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The impact of toxic leadership on promoting organizational silence: An analytical study of the opinions of a sample of employees in the colleges and departments of the University of Tikrit

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the impact of toxic leadership on organizational silence through its dimensions: abusive supervision, narcissism, self-promotion, unpredictability, and authoritarian leadership. The study focuses on employees in the higher education sector at the University of Tikrit. To date, no research has explored the relationship between toxic leadership and employee silence. The study was conducted at the University of Tikrit, with a sample comprising 240 employees from various colleges and departments. A purposive sampling technique was used to gather opinions from the entire study population. The primary data collection tool was a questionnaire, which was distributed among academic and administrative staff across the university's colleges and departments. Various statistical methods were employed to analyze the data, including standard deviation, arithmetic mean, Pearson correlation coefficient, and linear regression. The key findings of the study highlight the significant impact of toxic leadership on fostering organizational silence.

Keyword: Toxic leadership, organizational silence

Introduction

When considering leadership styles or the relationships between leaders and subordinates, what often comes to mind are those leaders who successfully guided their nations through difficult circumstances, as well as those who failed to manage crises, ultimately leading to the collapse of their institutions or states. History classifies leaders into two categories: those who are regarded as role models and those who are remembered as dark marks of their time. Modern management focuses on human development, driven by the fundamental belief that individuals possess immense intellectual capabilities, far beyond what is typically utilized in various workplaces. The optimal use of these intellectual resources serves as the true foundation for organizational excellence. Over the past decades, leadership has been a subject of great interest to researchers across diverse fields, including management, politics, human development, and education, highlighting its positive role in both individual and organizational success. However, in recent years, research has increasingly shifted towards exploring the darker side of leadership, its negative effects on employees and work environments, and the harmful behaviors that transform organizational settings into toxic workplaces, ultimately hindering employee performance and retention.

Negative leadership practices in some organizations have reignited researchers' interest in the destructive aspects of leadership, commonly referred to as toxic, destructive, or authoritarian leadership. Recent studies have focused on toxic leadership behaviors in the workplace and their detrimental effects on both individuals and organizations. Toxic leadership describes leaders who exhibit harmful and unethical characteristics, causing damage to their subordinates through actions that hinder employee success and push them toward leaving the organization. As a result, organizations risk losing talented employees while retaining only underperforming individuals.

The lack of clear criteria for selecting leaders before they assume positions of authority has contributed to the emergence of toxic leadership behaviors. These behaviors include dominance, deceit, favoritism, isolation, intimidation, and exaggeration,

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all of which lead to psychological pressure and human suffering within the organization. According to Fitzgibbons & Kevin, toxic leadership is a dysfunctional management approach characterized by abusive behaviors, increased employee fear, incompetence, and the promotion of aggressive conduct while shifting blame onto others.

Toxic leadership significantly impacts employees' mental health, increasing stress, anxiety, and burnout. Moreover, a toxic leader can erode organizational culture, fostering an environment of fear, distrust, and low morale, ultimately undermining teamwork and cooperation. This, in turn, negatively affects overall organizational performance and work quality. A toxic relationship between a leader and subordinates creates an unhealthy dynamic based on conflict, competition, and the need for dominance. Such relationships often lead to internal struggles, making employees unproductive, unstable, and prone to emotional outbursts that may escalate into workplace violence.

Section One: Research Methodology

First: Research Problem

Toxic leadership has a detrimental impact on educational institutions, ranging from primary education to higher education, as it negatively affects an organization's ability to achieve its objectives. The prevalence of this managerial style in organizational leadership manifests through various symptoms, including the punishment of those who think differently, the rewarding and promotion of sycophants and opportunists to administrative positions, and the exclusion of creative and critical thinkers from decision-making roles. This study addresses the research problem from both academic and practical perspectives.

Academic Perspective

After reviewing numerous previous studies related to the research topic, the researcher found no foreign or Arabic study, to the best of their knowledge that has examined the relationship between these two variables simultaneously. Therefore, the research gap in this study lies in the absence of prior research measuring the relationship between toxic leadership and employee silence together.

Practical Perspective

The researcher conducted an exploratory study on a sample of faculty members and administrative staff working in the education sector at the University of Tikrit, aiming to:

- Identify the extent to which toxic leadership dimensions are present among the leadership of certain colleges and departments at the University of Tikrit.
- Assess the prevalence of employee silence within the studied organization.

Second: Research Objectives

1. To explore the nature of the relationship between the dimensions of toxic leadership and the dimensions of employee silence in the studied organization.
2. To determine the direct impact of toxic leadership dimensions on the dimensions of employee silence within the organization.

Third: Research Significance

Scientific Significance

- Contributing to the theoretical foundation of toxic leadership and employee silence.
- Assisting in defining the nature of the relationship between toxic leadership and employee silence.

Practical Significance

- The study derives its practical importance from its application in the educational sector, specifically among faculty members and administrative staff in select colleges and departments of the University of Tikrit, who play a fundamental role in fulfilling the university's mission.
- Raising awareness among senior leadership in the university's colleges and departments regarding the concept and dimensions of toxic leadership and how the study's findings can be utilized.
- Identifying the training needs of faculty members and administrative staff in the university's colleges and departments to help them adapt to and mitigate the effects of toxic leadership while enhancing their skills to reduce employee silence within the studied organization.

Fourth: The Study's Hypothetical Model

The hypothetical model of the study is constructed based on the correlation and impact relationship between the study's main variables: toxic leadership and organizational silence. Figure (1) illustrates the proposed conceptual framework, which can be described as follows:

Independent Variable

- Toxic Leadership, represented by its sub-dimensions:
 - Abusive Supervision
 - Narcissism
 - Self-Promotion
 - Unpredictability
 - Authoritarian Leadership

Dependent Variable

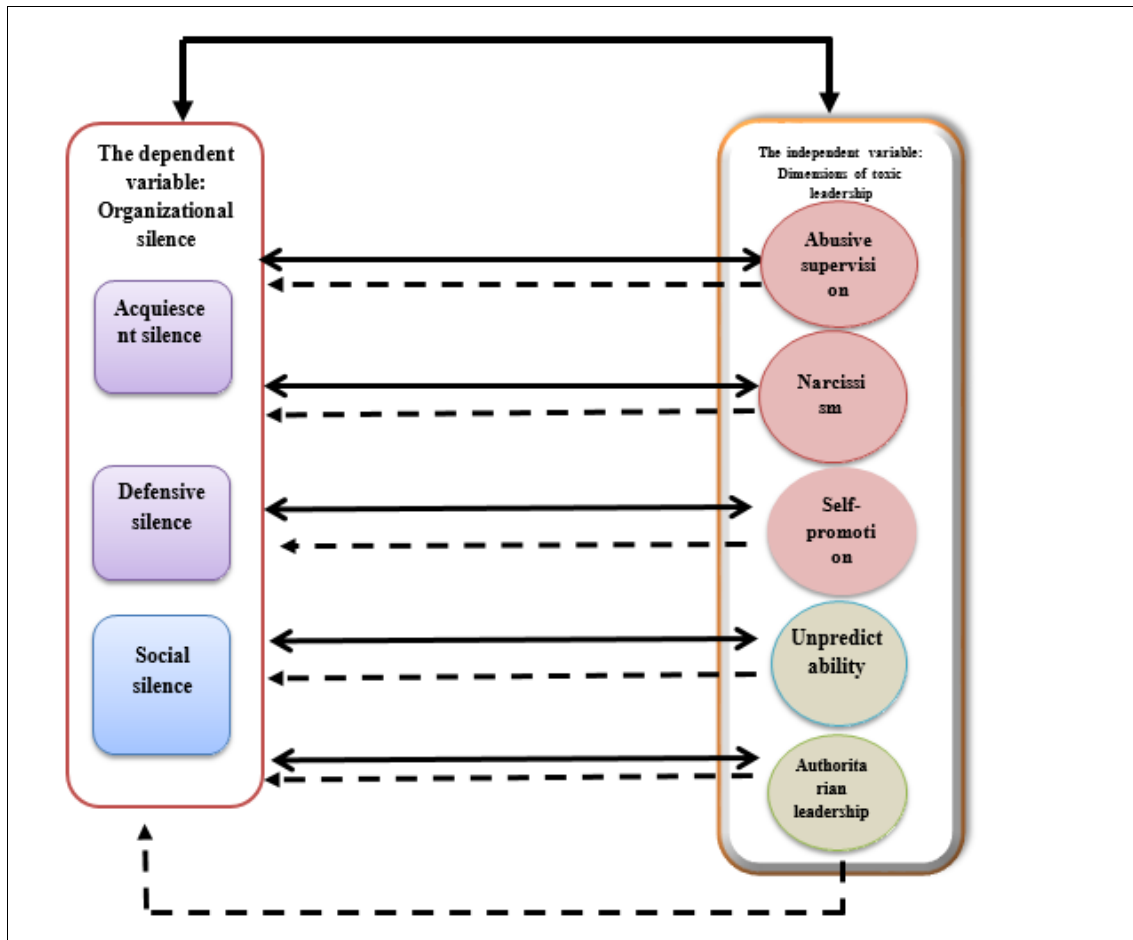
- Organizational Silence, represented by its sub-dimensions:
 - Acquiescent Silence
 - Defensive Silence
 - Social Silence

Fifth: Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses can be defined as follows:

1. There is a statistically significant positive correlation between toxic leadership, with all its dimensions combined, and organizational silence in the studied organization.

There is a statistically significant positive effect of toxic leadership, with all its dimensions combined, on organizational silence in the studied organization.



Sixth: Study Population and Sample
Description of the Study Population

The University of Tikrit was established in the center of Salahuddin Governorate in 1989 as one of the Iraqi universities under the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Initially, the university included several scientific and humanities colleges, such as the College of Medicine, Engineering, Education, and Agriculture. Currently, it stands as a prominent scientific institution, comprising more than 22 colleges across various scientific and humanities disciplines, offering both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

Study Sample

The research sample consisted of a random selection of employees from various departments and colleges at the University of Tikrit, totaling 240 individuals. A total of 230 questionnaires were distributed, with 230 returned. Ten questionnaires were invalid, and 230 questionnaires were deemed valid for analysis. The response rate for the questionnaire was 96%.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Aspect of the Study

First: Toxic Leadership

Concept of Toxic Leadership

Toxic leadership has become a focal point for many organizations. Despite the attention given to the negative effects of toxic leadership, no specific definition has been established. Researchers have used the term "toxic" to describe a wide range of dysfunctional behaviors exhibited by leaders, such as bigotry, dominance, narcissism, and authoritarianism. This has made it difficult to define toxic

leadership clearly. The concept of the toxic leader was first addressed by Whicker (1996) [45], who described such a leader as one who is out of sync with themselves, fallen, hateful, and malicious, and who undermines subordinates through methods of control and manipulation (Radwan, 561, 2019) [1].

Toxic leadership has been defined in various ways across multiple studies, reflecting its association with several topics such as organizational commitment, workplace deviance, counterproductive work behaviors, and crisis management (Ahmed *et al.*, 2023, 904) [4]. Below are some key definitions of toxic leadership:

- Toxic leadership is characterized by selfish behaviors that harm both employees and the organization as a whole, negatively impacting them in the long run. These leaders engage in deceptive and intimidating tactics, weakening employees' will and lowering their morale (Mahdi, 98, 2023) [3].
- Toxic leadership is a multidimensional construct involving abusive supervision, narcissism, authoritarianism, and self-promotion. These behaviors jeopardize the values and standards of the organization, developing inappropriate conduct that leads to negative effects on all employees within the organization (Nafei, 2019, 46).
- Fitzgibbons describes toxic leadership as a poor administrative approach practiced by some leaders when in power. This approach involves mistreating individuals, promoting aggressive behavior, and undermining organizational well-being (Abdel Aal,

307, 2023)^[5].

- Toxic leadership is the behavior of leaders who systematically engage in intimidation, deception, and the application of favoritism at the expense of competence and effectiveness, aiming to achieve their personal goals at the cost of employees in the organization (Ali *et al.*, 1021, 2024).
- Toxic leadership is a leadership approach that harms subordinates by poisoning the organizational climate, weakening enthusiasm, stifling innovation, and suppressing creative thinking. These leaders exercise control over their subordinates (Al-Najdi, 981, 2024)^[6].

The researcher defines toxic leadership as the harmful behaviors followed by some senior leaders within an organization. These behaviors contribute to the deviation of the organization from its main objectives, as they aim to achieve the personal goals of senior leadership, rather than the collective goals of the organization. This leads to withholding important information and data from management, preventing understanding and harmony between senior management and the employees.

Second: Dimensions of Toxic Leadership

Many scholars and researchers have explored the various dimensions of toxic leadership, with a range of opinions and perspectives on these dimensions. A study by Abdel Wahab (2582, 2024)^[5] addressed the dimensions of toxic leadership, including abusive supervision, authoritarian leadership, narcissism (self-centeredness), self-enhancement, and unpredictability. Similarly, a study by Ali *et al.* (1036, 2024) explored the dimensions of toxic leadership, which include abusive supervision, authoritarianism, narcissism, self-promotion, unpredictability, and self-centeredness. Another study by Abdullah (5, 2024) examined the dimensions of toxic leadership, namely abusive supervision, narcissism, self-promotion, and unpredictability. A study by ORGEV *et al.* (2019, 50) discussed the dimensions of toxic leadership as self-centeredness, lack of appreciation, and negative moodiness. Nafei (2015, 50) also explored the dimensions of toxic leadership, which included self-promotion, abusive supervision, unpredictability, narcissism, and authoritarianism.

After reviewing several studies on the dimensions of toxic leadership, the researcher will adopt the scale proposed by Hasan *et al.* (130, 2024)^[44], which includes the following dimensions: abusive supervision, narcissism, self-promotion, unpredictability, and authoritarian leadership. Below, we will discuss these dimensions in more detail.

Abusive Supervision: Abusive supervision is considered one of the forms of toxic leadership at the supervisory level. In this pattern, the leader exhibits a significant tendency toward aggressive behaviors when interacting with subordinates, such as mockery, belittling, and humiliating subordinates (Abdel Aal, 308, 2023)^[5]. Abusive supervision represents a type of negative leadership at the supervisory level, where supervisors continuously display aggressive behaviors as perceived by the employees. This concept extends to a set of negative behaviors that are described as psychological harm to the individuals working in the organization (Al-Jamli, 362, 2016).

Abusive supervision is a negative behavior that a leader directs toward their subordinates, publicly humiliating them, in addition to emotional and psychological abuse, and reminding them of past failures (Othman, 421, 2024). It refers to the extent to which subordinates perceive their leaders' aggressive behaviors, both verbally and non-verbally (excluding physical aggression). These behaviors include continuous criticism, public reprimanding, ridicule, and imposing unjustified punishments for mistakes that the subordinates did not commit (Abu Dahab, 227, 2024)^[8].

Second: Narcissism

The term "narcissism" was first coined by Have Lock Ellis in 1898, and later, it was developed by other researchers. Narcissism has been described as a personality disorder characterized by self-love. In the context of organizations, the narcissism of leaders is linked to power, leading others, and controlling them (Youssef, 473, 2023)^[11]. The concept of narcissism is based on the Greek myth of Narcissus, who was captivated by the reflection of his face in the water, which reflects narcissistic traits such as self-admiration and self-love. Narcissism has been used to describe the destructive behaviors of top executives and politicians. The psychological components of narcissism include superiority, arrogance, and low levels of empathy (Al-Nasrawi, 477, 2017)^[13].

Narcissistic leadership is a type of leadership that disregards the well-being of employees, with the leader's sole focus being self-promotion. This type of leadership creates a range of undesirable behaviors within organizations, negatively impacting employee performance. Over time, the influence of narcissistic leadership increases the gap between employees and the leader within the organization. The selfish behaviors of narcissistic leaders negatively impact creativity and lead to reduced organizational loyalty, which, in turn, affects employee engagement within the organization (Abbas *et al.*, 227, 2022)^[10]. Researchers have defined narcissistic leadership as an excessive sense of self-importance, uniqueness, arrogance, and admiration from others, along with a tendency to exploit others and lack of empathy toward them (Al-Gharabli, 148, 2018)^[14].

Researchers have described narcissistic leadership as a true affliction for many executives and leaders, particularly those who focus on their own goals, self-promotion, success, and how they are perceived by others. These behaviors expose the organization to suffering, danger, and a lack of interaction between employees and upper management (Mustafa *et al.*, 117, 2018)^[16].

Third: Self-Promotion

Schmidt (2008) views self-promotion as involving a series of behaviors by the leader aimed at enhancing their personal interests while diminishing the importance of others, especially talented individuals, to prevent them from competing. Maxwell (2015) emphasized that self-promotion includes repeated practices by the leader to display themselves and attribute any organizational success solely to their own efforts, while avoiding responsibility for failures, instead blaming others for those failures (Rizwan, 563, 2019). Researchers have pointed out that self-promotion is one of the impression management strategies, where individuals emphasize their accomplishments and abilities,

while minimizing their failures in an attempt to justify their competence to others (Molleman *et al.*, 2011, 89)^[41].

Researchers have defined self-promotion as a strategy that makes an individual appear attractive to others by exaggerating their competencies and abilities, and expressing them using words and phrases aimed at drawing attention and boasting about their skills and qualities (Saad *et al.*, 152, 2023)^[18]. Self-promotion has also been defined by researchers as behaviors that enhance the personal interests of leaders, especially senior-level managers, to minimize threats from competitors and/or talented subordinates (Khadr *et al.*, 44, 2023). Researchers have also described self-promotion as a leader in the organization attributing all successes to themselves, while blaming others for any failure, and exhibiting a more favorable personality in the presence of senior leadership (Zahra, 3, 2023)^[19].

Fourth: Unpredictability

Researchers have defined unpredictability as the unstable actions and behaviors emanating from senior management within the organization, which lead to subordinates becoming fearful and alert. Those exhibiting these behaviors act differently when their superiors are present, and these unpredictable actions eventually cause their subordinates to submit and feel helpless, unable to protect themselves (Palut *et al.*, 2020, 3). Unpredictability is also characterized as a leadership style where leaders' negative behaviors are difficult for employees to predict. These leaders are described as having mood swings, unpredictable behaviors, unjustified anger, and reflecting their emotional state onto the work environment (Mahdi, 99, 2023)^[3]. Researchers have stated that unpredictability is linked to a lack of self-control, with leaders often being inconsistent in their opinions and moods, and that unpredictability is associated with psychological disturbances (Ali *et al.*, 1041, 2024). Other researchers have defined it as behaviors that make subordinates feel fear and anxiety due to the unpredictable actions of leadership within the organization. This situation ultimately leads to subordinates submitting, feeling helpless, and unable to even protect themselves, which may cause them to leave the organization (Abdullah, 2023, 5).

Fifth: Authoritarian Leadership

The term "president" is often used to describe an authoritarian leader rather than the term "leader" because the authoritarian individual controls their followers and manipulates their fates without their consent. The leader creates plans for them in isolation, excluding them from participation and feedback, and imposes orders on them, demanding compliance (Badrawi, 29, 2009). Authoritarian leadership refers to a domineering and controlling style, where power rests solely with the leader, who does not delegate authority to anyone. The leader directly supervises the work of subordinates, makes decisions without consulting or involving them, and dictates these decisions. Subordinates are expected to obey and carry out orders, while the leader has little trust in their capabilities and shows no concern for human relations within the organization. The leader uses pressure and threats as a means of control (Abu al-Ghanem, 18, 2013).

Researchers have indicated that authoritarian leaders use the authority granted by their position to influence subordinates

without consulting them or considering their opinions in decision-making and instructions, as they believe that subordinates are not qualified to participate in assuming leadership responsibilities within the organization (Hisham, 109, 2019)^[24]. Studies have shown that when leaders adopt an authoritarian leadership style, they feel that they are the most competent and skilled among everyone, making decisions alone with little consultation with other stakeholders in the organization. The use of authoritarian behavior within the organization creates concern among employees, and these behaviors have negative effects on the organizational environment and the workers within it (Ragab, 183, 2022). Authoritarian leadership includes behaviors that restrict the autonomy of subordinates, limit their freedom to choose, suppress any individual initiatives or new ideas they present, and force them to fully comply with the agendas and operational procedures of the leaders (Mustafa *et al.*, 118, 2024)^[16].

Second: Organizational Silence

Universities and higher education institutions are among the most important organizations that contribute effectively to societal development. Through the science of organizational behavior, organizations can identify issues related to the behavior of individuals and groups working within them, along with the real reasons and their relationship to other phenomena in the organization. The term "organizational silence" has emerged prominently as an issue that negatively impacts the effectiveness and efficiency of performance in organizations. The success of any organization does not solely depend on subordinates, who require support and guidance from their leaders. Instead, leaders also need subordinates to proactively solve problems and provide ideas and information regarding organizational issues, so that appropriate actions can be taken to address them.

Human resources represent the primary tool for achieving goals and fostering development at the organizational level and even at the national level. This element, endowed with the freedom to think, express, and engage in purposeful dialogue, thrives in an environment characterized by democracy, cooperation, teamwork, participation, and a genuine sense of security, trust, and belonging. It is the responsibility of organizational leaders to create an environment conducive to these exceptional resources so they can fulfill their role without the oppressive pressures of work-related constraints.

Today, most employees in organizations remain silent regarding issues that occur at work. The reason for this is the organizations' lack of acceptance for any form of opposition, even if legitimate, as they perceive it as a threat to their existence and interests. On the other hand, these individuals believe that there is no possibility of changing the existing, undesirable organizational conditions. As a result, they accept and adapt to the prevailing organizational circumstances rather than trying to modify or resist them. This section will discuss the concept of organizational silence and its causes.

First: The Concept of Organizational Silence

Recently, there has been an increased focus on the concept of organizational silence due to its association with the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations, as well as the

negative behaviors of employees, which have become significant barriers to progress and development. The concept of organizational silence is relatively modern and unfamiliar at first glance, especially since it is difficult to define it in a specific way. This concept has evolved over three distinct periods. The first period, from 1970 to the mid-1980s, primarily focused on the concept of "voice," while the second period, spanning from the mid-1980s to 2000, concentrated on "speech." The current period, from 2000 to the present, has emphasized the concept of "silence" (Aboud, *et al.*, 238, 2021).

Researchers have defined organizational silence as the withholding of information, ideas, opinions, and suggestions related to work improvement. Organizational silence is seen as a negative attitude, reflecting employees' reluctance to participate in discussions, offer suggestions, or address existing problems within the organization. This behavior arises from employees' awareness that expressing their views may expose them to risks or provoke negative reactions from senior management (Zohra, *et al.*, 14, 2024).

Researchers have also defined it as the withholding of information that could benefit the organization, driven by employees' fear of negative reactions toward these ideas or their personal concerns (Bagheri, 2012, 49). Additionally, organizational silence is seen as employees withholding their opinions and information related to work that could enhance performance or bring about necessary changes, due to fears of adverse responses from senior management, in an effort to protect their job stability (Zohra, *et al.*, 2022, 4). It is further described as the tendency of employees to remain silent when they perceive a lack of support from management and others, coupled with the fear of isolation or being dismissed from the organization (Al-Dhuwian, *et al.*, 306, 2022).

The researcher views organizational silence as a deliberate behavior by employees to withhold ideas and information that contribute to achieving the organization's goals and strategies. This behavior is driven by employees' fear of dismissal and isolation due to the negative behaviors exhibited by leaders in the organization, who do not accept their ideas or opinions.

Second: Dimensions of Organizational Silence

A: Silence of Compliance

The silence of compliance is considered the first form of organizational silence, described as stable silence, where employees withhold thoughts, information, and opinions related to the organization to avoid conflicts with supervisors. This occurs in individuals who have relevant ideas, information, and opinions but choose not to present them because they are unwilling to make the effort to change the organizational situation (Aujah, 570, 2019). Researchers have defined it as employees withholding information, ideas, and opinions related to work due to their submission to the status quo or their lack of interest. It is seen as a form of negative behavior such as negligence and work avoidance, characterized by low self-efficacy and low participation levels. Employees are not willing to exert effort to contribute or offer suggestions for change (Abu Al-Gheit, 152, 2021). Researchers have described it as a lack of effective communication between employees and their supervisors, despite having ideas and suggestions that could

benefit the organization. Pinder & Harlose described these individuals as isolated, unwilling to exert effort to improve the organization's performance, and they consider silence a negative trait. When an employee remains silent, it indicates acceptance of the negative status quo in the organization (Khalil, 13, 2019) ^[29].

The researcher views the silence of compliance as an escape by employees from the negative environment in which they work. These employees lack the ability to deal with direct supervisors or organizational leaders and are not concerned with the organization's development due to the negative behaviors and practices they encounter from management when presenting proposals or ideas that could enhance the organization. Fear of possible changes against upper management results in employees adopting silence merely to maintain their livelihood.

B: Defensive Silence

Defensive silence is a form of organizational silence, which involves intentional behavior aimed at protecting oneself from threats. It includes awareness and focus on alternatives, followed by a conscious decision to withhold thoughts, information, and opinions as the best strategy. The motivation behind this type of silence is self-protection or fear of the organization (Al-Abd, 9, 2022) ^[30]. Researchers have defined defensive silence as deliberate and proactive behavior aimed at protecting oneself from external threats. It involves withholding information based on the fear of expressing ideas, and defensive silence can also involve concealing one's identity, which is a form of self-protection (Al-Tantawi, *et al.*, 217, 2021). It is used to describe deliberate neglect based on the fear of the consequences of speaking out, in line with the logic of psychological safety. It is defined as the withholding of information, ideas, and opinions based on fear and is considered intentional behavior. It aims to protect the self from external threats, where some individuals refrain from delivering bad news to avoid a negative reaction from the recipient or personal consequences (Jassim, *et al.*, 396, 2017) ^[31]. Researchers have described it as an unproductive work behavior because employees conceal opinions and information that would benefit the organization. Individuals who exhibit defensive silence are easily able to display this behavior and hide their knowledge. The reason for this is the poor environment that the employee experiences within the organization and their fear of disclosing all the knowledge they possess (Shuqi, *et al.*, 2022, 2).

C: Social Silence

Social silence is defined as the withholding of thoughts and information related to work based on cooperation and helping others, but the goal of withholding information is to protect other employees from negative consequences imposed by the organization's management (Al-Ahmari, *et al.*, 102, 2024). According to Denize & Ertosun, social silence is a rational behavior characterized by withholding work-related ideas, information, or opinions with the aim of benefiting others in the organization based on altruism or cooperative motives. This type of silence focuses on others and occurs in two ways: first, the silent employee does so to protect the organization's interests, and second, the silent employee does so to protect other employees within the organization (Samihah, *et al.*, 15, 2021). Researchers have defined it as the withholding of thoughts, information, and opinions related to work in order to benefit others in the

organization, which is known as altruism. This type of silence is proactive and primarily focuses on others, making the individual more social and accepted among colleagues, as the work produced is based on caring for others rather than fearing negative consequences that the individual might face within the organization (Al-Zaydi, 28, 2021) [34].

The researcher views this type of silence as self-protection for the individual and their colleagues. In other words, withholding ideas and information relevant to the organization is due to the fear of negative reactions from management towards these ideas and information, which could result in the employee being dismissed or penalized. The goal of the employee adopting this silence is to maintain their position within the organization out of fear of termination or punishment.

Third: The Relationship between Toxic Leadership and Organizational Silence: A study by Kitewitz *et al.* (2016) indicated that employees' perception of abusive supervision behaviors influences their motivation to adopt organizational silence due to their fear of the negative consequences associated with expressing their opinions and ideas. In other words, organizational silence occurs as a direct result of toxic leadership practices, leading to a

decrease in job performance and subsequently lower organizational performance (Salam, 255, 2024) [35]. The study further revealed that organizational silence arises from employees' fear of discussing workplace issues, as leadership perceives them as troublemakers. Additionally, employees fear potential penalties such as delayed promotions, salary deductions, or forced termination. Lastly, organizational silence emerges when employees feel that discussing organizational issues, particularly concerning the policies and practices of toxic leadership, is futile (Ziada, 145, 2023).

Chapter Three: The Applied Aspect

First: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for Internal Consistency

To ensure that the questionnaire measures the intended factors, the researcher used Cronbach's Alpha equation. A value of ($0.60 \leq \text{Alpha}$) is generally considered acceptable in studies related to administrative and human sciences. Table (1) shows the results of the reliability test for the study tool.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Test Results for Internal Consistency Measure

S	Variables and Subdimensions	Number of Items	Reliability Coefficient (Alpha)
1	Toxic Leadership	25	0.92
1-1	Abusive Supervision	5	0.75
2-1	Narcissism	5	0.73
3-1	Self-Promotion	5	0.77
4-1	Unpredictability	5	0.82
5-1	Authoritarian Leadership	5	0.80
2	Organizational Silence	15	0.94
1-2	Silence of Compliance	5	0.84
2-2	Defensive Silence	5	0.88
3-2	Social Silence	5	0.89
The Questionnaire as a Whole		40	0.959

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the SPSS program (V 23)

The results in Table (1) indicate that all values for the validity and reliability tests, including the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the study variables, were higher than (0.60), which exceeds the assumed threshold for questionnaire reliability. The overall reliability of the questionnaire was high, achieving a value of (0.959), indicating strong internal consistency for the questionnaire as a whole.

Second: Description and Diagnosis of Study Variables:

This section provides a description and diagnosis of the study variables (toxic leadership and organizational silence) based on the responses of the individuals working in the departments and faculties of Tikrit University, as well as the items used for the five-point Likert scale.

Description of Respondents' Answers to the Toxic Leadership Variable and its Diagnosis

Table (2) shows that all responses for each dimension of the toxic leadership variable were higher than the hypothetical mean value of (3). The relative importance of the dimensions of toxic leadership, according to the perspective of the individuals working in the departments and faculties of Tikrit University, based on the values of the mean, standard deviation, and relative importance, indicates that the most important dimension of the toxic leadership variable is the (unpredictability) dimension, with a mean value of (3.86), a standard deviation of (0.66), and a relative importance of (77.20%). Meanwhile, the (abusive supervision) dimension was found to be the least important, with a mean value of (3.58), a standard deviation of (0.66), and a relative importance of (71.64%).

Table 2: Relative Importance of Toxic Leadership Dimensions from the Perspective of the Individuals Working in the Departments and Faculties of Tikrit University

S	Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Importance %	Ranking
1	Abusive Supervision	3.582	0.663	71.64	Fifth
2	Narcissism	3.733	0.622	74.66	Third
3	Self-Promotion	3.833	0.688	76.66	Second
4	Unpredictability	3.860	0.669	77.20	First
5	Authoritarian Leadership	3.727	0.682	74.54	Fourth
	Toxic Leadership	3.747	0.556	74.94	

N=230

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the (SPSS: V 23) program

The results in Table (2) regarding the mean, standard deviation, and relative importance indicate that all dimensions of toxic leadership achieved mean values higher than the hypothesized mean of (3.00), suggesting that the sample perceives the existence of toxic leadership practices at a level exceeding the moderate level. These results reflect employees' perceptions of the impact of toxic leadership in the work environment, which may negatively affect job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational interaction. This increase in the means indicates the need to review leadership styles and analyze the causes of this phenomenon to minimize its negative effects and foster a healthy and positive work environment.

Description of Respondents' Answers Regarding Organizational Silence Variable and Its Diagnosis:

Table (3) shows that all answers for each dimension of the organizational silence variable were higher than the hypothesized mean of (3). It also illustrates the relative importance of organizational silence dimensions from the perspective of employees working in the departments and faculties of Tikrit University. Through the values of the mean, standard deviation, and relative importance, it is evident that the most important dimension of organizational silence is the social silence dimension, with a mean of (3.96), a standard deviation of (0.65), and a relative importance of (79.32%). On the other hand, the dimension of acquiescent silence ranked third and last, with a mean of (3.80), a standard deviation of (0.67), and a relative importance of (76.14%).

Table 3: Relative Importance of Organizational Silence Dimensions from the Perspective of Employees in the Departments and Faculties of Tikrit University

S	Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Importance %	Rank
1	Acquiescent Silence	3.807	0.671	76.14	Third
2	Defensive Silence	3.826	0.692	76.52	Second
3	Social Silence	3.966	0.657	79.32	First
	Organizational Silence	3.866	0.621	77.32	

N=230

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the (SPSS: V 23) program

The results in Table (3) indicate that all dimensions of organizational silence achieved mean scores higher than the hypothetical mean of (3.00), reflecting high levels of organizational silence among the sample. These results suggest a general tendency among employees to refrain from expressing their opinions or concerns in the workplace, which may be an indicator of the absence of effective communication channels or fear of negative consequences. Moreover, the elevated level of organizational silence suggests the presence of a work environment that does not encourage active participation, which may negatively affect decision-making processes and organizational innovation.

Third: Testing and Analyzing Correlation Relationships between the Research Variables:

This section reviews the testing of hypotheses concerning the correlation relationships defined by the research, aimed at determining whether the hypothesis should be accepted or rejected. The Pearson correlation equation will be used to estimate the relationship between the two variables: the independent variable (toxic leadership) and its dimensions, and the dependent variable (organizational silence), which will clarify the relationship between the variables.

Testing the First Main Hypothesis and its Sub-hypotheses

Table (4) indicates a significant positive correlation between toxic leadership and organizational silence, with the overall correlation coefficient value of (0.802) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the significance level of (0.05). This suggests that there is a relationship between the two variables (toxic leadership and organizational silence). Furthermore, this result indicates that the more toxic leadership is practiced, the more it contributes to enhancing organizational silence. Thus, we accept the alternative hypothesis, which states that "There is a statistically significant correlation between toxic leadership (with its combined dimensions) and organizational silence." The following sub-hypotheses are derived from the main hypothesis:

A. Regarding the test of the sub-hypothesis (A) which states that (There is a statistically significant correlation between abusive supervision and organizational silence), the correlation coefficient between the dimension of abusive supervision and organizational silence was (0.597) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the significance level of (0.05). This result indicates the significance of the correlation value, and it is at an acceptable level. This result provides strong support for

accepting sub-hypothesis (A), which stems from the first main hypothesis, stating that (There is a statistically significant correlation between abusive supervision and organizational silence).

B. Regarding the test of the sub-hypothesis (B) which states that (There is a statistically significant correlation between narcissism and organizational silence), the correlation coefficient between the dimension of narcissism and organizational silence was (0.613) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the significance level of (0.05). This result indicates the significance of the correlation value, and it is at a moderate level. This result provides strong support for accepting sub-hypothesis (B), which stems from the first main hypothesis, stating that (There is a statistically significant correlation between narcissism and organizational silence).

C. Regarding the test of the sub-hypothesis (C) which states that (There is a statistically significant correlation between self-promotion and organizational silence), the correlation coefficient between the dimension of self-promotion and organizational silence was (0.714) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the significance level of (0.05). This result indicates the significance of the correlation value, and it is at a good level. This result provides strong support for accepting sub-hypothesis (C), which stems from the first main hypothesis, stating that (There is a statistically significant correlation between self-promotion and

organizational silence).

D. Regarding the test of the sub-hypothesis (D) which states that (There is a statistically significant correlation between unpredictability and organizational silence), the correlation coefficient between the dimension of unpredictability and organizational silence was (0.741) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the significance level of (0.05). This result indicates the significance of the correlation value, and it is at a good level. This result provides strong support for accepting sub-hypothesis (D), which stems from the first main hypothesis, stating that (There is a statistically significant correlation between unpredictability and organizational silence).

E. Regarding the test of the sub-hypothesis (E) which states that (There is a statistically significant correlation between authoritarian leadership and organizational silence), the correlation coefficient between the dimension of authoritarian leadership and organizational silence was (0.684) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the significance level of (0.05). This result indicates the significance of the correlation value, and it is at a moderate level. This result provides strong support for accepting sub-hypothesis (E), which stems from the first main hypothesis, stating that (There is a statistically significant correlation between authoritarian leadership and organizational silence).

Table 4: The Correlation between Toxic Leadership (with all its dimensions) and Organizational Silence

	Dependent Variable: Organizational Silence			
	Dimensions	Pearson Correlation	Sig	N
Independent Variable: Toxic Leadership	Toxic Leadership	0.802	0.000	230
	Abusive Supervision	0.597	0.000	230
	Narcissism	0.613	0.000	230
	Self-Promotion	0.714	0.000	230
	Unpredictability	0.741	0.000	230
	Authoritarian Leadership	0.684	0.000	230

N= 230

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the (SPSS: V 23) program

Third: Testing the Second Main Hypothesis and Its Sub-hypotheses

The second main hypothesis, which states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between toxic leadership (in all its dimensions) and organizational silence," is tested.

Table (5) shows that the calculated value of (F) between toxic leadership and organizational silence is (410.44), which is greater than the tabular value of (F) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the 5% significance level (with a confidence level of 95%). Based on this, we accept the alternative hypothesis, which states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between toxic leadership (in all its dimensions) and organizational silence." The coefficient of determination (R²) value recorded is (0.643), which indicates that the use of toxic leadership explains approximately (64%) of the variables affecting organizational silence. The remaining percentage is attributed to other variables that were not included in the model. The calculated value of (t) for the slope coefficient is (20.260), which is greater than the

tabular value of (t) at a significance level of (0.05), indicating the statistical significance of the slope coefficient for toxic leadership. The value of the slope coefficient (β₁) is (0.894), meaning that for every one-unit increase in the use of toxic leadership, organizational silence will increase by (89%).

The following sub-hypotheses stem from the second main hypothesis

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the (SPSS: V 23) program

A. Testing the Sub-hypothesis (A), which stems from the second main hypothesis, states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between abusive supervision and organizational silence." The calculated value of (F) between abusive supervision and organizational silence is (126.30), which is greater than the tabular value of (F) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the 5% significance level (with a confidence level of 95%). Based on this, we accept sub-hypothesis (A), which states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between abusive supervision and organizational silence." The coefficient of determination (R²) is (0.356), which

shows that abusive supervision explains approximately (35%) of the variations in organizational silence. The remaining percentage is attributed to other variables that were not included in the model. The calculated value of (t) for the slope coefficient is (11.238), which is greater than the tabular value of (t) at a significance level of (0.05), indicating the statistical significance of the slope coefficient for abusive supervision. The value of the slope coefficient (β_1) is (0.559), meaning that an increase in the use of abusive supervision by one unit will lead to an increase in organizational silence by (55%).

B. Testing the Sub-hypothesis (B), which stems from the second main hypothesis, states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between narcissism and organizational silence." The calculated value of (F) between narcissism and organizational silence is (137.13), which is greater than the tabular value of (F) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the 5% significance level (with a confidence level of 95%). Based on this, we accept sub-hypothesis (B), which states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between narcissism and organizational silence." The coefficient of determination (R^2) is (0.376), indicating that narcissism explains approximately (37%) of the variations in organizational silence. The remaining percentage is attributed to other variables that were not included in the model. The calculated value of (t) for the slope coefficient is (11.711), which is greater than the tabular value of (t) at a significance level of (0.05), indicating the statistical significance of the slope coefficient for narcissism. The value of the slope coefficient (β_1) is (0.611), meaning that an increase in narcissism by one unit will lead to an increase in organizational silence by (61%).

C. Testing the Sub-hypothesis (C), which stems from the second main hypothesis, states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between self-promotion and organizational silence." The calculated value of (F) between self-promotion and organizational silence is (236.94), which is greater than the tabular value of (F) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the 5% significance level (with a confidence level of 95%). Based on this, we accept sub-hypothesis (C), which states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between self-promotion and organizational silence." The coefficient of determination (R^2) is (0.510), indicating that self-promotion explains approximately (51%) of the variations in organizational silence. The remaining percentage is attributed to other variables that were not included in the model. The calculated value of (t) for the slope coefficient is (15.393), which is greater than the tabular value of (t) at a significance level of (0.05), indicating the statistical significance of the

slope coefficient for self-promotion. The value of the slope coefficient (β_1) is (0.644), meaning that an increase in self-promotion by one unit will lead to an increase in organizational silence by (64%).

D. Testing the Sub-hypothesis (D), which stems from the second main hypothesis, states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between unpredictability and organizational silence." The calculated value of (F) between unpredictability and organizational silence is (278.29), which is greater than the tabular value of (F) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the 5% significance level (with a confidence level of 95%). Based on this, we accept sub-hypothesis (D), which states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between unpredictability and organizational silence." The coefficient of determination (R^2) is (0.550), indicating that unpredictability explains approximately (55%) of the variations in organizational silence. The remaining percentage is attributed to other variables that were not included in the model. The calculated value of (t) for the slope coefficient is (16.682), which is greater than the tabular value of (t) at a significance level of (0.05), indicating the statistical significance of the slope coefficient for unpredictability. The value of the slope coefficient (β_1) is (0.688), meaning that an increase in unpredictability by one unit will lead to an increase in organizational silence by (68%).

E. Testing the Sub-hypothesis (E), which stems from the second main hypothesis, states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between authoritarian leadership and organizational silence." The calculated value of (F) between authoritarian leadership and organizational silence is (200.76), which is greater than the tabular value of (F) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than the 5% significance level (with a confidence level of 95%). Based on this, we accept sub-hypothesis (E), which states that "there is a statistically significant impact relationship between authoritarian leadership and organizational silence." The coefficient of determination (R^2) is (0.468), indicating that authoritarian leadership explains approximately (46%) of the variations in organizational silence. The remaining percentage is attributed to other variables that were not included in the model. The calculated value of (t) for the slope coefficient is (14.169), which is greater than the tabular value of (t) at a significance level of (0.05), indicating the statistical significance of the slope coefficient for authoritarian leadership. The value of the slope coefficient (β_1) is (0.623), meaning that an increase in authoritarian leadership by one unit will lead to an increase in organizational silence by (62%).

Table 5: ANOVA Test Results and Impact Relationship Measurement between Toxic Leadership and Organizational Silence

Dependent Variable	Organizational Silence		R ²	T		F	
	Beta	β_1		Calculated	Sig.	Calculated	Sig.
Toxic Leadership	0.802	0.894	0.643	20.260	0.000	410.44	0.000
Abusive Supervision	0.597	0.559	0.356	11.238	0.000	126.30	0.000
Narcissism	0.613	0.611	0.376	11.711	0.000	137.13	0.000
Self-Promotion	0.714	0.644	0.510	15.393	0.000	236.94	0.000
Unpredictability	0.741	0.688	0.550	16.682	0.000	278.29	0.000
Authoritarian Leadership	0.684	0.623	0.468	14.169	0.000	200.76	0.000

N=230 $P \leq 0.05$

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the (SPSS: V 23) program.

Chapter Four: Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

1. Employees in the studied organization suffer from a lack of predictability regarding the decisions and actions taken by senior management towards the organization's employees.
2. The study results reveal that employees in the studied organization recognize the presence of toxic leadership practices in all of its dimensions being exercised against the organization's workers.
3. Employees face difficulties in building good social relationships, which is one of the dimensions of organizational silence, due to the impact of toxic leadership behaviors on them.
4. There is a general tendency among employees in the studied organization to refrain from expressing their opinions or concerns due to fears of the work environment and the exercise of toxic leadership behaviors towards them.

II. Recommendations

1. Senior management should pay more attention to the employees and avoid negative behaviors that may affect their productivity and efficiency, thus negatively impacting the organization's position.
2. Senior management should empower employees by involving them in decision-making, listening to their feedback, and understanding their suggestions and requirements for successful performance and achieving the organization's goals.
3. Senior management should work on building good social relationships with employees based on mutual respect and appreciation, which contributes to boosting employee morale, enhancing their efficiency, and fostering creativity and growth in the workplace.
4. It is essential to hear the voices of employees in the organization to identify the problems and obstacles they face and determine appropriate solutions. This will allow information to reach senior management quickly and without hesitation from the employees.

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