

Post-MCGI Society Research Team

Working Paper

Diminishing Returns: Why the MCGI Cares Recruitment Funnel is Failing (2026 Analysis)

Lugaw Feeding Drives as Mechanisms of Legitimacy Currency and
Surplus-Labor Extraction After Charismatic Loss

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Abstract

This paper analyzes MCGI's *lugaw* feeding drives and *MCGI Cares* activities as a hyperreal recruitment funnel and legitimacy-production system. Following the loss of founder-centered charismatic authority, the organization's public legitimacy increasingly shifts toward high-visibility logistics and repeatable "good works" as a substitute for doctrinal persuasion. We argue that charity in this context operates as a currency: it is minted through unpaid member labor and spent to acquire public trust, internal compliance, and recruits.

To formalize the observed pattern—declining baptismal intake despite sustained or intensified output—we introduce an Inflationary Legitimacy Function that models diminishing returns under saturation and skepticism. A preliminary process-tracing sequence shows tight temporal coupling between a *lugaw* event window (Oct 25–31), Mass Indoctrination (Nov 3), and baptism (Nov 13–16).

A later outcome marker—875 baptisms reported on Jan 10, 2026—is read as consistent with a late-stage "scissors crisis" in which the labor burden rises while recruitment yield falls. The paper concludes with testable predictions for the 2026 cycle and an evidence plan designed for public scrutiny.

1. Introduction: From Theology to Logistics

A religious organization changes character when its public authority no longer rests mainly on theology, Bible exposition, and doctrinal persuasion, but on visible operations—feeding drives, medical missions, logistics-heavy “good works,” and public-service branding. Weber’s classic point matters: charismatic authority is personal and unstable; succession often forces institutions to find substitutes when charisma cannot be inherited in functional form.[2]

In the post-founder period, MCGI’s public emphasis appears to shift toward performative charity and operational execution. This paper does not require personality judgments to stand. It treats the shift as an institutional pattern: as doctrinal persuasion loses force, visible outputs become a routinized legitimacy technology—repeatable, countable, and broadcast-ready.

The *lugaw* feeding drive is the central object of analysis. The argument is not that feeding the hungry is inherently suspect. The claim is narrower and testable: when charity becomes a primary legitimacy engine of a centralized, high-maintenance organization, it acquires predictable economic features—targeting, funnel design, labor externalization, and conversion pressure.

2. Core Claim: Charity Becomes Currency

The central thesis is simple: *lugaw* becomes a currency of “good works.” Currency here does not mean literal money. It means a unit that can be produced, displayed, and exchanged for benefits—trust, legitimacy, attention, and recruitment access.

In this framework, charity output becomes a moral accounting unit. It is displayed outwardly as proof of benevolence, circulated inwardly as proof of righteousness, and leveraged as a bridge into conversion processes. The organization “mints” good works through unpaid labor, then “spends” the resulting image to purchase legitimacy and prospects.

2.1 Formalizing the Mechanism: The Diminishing Returns of Performative Charity

To explain why baptismal intake (yield) can decline even as feeding drives (output) persist or intensify, this paper models the relationship as an economic production function subject to signal decay and saturation.

In a charismatic environment, “good works” can operate as a direct signal of divine backing and organizational virtue. In the hyperreal stage—where charity is routinely staged for media capture—the signal faces inflationary pressure. We propose the Inflationary Legitimacy

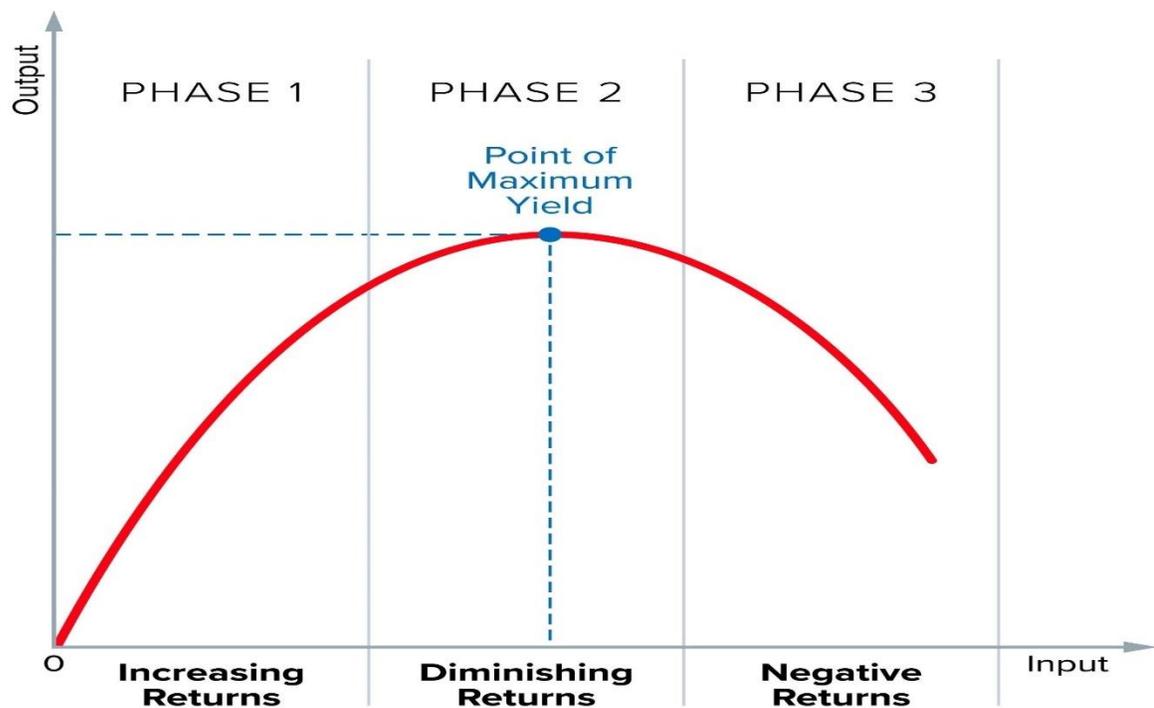
Function:

$$Y_t = \frac{\alpha(L_t \cdot V_t)^\gamma}{1 + \delta(S_t)}$$

Where:

- Y_t (Yield): Recruitment outcome at time t (e.g., baptism count).
- L_t (Labor): Volume of unpaid member labor hours utilized to produce events.
- V_t (Visibility): Visibility intensity (broadcasting, staging, social media saturation).
- γ (Elasticity): Baseline effectiveness of funnel operations (how efficiently inputs translate into conversion).
- $\delta(S_t)$ (Skepticism/Saturation Factor): The crucial variable; as public and internal saturation (S) increases over time, the denominator grows.

Interpretation: As time advances, saturation tends to rise because the signal is repeated and routinized. The denominator grows. To maintain constant yield (Y), the numerator ($L \cdot V$) must increase at an accelerating rate. This produces a Red Queen dynamic: the organization must run faster—extract more labor, stage more events—just to stay in the same place.[13]



When labor extraction generates internal burnout and yield continues to fall (as suggested by the Jan 10, 2026 figure of 875), the system enters negative marginal utility: more input produces less outcome. This formalization matters because it moves the argument from “people are tired of charity” to a structural claim: the system faces diminishing returns because the legitimacy signal inflates.

3. Theoretical Foundations: Why the Model Fits the Institution

3.1 Charisma Loss and Legitimacy Substitution

Weber explains the succession condition: charisma cannot be reliably inherited; institutions substitute other legitimacy technologies when doctrinal persuasion weakens.[2] In such settings, visible output becomes a substitute for persuasive authority.

3.2 Simulation and Simulacra: Hyperreal Benevolence

Baudrillard’s concept of simulation and simulacra helps explain why staged charity can detach from relief and become a self-referential image economy: the representation replaces the reality it claims to represent.[3] This paper’s framing is inspired by the Post-MCGI Society article “Simulation and Simulacra,” which argues that *MCGI Cares* functions as a curated performance of benevolence oriented toward optics and conversion potential rather than need-based relief.[1]

3.3 Signaling, Funnel Logic, and Targeting

Spence’s signaling framework clarifies why public charity functions as a trust signal.[4] Funnel logic then explains how signals convert into contact, contact into attendance, and attendance into baptism. The paper treats “lugaw drives” as top-of-funnel legitimacy production with a downstream conversion pathway.

3.4 Surplus Labor and Cost Externalization

Marx’s baseline insight remains useful here: where labor is essential and unpaid, surplus is captured elsewhere.[5] Even if participants interpret labor as devotion, the economic mechanism remains: wage costs are externalized downward, raising organizational capacity and potentially expanding the range of profitable or legitimacy-producing operations.

3.5 Hegemony and Discipline as Compliance Infrastructure

The model requires an explanation for why labor can be mobilized without wages. Gramsci explains moral normalization—how “duty language” makes extraction appear natural.[10] Foucault explains discipline—how surveillance and normalization produce self-policing compliance.[11] Together they describe the social technology that stabilizes the production function.

4. Mechanism: How Lugaw Becomes a Recruitment-and-Legitimation Machine

The mechanism is best understood as a pipeline that converts unpaid labor into optics, optics into trust, and trust into conversion steps. It starts with production. Members supply the work that makes the event possible—cooking, packing, transport, setup, coordination, and staffing. The key detail is not simply that labor exists, but that it is structurally treated as a renewable resource: the system assumes it will be replenished by moral framing and internal discipline.

Next comes staging. The charity event is not merely executed; it is designed to be seen. Uniforms, banners, camera angles, curated distribution scenes, and social media posting rhythms function like packaging. In Baudrillard’s terms, the representation becomes the product. The image of benevolence begins to do more institutional work than the relief itself.[3]

Then comes targeting. In a recruitment-funnel setting, charity is most useful when it reaches people who are reachable again—people who can be invited, followed up, and brought into a scheduled indoctrination pipeline. That is why the model expects selection pressure toward “convertible” recipients rather than strictly need-based distribution. Once charity becomes a legitimacy currency, it is rational—at the institutional level—to spend it where it yields conversion.

The pipeline then turns the act of giving into invitation. The moment of distribution becomes the relational hook: the pretext for contact, for a conversation, and for a timed schedule. Indoctrination consolidates that contact into a formal pathway, and baptism formalizes the conversion outcome.

Afterward, the outputs circulate again as proof: externally as benevolence, internally as righteousness, and organizationally as justification for the next round of extraction.

This is where the contradiction appears. If legitimacy depends on constant output, the institution cannot slow down without risking image loss. So it must mint more “good works.” But overproduction inflates the signal and accelerates burnout—pushing L up while Y falls. The

mechanism therefore predicts its own instability: the system demands more labor precisely when labor becomes harder to extract at the same conversion yield.

5. Evidence Strategy: Process Tracing, Replication Index, and Outcome Markers

This paper is designed to be publicly testable through dated sequences and measurable outcomes.

5.1 Replication Index A (Oct–Nov sequence; tight coupling)

In one observed cycle, *lugaw/MCGI Cares* activity occurred during Oct 25–31, followed by Mass Indoctrination on Nov 3, and then baptism on Nov 13–16. The charity-to-indoctrination lag is 3 days from the last day of the charity window (Oct 31 → Nov 3) and 9 days from the first day (Oct 25 → Nov 3). Indoctrination-to-baptism follows within 10–13 days (Nov 3 → Nov 13–16). This is consistent with funnel coupling rather than a random charitable cadence.[8]

5.2 Replication Index B (Nov–Dec cycle; Jan 10, 2026 outcome marker)

For the November–December period, this paper records an outcome marker: MCGI publicly reported 875 baptisms on Jan 10, 2026, described here as an unusually low figure relative to the longer intake series (Appendix B). This outcome marker is treated as a late-stage yield signal consistent with the inflation model: even if output remains visible, conversion yield can collapse.

The replication logic is straightforward and repeatable: each cycle logs (a) *lugaw* event window(s), (b) indoctrination date(s), (c) baptism date(s) and count(s), then computes lag distributions. Repeated short-lag coupling strengthens the funnel claim; scattered long-lag coupling weakens it.

Either way, the model becomes accountable.

6. The “Legitimacy Scissors”: Diverging Input and Outcome

This paper names the late-stage pattern a scissors crisis: a widening divergence between rising production costs (member labor and operational intensity) and falling recruitment yield (baptismal intake). The metaphor comes from political-economic discussions of “scissors” dynamics—divergent trends that create an extraction gap.[14]

Here the “Extraction Gap” is the space between:

- Input: Rising labor burden required to mint legitimacy tokens.
- Outcome: Falling conversion yield despite that burden.

The Jan 10, 2026 figure (875) does not by itself prove causality. But placed alongside the long decline in intake averages and the demonstrated funnel coupling sequence, it is consistent with a system entering a phase of diminishing returns: the machine runs hotter, produces less.

7. Connecting the Model to the Intake Decline Series

Appendix B provides the baptism intake series used in earlier Post-MCGI Society work. The series shows a long downward arc after the post-2021 peak, with a contested 2025 flatline. The Jan 10, 2026 count is included as an additional low outcome marker.

Read through the Inflationary Legitimacy Function, the trend suggests a worsening ratio: ($L \cdot V$) is pushed upward to defend legitimacy, while Y trends downward as $\delta(St)$ grows.

8. Predictions for the 2026 Cycle

If the Red Queen dynamic holds, the institution is unlikely to respond by slowing the legitimacy engine. It will more plausibly respond by accelerating it.

Prediction: In Q2 and Q3 of 2026, the organization increases the frequency and scale of feeding drives and related optics, accompanied by intensified internal pressure to “bear fruit.” Under the inflationary mechanism, the gap between member exhaustion (input) and institutional growth (yield) continues to widen unless the system fundamentally changes its legitimacy strategy.

This prediction is falsifiable: if output cadence decreases while yield rebounds, the model weakens. If output cadence increases while yield continues to fall or stagnate, the model strengthens.

Conclusion: The Scissors Crisis of 2026

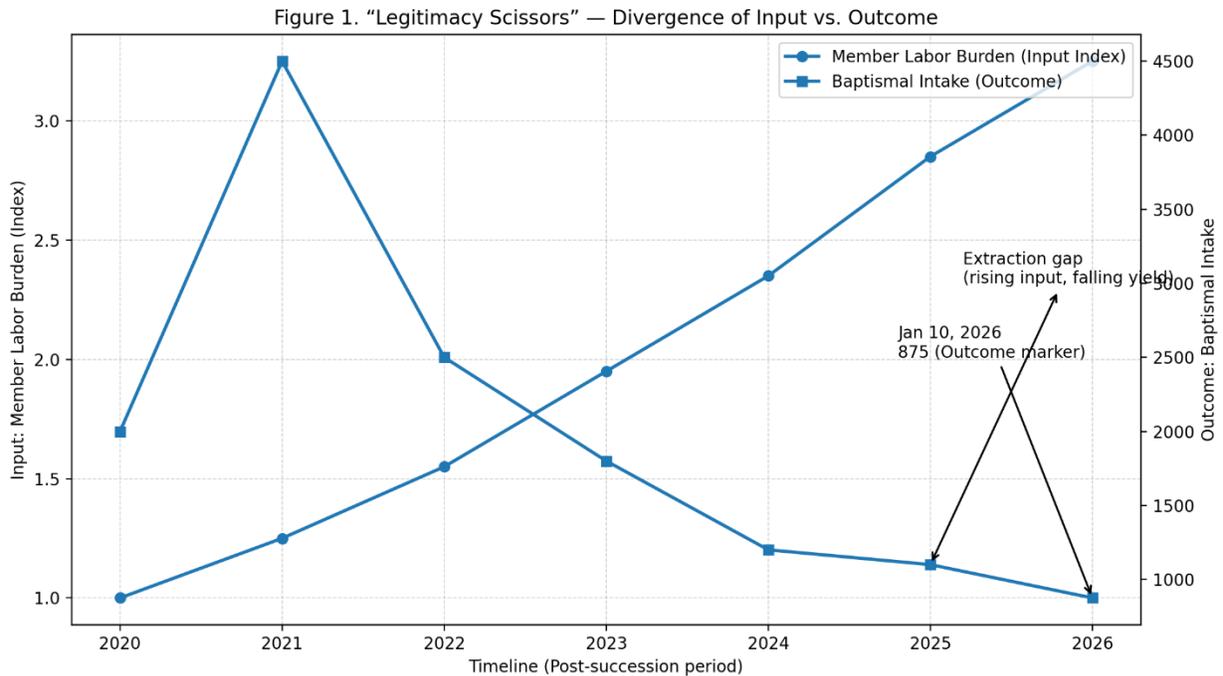
While MCGI’s *lugaw* feeding drives are framed publicly as pure benevolence, this working paper argues they function structurally as a hyperreal legitimacy engine designed to convert unpaid labor into optics, optics into prospects, and prospects into conversion. The system, however, shows signs of stress.

The paper introduces the Inflationary Legitimacy Function to formalize diminishing returns under saturation. As “good works” are mass-produced and simulated for media, their signaling value decays; the currency of charity loses purchasing power. The empirical pattern aligns with this logic: a tight funnel coupling sequence (Oct 25–31 → Nov 3 → Nov 13–16) appears alongside broader intake decline and a strikingly low reported baptism figure of 875 on Jan 10, 2026.

In this late-stage phase, the system resembles a Red Queen economy: exponentially increasing surplus labor is required merely to maintain static legitimacy, while recruitment yield weakens. If the mechanism continues unchecked, the gap between labor extraction and institutional growth will keep widening—and the machine will run hotter while producing less.

Appendix A: Replication Index Template

Replication Entry Format: Charity window (dates), Indoctrination date(s), Baptism date(s) and count(s), Lag A (last charity day → indoctrination), Lag B (indoctrination → baptism), Notes (targeting cues; labor mobilization cues), Evidence pointers (post IDs, archived screenshots, internal instructions).



Input curve is an illustrative index (proxy) representing rising labor burden (event frequency, logistics intensity, participation pressure). Outcome uses the provided int

Year	Average Monthly Baptismal Intake
2018	2,500
2019	3,000
2020	2,000
2021	4,500
2022	2,500
2023	1,800
2024	1,200
2025	1,100 (Contested; allegations of reporting manipulation)
Jan 10, 2026	875 (Publicly reported figure; cycle outcome marker)

Notes and References

- [1] Rosa Rosal, “Simulation and Simulacra,” Post-MCGI Society (mcgixiters.org), post slug: “simulation-and-simulacra.”
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- [5] Karl Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1* (Hamburg, 1867; various editions).
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[12] Mark Granovetter, “Threshold Models of Collective Behavior,” *American Journal of Sociology* 83, no. 6 (1978): 1420–1443.

[13] Leigh Van Valen, “A New Evolutionary Law,” *Evolutionary Theory* 1 (1973): 1–30.

[14] Evgeny Preobrazhensky, *The New Economics* (1926; various editions), commonly associated with early Soviet discussions of “scissors” dynamics.