

Research Context:

As our world becomes increasingly VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous), companies and organizations in general face an **ever-growing number of conflicting yet interrelated expectations from their various stakeholders around the world**. Leaders are supposed to maintain control yet empower organizational members, be competitive and cooperative, humble and narcissistic to foster motivation, innovation, and creativity within their organizations, and balance conflicting role identities or dual leadership structures to ensure that organizational goals are achieved globally. In the academic literature, the relationships between these different expectations are presented as paradoxical tensions. To deal with such tensions, leaders and organizational members need, on the one hand, the ability to think paradoxically (paradox mindset) and, on the other hand, the corresponding capacity to act (agency) to shape their responses to these tensions depending on the situational dynamics in different contexts.



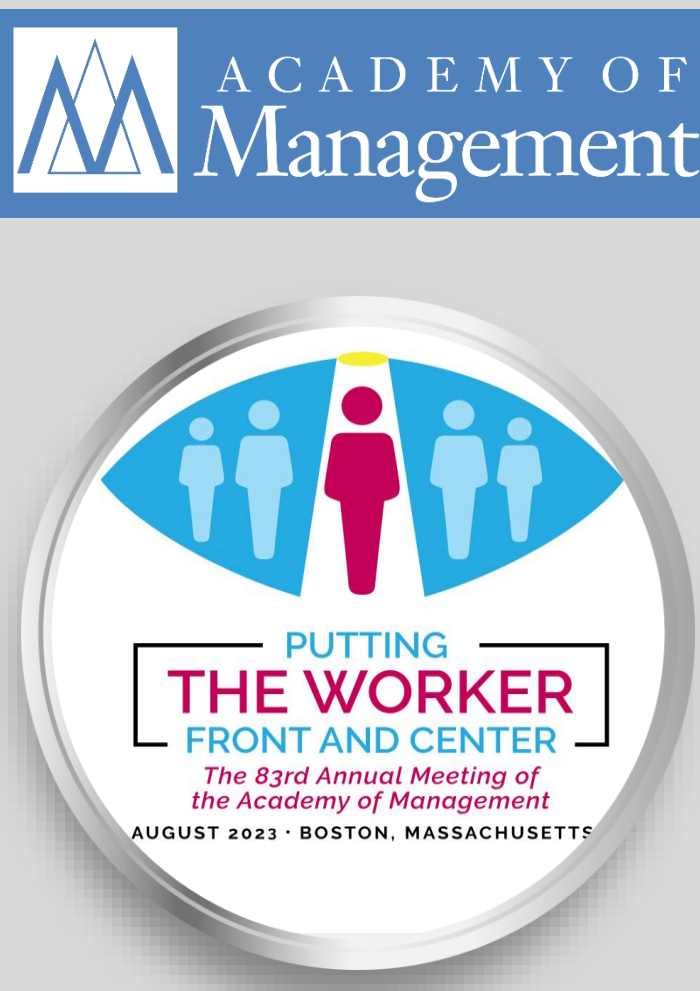
General Research Problem:

Most research has shown that a paradoxical mindset helps individuals manage paradoxical tensions and scholars have also suggested that such tensions are dealt with differently depending on situational dynamics and leaders' capacity to act on their mindset. This project applies a more **holistic view on the mechanisms of how paradoxical tensions are perceived and managed situationally in different contexts and on how paradoxical leaders may evoke their paradox mindset into their organization so that subordinates can improve their management of paradoxes**. This shall ultimately advance our theoretical understanding of these phenomena, but also the ability of organizations and their leaders to better deal with the complexity and tensions in organizational life. The project was pursued in three subprojects:

Projects:

Results:

Publication Output:

<p>Mechanisms and Situated Dynamics Embedded in Culture that Shape Individual Responses to Paradox</p>	<p>The project strived to study the influence of cultural values, norms and schemas that are activated by situation-specific characteristics and, in turn, shape individual responses to paradoxical tensions.</p>	<p>Paradox mindset as a values-based mechanism, and schema activation and norm salience as additional context-based mechanisms are identified as drivers shaping individual responses to paradoxical tensions.</p>	
<p>How Paradoxical Leaders Guide Their Followers to Embrace Paradox: Cognitive and Behavioral Mechanisms of Paradox Mindset Development</p>	<p>The project aimed at shedding light on how paradoxical leaders might directly or indirectly engender a paradox mindset in their followers in order for them to constantly confront and manage paradoxical tensions inherent in organizations.</p>	<p>Cognitive and behavioral influences on followers' paradox mindset development are interrelated, with behavioral mechanisms mediating the effects of cognitive mechanisms.</p>	
<p>What We Do (Not) Know About Paradoxical Leadership</p>	<p>The project set out to develop a systematic literature review on paradoxical leadership (PL) as the current literature was rather fragmented and disconnected.</p>	<p>We distinguish between paradoxical tensions on multiple levels of analysis and discuss individual- and organizational-level management approaches to cope with these tensions. Gaps in the current literature are highlighted and an agenda for future research is presented.</p>	

Summarizing, the project has resulted in significant scientific contributions, including one publication in a leading international journal and two invitations to highly reputable peer-reviewed conferences. Furthermore, it has provided the scientific foundation for one dissertation project.