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PARADOXICAL LEADERSHIP: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract: In the contemporary complex business world, the presence of paradoxes within organizations has become increasingly salient, leading to a heightened interest in the concept of paradoxical leadership among researchers. The objective of this systematic review was to delineate the primary research streams on paradoxical leadership, to examine the methodologies and contexts commonly used in the literature, and to identify current knowledge gaps, as well as to propose strategies for addressing these gaps, thereby offering appropriate recommendations for future research. This study adopted a systematic review approach for its methodology. Inclusion criteria were that the studies be written in Turkish and English, focus directly on the topic of paradoxical leadership, be published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and that full-text access be available. Within this context, a total of 100 articles published on paradoxical leadership in the Scopus and Google Scholar databases between 1986 and 2024 have been systematically examined. It has been determined the characteristics deemed essential for a paradoxical leader are generally considered as premises. The outcome variables predominantly examined include innovative and creative behaviors, as well as innovative performance. Recent studies have acknowledged the negative aspects of paradoxical leadership, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive understanding of its complex nature.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Paradox, organizational paradoxes, paradoxical leadership, systematic review.

JEL Kodu: M00, M10, M19.

PARADOKSAL LİDERLİK: SİSTEMATİK BİR DERLEME

Özet: Günümüzün karmaşık iş dünyasında, örgütler içindeki paradoksların varlığı giderek daha belirgin hale gelmiş ve araştırmacılar arasında paradoksal liderlik kavramına olan ilgi artmıştır. Bu sistematik incelemenin amacı, paradoksal liderlik üzerine temel araştırma akımlarını belirlemek, literatürde yaygın olarak kullanılan metodolojileri ve bağlamları incelemek, mevcut bilgi boşluklarını belirlemek ve bu boşlukları gidermeye yönelik stratejiler önererek gelecekteki araştırmalar için uygun öneriler sunmaktır. Bu çalışmada metodoloji olarak sistematik bir inceleme yaklaşımı benimsenmiştir. Dahil etme kriterleri, çalışmaların Türkçe ve İngilizce dillerinde yazılmış olması, doğrudan paradoksal liderlik konusuna odaklanması, hakemli bilimsel dergilerde yayımlanmış olması ve tam metinlerine erişim sağlanabilmesi şeklinde belirlenmiştir. Bu bağlamda, 1986-2024 yılları arasında Scopus ve Google Akademik veri tabanlarında paradoksal liderlik üzerine yayınlanmış toplam 100 makale sistematik olarak incelenmiştir. Paradoksal bir lider için olmazsa olmaz kabul edilen özelliklerin genellikle öncül olarak kabul edildiği belirlenmiştir. Ağırlıklı olarak incelenen sonuç değişkenleri arasında yenilikçi ve yaratıcı davranışlar ile yenilikçi performans yer almaktadır. Son çalışmalar, paradoksal liderliğin olumsuz yönlerini kabul ederek, karmaşık yapısının daha kapsamlı bir şekilde anlaşılması ihtiyacını vurgulamaktadır.

Keywords: Paradoks, örgütsel paradokslar, paradoksal liderlik, sistematik derleme.

JEL Code: M00, M10, M19.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in paradoxes in organizations, driven by the dynamic nature of today's business environment, which poses both internal and external challenges to organizations (Batool et al., 2023b, p. 240). Academics argue that paradoxes have become an ordinary phenomenon (Julmi, 2021, p. 631). In such complex environments, leaders are likely to face heightened paradoxical demands (Batool et al., 2023b, p.240; Jules and Good, 2014, p. 123; Zhang et al., 2015, p. 538).

Among the various organizational paradoxes, examples include "centralization versus decentralization", "quality versus cost", "competition versus cooperation", "profit versus social responsibility". Leaders must reveal paradoxical leadership skills to balance and resolve these tensions and conflicts (He and Yun, 2022, p. 3; Jules and Good, 2014, p. 123; Lewis, 2000, p. 760; Pan and He, 2022, p. 28). Paradoxical leaders can focus on the conflicting needs of organization and its employees in diverse and simultaneous ways (Meng et al., 2023, p. 1). Starting from this point, a systematic review of the paradoxical leadership literature was conducted, focusing on the period between 1986-2024. To develop a comprehensive framework of the literature on paradoxical leadership, conducting a systematic synthesis of paradoxical leadership research can help reveal the breadth and depth of existing knowledge. Starting from this point, first of all, the results of the articles related to the subject has systematically compiled and the research framework of the antecedent and consequent variables of paradoxical leadership has compiled in order to find an answer to the question of "what do we know". Subsequently, the context and methods used in previous studies are evaluated. Finally, it is thought that the article will contribute to the literature by drawing a road map on "where to go" regarding paradoxical leadership.

Review of Literature

"Paradox refers to coexistence of conflicting yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously". Elements that are absurd and illogical alone are complement each other when viewed together (Cameron, 1986, p.545; Lewis, 2000, p.760).

As paradoxes cannot be resolved logically, it has been argued that adopting either/or thinking is insufficient for dealing with (Lewis, 2000; Lewis et al., 2014). To deal effectively with paradoxes, tensions between opposing elements must be reframed as possibilities of both/and. Both/and thinking mean accepting both sides of the continuum rather than rejecting one by accepting the other (Starr et al., 2021, p.6).

Tensions and competing demands are inherent in organizational functioning. These contradictions may arise between individual and group demands, focus and flexibility, autonomy and democracy, quality and cost, as well as differentiation and integration, stability, and change (Clegg et al., 2002, pp.483-484; Lewis, 2000, p.762; Zhang et al., 2015, p.540). For example, managers may be expected "to increase efficiency and creativity, form individual teams, think globally, and act locally" (Lewis, 2000: 760). Investigating ways in which that organizations can effectively cope with competing demands simultaneously is a common thread of paradox studies (Bashir, 2021, p.108).

Paradoxical Leadership

In the 21st century, developments such as globalization, digitalization and industry 4.0 have contributed toincreasingly flexiable, complex and competitive organizational environments (Yücel, 2022, p. 559). Leaders encounter various paradoxes and contradictions throughout their working lives (Farrell, 2018, p. 167). Consequently, managers must recognize

the tensions and concerns caused by paradoxes and leverage them for organizational benefits (Lewis, 2000, p. 764). This situation led to the emergence of paradoxical leadership (Lewis et al., 2014, p. 58). Paradoxical leader behavior refers to "seemingly competing but interrelated behaviors to meet structural demands and follower demands simultaneously and over time" (Zhang et al., 2015, p. 539).

In contemporary organizations operating within complex business environments, models based on linear thinking and rational problem solving are inadequate. For example, in the situational leadership approach, the "either/or" strategy is emphasized, which is based on the proposition that both poles of the paradox can be right or wrong, depending on the situation (Smith and Lewis, 2011, p. 381). While choosing between conflicting demands may improve short-term performance, it is essential for leaders to have a paradox perspective that emphasizes a both/and approach to maintain long-term effectiveness (Zhang et al., 2015, pp. 538-539).

Methodology

The rapid increase in research on paradoxical leadership in recent years has led to a conceptual fragmentation in the literature and the emergence of inconsistent theoretical foundations. This situation makes it difficult to evaluate the current findings within a holistic framework. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to create a comprehensive and integrative systematic review to systematically synthesize current findings, clarify conceptual boundaries, reveal underlying mechanisms, and develop a multi-level and contextualized understanding of paradoxical leadership. This study utilized a systematic review method to map the main research streams on "paradoxical leadership", identify commonly employed methods and contexts, and identify existing knowledge gaps. The conceptual frameworks utilized are TCM framework developed by Paul et al. (2017) and ADO framework developed by Paul and Benito (2018). Both frameworks were initially published by Lim et al. (2021), and served as a guide for this study. In this context, a total of 100 articles published on the subject between 1986 and 2024 were reviewed. The year 1986 was accepted as the year when the first study on organizational paradoxes was conducted.

"Systematic review is the systematic and impartial scanning, evaluation and synthesis of studies on a certain subject in accordance with certain criteria" (Çınar, 2021, p. 311). According to Klassen et al. (1998, p. 700), "a systematic review is an examination in which a comprehensive search is made for relevant studies on a particular subject and the identified ones are then evaluated and synthesized according to a predetermined and clear method".

Procedure

PRISMA protocol was followed to ensure reliability of this systematic review. This protocol consists of the following key stages: identification, scanning, eligibility and inclusion (Lim et al., 2021).

Identification: Initially, in terms of source type, articles have been exclusively considered in this study, thereby excluding thesis, books, and book chapters. The "Scopus" and "Google Scholar" databases were chosen to identify studies on paradoxical leadership. The use of both Scopus and Google Scholar databases in the systematic literature review was preferred to increase the comprehensiveness of the literature and reduce indexing biases. Scopus presents fundamental and high-impact studies in the field, while Google Scholar made it possible to include unindexed or newly published studies in the search (Harzing and Alakangas, 2016; Mongeon and Paul-Hus, 2016; Gusenbauer and Haddaway, 2020; Haddaway et al., 2015). The search period encompassed the years 1986 to 2024. "paradoxical leader", "paradoxical leadership" and "paradoxical leader behavior" have been used as keywords in Turkish and

English. This choice was made because the concept is addressed in the literature both as a leadership approach and at the level of individual leadership behavior. The combined use of both terms has increased the comprehensiveness of the literature by including studies that examine the concept at different analytical levels.

Scanning: A comprehensive search has been conducted using keywords. In the first step, scanning was limited to titles. Among the articles addressing the topic of "paradoxical leadership", the most relevant ones have been selected. This systematic review include both conceptual and empirical articles.

Eligibility and Inclusion: Following the screening process, specific inclusion and exclusion criteria have been applied to restrict the research. The inclusion criteria stipulated that articles must be written in Turkish and English on the subject of paradoxical leadership, published in scientific-refereed journals, and provide full text access. The full text of the relevant articles are comprehensively evaluated to ensure eligibility. Only articles published in peer-reviewed journals were included as they undergo a rigorous evaluation process.Therefore, thesis, conference proceedings, books, and book chapters have been excluded from this study. Non-academic articles and inaccessible publications have been excluded from the scope as well. Additionally, articles that were evaluated for relevance and studies deemed outside the scope of the review were excluded. Thus, 100 articles reach, which are a mixture of qualitative, quantitative and conceptual studies.
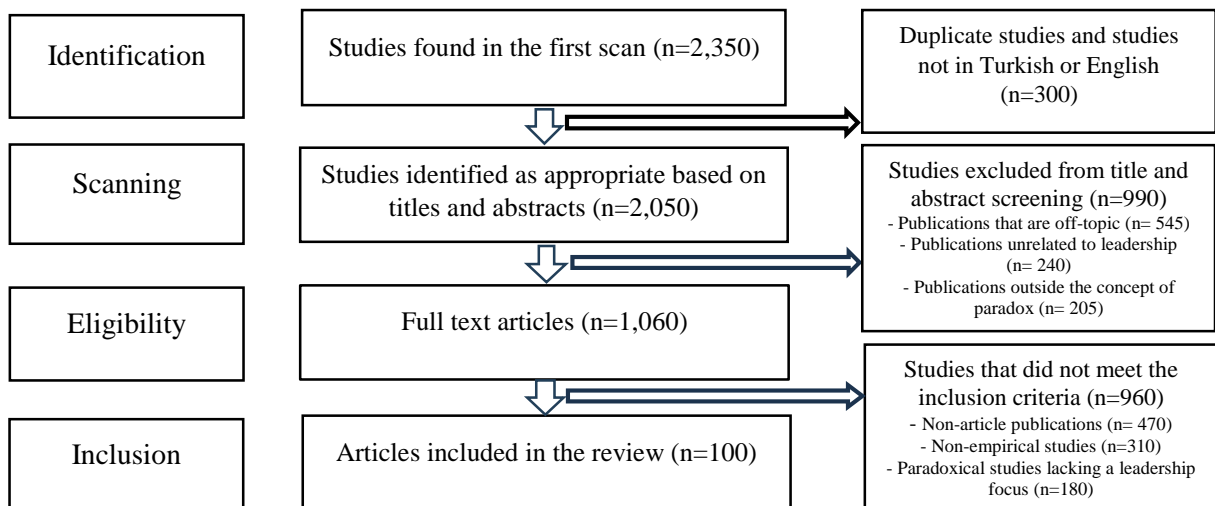
Identification	Studies found in the first scan (n=2,350)	Duplicate studies and studies not in Turkish or English (n=300)
Scanning	Studies identified as appropriate based on titles and abstracts (n=2,050)	Studies excluded from title and abstract screening (n=990) - Publications that are off-topic (n= 545) - Publications unrelated to leadership (n= 240) - Publications outside the concept of paradox (n= 205)
Eligibility	Full text articles (n=1,060)	Studies that did not meet the inclusion criteria (n=960) - Non-article publications (n= 470) - Non-empirical studies (n=310) - Paradoxical studies lacking a leadership focus (n=180)
Inclusion	Articles included in the review (n=100)	

Figure 1. The PRISMA

Findings of the Study

Table 1 provides a summary of the 100 articles evaluated. Four main questions were identified to guide the comprehensive review of the articles. (1) What is known about paradoxical leadership? (2) Which research contexts were examined? (3) Which research methods were used? (4) Where should we go regarding paradoxical leadership?

Table 1. Summary of Paradoxical Leadership Studies Between 1986-2024				
Study	**Citation Counts**	**Context**	**Purpose**	**Method**
Cameron, 1986	2032	USA	The paradoxical nature of effectiveness criteria in organizations is investigated.	Conceptual
Lewis, 2000	4049	USA	It is aimed to contribute to researchers discovering paradoxes.	Conceptual
Clegg et.al., 2002	835	Great Britain	Regularities in the management paradox literature have been presented.	Review
Kodish, 2006	102	USA	It is aimed to provide an explanation of Aristotle's philosophy and the paradoxical combination of leadership characteristics.	Conceptual
Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009	3544	USA	The role of integration and differentiation tactics in managing paradoxes has been investigated.	Qualitative
Smith & Lewis, 2011	6264	USA	The paradox literature has been reviewed, its types have been categorized, and the main debates have been highlighted.	Conceptual
Smith et al., 2012	358	USA	The skills required to effectively manage the tensions that social entrepreneurs may face have been explored.	Conceptual
Smith & Lewis, 2012	140	USA	In order to draw attention to the paradox, basic arguments have been developed by determining leadership skills.	Conceptual
Barnson, 2014	17	USA	The effect of sports coaching academics' paradox perspective on the tensions of the coaching process has been studied.	Conceptual
Fredberg, 2014	77	Sweden	The practices of CEOs of global organizations towards managing paradox have been investigated.	Qualitative
Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014	107	Australia	It has been investigated how Singapore Airlines became one of the high-performance airlines thanks to its ability to overcome paradoxes.	Qualitative
Lewis et al., 2014	725	Great Britain	The importance of paradox management in terms of strategic agility and which practices are effective have been investigated.	Qualitative
Zhang et al., 2015	1006	China	Based on yin-yang philosophy, how paradoxical leaders can effectively deal with paradoxical challenges has been explored in this study.	Mixed

Ingram et al., 2016	247	Great Britain	Paradoxical tensions and paradoxical thinking in family businesses have been explored.	Quantitative
Alfes & Langner, 2017	62	Europe	It has been explored how the tensions between participative and directive leadership behaviors can be resolved in NPOs.	Qualitative
Knight & Paroutis, 2017	290	USA	The answer to the question "How do paradoxical tensions become apparent in organizations over time?" has been investigated.	Qualitative
Miron-Spektor et al., 2017	1088	USA	It is aimed to create a model that helps reveal individuals' various approaches to tensions. Resource scarcity has been identified as a source of tension.	Mixed
Zhang et al., 2017	412	China	The impact of paradoxical leader characteristics on CEOs' likelihood of possessing charisma, developing an innovative culture, and delivering innovative performance has been investigated.	Quantitative
Başar & Basım, 2018	23	Türkiye	It is aimed to develop a theoretical model that integrates the light and dark sides of leadership.	Conceptual
Jia et al., 2018	61	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership incompatibility on follower behavior has been investigated.	Quantitative
Li et al., 2018	82	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on team innovation has been investigated.	Quantitative
Pearce et al., 2019	113	USA	The ways leaders manage paradoxes have been investigated.	Qualitative
Shao et al., 2019	273	Netherlands & Germany	The effect of paradoxical leadership behavior on employees' creativity in situations where workload pressure and integrative complexity are high and the mediating effect of creative self-efficacy have been investigated.	Quantitative
Yi et al., 2019	60	China	The relationship between paradoxical leadership and innovation and the role of "knowledge sharing" have been investigated.	Quantitative
Zhang & Han, 2019	127	China	The role of paradoxical leader behavior in long-term organizational development has been investigated.	Conceptual
Al Hasnawi & Abbas, 2020	29	Iraq	The effect of paradoxical leader behavior on organizational inertia and the mediating role of workplace ostracism has been investigated.	Quantitative
Dashuai & Bin, 2020	21	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on individual innovation and team innovation has been investigated.	Quantitative
Franken et al., 2020	210	New Zealand	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employee resilience has been investigated.	Quantitative
Li et al., 2020	87	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employees' encouraging and prohibitive voice behaviors and the mediating role of psychological safety and self-efficacy has been investigated.	Quantitative
She et al., 2020	71	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employees' service performance has been investigated.	Quantitative
Xu et al., 2020	1	China	It is aimed to examine the conflicts and tensions caused by institutional transformation.	Qualitative
Xue et al., 2020	78	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employee voice behavior has been investigated.	Qualitative
Bashir, 2021	11	Pakistan	The effect of paradoxical leadership on work stress has been studied.	Quantitative

Chen et al., 2021	39	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership and the mediating effect of job crafting and career flexibility on leaders' task performance has been investigated.	Quantitative
Fürstenberg et al., 2021	136	Germany	The effect of paradoxical leadership behavior on follower goal clarity, job autonomy and work commitment has been studied in three stages.	Quantitative
Ishaq et al., 2021	64	Pakistan	The relationship between the personality traits of leaders and their followers' innovative behaviors and paradoxical leadership behavior has been investigated.	Quantitative
Jia et al., 2021	35	China	Antecedents of smuggling have been examined from the perspective of paradoxical leadership.	Quantitative
Julmi, 2021	34	Germany	In the article, awareness is raised about the dark side of paradoxical leadership and this situation is discussed within the framework of the concept called paratoxic leadership.	Conceptual
Klonek et al., 2021	68	Switzerland, Austria	The relationship between the entrepreneur's ambidexterity and paradoxical leadership has been investigated.	Quantitative
Meng et al., 2021	22	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership behavior on employees' mandatory organizational citizenship behavior and the mediating and moderating effects of job pressure perception and leader-member turnover change has been investigated.	Quantitative
Pan, 2021	45	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on organizational citizenship behavior has been investigated.	Quantitative
Ren & Yang, 2021	14	China	The relationship between paradoxical leader behaviors and followers' perceptions of justice has been investigated.	Quantitative
Rescalvo-Martin et al., 2021	58	Spain	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employees' extra-role service behaviors and the mediating effect of employees' development-oriented behaviors have been studied.	Quantitative
Sparr et al., 2021	52	Germany	The effect of paradoxical leadership on follower performance has been investigated.	Quanitative
Tan et al., 2021	2	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership behaviors on followers' unethical behavior has been investigated.	Quanitative
Yang et al., 2021	253	China	The effect of paradoxical leader behavior on employees' creativity through the mediating effect of employees' success at work has been investigated.	Quanitative
Yaşbay Kobal, 2021	2	Türkiye	The types and purposes of social enterprises in Türkiye and what kind of leadership skills social entrepreneurs have been investigated.	Qualitative
Zhang et al., 2021	21	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employee task performance has been investigated.	Quanitative
Backhaus et al., 2022	84	Germany	The impact of paradoxical leadership on follower outcomes (job satisfaction, job involvement, and perceived performance) has been studied.	Quanitative
Feng et al., 2022a	6	China	The relationship between paradoxical leadership and innovative behavior of employees and the role of proactive personality and work commitment have been examined.	Quanitative
Feng et al., 2022b	12	China	The relationship between paradoxical leader behavior and employees' taking responsibility has been investigated.	Quantitative
He & Yun, 2022	21	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employees' unethical pro-manager behavior and the mediating role of manager-subordinate Guanxi in this effect have been investigated.	Quantitative

Jabur & Alhadrawi 2022	2	Iraq	The effect of paradoxical leadership behaviors on the level of knowledge diversity has been investigated.	Quantitative
Jung et al., 2022	22	Japan	The relationship between paradoxical leadership and participation in creative tasks and the mediating role of creative self-efficacy in this relationship have been investigated.	Quantitative
Li et al., 2022	21	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on performance and the mediating effect of the employee's psychological well-being in this relationship has been studied.	Quantitative
Li & Ding, 2022	21	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on the adaptive performance of new generation employees has been investigated.	Quantitative
Liu & Pak, 2022	12	China	The effects of paradoxical leadership and servant leadership in explaining individual creativity and psychological need satisfaction have been investigated comparatively.	Quantitative
Niu et al., 2022	19	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on organizational citizenship behavior and the mediating role of leader-member interaction in this relationship have been investigated.	Quantitative
Pan & He, 2022	0	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employee loyalty and the mediating role of social change and job satisfaction have been investigated.	Quantitative
Park et al., 2022	36	South Korea	The paradoxical relationship of leadership with the emotional stability of the individual and how this interaction affects creativity through work engagement has been investigated.	Quantitative
Sulphey & Jasim, 2022	28	India	The relationship between organizational silence and employee voice and the moderating role of paradoxical leadership in this relationship has been investigated.	Quantitative
Wang et al., 2022	13	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employee innovation and the mediating role of organization-based self-esteem and harmonious passion have been investigated.	Quantitative
Yin, 2022	27	China	It has been investigated how paradoxical leadership develops the paradox mentality of subordinates.	Qualitative
Yücel, 2022	4	Türkiye	The effects of paradoxical leadership behavior on employees' creativity and versatility have been investigated.	Quantitative
Zhang et al., 2022	84	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on individual innovation and team innovation has been investigated.	Quantitative
Zhang & Liu, 2022	88	China	The relationship between paradoxical leadership behavior, employees' perception of legitimate power and intrinsic motivation, and the impact of these mechanisms on employees' creativity have been investigated.	Quantitative
Akeel & Elfattah, 2023	3	Egypt	It is aimed to determine the level of perception of paradoxical leadership behavior and the level of burnout and to determine the effect of perceived paradoxical leadership behavior on burnout.	Quantitative
Batool et al., 2023a	63	Pakistan	A multilevel Conceptual model is proposed by conducting a systematic review of paradox leadership theory.	Conceptual
Batool et al., 2023b	20	Pakistan	The impact of paradoxical leader behavior on leader effectiveness and the moderating role of job-related and structural uncertainty have been investigated.	Quantitative
Boemelburg et al., 2023	44	Switzerland	It is aimed to investigate the role of leadership in developing the paradox mentality of followers.	Quanitative

Chen & Yang, 2023	12	China	An evaluation of studies on paradoxical leadership in the Chinese context was made.	Quanitative
Collins, 2023	7	Australia	The combined effects of intelligence, anxiety, and anger, as paradoxical leader behaviors, on transformational leadership have been investigated.	Quantitative
Deng et al., 2023	6	China	The relationship between paradoxical leadership and employees' exploratory innovation has been investigated.	Quantitative
Geng et al., 2023	16	China	The effect of paradoxical leader behavior on creativity through role ambiguity and creative self-efficacy has been investigated.	Quantitative
Kundi et al., 2023	50	Pakistan	The impact of paradoxical leadership on employees' behavioral outcomes has been investigated through work engagement.	Quantitative
Lee et al., 2023	23	Thailand	The effect of paradoxical leadership behavior at the follower/team level has been investigated.	Conceptual
Li et al., 2023	10	China	The impact of paradoxical leadership on resistance to digital technology and employees' career sustainability has been investigated.	Quantitative
Lo et al., 2023	13	Taiwan	The effect of paradoxical leadership on organizational identification and turnover intention was investigated.	Quantitative
Meng et al., 2023	28	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on team cohesion and team performance has been investigated.	Quantitative
Oh et al., 2023	20	Korea	The effect of paradoxical leader behavior on employees' participation in innovation and problem-solving activities has been investigated.	Quantitative
Rajan & Aiswarya, 2023	6	India	The effect of paradoxical leadership on organizational creativity and the mediating role of employee resilience have been investigated.	Conceptual
Shehata et al., 2023	38	Egypt	The effect of paradoxical leadership on perceived organizational support has been investigated.	Quantitative
Trieu et al., 2023	91	Vietnam	The impact of paradoxical leadership on organizational ambidexterity and performance has been studied.	Quantitative
Wang et al., 2023	4	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership behaviors and the mediating effect of insiders on employees' self-evaluations have been investigated.	Quantitative
Wei et al., 2023	31	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on team innovation has been investigated.	Quantitative
Yang et al., 2023	4	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership behavior on employees' creative deviance has been investigated in two studies.	Quantitative
Younis et al., 2023	5	Pakistan	The effect of paradoxical leadership behavior on employee creativity has been investigated.	Quantitative
Bao & Yang, 2024	6	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership behavior on work-family conflict has been investigated.	Quantitative
Chang et al., 2024	5	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on company performance has been investigated.	Quantitative
Devi, 2024	91	India	The relationship between paradoxical leadership and employee creativity and the moderating role of knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding in this relationship have been investigated.	Quantitative

Elshaer et al., 2024	3	Saudi Arabia	The effect of paradoxical leadership on proactive work behavior has been investigated.	Quantitative
Gopakumar & Gupta, 2024	12	India	The effect of paradoxical leadership on social-business tensions in social enterprises has been investigated.	Qualitative
Hossain et al., 2024	53	Malezya	It has been aimed to examine the impact of the adoption of Industry 4.0 technologies and paradoxical leadership on the corporate sustainable performance of SMEs.	Quantitative
Lin et al., 2024	18	China	The relationship between paradoxical leadership and employee creativity has been investigated.	Quantitative
Pearce & Knippenberg, 2024	15	USA	The effect of paradoxical leadership on the innovation process has been investigated.	Quantitative
Rashid & Yahya Hassan, 2024	0	Iraq	The role of paradoxical leadership behavior in increasing the strategic agility of organizations has been investigated.	Quantitative
Xu & Liu, 2024	17	China	The impact of paradoxical leadership on manufacturing supply chain resilience has been investigated.	Quantitative
Yang et al., 2024	38	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership behavior on employee creative deviance has been investigated.	Quantitative
Zaman et al., 2024	12		The impact of paradoxical leadership on project agility and project success was investigated.	Quantitative
Zhang et al., 2024	12	China	The effect of paradoxical leadership on employee performance has been investigated.	Quantitative

ADO Framework

Among the 100 articles included in the review on paradoxical leadership between 1986 and 2024, the most frequently cited articles were Smith and Lewis (2011) with 5274 citations, Lewis (2000) with 3664 citations, and Andriopoulos and Lewis (2009) with 3237 citations. Smith and Lewis emerged as leading authors in the field. The journals in which articles on the subject are published are scattered, and there is no prominent journal.

Antecedents: It has been determined that in studies on paradoxical leadership, the characteristics that a paradoxical leader should have are largely discussed as antecedents. Furthermore, it has been found that context plays an important role in the emergence of paradoxical leaders. For instance, organizations with organic organizational structures present situations where paradoxical leaders emerge (Clegg et al., 2002; Zhang et al., 2015; Volk et al., 2022).

Mediators and moderators/decisions: The mediator variables most frequently addressed in studies on paradoxical leadership studies are self-efficacy and job involvement. It is seen that the leader-member interaction is the most studied subject among mediators.

Outcomes: The innovative, and creative behaviors of the employees and innovative performance have been mostly considered as outcome variables in the articles included in the review on paradoxical leadership. In these studies, the leader has generally placed at the center and the role of the followers has been ignored. In addition to identifying the positive aspects of paradoxical leaders, emerging research in recent years (Batool et al., 2023a; Cunha and Putnam, 2019; Delmas and Burbano, 2011; Julmi, 2021; Volk et al., 2022) has also begun to consider the negative aspects of paradoxical leadership.

Table 2. ADO Framework Summary of Paradoxical Leadership Studies Between 1986-2024

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Antecedents	**The Characteristics of Paradoxical Leader** Andriopoulos and Lewis, 2009; Batool et al., 2023a; Batool et al., 2023b; Clegg et al., 2002; Heracleous and Wirtz, 2014; Ishaq et al., 2021; Kodish, 2006; Lewis et al., 2014; Miron-Spector, 2021; Smith and Lewis, 2012; Smith et al., 2012; Pearce et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2020; Yaşbay Kobal, 2021; Zhang et al., 2015, 2017
	Contextual Factors Alfes and Langner, 2017; Barnson, 2014; Clegg et al., 2002; Fredberg, 2014; Ingram et al., 2016; Miron-Spektor et al., 2017; Volk et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2015
Moderators	**Leader-Member Interaction** Klonek et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2023; Meng et al., 2021; Niu et al., 2022
Mediators	**Self-Efficacy** Feng et al., 2022b; Jung et al., 2022; Geng et al., 2023; Li et al., 2020; Shao et al., 2019
	Job Involvement Feng et al., 2022a; Fürstenberg al., 2021; Kundi et al., 2023; Park et al., 2022
Outcomes	**Innovative Behavior** Dashuai and Bin, 2020; Feng et al., 2022a; Ingram et al., 2016; Kundi, 2023; Lee et al., 2023; Liu and Pak, 2022; Wang et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2021; Yi et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2022
	Creative Behavior Devi, 2024; Geng et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2023; Lin et al., 2024; Shao et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2024; Younis et al., 2023; Yücel, 2022; Zhang and Liu, 2022
	Innovative Performance Ishaq et al., 2021; Li et al., 2018; Pearce and Knippenberg, 2024; Zhang et al., 2017; Zhang and Liu, 2022

TCM Framework

Theories: It has been determined that all articles dealing with the subject of paradoxical leadership include leadership theories in their theoretical background.

Contexts: It has been indicated that the majority of the articles examined have been written within the context of China. This prevalence may be influenced by the emergence of

Ying-Yang philosophy in China. However, it has been observed that the Eastern orientation towards paradoxes differs from the Western orientation. In studies built on Eastern yin-yang philosophy, the integration of conflicting elements and the unity of opposites are emphasized. However, conducted from a Western perspective, emphasis is placed on separating paradoxical elements and appreciating the unique characteristics of opposites.

Methods: Quantitative method has utilized in the majority of the articles included in the review, with regression analysis emerging as the most preferred analysis method.

Figure 2. Paradoxical Leadership Literature General Framework
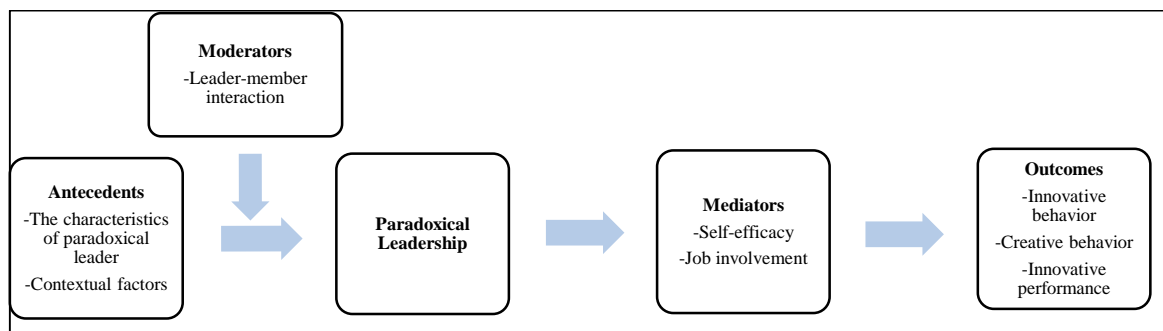
Discussion and Conclusion

The objective of this systematic review is to delineate the primary research streams on paradoxical leadership, to examine commonly used methodologies and contexts, and to identify current knowledge gaps, and propose strategies addressing these gaps, thereby offering recommendations for future research. As a result of this systematic review, it has been determined that the characteristics deemed essential for a paradoxical leader have generally been considered as premises in studies on paradoxical leadership. The innovative and creative behavior of the employees and innovative performance have mostly been considered as outcome variables in the articles included in the review on paradoxical leadership.

In the literature, there are two systematic review studies on paradoxical leadership, one by Batool et al. (2023a) and the other by Chen and Yang (2023). The model proposed by Batool et al. (2023a) revolves around individual characteristics and contextual factors as antecedents of paradoxical leadership behavior. Job competence, interpersonal conflict, and perceived organizational support are relevant mediating mechanisms that influence outcomes differently. Regulatory mechanisms include variables such as career flexibility and holistic thinking. Finally, it has been found that paradoxical leadership behavior positively influences followers' creativity, innovative behavior, and commitment to work. The antecedent and outcome variables included in the proposed model in this study are parallel to the model of the current study. In the model proposed by Chen and Yang (2023), holistic thinking, complexity, and personality traits are included as antecedents of paradoxical leadership behavior. At the individual level, positive thinking and self-control were identified among the moderators; at the team level, team task independence was observed. Regulatory mechanisms include variables such as role ambiguity, instability, and team dynamics. Outcome variables include employee creativity, job performance, and role performance. The outcome variables of the current study show parallelism only with the creativity variable among the outcome variables included in the model proposed in this study.

The literature shows that while there are numerous studies focusing on the personal and structural causes of paradoxical leadership, studies addressing moderator and mediator effects are relatively limited. The literature on paradoxical leadership is a relatively new area of research compared to classical leadership approaches. Therefore, in early studies, researchers

primarily focused on clarifying the conceptual framework of paradoxical leadership; explaining the role of individual characteristics of leaders, such as cognitive flexibility, emotional intelligence, and tolerance for uncertainty, as well as structural conditions such as organizational culture, environmental dynamism, and uncertainty, in the emergence of this leadership style. This trend suggests that, in parallel with the natural development process of the field, the focus is first on identifying the causes, and then on examining the mechanisms through which these causes are effective and under what conditions. However, in a multidimensional and context-sensitive concept like paradoxical leadership, examining the moderating variables that answer the question of "under what conditions?" and the mediating variables that address the question of "through what processes?" is considered theoretically and methodologically more complex and research-wise riskier compared to directly analyzing personal or structural causes. The fact that such models require strong theoretical foundations, comprehensive data sets, and advanced analytical techniques further increases the difficulty. For these reasons, it can be said that studies addressing moderator and mediator effects in paradoxical leadership behavior are relatively few in the literature. It is important for future research to focus on the mechanisms that can explain under what conditions and through what psychological processes paradoxical leadership is effective.

In addition to determining the positive aspects of paradoxical leaders, studies that have emerged in recent years (Batool et al., 2023a; Cunha and Putnam, 2019; Delmas and Burbano, 2011; Julmi, 2021; Volk et al., 2022) have shown that negative aspects of paradoxical leadership have also begun to be consideration. For example, employees may respond defensively to paradoxical tensions. In this sense, their orientation towards tensions is important. Followers who have a similar orientation to the paradoxical leader regarding tensions are more likely to appreciate the paradoxical leader's behavior, while others will be uncomfortable following her and may view the tasks as a burden to them (Batool et al., 2023a; Miron-Spektor et al., 2018). Paradoxical leadership, on the other hand, can lead to increased stress and anxiety levels because it demands that employees meet conflicting expectations simultaneously. The constant pressure to balance conflicting demands can strain employees' cognitive and emotional resources, creating chronic tension. Furthermore, paradoxical leadership requires flexible interpretations of roles, which can weaken clear role definitions. This situation causes employees to be caught between the questions "What should I do?" and "What is expected of me?", consequently increasing the perception of role conflict and role ambiguity. Especially in contexts where expectations are not clearly structured, paradoxical leadership behaviors can be perceived by employees as inconsistent or unpredictable. It should also be emphasized that paradoxical leadership is not equally effective for every employee. Employees with a high need for structure and clarity, a strong tendency to avoid uncertainty, and relatively low levels of experience or competence tend to be more negatively affected by paradoxical leadership. Leader-follower mismatch occurs when a leader's paradoxical behavior is incompatible with the cognitive and emotional capacities of their followers; this can trigger burnout, job alienation, and resistance behaviors.

Considering the above explanations, it can be said that this article comprehensively addresses the paradoxical leadership literature and offers an integral framework to the field. This framework systematically outlines the antecedents, mediating mechanisms, and consequences of paradoxical leadership. Furthermore, the article highlights both the positive and negative effects of paradoxical leadership behavior; discusses the limitations of current studies; and offers guiding suggestions for future research.

Although there has been a significant increase in the number of studies on paradoxical leadership in recent years, these studies largely rely on similar theoretical assumptions, methodological approaches, and limited contextual samples. The fundamental contribution of

this systematic review is its ability to classify and structure the scattered and fragmented findings in the field within a holistic framework, based on recurring patterns. This study not only describes the existing literature but also critically reveals the field's implicit assumptions, blind spots, and neglected dimensions. In this respect, the compilation makes a significant contribution to the development of a more balanced, critical, and contextually sensitive research agenda in paradoxical leadership studies.

It has been observed that the majority of the articles examined within the scope of the research have been written in the context of China. This prevalence may have been influenced by the Ying-Yang philosophy that has emerged in China. It can be argued that this philosophical legacy has made it more culturally acceptable for Chinese leaders to exhibit authoritarian yet supportive, disciplined yet flexible, and demanding yet protective behaviors simultaneously; this, in turn, is considered one of the factors contributing to the emergence of paradoxical leadership behaviors. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the examination of paradoxical leadership theory in different contexts and that a paradoxical leader is likely to encounter various paradoxes at the follower, team, and organizational levels in organizations. The current study aims to fill this gap in the literature by examining how these paradoxes are dealt with.

Through this systematic review, the existing paradoxical leadership literature was comprehensively reviewed, and an integrative framework was presented. This study is expected to develop an understanding of the effects of paradoxical leadership behavior on team and organization levels as well as on followers. Paradoxical leadership behaviors can cause stress and anxiety on followers, lead to conflicts, and have negative effects on the organization at different levels. To mitigate these detrimental effects, strategies can be considered to motivate paradoxical leaders in the organization.

To deal with multi level paradoxes in organizations, both leaders and followers can receive training and be assigned tasks to implement paradoxical leadership behaviors. Additionally, managers can train employees to adopt leadership behaviors in certain paradoxical situations. All this can contribute to the formation of an understanding that will enable tensions to be embraced rather than preceiving them as problems.

A limitation of this study is that only articles on paradoxical leadership were included in this systematic review. Other scientific studies may also be included in future systematic reviews.The studies examined, revealed that paradoxical aspects of paradoxical leader behavior are largely overlooked. Future studies can examine the conditions that amplify or diminish the positive and negative effects of paradoxical leader behavior. Finally, in the majority of the studies examined, the issue of paradoxical leadership is addressed in a leader-centered manner. Future studies may examine how followers adapt to the leaders' paradoxical mentality.

In future studies, the issue of what kind of negative consequences paradoxical leader behavior causes can be studied from different perspectives. Such studies can provide guidance on how paradoxical leaders can benefit the organizations without causing harm. The studies examined, revealed that the most important positive results of paradoxical leadership behavior are related to the creative and innovative behaviors of employees and innovative performance. Considering these results, the importance of paradoxical leadership behavior in increasing organizational innovation performance can consideration.

Future longitudinal studies should be conducted to investigate how leaders cope with multiple paradoxes. It can be investigated how leaders with a paradox mentality deal with the paradoxes of stability and change that arise, especially in organizations undergoing a change process due to mergers or acquisitions. Finally, the majority of existing research in the literature also focuses on the Chinese context. This situation necessitates questioning the cultural

specificity and generalizability of the concept. Comparative studies across different cultural contexts and organizational structures can more clearly reveal whether paradoxical leadership is a universal or context-specific leadership approach.

Author Contributions

All processes of this study (design, data collection, analysis, writing, and editing) were carried out by Hava Y.K.

Ethical Approval

This study does not require ethical committee approval.

Conflict of Interest Statement

This study contains no conflicts of interest with any individual or organization.

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