
- P3 High performance with good job-related attitude may lead to strong self-concept.
- P4 Low performance with good job-related attitude may lead to normal self-concept.
- P5 An employee's self-concept is a moderating factor in acquiring the DGS.

It is our conception that proposition P1 and P3 are more likely to acquire the DGS. We also see the DGS as a spectrum on both negative and positive scale, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Our assumption is that, leaders who are high performers and have good job-related attitudes develop a strong self-concept and a belief that they are irreplaceable or are versatile and will have no problem getting a similar or even higher role in other organisations if they are let go. This category of leaders has the support of others and the trust of decision-makers. They are more likely to succeed with unpopular decisions others

might not. Also, leaders with low performance and bad attitudes develop weak self-concept and live in a state of *come what may*. For fear of being underestimated, such leaders may employ disputatious strategies, which are sometimes misconstrued as confidence to remain in their role. Once they have been able to survive such turbulence for an extended period, they are perceived as untouchable. It should, however, be noted that even though we are proposing here that those in quadrants P1 and P3 have a high propensity of acquiring the DGS, other variables such as well-connectedness, long service, and tenure, can cause leaders in the normal self-concept quadrants to develop the DGS overtime.

Figure 1 Self-concept quadrant (see online version for colours)

Figure 2 Self-concept and the DGS spectrum

6 Conceptualisation of DGS and related theories

In conceptualising the DGS, we agree with Cornelissen (2005) that within the early phases of theoretical development, a metaphor is heuristic and suggestive, and not yet declarative of a particular organisational phenomenon. We also believed that in relating the metaphor to existing theories, it could be used to consolidate occurrences in organisations into a holistic understanding of an organisational phenomenon. The DGS in organisations is an adaptive challenge or the so-called wicked problem that must be seen and addressed as such. Adaptive challenges or wicked problems have no defined rules,

require a broad recognition and understanding, they are unique, and there are no quick remedies and simple solutions (Yawson, 2015).

We have identified two archetypes, which help to provide a clearer understanding of the DGS concept. These archetypes are broad characterisations with unique positives and negatives situated in existing empirical leadership theories and practices. These two archetypes of DGS are what we have taxonomically referred to as *Proprietary Absolutist Leadership* and the *'Three Monkeys' Leadership*

6.1 *Proprietary absolutist leadership*

Proprietary absolutism is a quintessential DGS archetype and most often than not are found in many organisations. Proprietary absolutist leaders (PALs) refer to leaders who have had mostly long service and very successful careers but gotten to a stage in their lives where they have become disengaged and at the same time are perceived as "untouchable." They live in a broken illusion of having proprietary and absolute control over the company culture and how the status quo must be maintained. For example, long-tenured employees typically have stronger expertise, along with broader and more in-depth knowledge in their fields and use such invaluable abilities to provide clarity of direction to enable a team to familiarise itself with a task. When the direction is clear, team members have a more informed perspective and as a result are better able to decide on the most appropriate approach for accomplishing a task efficiently and effectively (Caruso, 2017). Such an employee can be described as having a DGS because although they may exhibit some disruptive behaviour, their invaluable experience is beneficial to the organisation. Thus, they are not easily replaceable. We make this assertion because their long service helps them to establish a strong bond with organisational members, making them an *anchor of affection* or an *unrivaled power broker*.

Conceptually, proprietary absolutism takes its antecedents from the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory. The LMX theory of leadership postulates that leaders often develop different exchange relationships with subordinates through differentiation (Liden et al., 1997). LMX can be categorised into two attributes: High-quality LMX and low-quality LMX (Kim et al., 2015), and a PAL can be either of the categories. High-quality LMX is centred on mutual obligation and reciprocity, characterised by mutual liking, trust, and respect (Liden et al., 1997; Kim et al., 2015). Low-quality LMX is grounded on the transactional part of the employment relationship, such as the economic exchange that emphasises pay for performance (Maslyn and Uhl-Bien, 2001; Kim et al., 2015). Proprietary absolutist leadership relates to high-quality LMX such that their long service and success has positioned them as a symbol of trust, respect, and efficiency. Therefore, members are inspired to follow their lead even when they make unpopular decisions.

On the other hand, PAL who has lost touch of reality but relies solely on their past performance records can employ the transactional style to remain relevant. They can use this strategy to motivate members to put up their best. "LMX quality has been associated with various employee outcomes, such as organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and job performance" [Kim et al., (2015), p.216].

Woodward (2017) uses a different metaphor to describe proprietary absolutism in what he calls 'altitude sickness'. In his metaphor, Woodward (2017) described three critical leadership altitudes as 50,000 feet, 50 feet, and 5 feet; and asserted that effective leaders develop the capacity to 'fly' their thinking at all three altitudes, not getting

trapped at any one of them. They travel up and down easily, making the connections between all the altitudes. PAL become disproportionately trapped at one of these three altitudes. This lack of flexibility becomes dangerous for themselves, their teams, and the organisation (Woodward, 2017).

In his research, Woodward (2017) has discovered that around 70% of senior executives display an 'altitude sickness' phenomenon. Woodward (2017) described the largest group as those who rarely leave the 50-foot sphere and eventually become resistant to change. Charan (2015) describes such leaders as stuck in the 'rear-view mirror'. They do not use 'outside-in' or 'future-back' thinking. Woodward (2017) further described them as 'legacy hostages' as they do not open themselves to new ideas and the outside world.

“Leaders caught in 50-foot thinking see neither the opportunities nor the threats of disruption. While being effective at the tactical level of 50 feet is essential for business performance – and is often richly rewarded, it can become a dangerous comfort zone.” [Woodward, (2017), p.2]

Woodward (2017) described the second largest group with altitude sickness as those trapped at 50,000 feet. These are employees who have achieved significant career success and risen to be leaders of organisations but have acquired what we refer to as the DGS and display proprietary absolutists' characteristics. They live 'in the clouds', such leaders announce a new vision every other week, never executing effectively to deliver results. The third, yet much smaller group with altitude sickness, Woodward (2017) describes, are perhaps the most problematic leaders of all: those trapped at 5 feet. These superegoists and narcissists spend an excessively large amount of time thinking about themselves. The archetypal micro-managers, they get in everybody's way.

6.2 The 'three monkeys' leadership

The three monkeys are a Japanese cultural symbol, dating back at least to the *Muromachi* period (1333–1568), but possibly imported to Japan from China in the 8th century (Japan Society of London, 1893). The monkeys are a visual pun, a play on the original Japanese words *mizaru*, *kikazaru*, *iwazaru* which mean “Don't hear, don't see, don't speak”. The monkeys are thought to symbolise a religious principle: whoever does not hear, see, or speak evil, shall be spared all evil (Japan Society of London, 1893). In sync with the three monkeys' idea, Mahatma Gandhi brought in the metaphor of 'Three Wise Monkeys' to promulgate his Principle-Centered Leadership philosophy. We use the metaphor of the three monkeys here collectively to represent the second archetype of DGS. There are various meanings ascribed to the monkeys and the metaphor, including associations with being sound mind, speech and action (Tirrell, 2009). It is a multimodal metaphor in that; it is expressed with both words and symbols (Tay, 2017). In the Western world, the phrase is often used to refer to those who deal with impropriety by turning a blind eye. We are limiting our interpretation to the later to depict a leadership behaviour, where people in a position of authority turn a blind eye to impropriety within organisations. This archetypal DGS commonly occurs in three ways:

- *New to the culture of the organisation.* Leaders who are new to the organisation can find themselves turning a blind eye to issues as they get to know the staff and understand the organisation (Newman, 2008). With time this becomes a habit, and they default to “Don't hear, don't see, don't speak”. While it is essential to observe

the culture, it should not deter a leader to deal with issues in a timely fashion and be able to name the elephants in the room as described by Heifetz et al. (2009).

- *Conflict avoidance.* Some leaders naturally tend to avoid conflict or become overly accommodating when faced with a contentious issue all in the name of collegiality. These traits may have served the leader well in the past. However, these leadership behaviours, if over-used become detrimental to organisation performance and it is a symptom of DGS.
- *The anchor of affection.* Managers who want to be friends with staff or see staff as 'family' sometimes fail to have conversations about problematic staff behaviours (Newman, 2008). The desire to be friends and the belief that this is the best way to manage lies behind avoiding difficult conversations. Over time, this behaviour can trap an organisation's structure, culture, and defaults within a deeply ingrained systemic holding cell; leaders become prisoners of the present instead of shapers of the future (Heifetz et al., 2009). This is particularly true when managers have come up through the ranks, and they find themselves managing former peers (Newman, 2008).

7 Addressing the DGS

The first step towards addressing the DGS in organisations is to be able to identify the syndrome. Organisational leaders should be able to identify the symptoms and appreciate the fact that the DGS is most often than not an adaptive challenge and must be addressed as such. Any attempt to use technical solutions in addressing an adaptive challenge like the DGS leads to the creation of more wicked problems. In the face of an adaptive challenge, adaptive leadership builds an organisation's capacity not only to succeed but also to thrive. It inspires others to pursue a shared vision in the face of uncertainty about a proposed change. This process inherently produces some level of conflict and resistance. However, conflict is not only beneficial but necessary for adaptive change initiatives.

To effectively address adaptive challenges, leaders need to expose sources of conflict, ask tough questions, and disorient people (Heifetz et al., 2009). Systems can become systems unto themselves and take on a life of their own. Combatting deeply ingrained norms and self-reinforcing challenges like the DGS requires diagnosing the complete system and effectively scanning the entire environment. A leader's ability to recognise and understand the DGS archetypes are very critical in addressing the syndrome. The goal is to mobilise stakeholders to engage with a leader's initiative by identifying the values they hold, and then identify ways in which they can show how supporting the change initiative enables stakeholders to serve those values (Heifetz et al., 2009). In the following section, we will discuss some tools and tactics to address the DGS based on the two archetypes: Proprietary Absolutist Leadership, and the Three Monkeys Leadership.

7.1 Capitalising on the positive aspects of the DGS

Since each of the archetypes has its positives and negatives, it is essential that when the symptoms of the syndrome are seen in an organisation, the positives are capitalised on for improvement, and the negatives addressed like any adaptive challenge. One approach we propose here to enhancing the positive aspects of the DGS is to use appreciative inquiry

(AI). The responsibility of leadership is effective management of an organisation's greatest asset, its human capital. In doing so there is the opportunity to maximise the organisation's performance.

AI is applied to the employee evaluation as a means of focusing on the positives and driving performance. At the heart of AI is the belief that looking for the positive in the people and what works for an organisation can empower and motivate actions for the good (Dunlap, 2008). Since its inception, the initial five principles of AI were expanded to eight (constructionist, simultaneity, poetic, anticipatory, positive, wholesale, enactment and free choice) as the foundation and basis for implementation. AI uses either a 4-D (discovery, dream, determination, and destiny) or 4-I model (inquire, imagine, innovate, and initiate) are used as the narrative process for change (Dunlap, 2008). AI is an effective means for evaluation as it is participatory and emphasises the positive.

Typical performance review appraisals will not work with leaders and employees with DGS and are of less value when compared to AI questions addressing peak experiences, personal values, core life-giving factors, and future dreams (Dunlap, 2008; Ridley-Duff and Duncan, 2015). It is also systemic and ongoing, thereby permitting continuous assessment of the success or timely revision of interventions. Building links between organisational values and training delivered as conversations and inquiry make a difference and lead to a sustained change in behaviour.

7.2 Addressing the negative aspects of DGS

The negative aspects of DGS in an organisation are wicked problems or adaptive challenges and should be treated as such. Many leaders have the misconception that when something goes wrong, it is the company that is broken, when, in fact, what is broken is that people in the company are not willing to change. People embrace change when it is perceived as useful for them, but resist the loss that many changes bring (Heifetz et al., 2009). An adaptive leader is one who can motivate people to embrace change instead of fearing the loss. Strategies to become an adaptive leader and be able to identify and 'treat' people with the negative aspects of DGS entail mobilising people to understand what is essential to be held from the past, and what needs to be discarded to move forward and to avoid creating disequilibrium. The key to being a successful adaptive leader is one's ability to keep the temperature in the productive zone of disequilibrium (PZD), such that challenges result in productive actionable engagement (Heifetz et al., 2009). Leaders must implement the action plan that incorporates changes through continuous reflection on the big picture while focusing on the details to identify the type of challenge and remain on the right track to resolving it.

Leaders must determine whether the problem an organisation is facing is an adaptive or technical problem, and approach resolution accordingly. In the face of an adaptive challenge like DGS, adaptive leadership builds an organisation's capacity not only to succeed but also to thrive. It inspires others to pursue a shared vision in the face of uncertainty about a proposed change. This process inherently produces some level of conflict and resistance. However, conflict is necessary for adaptive change initiatives. To effectively address adaptive challenges, leaders need to expose sources of conflict, ask tough questions, and disorient people (Heifetz, 1994). "Resistance to change stems from a fear of losing something important" [Heifetz et al., (2009), p.96].

In this context, the goal is not to necessarily convince people of an individual's initiative, but rather guide them through the process. This is done through effective

communication. A leader's communication style paves the way for how employees communicate change and its related demands on the organisation and its people. Effective communication is a two-way street in which a leader must possess good listening skills. This reinforces the concept that a leader must understand what motivates people and find ways to show how the change will serve their needs and concerns.

7.3 *Self-diagnoses and action*

Extreme levels of the negative aspects of DGS may be relatively rare in the general population, but each one of us will have a degree of the syndrome in our personality. So how can we self-diagnose to see whether we have the syndrome? The answer lies partly in what we know about personal relationships. Employees with similar personalities — even negative ones — attract each other, and can facilitate effective working relationships (Page et al., 2017). Leaders need to acknowledge and accept that they may have the DGS traits and should get to know them. In self-diagnosing, these questions, the dimensions outlined by Page et al. (2017, p.4) are essential:

“What do they look like to you? Be aware that not every follower might be able to easily handle personal interaction with you. How do other employees perceive and experience these aspects of your personality? What triggers you to behave in these ways?”

If the self-diagnoses inclines one to believe that they are showing symptoms of the three-monkey leadership archetype, for example, some learned behavioural routines might help to keep these traits in check and help the employee to perform better as a leader. Newman (2008, p.2) has outlined the following self-diagnostic approaches:

- *Make an inventory:* Take some time to write down all the troubling things you see in the department but are not being addressed. What are you not bringing up? What are staff not bringing up? What tends to be allowed to slip by? Write all these down. Notice how you might feel reluctant to even shed this kind of light on some situations in the department.
- *Analyse yourself:* Once you have a list of things that are being left unsaid, ask yourself why you allow certain things to continue. Are you avoiding conflict, are you wanting to be a friend, are you new to the culture? Is confronting an issue effectively a new skill you need to acquire? Imagine what will happen if you stop turning a blind eye. What would the repercussions be? What could happen if you continue to turn a blind eye? Look around – who else may be turning a blind eye? Your staff, your peers, your boss? How could you enlist their aid to make changes?
- *Have a conversation:* Consider your inventory of taboo topics and decide a plan of action. You may decide to bring people together to discuss how the department as a whole is turning a blind eye to issues such as each other's safety. Or, you may decide to speak privately to underperformers about your observations. Alternatively, if the issue involves your boss, this may be your first stop on the way to discussing previously avoided topics.

8 Conclusions and recommendation for further research

The use of metaphors in organisations and leadership circles is an age-old phenomenon. Interestingly, no individual or group of scholars have been able to provide a definitive definition for a metaphor; thereby, it continues to spark scholarly interest. Classical scholars such as Socrates and Aristotle employed metaphors considerably in their public discourse. Aristotle, for instance, went as far to equate mastery of metaphors to ingenuity. Metaphors continue to play a central role in leadership speeches and organisational life in general. In contemporary organisations, metaphors continue to be relevant in organisational theory, organisational behaviour, organisational communication, and OD. Also, the use of metaphoric expressions by a leader has been found to incite followers' passion and drive them to want to act by the leader's vision. It is categorical to note that the most memorable and recognised statements by famous leaders are those ingrained in metaphoric expressions.

This study generates several applications-oriented suggestions. Organisations should manage employees' sense of generalised self-concept. Metaphors can divulge areas of everyday business life that remain impervious to the jargons, which have been created to describe it. Metaphors like the DGS can help to stimulate creativity and initiate discussion and exploration of issues of identity and change in the workplace (Essex and Mainemelis, 2002) if identified and utilised appropriately.

In societies such as Ghana, most of the traditional ecological knowledge is preserved through metaphors and symbols. The DGS metaphor which gained international media attention after many years of use in the Ghanaian society needs the consideration of management and leadership scholars and practitioners in discussing and assessing leadership and employee behaviour in organisations.

This study lays the groundwork for empirical studies to test the propositions made in the paper. Further studies are required to test the conceptualisation of the DGS empirically. It is important that the relationship between self-concept as a moderating factor in acquiring the DGS is established empirically. Figure 3 illustrates the causal relations reflected in the study's five propositions. It should be noted that other environmental factors can inspire those with a normal self-concept to develop DGS overtime.

Figure 3 Summary of proposed empirical testing of DGS (see online version for colours)

We have also presented two archetypes of the DGS as a metaphoric inquiry into leadership behaviour in organisations. We believe that this conceptual discussion of an age-old and tested metaphor of leadership opens a new and intricate field of research, whose scope goes way beyond the reach of a single article. It focuses on a scholarly area that remains largely unexplored and uninvestigated. One reason for this is that current investigative efforts, in whatever areas of inquiry into leadership and organisation theory, concentrate on mainstream knowledge to the detriment of indigenous ecological knowledge. This bias has considerable consequences. It may leave large areas of knowledge of research fields and policy areas in the background. The complex, intangible, incommensurable or vague is too often ignored or disregarded or even viewed as irrelevant. It is this kind of abdication that leaves the most difficult but the most important out of research work. Therefore, our interests are built on a comprehensive and ambitious vision of using indigenous ecological knowledge for organisational theory and leadership research. The DGS as outlined in this paper is an example of such inquiry. Intellectual capital is more than just mere information. It is about knowledge: finding it, developing it, storing it, sharing it and, ultimately, using it for employee wellbeing and performance. It is about being able to unlock the potential that workers may have. But knowledge by itself is not enough to simply be applicable: Knowledge does not become capital until it is captured and used to benefit society. That necessitates finding ways to extract all the marvellous ideas locked inside the people and organisations. An adaptive leader can identify and address the DGS for organisational effectiveness.

References

- Andriessen, D. and Gubbins, C. (2009) 'Metaphor analysis as an approach for exploring theoretical concepts: The case of social capital', *Organization Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 8, pp.845–863, DOI: 10.1177/0170840609334952.
- Boys-Stones, G.R. (2003) *Metaphor, Allegory, and the Classical Tradition: Ancient thought and Modern Revisions*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.
- Brobby, D.A. (2015) 'A dead goat syndrome', *Modern Ghana*, 23 November, pp.1–2 [online] <https://www.modernghana.com/news/657509/1/a-dead-goat-syndrome.html> (accessed 5 August 2018).
- Butcher, S.H. (1907) *The Poetics of Aristotle*, Macmillan, London, UK.
- Cameron, F. and Mengler, S. (2009) 'Complexity, transdisciplinarity and museum collections documentation: emergent metaphors for a complex world', *Journal of Material Culture*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp.89–218, DOI:10.1177/1359183509103061.
- Caruso, S.J. (2017) *Benefits and Challenges of Long-Tenured Employees*, HR Development Info., [online] <https://hrdevelopmentinfo.com/benefits-and-challenges-of-long-tenured-employees/> (accessed 29 December 2017).
- Charan, R. (2015) *The Attacker's Advantage: Turning Uncertainty into Breakthrough Opportunities*, 1st ed., PublicAffairs-Hachette Book Group, New York City, NY.
- Cleary, C. and Packard, T. (1992) 'The use of metaphors in organizational assessment and change', *Group & Organization Management*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp.229–241, DOI: 10.1177/1059601192173002.
- Cornelissen, J.P. (2005) 'Beyond compare: metaphor in organization theory', *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 751–764, DOI: 10.5465/amr.2005.18378876.
- Cornelissen, J.P. (2006a) 'Making sense of theory construction: metaphor and disciplined imagination', *Organization Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 11, pp.1579–1597, DOI: 10.1177/0170840606068333.

- Cornelissen, J.P. (2006b) 'Metaphor and the dynamics of knowledge in organization theory: a case study of the organizational identity metaphor*', *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 4, pp. 683–709, DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-6486.2006.00607.x.
- Cornelissen, J.P. (2006c) 'Metaphor in organization theory: progress and the past', *Academy of Management Review*, pp.485–489, DOI: 10.5465/AMR.2006.20208700.
- Cornelissen, J.P. and Kafouros, M. (2008) 'Metaphors and theory building in organization theory: what determines the impact of a metaphor on theory?', *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp.365–379, DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-8551.2007.00550.x.
- Cornelissen, J.P. et al. (2008) 'Metaphor in organizational research: context, modalities and implications for research – introduction', *Organization Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp.7–22, doi: 10.1177/0170840607086634.
- Donnellon, A., Gray, B. and Bougon, M. G. (1986) 'Communication, meaning, and organized action', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp.43–55.
- Dunlap, C.A. (2008) 'Effective evaluation through appreciative inquiry', *Performance Improvement*, Vol. 47, No. 2, pp.23–29, DOI: 10.1002/pfi.181.
- Essex, E.M. and Mainemelis, C. (2002) 'Learning from an artist about organizations: the poetry and prose of David Whyte at work', *Journal of Management Inquiry*, Vol. 11, No. 2, pp.148–159, DOI: 10.1177/10592602011002008.
- Fischer, D., Osafo, E. and Turner, B. (2010) 'Further investigation of an IAT for workplace integrity', in *25th Annual Meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, SIOP, Atlanta, GA, pp.1–31.
- Gadugah, N. (2015) 'I have a dead goat syndrome – Mahama tells Ghanaians', Myjoyonline.com, 3 November, p.1 [online] <http://www.myjoyonline.com/politics/2015/March-11th/i-have-dead-goat-syndrome-mahama-tells-ghanaians.php> (accessed 5 August 2018).
- Gardner, D.G. and Pierce, J.L. (1998) 'Self-esteem and self-efficacy within the organizational context', *Group & Organization Management*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp.48–70, DOI: 10.1177/1059601198231004.
- Geiger, S. and Finch, J. (2010) 'Networks of mind and networks of organizations: the map metaphor in business network research', *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp.381–389, Elsevier Inc., DOI: 10.1016/j.indmarman.2007.08.009.
- Heifetz, R.A. (1994) *Leadership without Easy Answers*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- Heifetz, R.A., Grashow, A. and Linsky, M. (2009) *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*, Harvard Business Press, Boston, MA.
- Hogler, R. et al. (2008) 'Meaning in organizational communication', *Management Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp.393–412, DOI: 10.1177/0893318907309929.
- Jacobs, C.D. and Heracleous, L.T. (2006) 'Constructing shared understanding: the role of embodied metaphors in organization development', *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, Vol. 42, No. 2, pp.207–226, DOI: 10.1177/0021886305284895.
- Japan Society of London (1893) *No Title*, Vol. 1, Kegan Paul/Harvard University, Japan.
- Kaarst-Brown, M.L. and Robey, D. (1999) 'More on myth, magic, and metaphor', *Information Technology & People*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp.192–218, DOI: 10.1108/09593849910267251.
- Kamoche, K., Cunha, M.P.E. and da Cunha, J.V. (2003) 'Towards a theory of organizational improvisation: looking beyond the jazz metaphor', *Journal of Management Studies*, December, Vol. 40, pp.2023–2051, DOI: 10.1046/j.1467-6486.2003.00410.x.
- Katz, I. (1996) *The Construction of Racial Identity in Children of Mixed Parentage: Mixed Metaphors*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London, UK.
- Kim, T-Y., Liu, Z. and Diefendorff, J.M. (2015) 'Leader-member exchange and job performance: the effects of taking charge and organizational tenure', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp.216–231, DOI: 10.1002/job.1971.

- Knowles, M. and Moon, R. (2004) *Introducing Metaphor*, Routledge – Taylor and Francis Group, London.
- Koch, S. and Deetz, S. (1981) 'Metaphor analysis of social reality in organizations', *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp.1–15, DOI: 10.1080/00909888109360284.
- Lakoff, G. (1993) 'The contemporary theory of metaphor', in Orton, A. (Ed.): *Metaphor and Thought*, pp.202–251, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, DOI: 10.1017/CBO9781139173865.013.
- Liden, R.C., Sparrowe, R.T. and Wayne, S.I. (1997) 'Leader-member exchange theory: the past and potential for the future', in Buckley, M.R., Halbesleben, J.R.B. and Wheeler, A.R. (Eds.): *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, Vol. 15, pp.47–119, JAI Press Inc., Stamford, CT.
- Marshak, R.J. (1993) 'Managing the metaphors of change', *Organizational Dynamics*, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp.44–56, DOI: 10.1016/0090-2616(93)90081-B.
- Maslyn, J.M. and Uhl-Bien, M. (2001) 'Leader-member exchange and its dimensions: effects of self-effort and other's effort on relationship quality', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 86, No. 4, pp.697–708, DOI: 10.1037//0021-9010.86.4.697.
- Mio, J.S. et al. (2005) 'Presidential leadership and charisma: the effects of metaphor', *Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp.287–294, DOI: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.01.005.
- Morgan, G. (1980) 'Paradigms, metaphors, and puzzle solving in organization theory', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 4, p.605, DOI: 10.2307/2392283.
- Morgan, G. (2016) 'Commentary: beyond Morgan's eight metaphors', *Human Relations*, Vol. 69, No. 4, pp.1029–1042, DOI: 10.1177/0018726715624497.
- Mullen, C., Greenlee, B. and Bruner, D. (2005) 'Exploring the theory-practice relationship in educational leadership curriculum through metaphor', *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp.1–14 [online] <http://www.isetl.org/jtthe/pdf/IJTLHE17.pdf> (accessed 13 January 2014).
- Muller, F.M. (1871) 'Lectures on the science of language', *Library of Princeton University*, Vol. 2, No. 6, Longman and Co., London.
- Newman, J. (2008) *Managers Turn a Blind Eye*, Newman & Grigg Psychological and Consulting Services Ltd. [online] drjennifernewman.com/2008/04/managers-turn-a-blind-eye/ (accessed 31 December 2017).
- Oates, B.J. and Fitzgerald, B. (2007) 'Multi-metaphor method: organizational metaphors in information systems development', *Information Systems Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp.421–449, DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2575.2007.00266.x.
- Örtenblad, A., Putnam, L.L. and Trehan, K. (2016) 'Beyond Morgan's eight metaphors: adding to and developing organization theory', *Human Relations*, Vol. 69, No. 4, pp.875–889, DOI: 10.1177/0018726715623999.
- Page, N., Bergner, S. and Wills, S. (2017) 'Who empathizes with machiavellian or narcissistic leaders?', *Harvard Business Review*, September, No. 15, p.6.
- Penninck, H. (2014) *An Analysis of Metaphor Used in Political Speeches Responding to the Financial Crises of 1929 and 2008*, The University of Gent, Gent, Belgium.
- Pondy, L. (1983) 'The role of metaphors and myths in organization and in the facilitation of change', in Pondy, L. et al. (Eds.): *Organizational Symbolism*, pp.157–166, JAI Press Inc., Greenwich, CT.
- Quist-Arcton, O. (2015) 'Why the president of Ghana said he was like a dead goat', *National Public Radio (NPR)*, 21 September, pp.1–9 [online] <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2015/09/21/442214549/why-the-president-of-ghana-said-he-was-like-a-dead-goat> (accessed 17 September 2018).
- Ridley-Duff, R.J. and Duncan, G. (2015) 'What is critical appreciation? Insights from studying the critical turn in an appreciative inquiry', *Human Relations*, Vol. 68, No. 10, pp.1579–1599, DOI: 10.1177/0018726714561698.

- Rowe, A. and Hogarth, A. (2005) 'Use of complex adaptive systems metaphor to achieve professional and organizational change', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp.396–405, DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2648.2005.03510.x.
- Schoeneborn, D., Vásquez, C. and Cornelissen, J. (2016) 'Imagining organization through metaphor and metonymy: unpacking the process-entity paradox', *Human Relations*, Vol. 69, No. 4, pp.915–944, DOI: 10.1177/0018726715612899.
- Semino, E. (2008) *Metaphor in Discourse*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
- Sergiovanni, T.J. (1994) 'Organizations or communities? Changing the metaphor changes the theory', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp.214–226.
- Simpson, P.L.P. (2000) *The Politics of Aristotle*, Univ of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC.
- Singh, K. (2010) 'Metaphor as a tool in educational leadership classrooms', *Management in Education*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp.127–131, DOI: 10.1177/0892020608090411.
- Steen, G.J. (2011) 'From three dimensions to five steps: the value of deliberate metaphor', *Metaphorik.de*, Vol. 2011, No. 21, pp.83–110.
- Tay, D. (2017) 'Metaphor construction in online motivational posters', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 112, pp.97–112, DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2017.03.006.
- Tell, J. (2000) 'Learning networks – a metaphor for inter-organizational development in SMEs', *Enterprise and Innovation Management Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp.303–317, DOI: 10.1080/14632440010028302.
- Tirrell, L. (2009) 'Epistemic aspects of evil: the three monkeys meet the atrocity paradigm', in Veltman, A. and Norlock, K. (Eds.): *Evil, Political Violence and Forgiveness: Essays in Honor of Claudia Card*, pp.35–51, Lexington Books/Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, MD.
- Tracy, S.J., Lutgen-Sandvik, P. and Alberts, J.K. (2006) 'Nightmares, demons, and slaves', *Management Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp.148–185, DOI: 10.1177/0893318906291980.
- Urwiler, R. and Frolick, M.N. (2008) 'The IT value hierarchy: using Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a metaphor for gauging the maturity level of information technology use within competitive organizations', *Information Systems Management*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp.83–88, DOI: 10.1080/10580530701777206.
- Woodward, I.C. (2017) *The Three Altitudes of Leadership*, INSEAD Knowledge: Leadership & Organizations – Blog [online] <https://knowledge.insead.edu/blog/insead-blog/the-three-altitudes-of-leadership-7541> (accessed 30 December 2017).
- Yawson, R.M. (2015) 'The 'wicked problem construct' for organisational leadership and development', *International Journal of Business and Systems Research*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp.67–85, DOI: 10.1504/IJBSR.2015.066812.