

Paradoxical Leadership and its Impact on the Formation of Perceived Organizational Image: An Exploratory Study at the College of Administration and Economics, University of Basrah

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Abstract:

The current study aimed to explore the correlation and impact relationships between paradoxical leadership and perceived organizational image at the College of Administration and Economics. The research problem was characterized by the ambiguity and distortion surrounding the perceived organizational image, as some employees lack a connection to both the internal and external organizational image and do not actively work to preserve it. The study sought to verify the adoption of paradoxical leadership as a leadership style and to assess the clarity of the organizational image within the surveyed college. A questionnaire was distributed to 140 individuals, from which 128 valid responses were retrieved and analyzed. The findings revealed a correlation and impact relationship between paradoxical leadership and perceived organizational image at the overall level. The study recommended separating hierarchical relationships from personal relationships in managing college affairs to achieve a state of balance, maintain equal distances, and interact with employees uniformly to establish a unified organizational image among all members.

Keywords: Paradoxical Leadership, Organizational Image, College of Administration and Economics.

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Section One: Methodology and Previous Studies

First: Study Methodology

1. Research Problem

The organizational image is considered a critical managerial issue due to its impact on employees' attitudes toward work and overall performance. Increasing academic interest in the organizational image has been observed, as it influences employees' engagement in accomplishing their tasks (Lee & Lee, 2023, p.1). The accumulation of perceptions from both insiders and outsiders regarding all aspects of the organization forms the framework of the organizational image. This image requires a long time to develop and maintain its appeal in the minds of others, as it provides signals about the development and maintenance of the organization's audience. For this image to be positive, the organization must work to meet the needs of its employees (Bingol et al., 2013, p.229). This necessitates that organizational leaders create a work environment that prepares suitable conditions and addresses ambiguities in work roles. Paradoxical leadership can address these issues (Backhaus et al., 2022, p.24) through clear and consistent communication, leading by example, providing training and support,

assisting in self-development, managing time effectively, overcoming job procrastination, and addressing the emotional and psychological factors that contribute to workplace procrastination (Al Hisnawi et al., 2023, p.248).

Through interviews conducted by the researchers with several college employees regarding their perception of the organizational image, it was found that the perceived image in the minds of some employees is characterized by ambiguity and inconsistency among the individuals interviewed. In other words, the image is unclear and distorted. Moreover, the researchers discovered that some employees maintain their jobs solely for the salary, without having any connection to the external or internal organizational image.

On the other hand, there are studies that encourage further exploration of variables like organizational image (Lee & Lee, 2023, p.10) and paradoxical leadership (Backhaus et al., 2023, p.26).

Based on this, the researchers formulated the study problem as the following questions:

- Does the surveyed college adopt paradoxical leadership as a style in managing its functional affairs?
- To what extent is the perceived organizational image clear to the surveyed sample?
- Is there a correlation and impact between paradoxical leadership and the perceived organizational image?

2. Importance of the Study

A. The study integrates two closely related variables that influence employees' behaviors and their commitment to work within the surveyed organization: paradoxical leadership and the perceived organizational image.

B. The importance of the study is connected to the academic and social status of the surveyed college at the provincial, Basrah, and national levels in Iraq.

C. The study examines the emotional and psychological impact left by the surveyed college as a foundation for creating an organizational image that supports work.

3. Study Objectives

A. To confirm the adoption of paradoxical leadership as a leadership style that combines two opposing states to manage functional affairs in the surveyed college.

B. To determine the clarity of the organizational image among the surveyed employees.

C. To explore the positive or negative significance of the correlation and impact between the study's variables.

4. Hypothetical Framework

The hypothetical framework consists of two variables: servant leadership and job satisfaction, as follows:

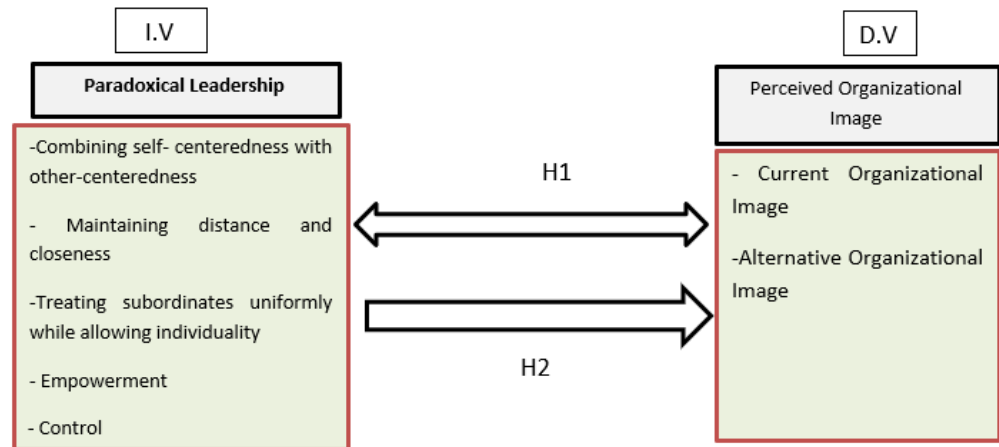


Figure (1): Hypothetical Framework

5. Hypotheses

(H1): There is a significant correlation between paradoxical leadership and the perceived organizational image, which branches into:

(H1.1) There is a significant correlation between combining self-centeredness and other-centeredness and the perceived organizational image.

(H1.2) There is a significant correlation between maintaining distance and closeness and the perceived organizational image.

(H1.3) There is a significant correlation between treating subordinates uniformly while allowing individuality and the perceived organizational image.

(H1.4) There is a significant correlation between empowerment and the perceived organizational image.

(H1.5) There is a significant correlation between control and the perceived organizational image.

(H2): There is a significant impact of paradoxical leadership on the perceived organizational image, which branches into:

(H2.1) There is a significant impact of combining self-centeredness and other-centeredness on the perceived organizational image.

(H2.2) There is a significant impact of maintaining distance and closeness on the perceived organizational image.

(H2.3) There is a significant impact of treating subordinates uniformly while allowing individuality on the perceived organizational image.

(H2.4) There is a significant impact of empowerment on the perceived organizational image.

(H2.5) There is a significant impact of control on the perceived organizational image.

6. Scope of the Study

A. **Time Boundaries:** From June 1, 2024, to December 1, 2024.

B. **Geographical Boundaries:** Iraq – University of Basrah, College of Administration and Economics.

C. **Human Boundaries:** A random sample of employees.

6. Study Population and Sample

A. **Population:** The population consists of employees from the College of Administration and Economics at the University of Basrah, totaling 200 individuals. The sample was randomly selected, with 132 individuals based on the sample size table of Krejcie & Morgan (1970). A total of 140 questionnaires were distributed to ensure the required sample size, with 128 valid responses retrieved for analysis.

7. Data Collection Methods

A. **Theoretical Aspect:** All available sources, both electronic and printed, in Arabic and foreign languages, were utilized. These sources were accessible in the library of the College of Administration and Economics, the central library of the University of Basrah, or available online and through Iraqi academic journal websites.

B. Practical Aspect:

The researchers developed a questionnaire with three sections, the first related to personal information, the second related to the paradoxical leadership variable (consisting of five dimensions and 20 items according to (Zhang et al., 2015), (Kazem, 2021) and (Backhaus et al., 2022)), and the third for the variable of perceived organizational image (2 dimensions and 12 items according to (AlKanani, 2019)) As. The researchers used the Five-point Likert scale responses to measure from the sample.

9. Statistical Methods

The statistical methods used include:

- Arithmetic mean
- Standard deviation
- Relative importance
- Pearson correlation coefficient
- Simple regression analysis

Secondly: Previous Studies

1-Studies on Paradoxical Leadership

A. **Study by Al-Hadrawi & Jaber (2023),** The aim of this study was to clarify conceptually and theoretically, on the one hand, the conceptual and theoretical parameters of the variables being investigated, and on the other hand, it was to determine their levels in the surveyed hospital. Furthermore, it aimed to determine the magnitude of the interactive variable, cognitive diversity, and its capability to decrease the level of ambiguity. The study was descriptive-analytical and the questionnaire was based on previous work in which it was developed. Forty items which sampled across the three variables were used in a questionnaire spread to a random sample of 264 from a population of 776. The responses were analyzed employing use of the software (24.Smart PLS SPSSV). According to one of the main conclusions of the study, paradoxical leadership would reduce strategic ambiguity only if the organization complied by supporting cognitive diversity. The considerations were to emphasize the need to pay attention to cognitive diversity to create an employee's ideas, skills and capabilities and in turn, to provide an ongoing developmental programme and to take into account the negative impacts as well as to work on removing them.

B. **Study by Backhaus et al. (2021), "Giving Sense about Paradoxes: Paradoxical Leadership in the Public Sector"** The purpose of this study was to understand the role of paradoxical leadership in the public sector and its impact on employee outcomes including job satisfaction, work engagement and perceived performance. The data to

study structural equation modeling got using 1290 employees from the government offices in Germany. Paradoxical leadership reduces the role and goal ambiguity in the workplace, thus increasing job satisfaction and work engagement, as revealed in the results. Despite this, there was no positive direct effect of paradoxical leadership on perceived performance, but rather through the reduction of role ambiguity. It is found in the study that paradoxical leadership is an effective way of managing complex and contradiction situations in the public sector.

2- Studies on Perceived Organizational Image

A. Study by Al-Kanani (2019), "The Mediating Role of Work Engagement in the Causal Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Image and Work Outcomes"

The study seeks to analyze the link between the organizational image perceived in the employees and the work results, investigating the role of work engagement as a mediator. Based on the opinions of 166 employees of the Directorate of Youth and Sports in Karbala, with a response rate of 94.9%, it was conducted. The study used an analytical approach to clarify the impact of the perceived organizational image in its current and alternative dimensions on work outcomes, including job satisfaction, work commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and turnover intention, through work engagement with its various dimensions (organizational and community bonds, organizational fit, community fit, organizational and community sacrifice). Data were collected using a randomly distributed questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS 23 and AMOS 20. The results showed that employees at the Directorate tend to maintain their current jobs, and that work engagement partially mediates the relationship between the perceived organizational image and work outcomes. The study concluded that the Directorate of Youth and Sports in Karbala should focus on maintaining the current organizational image, as it has a positive effect on employee satisfaction and acceptance.

B. Study by Andrade & Neves, "Perceived Organizational Image, Coworkers' Conflict, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Mediation Role of Work-Family Conflict"

The study aimed to analyze the relationship between the perceived organizational image, coworker conflict, and organizational citizenship behavior, focusing on the role of work-family conflict as a mediating variable. The study adopted a descriptive-analytical approach, collecting data from 164 full-time employees in elderly care institutions in Portugal. A questionnaire was used as the main data collection tool, which included measures of the perceived organizational image, coworker conflict, work-family conflict, and organizational citizenship behavior. The results revealed that the perceived organizational image directly and indirectly enhances organizational citizenship behavior by reducing work-family conflict, while coworker conflict negatively affected organizational citizenship behavior through the same mediating variable. The study recommends enhancing the positive organizational image and reducing conflicts in the work environment to support positive behaviors like organizational citizenship behavior.

Second Section: Theoretical Framework of the Study

First: Paradoxical Leadership

1. Concept of Paradoxical Leadership

The concept of paradoxical leadership centers around the idea that a leader adopts a specific approach to integrate behaviors that may seem contradictory on the surface but are complementary in essence. This means that a leader accepts and balances various contradictory demands simultaneously. Through this approach, the leader can meet structural requirements and follower needs concurrently, enhancing adaptability and innovation in facing various challenges (Waldman & Bowen, 2016:318).

In other words, the leader must possess the ability to manage tensions and changing circumstances while maintaining trust and focus on achieving goals. This requires continuous engagement with different tensions while preserving credibility and integrity (Lavine, 2014:2).

In this regard, Zhang et al. (2015:539) agree, stating that paradoxical leadership is the ability to enact behaviors that seem opposed but are synergistic, providing the essential organizational and follower requirements over a long period, which enhances efficiency and harmony at work.

This is reflected in Backhaus et al. (2022:1479), who describe paradoxical leadership as a "both-and" approach, where contradictions within the organization are acknowledged, and the leader addresses opposing aspects simultaneously, viewing them as potential opportunities rather than threats.

Li et al. (2020:2) identify key points in paradoxical leadership, which include:

- Combining self-centeredness and other-centeredness.
- Maintaining distance and closeness.
- Treating subordinates uniformly while allowing for individuality.
- Imposing work requirements while permitting flexibility.
- Maintaining control over decisions while allowing autonomy.

Due to the inherent contradictions in this leadership style, some researchers point out that it generates both positive (bright) and negative (dark) sides. Leaders dealing with contradictions to manage organizational affairs may create a sense of bias toward certain groups, which leads to internal conflict that may impact the organization's future. In this regard, Franken et al. (2020:5) mention that the bright side of paradoxical leadership appears when leaders attempt to integrate inherent tensions between control and empowerment over time. This requires leaders to combine seemingly conflicting behaviors, such as formal top-down managerial functions and emerging adaptive, informal functions, which enhance flexibility (Xue et al., 2020:7). Leaders successfully achieve this balance by managing the variation between different goals and diverse needs within the team, leading to better results. Thanks to the ability to balance direction and flexibility, teams can achieve superior performance and develop new ideas, fostering creativity and growth in the organization. Conversely, the dark side represents the opposite of the bright side. That is, when leaders exploit their power by placing followers in situations where they cannot make the right decisions to achieve personal or organizational goals, with a deliberate intent to harm or neglect risks, it signals the dark side of paradoxical leadership (Schmid et al., 2019:1403). Additionally, leaders may misuse their followers by employing complex rhetorical strategies known as double messages, which allow leaders to create situations where followers are unable to make the correct decisions, while always being held accountable for the wrong ones. This dynamic not only affects the mental health of followers but also undermines the fundamental goals and interests of the organization (Julmi, 2021:632). Furthermore, (Fürstenberg et al., 2023:2) add that the dark side of paradoxical leadership emerges when employees face difficulties in coping with the contradictory behaviors of their leaders, which may lead to negative or inconsistent reactions among them. These varied responses stem from individual differences in traits and cognitive abilities. The failure to understand the psychological effects this leadership style has on employees may lead to an incomplete or overly optimistic interpretation of its impacts, highlighting the negative side of this leadership in some cases.

Table (1) illustrates the views and contributions of researchers in defining paradoxical leadership in chronological order.

Researcher	Definition
(Pearce et al.,2019:2)	A leadership style that balances apparent contradictions in leadership behavior, such as treating individuals equally while considering their individual needs, enforcing work rules while allowing flexibility, and the ability to integrate opposing viewpoints to achieve positive outcomes.
(Guo et al.,2020:3)	A behavior that combines two contradictory leadership styles, such as flexibility and rigidity, to create an integrated strategy that effectively manages tensions.
KIM,2021:168)(A leadership approach that combines and balances opposing tensions, such as control and autonomy, to achieve effective management.
(Yin,2022:3)	This leadership style flexibly meets conflicting demands to achieve a reasonable balance among the needs of organizational structure and individual, for example, integrating opposite needs like controlling decisions and leaving autonomy, and enforcing requirements and offering flexibility.
(Lee et al.,2023:2)	A dynamic approach that integrates seemingly mutually exclusive behaviors, such as treating subordinates equally while freeing them of the constraints of conformity, being self centered while taking into account the other, maintaining control while encouraging people to be as independent as possible, and enforcing the work requirement while allowing flexibility, simultaneously.

The source: Prepared by the researchers based on the references cited within it.

Based on this, paradoxical leadership represents one that is able to manage jointly and simultaneously contradictory behaviors in terms of the organization as well as the follower. To take a lead of this kind, the leader needs to have the skill to weld contradictory elements, as for example to place self and others together at the same time, in the way that it contributes to both efficiency and harmony. But, when the leader uses these contradictions for personal progress or lets the followers fall into what then seems to be impossible situations, this part of leadership gets dark and thus creates tensions and clashes within the organization. If leader does not clarify their motivations to employees, there will be an increase of misunderstandings, negative comparisons by employees, in turn creating internal conflict. However, when appropriately employed, paradoxical leadership is a good way of handling all organizational matters.

2-Roles of Paradoxical Leadership

Paradoxical leadership relies on several roles to achieve a balance between stability and flexibility, aiming to maximize performance and innovation. This contributes to creating a work environment that supports creativity, enhances positive relationships, and adapts to external environmental changes. These roles include the following (Xue et al., 2020:7) and (Zhang et al., 2021:2):

- 1. Providing Stability:** The application of paradoxical leadership ensures stability through defined procedures along with organized standards that support operation continuity while shrinking chaos.
- 2. Enhancing Flexibility:** Through paradoxical leadership employees gain flexibility to adjust by being furnished with innovation spaces to experiment which improves their handling of changing situations.

3. Encouraging Voice Expression: Genealogical leadership stabilizes operations while permitting flexibility which enables employees to freely share their ideas leading to better communication and creative growth inside the organization.

4. Restricting Voice Expression: The expression of voice remains encouraged by paradoxical leadership yet certain aspects of this style might result in restricted communication if it threatens company objectives or disruptions surface.

5. Imposing Work Requirements While Allowing Flexibility: The leader establishes detailed objectives together with standards yet offers employees free rein to discover creative approaches because he desires innovative solutions.

6. Respecting Equal Treatment While Allowing Individuality: A leader shows fair treatment of all members and appreciates individual uniqueness that enables diversity within the team.

7. Maintaining Distance While Being Close: Leaders interact professionally with people while staying near enough to demonstrate genuine attention for their issues and requirements.

8. Balancing Self-Interest with Focus on Others: A leader effectively manages personal objectives alongside organizational requirements alongside team member welfare to improve connections and reach mutual objectives.

Two functions of paradoxical leadership create an essential core which enables organizations to maintain strict control together with flexible systems that guarantee operational effectiveness. Change management capabilities strengthen through the integration of stability and flexibility since organization structures achieve necessary adaptability to respond to external requirements.

3-Dimensions of Paradoxical Leadership

The current study relies on four main dimensions of paradoxical leadership: (A) combining self-centeredness with other-centeredness, (B) maintaining both distance and closeness, (C) treating subordinates uniformly while allowing individualization, and (D) control and empowerment. These dimensions have been used in several Iraqi Arabic studies, such as (Kazem, 2021) and (Al-Asadi & Al-Abro, 2021).

The scale demonstrated superiority by being designed exclusively for Iraqi context applications due to its capability to assess Iraq-based leadership relationships and behaviors properly. The scale uses tested research-based dimensions of paradoxical leadership and applies them to the Iraqi context which strengthens its credibility. This tool provides an organized model which brings together different leadership elements that range from control methods to empowering strategies alongside self-interest to other-orientation thus making it an excellent evaluation instrument for leadership results.

1. Combining Self-Centeredness with Other-Centeredness The paradoxical leadership approach unites both personal self-importance along with considering the needs of others. Leaders maintain control of their authority while encouraging subordinates to join decision-making processes and expressing gratitude to their commitments. Through equilibrium between self-centeredness and appreciation of others leaders preserve their authority while displaying humility along with recognizing others' worth that leads to better outcomes when facing difficulties (Huertas et al., 2019:5). Leadership maintains its core position within the organization but declines independence from considering others' needs. Paradoxical leaders blend the desire to be the center of attention with an appreciation for others' contributions, fostering a collaborative and participative leadership environment (Bolden et al., 2023:13).

2. Maintaining Both Distance and Closeness Maintaining a balance between closeness and distance in the relationship between leaders and subordinates is crucial for effective leadership. While some leadership styles, such as leader-member exchange (LMX), suggest that close relationships promote positive work behaviors, excessive closeness can be detrimental, leading leaders to avoid conflicts or difficult decisions. Sometimes, it can even weaken the leader's charismatic qualities. Leadership relationships are often formal and hierarchical, where distance is determined by status and authority. However, for commitment and trust, leaders should minimize this gap by building balanced personal relationships. Moderate distance can make leaders more effective and attractive to subordinates (Antonakis & Atwater, 2017:11).

3. Treating Subordinates Uniformly while Allowing Individualization The principle of uniformity suggests treating individuals based on their membership in a specific group in a consistent manner. However, some leadership theories, such as transformational leadership and leader-member exchange theory, advocate for individualized and personal treatment within groups. Leaders can place subordinates in uniform tasks and roles while recognizing their individual privileges and rights without showing favoritism (Fu et al., 2020). However, excessive emphasis on uniformity may strip individuals of their unique identity, causing them to feel unrecognized. Leaders must balance treating everyone fairly while also acknowledging the uniqueness and needs of each individual (Munk, 2023).

4. Control and Empowerment Leaders who adopt a paradoxical leadership style aim to balance control and empowerment. Control involves imposing rules and requirements on subordinates, while empowerment allows them the freedom and autonomy to make decisions. This balance is a paradox, as leaders are required to exercise control while simultaneously allowing flexibility (Bhupla, 2022). These contradictions are part of situational leadership, where leaders control employee behavior and work decisions while permitting a degree of autonomy. Some situations require strict control, while others may benefit from empowerment (van et al., 2022).

Second: Perceived Organizational Image

1. Concept of Perceived Organizational Image

The concept of perceived organizational image refers to how individuals within an organization (such as employees or managers) perceive the way outsiders view the organization. In other words, it is the impressions or perceptions that employees believe external audiences (such as customers, partners, or the community) form about the organization. This image can include perceptions of the organization's reputation, values, competence, success, quality in delivering products or services, and its positive or negative impact on society (Bromley, 2000:244). According to (Tanyildiz et al., 2020:15), perceived organizational image refers to the feelings and beliefs that emerge in the minds of customers and stakeholders concerning the organization. Perceived organizational image refers to the ideas and impressions individuals hold about an entity, whether a person or an organization. This image reflects how individuals perceive the entity based on their personal experiences, available information, and the messages the organization itself sends (Albert et al., 2000:14).

(Lievens, 2017:2) adds that perceived organizational image includes a set of thoughts and feelings linked to the organization, such as its reputation, performance, values, and social impact. (Wilson & Peper, 2004:190) explain that these thoughts may be either positive or negative, and they develop in an individual's mind over time as a result of continuous interaction with various system elements, leading to a comprehensive perception of the entity.(Andersson, 2022:682) agrees with previous definitions, indicating that perceived organizational image consists of the perceptions that ~~organizational members have about how others, both internal and external stakeholders,~~

view the organization. This image reflects the organization's reputation and the identity it believes it communicates to the external community. It includes evaluations and beliefs of members about how external stakeholders assess the organization and how these perceptions align with the organization's collective identity, influencing how members understand and interact with the organization.

The table (2) summarizes some of the contributions of researchers to defining the concept of perceived organizational image over time.

Researcher	Definition
(Ahmed & Khan,2019:894)	The perceptions held by employees or stakeholders regarding the organization's policies and initiatives, particularly those related to corporate social responsibility, and their impact on the well-being of employees and the community.
(Erat et al.,2020:3)	The way in which the organization defines its own operations and what it represents to stakeholders, by reflecting the core characteristics it highlights to distinguish itself in the minds of others.
(Peña et al.,2021:3)	How employees perceive social connections and values within the organization, and their positive or negative impact on fostering collaboration and trust.
(Andersson,2022:682)	Employees' perceptions of how others view the organization and how they evaluate it, which influence how issues are interpreted and policies are implemented within the organization.
(Lee et al.,2023:2)	The perceptions of members within the organization regarding how others evaluate the organization, and how it stands out and attracts attention based on its tasks, goals, and values compared to other organizations.

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the sources cited within.

From the above, the perceived organizational image is a collection of impressions and perceptions held by employees about a particular organizational entity, whether an individual or an organization, based on their personal experiences and the messages sent by the organization through which it communicates with employees and the community. This image includes evaluations of the organization's values, reputation, performance, and its impact on society. It also encompasses the perceptions of what employees within the organization believe the public perceives about it or the image the public has formed of the organization.

2- Importance of the Perceived Organizational Image

The perceived organizational image is a vital element in understanding how organizations interact with their environment and how individuals perceive those organizations. It significantly impacts the organization's reputation and reflects individuals' evaluations of the organization's efficiency and effectiveness in achieving its goals and meeting stakeholder needs. The perceived organizational image acts as a central element in management and organization by defining how organizations display themselves along with their stakeholders and by influencing how companies behave and strategize. Understand the following explanation regarding the vital significance of perceived organizational image:

A - Organizational image perception has crucial value because it directly transforms employee attitudes and behaviors to enhance organization performance outcomes. The way employees view their organization's image creates better workplace satisfaction and organizes higher commitment to develop improved work wellness. (Pérez & Martínez, 2017:124).

B - The positive work environment resulting from organizational image development drives employee satisfaction and commitment toward better organization performance leading to success. (Dhir & Shukla, 2019:972).

C - Organizational images created by members determine both environmental stakeholder interactions and a company's ability to establish sustainable identity procedures. Employee conduct together with business strategic decisions depend heavily on this factor. People's understanding of organizational success and effectiveness translates into valuable perceptions that guide decision-making at the company while promoting desirable workplace behaviors. An intense perception of sustainable organizational identity fuels employee collaboration together with trust which drives staff members to put in extra effort to reach company objectives (Kanwal & Van Hoyer, 2020:3).

3-Dimensions of the Perceived Organizational Image

In this study, we adopted the perceived organizational image scale by (Al-Kinani, 2019), which is a well-structured model suitable for the Iraqi environment. This scale is based on strong scientific foundations and utilizes the most widely used scale in research, developed by (Oswald, 1995). The dimensions of the perceived organizational image, according to Oswald, are divided into two main categories:

A - Current Organizational Image: This relates to how employees within the organization perceive their own organization, as well as how individuals outside the organization view it (Peng et al., 2020:3). It reflects how individuals embody the concepts and culture of the organization in the physical work environment, offering valuable insights into how members understand and embody this culture (Byrne et al., 2022:6). Therefore, it is an important tool for identifying strengths and weaknesses and addressing them to help develop strategies for improving the work environment and enhancing cultural alignment (Mutonyi et al., 2022:2).

B - Alternative Organizational Image: This is the comparative image that employees envision when considering working in a different organization than their current one (Ehrnström & Biese, 2022:1742). It refers to an unconventional or new vision of how economic and social activities are organized and perceived (Ehrnström & Biese, 2022:1742). It also explores alternative models aimed at improving human well-being and protecting the environment to achieve ecological and social balance (Levitas, 2022:468).

By using this scale, we can gain a comprehensive understanding of how employees evaluate their current environment and their perceptions of working in alternative environments, which enhances the accuracy and effectiveness of the study in the organization under investigation.

Third: The Applied Aspect

First: Validity and Reliability of the Study Tool

The study relied on Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to determine the reliability of the study tool and the internal consistency of the items. According to the following table:

Table (3): Reliability Results of the Study Tool by Dimensions, Variables, and Overall Level

Paradoxical Leadership		Perceived Organizational Image	
N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
5	0.73	2	0.83

Source: Prepared by the researcher according to the outputs of the SPSS program.

Second: Description and Diagnosis of the Study Variables (Paradoxical Leadership) and (Perceived Organizational Image)

The table below presents the description and diagnosis of the study variables based on the mean, standard deviation, and level of significance as follows:

Table (5): Description and Diagnosis of the Study Variables and Dimensions

N	Dimensions	Mean	S.D	Importance	Ranking of the Dimensions
1	Combining Self-Centeredness and Other-Centeredness	2.92	0.85	0.58	3
2	Maintaining Distance and Proximity	2.74	0.85	0.55	4
3	Treating Subordinates Equally While Allowing for Individuality	2.68	0.83	0.54	5
4	Empowerment	3.01	0.93	0.60	2
5	Control	3.52	0.74	0.75	1
Paradoxical Leadership			2.97	0.84	0.59
1	Current Organizational Image	2.96	0.95	0.59	1
2	Alternative Organizational Image	2.70	0.67	0.54	2
Perceived Organizational Image			2.83	0.81	0.57

Source: Prepared by the researcher according to the outputs of the SPSS program.

Table (5): It is clear that the variable (**Paradoxical Leadership**) obtained a total mean of (2.97), which is a difference of (0.03) from the hypothetical mean of (3), with a standard deviation of less than one, which is (0.84), and a significance level of (59%). The ranking of the dimensions was as follows: the (**Control**) dimension ranked first, meaning that "there is an agreement among the sample members that the leaders of the college have the ability to direct peripheral behaviors in decision-making related to work." The same applies to the (**Empowerment**) dimension, which ranked second with a mean of (3.01), indicating "an agreement among the sample members that the leaders of the college work on empowering employees, allowing them to participate in decision-making with flexibility and independence, and act within permissible limits."

As for the other dimensions, the sample's opinion was neutral, as shown by the means: (**Self-Centeredness and Other-Centeredness**) with a mean of (2.92), ranking third, (**Maintaining Distance and Proximity**) with a mean of (2.74), ranking fourth, and (**Treating Subordinates Equally While Allowing for Individuality**) with a mean of (2.68), ranking fifth. From this, we conclude that "the sample's opinion was neutral regarding shared leadership with followers, maintaining hierarchical structure and personal relationships, and delegating tasks suited to employees' skills and personal abilities."

On the other hand, the variable (**Perceived Organizational Image**) obtained a total mean of (2.83), which is close to the hypothetical mean, with a standard deviation of (0.81) and a significance level of (57%). The ranking of the dimensions for this variable was as follows: the (**Current Organizational Image**) ranked first, meaning "that the employees' perception of the college itself is characterized by a lack of clarity." As for the (**Alternative Organizational Image**) dimension, it ranked second, indicating "a lack of clarity in the current organizational image when compared to an alternative organizational image."

Third: Testing the Study Hypotheses

1. Correlation Hypotheses

The table below illustrates the correlation relationships for the main hypothesis and its sub-hypotheses as follows:

Table (6): Correlation Relationships

Independent Variable	Type of Relationship	Dependent Variable	R	sig	N	Result	
						Correlation	Hypothesis
Paradoxical Leadership	Correlation	Perceived Organizational Image	0.282**	0.001	128	Significant	Acceptance
Combining Self-Centeredness and Other-Centeredness	Correlation	Perceived Organizational Image	0.225**	0.005	128	Significant	Acceptance
Maintaining Distance and Proximity	Correlation	Perceived Organizational Image	0.181*	0.020	128	Significant	Acceptance
Treating Subordinates Equally While Allowing for Individuality	Correlation	Perceived Organizational Image	0.275**	0.001	128	Significant	Acceptance
Empowerment	Correlation	Perceived Organizational Image	0.240**	0.003	128	Significant	Acceptance
Control	Correlation	Perceived Organizational Image	0.037	0.339	128	Insignificant	Rejection

Hypotheses are considered significant according to (Sig) if the value does not exceed (0.05).

Source: Prepared by the researcher according to the outputs of the SPSS program.

From the table above, we notice that the **Sig** value was less than (0.05), which means that the main hypothesis and its sub-hypotheses are accepted, except for the correlation between **Control** and **Perceived Organizational Image**, which showed an insignificant relationship. Therefore, we reject the hypothesis stating "**There is a significant correlation between control and perceived organizational image**" and replace it with the null hypothesis as follows: "**There is no significant correlation between control and perceived organizational image.**"

2- Causal Relationships Between the Study Variables

The table below illustrates the causal relationships between the **Paradoxical Leadership** variable and the **Perceived Organizational Image**.

Table (7): Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Independent Variable	Type of Relationship	Dependent Variable	R Square	B	R	F	F-value	Result	
								Correlation	Hypothesis
Paradoxical Leadership	Effect	Perceived Organizational Image	0.080	0.303	0.282 ^a	10.93	7.88	Significant	Acceptance
Combining Self-	Effect	Perceived Organizational Image	0.051	0.165	0.225 ^a	6.711	7.88	Insignificant	Rejection

Centeredness and Other-Centeredness		l Image							
Maintaining Distance and Proximity	Effect	Perceived Organizational Image	0.033	0.134	0.181 ^a	4.29	7.88	Insignificant	Rejection
Treating Subordinates Equally While Allowing for Individuality	Effect	Perceived Organizational Image	0.075	0.208	0.275 ^a	10.29	7.88	Significant	Acceptance
Empowerment	Effect	Perceived Organizational Image	0.66	0.161	0.240 ^a	7.92	7.88	Significant	Acceptance
Control	Effect	Perceived Organizational Image	0.001	0.031	0.037 ^a	0.172	7.88	Insignificant	Rejection

Source: Prepared by the researcher according to the outputs of the SPSS program.

Based on the table above, and by comparing the critical F-value with the calculated F-value, we can conclude that the main hypothesis (H2) and some of its sub-hypotheses (H2.3 and H2.4) are accepted, while hypotheses (H2.1), (H2.2), and (H2.5) are rejected, with their alternatives being accepted.

Section 4: Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Conclusions

A. The college relies on a paradoxical leadership style, though not entirely, as it heavily depends on the dimensions of control and empowerment in managing its operational affairs. This might be due to the existence of other leadership styles used as supplementary models for managing the entire college.

B. The framework of the organizational image formed in the minds of employees is unclear, especially when compared to the organizational image of other organizations or colleges. This may be due to the fluctuation of the adopted leadership style or the perceived disregard for individual differences among employees.

C. Control, as a leadership dimension, cannot serve as the dominant factor in shaping a comprehensive and clear organizational image, as indicated by the lack of a correlation between the control dimension and the perceived organizational image at the overall level.

D. It has been revealed that the college cannot combine self-centeredness and shared leadership with employees, as shown by the lack of effect between combining self-centeredness and focusing on others with the perceived organizational image.

E. Maintaining distance and closeness — There is an imbalance between maintaining distance (hierarchical structure) and closeness (personal relationships), as indicated by the lack of effect between maintaining distance and closeness with the perceived organizational image.

F. There is a significant correlation and effect between paradoxical leadership at the overall level and the perceived organizational image at the overall level.

2. Recommendations

A. Build a positive organizational climate characterized by cooperation and equality among the staff to create a clear organizational image among employees, encouraging them to put more effort into improving their performance.

B. Focus on empowering employees and providing them with the space to participate in

leadership to increase their sense of belonging to the college, which will help create a strong organizational image that drives them to feel valued by the institution.

C. Treat all employees equally while considering individual differences, and avoid ambiguity in certain directives, which some employees perceive as secondary, non-transparent behaviors.

D. Adopt approaches that elevate employees' intrinsic value and focus on community service to achieve a match between the internal organizational image among employees and the external image in society.

E. Separate hierarchical relationships from personal relationships in managing the college's affairs to reach a balanced state, ensuring equal distance in treating employees and forming a unified organizational image for all.

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