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A Virtue Ethics Approach to the Ethicality of Employee Empowerment

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ABSTRACT

Modern business organizations are expected to adhere to ethical standards while confronting complex challenges in their daily operations. This doctoral dissertation focuses on the virtuousness of a business organization, using the Aristotelian virtue theory as the framework to examine an organization's ethicality in practice. Specifically, its concentration on the virtues of employee empowerment. Employee empowerment is an integral part of human flourishing, comprising a central purpose of business organizations practicing virtues. Despite the growing popularity of promoting employee empowerment its ethical dimension has remained unclear. This dissertation sheds light on this dimension.

This dissertation seeks to enhance our comprehension of the organizational virtues of employee empowerment in business organizations. It accomplishes this aim through three key tasks: (1) clarifying the concept of organizational virtue through a literature analysis, (2) demonstrating a link between the Aristotelian virtue theory and employee empowerment, and (3) conducting an empirical investigation of the topic through a qualitative case study in multicultural business organizations. In the empirical part, the following research questions are answered: Which organizational virtues experienced by organization members in the case organizations are significant for employee empowerment? Which organizational vices constrain the case organizations' virtuousness for employee empowerment to occur as experienced by the organization members? Which organizational practices experienced by the organization members in the case organizations are crucial for the virtues of employee empowerment to take place? How do organizational virtues of employee empowerment affect the human flourishing of the employees as experienced by the organization members? Semi-structured and open-ended interviews were conducted with 41 members from two multicultural business organizations in Finland, and the data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

The literature analysis suggests that an organizational virtue reflects the organization's moral excellence, shaped through cooperation among its members. Rather than a universal list, virtues should be defined in relation to specific phenomena, like employee empowerment in this dissertation research. The literature analysis, viewed through an Aristotelian virtue theory lens, showed that employee empowerment is a worthy subject for empirical investigation from an ethical standpoint. The results of the empirical study theorized seven significant virtues and related vices of employee empowerment. Moreover, important organizational practices for the virtues were analyzed and conceptualized. Finally, the effects that can support the employees' flourishing at the workplace were revealed. This dissertation enriches understanding of organizational ethics from the selected viewpoint by offering an in-depth analysis of its topic.

Keywords: case study, employee, empowerment, ethics, Finland, multicultural organization, organization, organizational virtue, virtue

TIIVISTELMÄ

Modernien yritysorganisaatioiden odotetaan toimivan tiettyjen eettisten normien mukaisesti, kun ne kohtaavat monitahoisia haasteita jokapäiväisessä toiminnassaan. Tässä väitöskirjassa käsitellään yritysorganisaation hyveellisyyttä tarkastelemalla organisaation käytännön eettisyyttä aristoteelisen hyveellisyysteorian viitekehyksessä. Erityisenä painopisteenä on sen keskittyminen työntekijöiden voimaannuttamisen hyveisiin. Työntekijöiden voimaannuttaminen on olennainen osa inhimillistä kukoistusta, mikä on hyveellisyyttä harjoittavien yritysorganisaatioiden keskeinen tavoite. Vaikka työntekijöiden voimaannuttamisen edistäminen on yhä suositumpaa, sen eettinen ulottuvuus on jäänyt hämärän peittoon. Tätä eettistä ulottuvuutta valotetaan tässä väitöskirjassa.

Tämä väitöskirja pyrkii lisäämään ymmärtämystämme työntekijöiden voimaannuttamisen hyveistä yritysorganisaatioissa. Tämä tavoite saavutetaan kolmen keskeisen tehtävän avulla: 1) organisaatiollisen hyveen käsitteen selventäminen kirjallisuusanalyysin avulla, 2) aristoteelisen hyveellisyysopin ja työntekijöiden voimaannuttamisen välisen yhteyden osoittaminen ja 3) aiheen tutkiminen empiirisesti monikulttuurisissa yritysorganisaatioissa tehtävän laadullisen tapaustutkimuksen avulla. Empiirisessä osassa vastataan seuraaviin tutkimuskysymyksiin: Mitkä tutkimuksen kohteina olevien organisaatioiden jäsenten kokemat organisaatiolliset hyveet ovat työntekijöiden voimaannuttamisen kannalta merkityksellisiä? Mitkä organisaatiolliset paheet rajoittavat tutkimuksen kohteena olevien organisaatioiden hyveellisyyttä työntekijöiden voimaannuttamisen kannalta organisaatioiden jäsenten kokemana? Mitkä tutkimuksen kohteina olevien organisaatioiden jäsenten kokemat organisaatioiden toimintatavat ovat työntekijöiden voimaannuttamisen hyveiden toteutumisen kannalta ratkaisevia? Miten työntekijöiden voimaannuttamiseen liittyvät organisaation hyveet vaikuttavat työntekijöiden inhimilliseen kukoistukseen organisaation jäsenten kokemana? 41 henkilöä kahdesta monikulttuurisesta suomalaisesta yritysorganisaatiosta osallistui puolistrukturoituihin ja avoimiin haastatteluihin. Haastatteluiden aineisto analysoitiin laadullisen sisällönanalyysin keinoin.

Kirjallisuusanalyysi esittää, että organisaation hyve kuvastaa organisaation moraalista erinomaisuutta, joka muodostuu sen jäsenten välisen yhteistyön kautta. Yleisluontoisen luetteloinnin sijaan hyveet tulisi määritellä suhteessa tiettyihin ilmiöihin, kuten työntekijöiden vaikutusmahdollisuuksiin tämän väitöstutkimuksen tapauksessa. Aristoteelisen hyveellisyysteorian pohjalta tehty kirjallisuusanalyysi osoitti, että työntekijöiden voimaannuttamista oli syytä tutkia empiirisesti eettisestä näkökulmasta. Empiirisen tutkimuksen perusteella teoretisoitiin seitsemän merkittävää työntekijöiden voimaannuttamiseen liittyvää hyvettä ja niihin liittyvät paheet. Lisäksi analysoitiin ja käsitteellistettiin hyveiden kannalta tärkeitä organisaatiokäytäntöjä. Lopuksi tuotiin esiin tekijöitä, jotka voivat tukea työntekijöiden kukoistusta työpaikalla. Tämä väitöskirja kartuttaa organisaatioetiikan tuntemusta valitusta näkökulmasta tarjoamalla aiheesta syvällisen analyysin.

Asiasanat: tapaustutkimus, työntekijä, voimaannuttaminen, etiikka, Suomi, monikulttuurinen organisaatio, organisaatio, organisaatiolliset hyveet, hyve

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1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction chapter provides an overview of the research area of interest, explains how this research project fits into it, and demonstrates the dissertation's significance in the field of study. In addition, the chapter introduces the dissertation's aim setting, contributions, key concepts, and structure. It includes vital information to help readers orient themselves to the research presented in the dissertation's body.

1.1 The investigated topic

The issue of ethics pervades all facets of human life. Business organizations are not immune to this call (Crane et al., 2019; Martínez et al., 2021; Rhodes, 2023; Roy et al., 2023; Tan, 2023). Solomon (2000) asserted that the influence of companies over humanity, resources, and the world, in general, is growing. Business organizations impact stakeholders in their environment (Solomon, 2000), which expects ethical behavior from the organizations (Crane et al., 2019; Solomon, 2004). Various factors in the business environment, such as changing economic situation, increasing globalization, technological developments, demographic changes, multiple social and cultural norms, security challenges, and sudden crises (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic), affect the activities of companies and cause new challenges in terms of their ethical behavior (Weiss, 2022). Thus, there are extending and strengthening demands for business ethics while modern business organizations confront numerous complex challenges in their daily operations. For example, Kaptein (2017) emphasized that businesses must maintain and continuously develop ethical behavior in their activities to achieve success. Unethical behavior can result in significant financial penalties, reputational damage, decreased productivity, and difficulty in recruiting valued professionals, among other consequences (Weiss, 2022).

In this dissertation, the virtues of a business organization are of particular interest. The Aristotelian virtue theory was selected as the theoretical

lens because it offers an approach that helps examine ethical behavior in practice. In recent decades, the virtue theory has emerged as a fashionable trend concerning organizational life, both in research and practice (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2020, 2021; Del Baldo, 2020; Fontrodona et al., 2013; Hartman, 2013; Shaw, 2022; Solomon, 2004; Whetstone, 2001). It means that this Aristotelian virtue theory might be considered one of the most universally valid moral theories, which corresponds to the idea of globalization for ethical norms (Burton & Goldsby, 2005). According to the theory, business organizations should be communities of people committed to promoting human flourishing (doing and living well) in organizational life (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003). The early Greek philosophers recognized the link between human flourishing and virtues (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003; Cameron & Gaza, 2002). Optimal integration of organizational virtues into an organizational context supports the organization's ethical behavior and can promote employees' flourishing (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021). As an example, Aristotle's notion of the "good life" was based on the idea that the pursuit of virtue is the highest form of human flourishing. Since then, philosophers have echoed this idea, which has served as a major source of inspiration for modern ethical theories.

In its original form, virtue ethics emphasizes the importance of an individual's character manifested in virtues (for example, courage, prudence, and justice). Virtuousness is revealed through an individual's ethical behavior in practice. In addition, it is claimed that virtues can and should be nurtured (Arjoon, 2000; Pearce, 2013). In line with previous authors (e.g., Ferrero & Sison, 2014; Kaptein, 2008; Solomon, 1992a, 1992b, 2004), this dissertation argues that virtue ethics is also applicable at the organizational level. Ferrero and Sison (2014) asserted that virtue ethics is a prominent theoretical lens in studying organizational ethics in the intersection of business ethics and organizational behavior. A significant reason for virtue ethics' applicability in business is that this theory does not emphasize prohibitive rules to business behavior; rather, it strengthens motivation to succeed through an organization's virtuous behavior (Solomon, 1992a, 1992b). According to virtue ethics, the purpose of business organizations is not solely economic efficiency but also a happy life (Pearce, 2013) and a reward for meeting social demands and serving the public good (Solomon, 2004). As a result of virtue ethics, the focus is not exclusively on the organization's individual actions but on its character and the development of virtuous traits within its culture. Virtue ethics emphasizes cultivating moral virtues and character traits that guide ethical decision-making and behavior. In line with Kaptein (2008), it is assumed here that a more robust occurrence of organizational virtue is better because it promotes and motivates employees' ethical behavior.

In sum, virtue ethics has seen a resurgence in recent decades, recognizing its relevance to organizational contexts (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2020; Mion et al., 2023; Sison & Hartman, 2021). Historically, the organizational virtue lens is a relatively recent ethical approach used in business ethics (Abedi et al., 2014; Manz et al., 2008) because academic interest in virtue ethics theory

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and its application in business organizations began only a few decades ago (Ferrero & Sison, 2014). Thus, a deeper understanding of virtues at the organizational level is necessary to unveil the organization's ethical dimension. Based on several researchers (e.g., Cameron & Winn, 2012; Kaptein, 2008; Park & Peterson, 2003; Schudt, 2000; Solomon, 1992a, 1992b, 2004), the starting point for this dissertation research is that organizations possess and demonstrate virtues as individuals, but the virtues are only practiced jointly in organizations. Organizational virtue and its development are critical for business organizations that are committed to creating healthy and humane work environments (Manz et al., 2008).

Employee empowerment, which is also addressed in this dissertation, is a phenomenon within an organization that "leads to the joys of involvement, ownership, and growth" (Blanchard et al., 2001, p. 5). This can be seen as an important part of human flourishing, a central purpose of business organizations practicing virtues. Employee empowerment as a form of organizational governance was recognized in the 1950s and 1960s (Potterfield, 1997) and became popular in organizational behavior literature, especially in the 1980s (Huq, 2010). Since then, the idea of employee empowerment has spread significantly throughout the modern organizations of the 21st century (Ongori, 2009). For instance, the number of leaders aiming to advance employee empowerment in their organizations has increased (Tiambo, 2019). This may be attributed to several reasons.

To begin, businesses today recognize the critical role of employee empowerment in achieving organizational goals (Ahammad et al., 2021; Sarma & Huda, 2021; Tiambo, 2019; Tseng et al., 2020) because the talents, competencies, and skills of empowered employees can be utilized better than those of employees who are not empowered (Huq, 2016; Pride et al., 2014). This way, business organizations can overcome their inclination to compete by offering the best services or products while meeting the high expectations of their customers (Blanchard et al., 2001). Employee empowerment has the potential to develop and improve service delivery (Mayle, 2006), resulting in increased customer satisfaction and loyalty (Gazzoli et al., 2010). From this vantage point, an organization's human resources and leadership are important sources to the success of the organization (Huq, 2016).

Second, there is a need for employee empowerment in contemporary business organizations. Employees, particularly younger generations, expect, among others, autonomy and meaning at work, as well as opportunities to influence, learn, and grow in their duties (Blanchard et al., 2001; Potterfield, 1997). This is especially true for people working in Finland, which is the societal context of this study. The subject of this research concerns the workplaces prevalent in Finland, a country that places great emphasis on employee participation. The Finnish Constitution affords individuals the right to actively shape society, employment, and living conditions, which encompasses having a voice in decisions that impact their work and well-being (Constitution of Finland, 1999). The physical aspect of the well-being of employees, in turn, is

legally taken into consideration in Finnish organizations (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2002).

Managers must appreciate the significance of empowering their employees as it is a critical factor in fostering their intrinsic motivation, as noted by Huq (2016). The employees' need to be empowered is a critical aspect of their intrinsic motivation that managers should recognize (Huq, 2016). Employees are generally aware of their worth and desire to take ownership of tasks, which are key features of employee empowerment (Blanchard, 2001). Employee empowerment can improve job satisfaction, increase employee motivation, and foster positive relationships among organization members (Blanchard et al., 2001; Ciulla, 2020; Lincoln et al., 2002), thereby enhancing organizational productivity, morale, and commitment (Carter, 2009). Thus, organizations need to develop and implement practices that emphasize employee empowerment (Blanchard, 2001; Huq, 2016).

Finally, as business environments are rapidly changing nowadays, the pool of knowledge needed in decision-making is rapidly expanding. In addition, employees in many societies, such as Finland, are highly educated. It would be simplistic to believe that an autocratic leadership approach, in which power is concentrated and the top management is believed to know best, would be successful in such a situation. Instead of that, authority should be delegated to key information holders, who can be anyone within the organization, depending on the subject at hand. Employees who are empowered are beneficial in this situation.

Although employee empowerment has been discussed in recent decades (Badjie et al., 2019; Huq, 2016; Lincoln et al., 2002; Potterfield, 1999), the concept remains unclear. On the one hand, empowerment is an ambiguous idea due to the numerous ways it is applied across diverse disciplines (Lincoln et al., 2002). In addition, the term "employee empowerment" is frequently used synonymously with other terms, such as "employee involvement" and "employee participation" (Huq, 2016). On the other hand, when organizations deal with employee empowerment in practice, they lack clear definitions for the concept (Huq, 2016; Lincoln et al., 2002). As a result, the various definitions of employee empowerment generate a range of expectations and interpretations regarding its definition. Misperceptions, tensions, and unpredictable outcomes can occur in organizations due to the hazy understanding of employee empowerment (Lincoln et al., 2002). This also contributes to confusion regarding the implementation of employee empowerment (Huq, 2016). Thus, conceptual and empirical research is required to clarify this phenomenon further.

In addition to the fact that employee empowerment can be useful to the success of many companies, Ciulla (2020) claimed that it is ethical to demonstrate and advance employees' empowerment experiences. The purpose of employee empowerment is to contribute to human flourishing, which is a critical part of virtue ethics (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003; Cameron & Gaza, 2002). This feature constitutes this dissertation's central idea, namely, that the

virtues of employee empowerment form a crucial foundation for an organization's ethical behavior.

In this study, the virtues of employee empowerment are investigated in a multicultural business organizational context in Finland. The idea of a multicultural organization has gained increasing attention in recent decades (Sohrabi, 2019), and its popularity among politicians, researchers, and the media continues to grow. In this dissertation, a multicultural organization refers to an organization where employees represent different nationalities; thus, their cultural backgrounds differ from one another in this sense. For example, in his popular article, Cox (1991) claimed that organizations are becoming increasingly multicultural, and employees' national background is one factor that causes multiculturalism and diversity of employees. Numerous global economic, social, and environmental reasons, as well as personal reasons, drive people to relocate willingly or unwillingly to other countries. Business life in Finland, as well as elsewhere, has become and continues to become more multicultural, for example, because of increased migration and internationalization of businesses (Guilherme et al., 2010; Lämsä et al., 2019).

The number of people with a foreign background in Finland has grown since the beginning of the 1990s (Statistics Finland, 2019) and is likely to continue to grow as a result of Finland's migration policy, which plays an important role in the vitality, economic development, and future of Finland (European Migration Network, 2022). Statistics Finland (2021a) has reported that the number of immigrants relocating to Finland reached an unprecedented level of over 36,000 in 2021. Notably, Russian and Ukrainian citizens have applied for residency in large numbers due to the ongoing conflict, with 61,295 applications submitted since April 2023, as reported by the Finnish Immigration Service (2023). According to the same source, the largest number of immigrants with foreign citizenship came from Iraq and India in the last 12 months. The number of people with Indian citizenship increased by 27.2% between 2021 and 2022, which is the highest increase of any nationality in Finland, as reported by Statistics Finland (2023). Moreover, Statistics Finland (2023) reports that as of 2021, there were 469,633 people with foreign backgrounds out of Finland's more than 5.5 million people. The growing number of immigrants makes Finnish working life more multicultural in terms of different nationalities and related cultures. Nowadays, it is increasingly common to work in a multicultural environment in many Finnish organizations, and this trend may continue to grow due to the country's aging population and labor shortage (Tilastokeskus, 2015).

1.2   Aim of the study and its focus

The overall aim of this dissertation is to extend our knowledge and understanding of the organizational virtues of employee empowerment in business organizations. To generate in-depth information about the topic (Tight,

2017), this study adopts a qualitative case study approach and analyzes and interprets the experiences of organization members at different levels and tasks in its investigation. The empirical study was conducted in two multicultural business organizations in Finland, which comprise the cases in this research. The organizations were selected because they can be seen as a sign of modern and future working life in Finland due to the continuously increasing number of people with a foreign background in the country (Bergbom et al., 2020). The case study strategy, which uses theoretical background as a resource for empirical analysis, is adopted (Tight, 2017). In other words, in this dissertation, the theoretical framework is not tested, but with its help, analysis and interpretation of the topic are conducted.

The study draws on the idea stressed by Crane and Matten (2010, p. 118) that organizations are increasingly requested to be ethical in their actions, and "good actions of organizations come from good organizations." Ethically sound and correct actions are those undertaken by organizations with virtuous characteristics, and to be virtuous, these characteristics need to be practiced and nurtured in everyday organizational life (Arjoon, 2000; Pearce, 2013). Organizations are also increasingly requested to promote employee empowerment because various benefits of empowerment to employees and businesses, such as increased effectiveness, have been recognized (Ahammad et al., 2021; Blanchard et al., 2001; Gazzoli et al., 2010; Mayle 2006; Ongori, 2009; Sarma & Huda, 2021; Tiambo, 2019; Tseng et al., 2020). However, this study especially adapts the claim of Ciulla (2020) that it is also ethical to demonstrate and advance employee empowerment. Employee empowerment is not just a strategy for increasing organizational effectiveness; authentic empowerment entails a pervasive set of ethical understandings and commitments in organizational life (Ciulla, 2020). Empowerment is a process toward a goal, not as "power itself" or an end in and of itself (Lincoln et al., 2002).

In this dissertation, it is assumed that specific organizational virtues are significant for employee empowerment. According to the adopted Aristotelian virtue ethics approach, virtues are significant in the occurrence of human flourishing, which by definition, refers to features such as ownership, involvement, and development among people (Blanchard et al., 2001). These features are included in the phenomenon of employee empowerment, as mentioned, for example, by Yukl (2013) and Hanaysha and Tahir (2016). Organizational virtues are the preconditions for ethical behavior in organizations (Gotsis & Grimani, 2015) and, thus, for the virtuousness of employee empowerment. Therefore, this ethical feature of employee empowerment can be considered to play an important role in the formation of the quality of doing the right things and avoiding doing wrong things in business organizations. To obtain more detailed information on the significance of virtues of employee empowerment, the main research question is as follows:

Which organizational virtues experienced by organization members in the case organizations are significant for employee empowerment?

Although virtues in this study represent the characteristics of an ethical organization (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021; Ferrero & Sison, 2014; Kaptein,

2008; Solomon, 2004), the idea of the golden mean between two extremes is crucial in virtue ethics (Dimmock & Fisher, 2017; Reeve, 2014). Without a doubt, vices as moral weaknesses take place in the organizational character along with virtues. Without vices, it might be difficult to recognize the virtues and levels to strive for. Therefore, to be an ethical organization, especially one that not only produces but also constrains virtues need to be known (Kaptein, 2017). According to the adopted Aristotelian virtue ethics approach, virtue aims at what is intermediate (Dimmock & Fisher, 2017; Ross & Brown, 2009). For example, transparency is an organizational virtue, yet too much transparency tends to make employees confused and stressed, while too little of it creates a secretive and suspicious atmosphere in the organization (Riivari & Lämsä, 2019). Therefore, as suggested by Kaptein (2017), to understand the virtuousness of an organization, not only the virtues but also the perspective of vices must be examined. The second research question is as follows:

Which organizational vices constrain the case organizations' virtuousness for employee empowerment to occur as experienced by the organization members?

At the organizational level, one key interest of virtue ethics is organizational practices that support the virtues to take place (Collier, 1998; Riivari & Lämsä, 2019). Thus, organizational practices supporting the virtues of employee empowerment are a matter of developing and sustaining an ethical organization. Previous research suggests that organizational virtues occur and develop through organizational practices, which should later transition into habits (Arjoon, 2000; Hartman, 2013; MacIntyre, 1984; Pearce, 2013; Riivari & Lämsä, 2019). For example, Riivari and Lämsä (2019), who applied the virtue ethics theory in their study, showed that specific organizational practices are connected to specific organizational virtues of innovativeness in the organization. Thus, drawing on the suggestions of previous research, it is assumed in this dissertation that specific organizational virtues of employee empowerment can be advanced by specific organizational practices. Hence, the third research question is as follows:

Which organizational practices experienced by the organization members in the case organizations are crucial for the virtues of employee empowerment to take place?

The virtue ethics approach emphasizes the role of an organization's good characteristics (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021; Martin, 2022) rather than certain rules that guide the organization's behavior to achieve a desired consequence. Moreover, the approach responds to the modern requirements for business organizations that employees need to feel happy and that their well-being in the workplace be accorded importance (Achor, 2011; Demo et al., 2022; Hinchliffe, 2004; VanderWeele, 2017). The Aristotelian virtue ethics shows the connection between virtues and a happy life (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021; Ross & Brown, 2009). It means that virtuous behavior leads to happiness (Ross & Brown, 2009), good life (Crane et al., 2019), or enjoyment from doing virtuous actions. Thus, following this line of thought, it is possible to say that the organizational virtues of employee empowerment reflect the condition of happiness at the workplace, which includes working well and working good

(Hartman, 2017; Solomon, 2004). However, this connection needs more clarification. Thus, the fourth research question is as follows:

How do the organizational virtues of employee empowerment affect the human flourishing of the employees as experienced by the organization members?

The core idea of this dissertation's empirical study is highlighted in Figure 1.
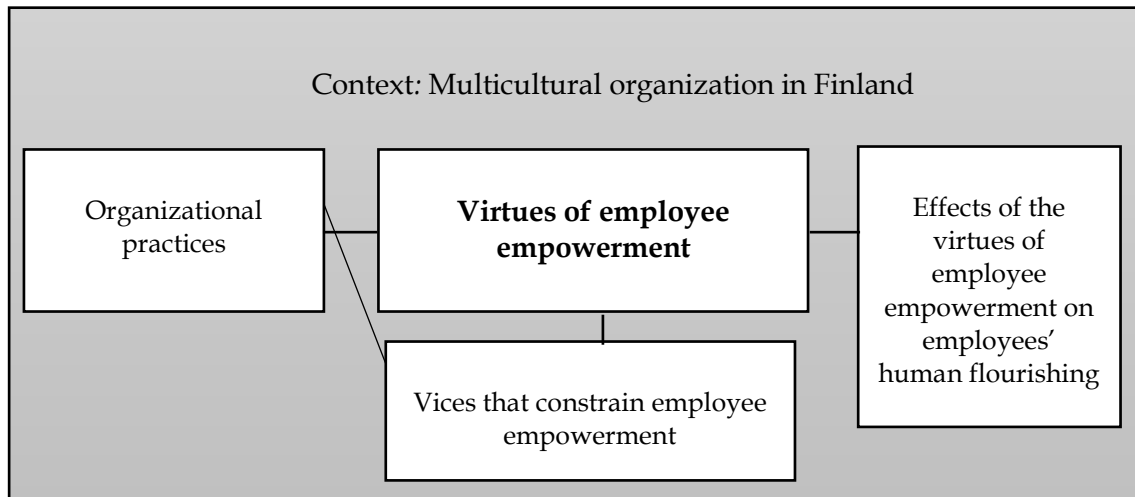
FIGURE 1   The overall idea of the study

Figure 1 shows that the study focuses on the organizational virtues that are significant for employee empowerment in the investigated case organizations. In addition, the vices that constrain the virtues to occur are explored. It is assumed that specific organizational practices can promote specific organizational virtues of employee empowerment. The practices and their link to the virtues are analyzed. Finally, it is estimated that the organizational virtues of employee empowerment affect the flourishing of employees in the case organizations. These effects are explored and described.

The research task of the dissertation proceeds as follows. *First,* a theoretical background is built. Although the focus on organizational virtues has emerged as an important research branch within organizational ethics literature in recent decades (Karakas & Sarigollu, 2013), this research stream tends to still lack, for example, a clearer picture of what is meant by virtues at the organizational level. One reason is that, traditionally, virtues have been perceived as an individual's characteristics. Therefore, based on previous research literature, in the theoretical part, this dissertation clarifies the meaning of organizational virtue from the adopted Aristotelian virtue ethics viewpoint (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021; Hartman, 2013; Kaptein, 2017; Solomon, 2004) by conducting a literature analysis of key studies on organizational virtues. *Second*, in the theory part, based on previous literature, the idea of employee empowerment is presented from the viewpoint of the adopted Aristotelian virtue theory. *Third,* the primary task of this dissertation is to conduct an empirical study, as presented above.

1.3 Contributions of the study

This dissertation has two main contributions, namely, theoretical and practical.

Theoretically, this study extends the literature and takes a step forward in understanding and making visible the organizational virtues of employee empowerment by utilizing the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory. In doing so, the study identifies and specifies a novel research gap. Employee empowerment has been a well-known idea for many years (Abadi & Chegini, 2013; Badjie et al., 2019; Potterfield, 1997). However, we lack significant information on the ethical nature of this phenomenon in organizational life. The ethical aspect of business organizations is increasingly important in the 21st century when businesses are under pressure to perform according to the moral expectations and demands of society (Grigoropoulos, 2019). In line with Crane and Matten (2010) and Crane et al., (2019), this study adopts the idea that the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory offers a significant way to study the ethical viewpoint of employee empowerment. The advantage of the virtue ethics approach in business ethics is it shows that right and wrong cannot be defined and solved by applying particular rules; rather, the cultivation of knowledge and judgement on ethical matters through employees' participation is important (see Crane & Matten, 2010, p. 119). From the theoretical perspective, the study brings the Aristotelian virtue ethics approach to life by investigating the organizational virtues of employee empowerment in a multicultural business organization context, offering a literature review and an empirical investigation of its topic. The concept of virtue ethics remains a significant subject of discussion in contemporary ethical theory. This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the practical applications of Aristotle's principles in the context of business.

Seen from *the practical viewpoint*, this dissertation stimulates new thinking and generates knowledge about the virtuousness of employee empowerment in the studied multicultural organizational context to be able to offer information to the development of these organization's practices to be more ethical. The discovered virtues of employee empowerment and related vices can offer helpful information to the organizations' members to understand and analyze the situation of virtuousness in their organization and develop their practices based on this evaluation. The study has the potential to enrich the "organizational virtue" language in practice and, as a result, enhance ethical development and outcomes in the study context. The study produces implications for the investigated organizations by providing knowledge regarding how employee empowerment could be advanced in organizations. The revealed organizational practices can show ways to affect the process of cultivation and practice of desirable virtues and modify virtuous behavior to advance employee empowerment. Consequently, the findings may serve as a good guide to the organization members on how to exercise certain virtues of employee empowerment. The results can be useful in the organizations'

leadership trainings and the recruitment process to hire suitable employees and leaders who are interested in strengthening the virtues of employee empowerment in the workplace. The study also discloses the effects of the virtues on employee empowerment. This information is crucial for the studied organizations to consider and to promote the well-being and happiness of their employees—a way to foster human flourishing in the organization. In sum, the research findings provide information that can help the studied organizations be aware of and develop their practices to strengthen the advantages of employee empowerment in an ethical manner.

This dissertation investigates its topic in the multicultural organization setting in Finland. Knowledge in this context is needed because the workforce with foreign backgrounds has increased since the 1990s and is constantly increasing in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2019). In particular, refugees, "re-migrants," foreign employees, and international students as sources of immigration are producing cultural diversity in Finland (Saukkonen & Pyykkönen, 2008; Working Group for Cultural Policy, Immigrants, and Promotion of Cultural Diversity, 2021). Altogether, the foreign citizens in Finland have different nationalities from all over the world (Statistics Finland, 2019). The majority of people that immigrated to Finland are from the Former Soviet Union, Estonia, Iraq, and Somalia (Statistics Finland, 2019). The multicultural working environments in Finnish organizations give rise to discussions on how to deal with multicultural employees in line with Nordic values, such as equality, trust, and human rights, consequently providing success and security to the work life in the organization. The knowledge offered by this dissertation might be helpful in the comprehension of the needs and ways of the integration of people with foreign backgrounds into Finnish working life and society.

1.4   Key concepts

The key concepts, namely, virtue ethics, organizational virtues, human flourishing, employee empowerment, and multicultural organization, are presented next.

Virtue ethics
In this study, virtue ethics is seen as a normative ethical approach that provides guidance toward the characteristics and formation of a good organization (Kaptein, 2008; Solomon, 2004). Virtue ethics emphasizes that organizations with virtuous character are able to act in a morally correct manner (Crane & Matten, 2010; Kaptein, 2008; Solomon, 2004). By definition, the virtue-based approach to business ethics shifts our attention from actions to agents and their character (Kaptein, 2017). According to the approach, good actions include not only doing the right things but also having a virtuous will and desires (Hartman, 2017; Solomon, 2004). Therefore, the foundation of an organization's

moral actions lies in the practice and development of virtues (Arjoon, 2000; Crane & Matten, 2010; Fontrodona et al., 2013) or, more specifically, organizational virtues.

Organizational virtues
Organizational virtues are a set of moral qualities expressed by the organization members as well as the organization itself (Cameron et al., 2004; Cameron, 2003; Caza, 2017), allowing organizations to fulfil their tasks and function properly and well (Arjoon, 2000). Actions are orienteers to infer and characterize virtues (Hartman, 2017). Practice and habituation are crucial components to developing virtues because organizations do not own them self-evidently but through organizational learning (Arjoon, 2000; MacIntyre, 1984; Pearce, 2013).

Human flourishing
Human flourishing has its origin in Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia or happiness, which is commonly translated as flourishing (Crane et al., 2019; Hartman, 2017). It is not about pleasure, but it defines an action of the soul, in accordance with reason, to fulfill one's human capacities (Ross & Brown, 2009). In other words, it means to unveil the best of human beings, their full potential to blossom, and it goes beyond happiness and satisfaction with life. As a result, human flourishing is associated with living well and is considered the central concern of the adopted Aristotelian ethics viewpoint (Hartman, 2017; Ross & Brown, 2009).

Virtues play an important role in achieving the good life or eudaimonia when individuals experience well-being (Hartman, 2013) and the best human life (Ross & Brown, 2009). Organizations, as a part of larger communities (country, world) (Solomon, 2004), aim to move toward specific telos, such as good aims, goals, purposes, and ends (MacIntyre, 2007). Aristotle believed that every practice aims at some happiness (Solomon, 2004), good (MacIntyre, 2007), or "good life" in a broader sense than just pleasure (Crane & Matten, 2010; Crane et al., 2019). "The good" for organizations can mean working well and working good in the sense of flourishing or well-being, as noticed by Hartman (2017), and not just financial profit (Solomon, 2004). It is mainly about being in line with the world of others by treating them in a way that serves their interests as well as your own (Hartman, 2017; Solomon, 2004), enjoying and sharing a good working life and a good job in organizations (Solomon, 2004). Organizations with virtuous behavior can fulfil their tasks and achieve the good life or happiness for their members (Arjoon, 2000; Crane & Matten, 2010; MacIntyre, 2007) and other stakeholders.

Employee empowerment
This concept has been widely used in the management field and organizational behavior literature, as well as across different disciplines, such as feminism, minority groups, education, community care, and politics (Lincoln et al., 2002). Due to the variety of meanings and interpretations given to the concept, the major concern of the debates on empowerment is its definition and clarification

(Badjie et al., 2019; Lincoln et al., 2002). This study understands and defines the concept of employee empowerment in light of the Aristotelian approach to business ethics, where one of the most fundamental aspects is the purposiveness (teleology) at some good. "For its chief proponents, empowerment is a humanistic device to improve the quality of working life for ordinary employees" (Lincoln et al., 2002, p. 271) and increase the quality of work. Following this argument, employee empowerment is considered a process of giving more power to employees in decision-making processes (Heery & Noon, 2017), responsibility, and control, thereby affecting their work, which can cause human flourishing—the highest good of human actions. This view is in contradiction with the traditional interpretation of employee empowerment as a management technique or tool to strengthen the bottom line of business organizations for the sake of organizational productivity. Previous research has extensively discussed the positive factors of employee empowerment that influence the internal organizational environment and the external environment, including better work communities (Badjie et al., 2019). More specifically, employee empowerment can lead to job satisfaction (Abou Elnaga & Imran, 2014), organizational commitment (Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016), increased motivation of employees and decreased employee turnover (Ongori, 2009), better work results, and many other advantages. In this study, it is assumed that employee empowerment brings flourishing and enjoyment among organization members from their working life and satisfaction from a good job. In this case, organizational virtues can influence the quality of life and well-being of organization members.

Virtues cause eudaimonia or human flourishing to happen. The virtuousness of employee empowerment correlates with its ethical characteristic involving entailed moral settings in organizational life (Carter, 2009; Ciulla, 2020). This way, employee empowerment, where the core element, according to a majority of authors, is giving power over certain tasks (Ongori, 2009), might be defined as a prerequisite that provides human flourishing and ethical behavior and encourages other virtues through organizational culture and leadership. Virtues manifested by the organization members relate to the purpose of well-being (Badjie et al., 2019), unless it is not a managerial trick giving unauthentic empowerment. Employees do not believe they are empowered if they do not find consistency between words and behavior (Craig & Steinhoff, 1990).

Multicultural organization
In this study, the definition of a multicultural organization given by Adler and Gundersen (2008) is adopted to clarify the concept in the context of this research. A multicultural organization in this study means regular interactions between organization members originally coming from different countries and representing different nationalities that are working together. They are citizens of various countries and have different mother tongues, cultural habits, and work experiences acquired from their home countries and in Finland. Some employees in the case organizations arrived in Finland after being recruited,

while others had been in Finland for some time before they joined the organization. This description of a multicultural organization defines the multicultural environment of the investigated business organizations in the empirical part of the study, following the idea as it is understood in the studied case organizations.

1.5 Structure of the study

This dissertation consists of five main chapters. Their content is summarized and shown in Figure 2.

Chapter	Content
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION	• Research background of the investigated topic • Aim settings, research questions, contributions, and structure
Chapter 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	• Virtue ethics theory and its implication to organizations • Literature review of organizational virtues • Employee empowerment and virtue ethics • Organizational practices and employee empowerment • Employee empowement in Finland
Chapter 3: DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	• Case study approach as interpretive sensemaking • Data collection • Data analysis • Ethical considerations and trustworthiness of the study
Chapter 4: EMPIRICAL RESULTS	•Virtues and vices of employee empowerment • Organizational practices supporting the virtues of employee empowerment •Effects of the virtues of employee empowerment on human flourishing of the employees
Chapter 5: DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	• Findings and implications •Limitations and further research

FIGURE 2   Structure of the study

The first chapter is an introductory part of the dissertation. This part presents the general information of the research, such as the research gap, research aim, research importance, and contributions under different subheadings in subsequent subchapters. Finally, a brief overview of the key research concepts of the dissertation is also included in the chapter. The second chapter presents the theoretical framework explaining key terminologies and a range of theoretical considerations concerning the research area and provides the basis

for the empirical part of the study. This part presents and discusses fundamental ideas of the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory and its application to study business ethics. Subsequently, prior research on organizational virtues and their meanings are analyzed. Moreover, the idea of employee empowerment is discussed from the viewpoints of virtue ethics, organizational practices, and organizational Finnish culture. The third chapter deals with the research strategy and methods for the empirical part of the research. More specifically, this part introduces and justifies the qualitative research philosophy and strategy, sampling method, data collection method, and data analysis. This chapter is finalized by the consideration of the ethics and trustworthiness of the study. The fourth chapter sheds light on the empirical results of the study and their summary. The final chapter summarizes and discusses the research findings. Research strengths, weaknesses, limitations, and further research suggestions are considered. Lastly, the overall conclusion of the study is presented.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The first two section of this chapter discusses the basics of the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory derived from Nicomachean ethics and its application to business ethics (Section 2.1-2.2). The following section of the chapter distinguishes among values, skills, and virtues (Section 2.3). The middle section of the chapter (Section 2.4) focuses on organizational virtues through the consideration of previous research literature on organizational ethics. The final section of the chapter (Section 2.5) moves to the concept of employee empowerment from the virtue ethics perceptive, its critical aspect in practical implementation, organizational practices in the context of empowerment, and characteristics of employee empowerment in Finnish culture.

2.1 Aristotelian virtue ethics theory

The Aristotelian virtue ethics theory is one of the classical traditions of moral thought. According to Western history, classic Greek philosophers were the first to examine virtue ethics (Murphy, 1999). The virtue ethics theory starts from Socrates' ethical philosophy that focuses on the character of a moral agent and its relation to the overall well-being of that moral agent. This ethical project questions what to do to manage one's character and live life well (Bowin, 2020).

Even though the virtue ethics theory is rooted in the ancient Greek philosophy of Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics (1926) had the most effect on its formulation (Ahmed & Machold, 2004; Arjoon, 2000; Murphy, 1999). Moreover, Aristotle was the first Greek virtue ethicist who formed the virtue ethics theory as a distinct part of philosophy (Bowin, 2020). The Nicomachean Ethics is the canonical text for Aristotle's account of the virtues dedicated to his son Nicomahus (MacIntyre, 2007). Nicomachean Ethics set such crucial ideas as the human soul, human flourishing, virtue, and the distinct virtues that led to the debates and revival of the Aristotelian virtue ethics today. This old approach to moral thinking, which began at the time of

antiquity, continues to be influential nowadays (Bowin, 2020); therefore, there is a constantly increasing interest in the ancient source among researchers. Consequently, there is an evident need to get familiar with the basics of Nicomachean Ethics to be able to participate and contribute to the discussion about the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory. The Aristotelian virtue ethics theory includes several interdependent elements (see Figure 3), each of which is explained throughout the chapter.
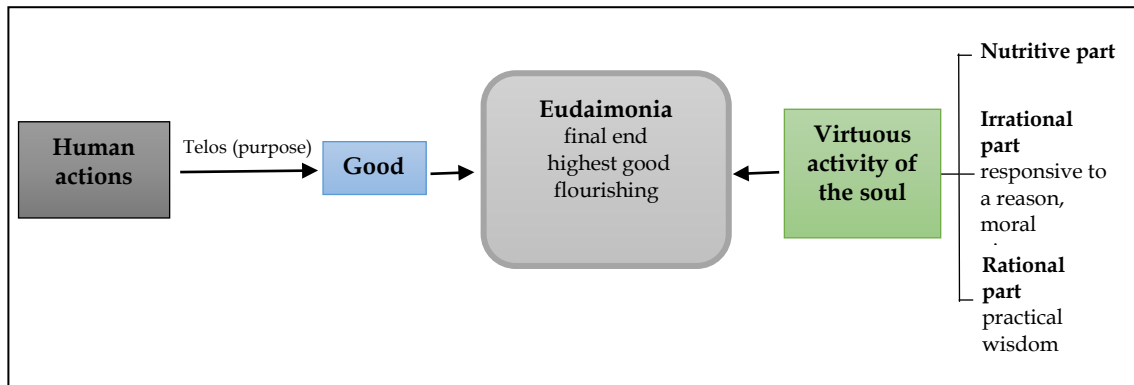
FIGURE 3   Aristotelian virtue ethics theory

Aristotle's teleological view of the world caused him to consider the rationale for human actions. Aristotle began Nicomachean Ethics with the concept of human good (Ross & Brown, 2009), which serves as the foundation for his ethical theory (Crane & Matten, 2010; Crane et al., 2019). In Aristotle's view, every activity and decision are supposed to be for some good (Ross & Brown, 2009). In other words, every human action seeks a beneficial purpose, objective, goal, or end (telos). In this instance, Aristotle referred to the actions that people intend to take as a result of their choice. In addition, Aristotle distinguished all the good associated with all human activities as subordinate to the highest human good (Ross & Brown, 2009). Aristotle established that the highest good is the ultimate and self-sufficient goal of human actions and that the choices of human actions are ultimately motivated by the highest good (chief good) but not otherwise (Ross & Brown, 2009). Even though the ultimate goal of all human actions is the highest good, there are still goals for other goods, such as honor, enjoyment, reason, and virtues (Ross & Brown, 2009). These intermediate goods are a component of the highest good (Bowin, 2020).

As highlighted in Figure 3, there is a common agreement that the highest good is eudaimonia or happiness associated with living well and faring well (Ross & Brown, 2009). People tend to understand happiness as a feeling, which might not be an accurate translation of eudaimonia. Aristotle clearly stated that eudaimonia is not a feeling but includes an activity or function of human beings (Ross & Brown, 2009). More precisely, Aristotle defined eudaimonia as the rational activity of the human soul exposing virtue (Ross & Brown, 2009). It is important to emphasize that eudaimonia is not just a purely rational act of the soul but a good or excellent performance (Ross & Brown, 2009). Ross and

Brown (2009, p. x) followed the suggestion that it would be more suitable to translate eudaimonia as "flourishing" or "fulfilment," "good life" (Crane et al., 2019, p. 116), and "well-being" "… as a matter of achieving natural human characteristics to the highest degree" (Hartman, 2013, p. 19). In other words, eudaimonia is the virtuous activity of human flourishing when it gets everything right for the human soul and develops human potential.

If we contemplate the aspect of the final end that all human activity is aimed at, it is conclusive that eudaimonia is the final cause of the soul's virtuous activity compatible with a reason. This idea indicates that eudaimonia and all its components (intermediate goods) play the role of a motivational factor, driver, and intention for taking certain actions. In Aristotle's eyes, eudaimonia as the target is a good life. He also showed the existence of debates on what constitutes a good life. Aristotle considered that people could seek pleasure in their lives (Ross & Brown, 2009). In this case, human life would be devoted to nothing because it is a process rather than a goal, a condition of the soul (Ross & Brown, 2009). He also spoke of an honor-seeking life, which is about being well in the eyes of others (Ross & Brown, 2009). It means that the final cause would be outside of the human soul. Another option is life for the sake of wealth. People are forced to make money, and they are useful for the sake of something else (Ross & Brown, 2009). The last possibility is a life of contemplation. Contemplative activity is a part of eudaimonia (Ross & Brown, 2009); hence, it is not the chief end. Even though Aristotle did not consider pleasure, wealth, and honor as sufficient conditions for a happy and flourishing life, he did not reject their importance in human life.

If eudaimonia is the activity of the soul in line with virtue and human virtue refers to virtue of the soul rather than virtue of the body (Ross & Brown, 2009), it is necessary to know more about the soul from Aristotle's perspective. Aristotle considered the human soul as a set of capacities (Hartman, 2013; Ross & Brown, 2009). This is the argument for him to believe that a human is a substance (Hartman, 2013). Aristotle viewed the human body and soul as inseparable. As exemplified by the principle of form and matter, when the soul (form) makes flesh a human being, the human body (matter) is necessary for soul activities (Hartman, 2013).

Figure 3 shows that in the virtue approach, there are three parts of the human soul, namely, nutritive, irrational, and rational. The first part of the human soul is specifically called nutritive and has nothing to do with human virtue or excellence (Ross & Brown, 2009). This power of the soul to provide nutrition and growth of the physical body also exists in other species (Ross & Brown, 2009), for example, in plants and animals. The second part of the human soul is irrational or desiring that speaks the same language as reason because of its responsiveness to reason while resisting in the opposite direction (Ross & Brown, 2009). It means that people have control over this soul. The last part of the soul is rational, one that has reason (Ross & Brown, 2009) and follows the reason in the full sense. The ability of humankind to reason makes them completely different from animals (Hartman, 2013) and unique in comparison

with other species. The desiring part of the soul of a virtuous person is more obedient in all matters to reasons than that of a continent person (Ross & Brown, 2009). A flourishing human follows not just desires but rational desires (Hartman, 2013).

Aristotle introduced the idea of virtue. Virtue is excellence of any kind (Ross & Brown, 2009, p. xii), a stable disposition (Hartman, 2013, p. 30), acquired traits of character (Crane & Matten, 2010, p. 118), characteristics of character, or preconditions that cause virtuous actions in accordance with eudaimonia. In other words, a virtue is the state or condition the human soul needs to be to enact eudaimonia. An individual living the best human life is one who exercises virtues (Ross & Brown, 2009, p. xii). While eudaimonia is the rational activity of the human soul in accordance with virtue, virtue and eudaimonia are in a very close relationship with one another. Therefore, they are defined in terms of each other.

The rational and the desiring parts of the human soul are under the domain of the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory in relation to virtue or excellence. Accordingly, Aristotle distinguished moral virtues or virtues of character and intellectual virtues. There are intellectual virtues that belong to the rational part of the soul. Practical wisdom is the most known one (Crane et al., 2019) because of its crucial connection to moral virtues (Ross & Brown, 2009, p. xiii). In turn, moral virtues provide proper functioning of the irrational desiring soul. Moral virtues are more in number, for example, courage, honesty, kindness, patience, and so on. To summarize, the irrational desiring soul is keeping special preconditions or moral virtues, while the practical wisdom of the rational soul inspiring and inviting to use those preconditions into actions is eudaimonia. This way, the rational soul gets the irrational desiring soul on the same page with reason. A person is not living well and flourishing if these two parts of the soul are in conflict and tension with each other. Aristotle's list of moral virtues is presented in Table 1 (Ross & Brown, 2009, Books III–VIII). The vices are also presented.

TABLE 1   Aristotle's moral virtues and vices

Action/Feeling	Excess (Vice)	Mean (Virtue)	Deficiency (Vice)
Fear and confidence	Rashness	Courage	Cowardice
Pleasures of touch	Self-indulgence	Temperance	Insensibility
Getting and spending (minor)	Prodigality	Liberality	Meanness
Getting and spending (major)	Tastelessness	Magnificence	Stinginess
Honor and dishonor	Ambition	Pride	Unambitiousness
Anger	Irascibility	Good temper	Unirascibility
Social intercourse	Obsequiousness	Friendliness	Quarrelsomeness
Self-expression	Boastfulness	Truthfulness	Mock modesty
Conversation	Buffoonery	Ready wit	Boorishness
Shame	Ashamed	Shame	Shameless
Indignation	Envy	Righteous indignation	Spitefulness

Table 1 expounds on the meanings of the moral virtues and vices of Aristotle. He discussed 11 moral virtues and vices in the Nicomachean Ethics that refer to emotions and desires. Each moral virtue is a mean between two corresponding vices presenting excess and deficiency (Ross & Brown, 2009, Book II). Aristotle's intellectual virtues are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2   Aristotle's intellectual virtues

Category	Ability
Scientific knowledge	Understanding of the material world
Art	Knowledge of how to make things
Practical wisdom	Judgment, common sense
Intuitive reason	Insight into basic truths
Philosophic wisdom	Combines science and intuition

Table 2 shows Aristotle's five intellectual virtues as a different way of understanding the excellence of the mind. The first column on the left contains the names of the virtues. The second column on the right clarifies their meanings. Aristotle's intellectual virtues relate to the mind and represent mental skills, bringing truth about what is right and wrong (Ross & Brown, 2009, Books II, VI). Both moral and intellectual virtues listed by Aristotle enable people to perform their actions well toward eudaimonia. Nowadays, these lists of virtues proposed by Aristotle can be criticized and argued from the point of view of different people, cultures, and societies that reject the idea of this universal list of virtues. Therefore, a more contextual approach to defining the virtues has been suggested (Hartman, 2013; Solomon, 2004, 1992a, 1992b).

People have the potential to live a rational life to achieve eudaimonia, but it is impossible without developing such potential. More specifically, Aristotle

emphasized habituation and education to become a person of good character who enjoys doing the right things. Moral virtues are mainly attained with the help of habituation or training, not just through talking or education. People are supposed to train and habituate their irrational desiring part of the soul into a soul that desires the right things. It is about understanding what the soul should be and practicing it continuously until it becomes a habit, and the soul has the necessary conditions or traits to act in a specific manner. Virtue is achieved, and a person acts accordingly when that person develops the right desires, attitudes, and emotions. The crucial role in this regard belongs to the community and, to some degree, to parents. Intellectual virtues are acquired through education, learning, contemplation, and discussion. Once generally good habits are cultivated, a person needs to train the reasoning capacity with practical wisdom through dialectic (the process of reasoning) to defend that one is good (Hartman, 2013). Once a person acquires practical wisdom, it brings differences in actions; therefore, virtues are completely developed only when merged with practical wisdom (Ross & Brown, 2009). This rational capacity of humans can break the habitual way of thinking in new situations.

Vices are the opposite of virtues. Every virtue is the means between vicious extremes; consequently, every virtue has two associated vices. It has an excessive vice and a deficient vice. Virtue is the target at the center of two vices. Moral virtues are concerned with the irrational desiring part of the soul that is responsive to reason, so every virtue relates to some sort of emotion. For example, there is a virtue associated with the feeling of fear and confidence: it is called courage (Ross & Brown, 2009). Courage is the means between two extremes of cowardice and foolhardiness. Aristotle concluded that courage is about the fear for the right things and purpose at the right time in the right way toward the right people with respect to the situation and reason (Ross & Brown, 2009). In other words, courage is the right amount of fear, the balance between recklessness and cowardice. This middle amount of fear compels a person to fight and keep themselves safe and, as a result, causes flourishing. On the contrary, the lack of fear or its excessiveness may lead a person into trouble or stop them from taking action in manageable situations.

The rational nature of human beings does not make all actions rational. An intentional action for a reason might be irrational and is a weakness of will (Hartman, 2013). Aristotle showed that people may seem to value something but eventually act against that value (Ross & Brown, 2009). A person may find something to say against a value, which means the person does not have real knowledge and a firmly held belief regarding the value. The person does not have real knowledge; it takes time (Ross & Brown, 2009). As a result, the person performs actions contrary to the virtues but in accordance with something else, which is used as a counterargument (vindictiveness) to a value. People with weak will have a tendency to follow an emotional impulse despite their acknowledgment that rejection is the right choice. On the contrary, people with practical wisdom feel discomfort from the idea of doing the wrong things. Aristotle also spoke about the failure of character, that is, when a person

perceives and frames a situation in the wrong way by focusing on unnecessary aspects that erroneously affect an ethical decision. The surrounding environment has a great influence on the way we frame situations. It is a test of character to determine whether a person understands a situation and the potential actions correctly (Hartman, 2013).

Aristotle classified three categories of internal human states that make people not virtuous, namely, continence, incontinence, and vice. Continent people generally act as a virtuous person does because reason overtakes their contradictory desires. Incontinent people experience conflict between the rational and irrational desiring soul, wherein desire wins in actions. A vicious person is somebody who both desires and does wrong things (Kraut, 2018).

To sum up, according to Aristotle, the actions of a virtuous actor are rooted in one's character made of virtues. The virtue ethics theory emphasizes several key aspects that help identify and define virtues, such as the following:
- actor;
- virtuous action;
- drivers motivating the actor to take virtuous action; and
- flourishing as a final end of virtuous action.

When somebody is virtuous, this person desires the right things because he reasons out and understands what is right and does the right things. In this case, desire, reason, and action are in agreement with each other. A virtuous person aims for the good of others or his own well-being, and such a person enjoys taking virtuous actions and desires to be this sort of person (Hartman, 2013). Moreover, a virtuous person has knowledge of what to do, makes decisions regarding actions for his sake and acts based on a firm and unchangeable virtuous character (Ross & Brown, 2009).

2.2   Aristotelian approach to business ethics

"Our conversations about corporations need to change for us to truly create the good society."

Freeman & Liedtka (1991, p. 92)

There are many reports about ethical scandals in business organizations involving different doubtful practices (Bagdasarov & MacDougall, 2017) and obviously causing human suffering. Interpersonal ethical issues in organizations like abuse, intimidation, and lying are the most increasingly common ethical misconduct (Bagdasarov & MacDougall, 2017). Such business practices result in disasters and damages, which demand finding a connection between business and ethics. Business ethics is a field to share, discuss, understand, and resolve ethical conflicts and problems of people working in the business industry. In addition, business ethics discusses and aims to promote an ethically good and sound business life. Therefore, this field has the potential

to bring a difference in the life of business communities by improving the perspectives and conceptions of business activities (Solomon, 1992a, 1992b).

Aristotle's ethics is of interest not only in modern moral philosophy but also in business ethics (Hartman, 2013). Researchers in organization ethics studies (e.g., Fontrodona et al., 2013; Hartman, 2013; Murphy, 1999; Solomon, 1992a, 1992b, 2004) have championed the application of virtues to the organizational level. Although the virtue system of ethics is an ancient Greek philosophy (Ahmed & Machold, 2004), academic interest in virtue ethics theory in business ethics dates back to hardly three decades ago (Ferrero & Sison, 2014). The virtue ethics theory is relevant to individuals, and it positions morality in the development of the moral character traits (virtues) of individuals (Arjoon, 2000; Fontrodona, Sison, & de Bruin, 2013; Sison & Fontrodona, 2012). Therefore, the virtues of individuals have been the focus of most previous research (Cameron et al., 2004; Chun, 2005). Virtue ethics has been developed and applied to organizations and represents a suitable approach to studying human action, professional work, and organizational characteristics and activity (Fontrodona et al., 2013). This unique approach has the potential to bring new thinking and understanding into the field of business ethics (Calkins, 2014; Solomon, 1992a, 1992b) and revolutionize the operating ways of organizations (Younkins, 2011).

The Greek philosopher Aristotle himself believed that profit-oriented commerce is antisocial and unethical (Solomon, 1992b). In his opinion, the business environment is not suitable for people to be truly virtuous because money is the main target and end for itself, and not some good end. Communicative and rational humans with much money cannot live the good life or eudaimonia. Although there is an apparent contradiction between business and Aristotle's ethics, it is possible to argue that virtue can be attained in business life. (Hartman, 2013). Aristotelian ethics provides ethical grounds suitable for everyday business activities (Solomon, 1992b). Moreover, Aristotle might be considered the first business ethicist who had ideas about the ethics of exchange and distinguished two points of economics. He called the first one *oeconomicus* (household trading), which is significant for the functioning of at least a modestly complex society. The second one is *chrematisike* or simply profit-seeking trade, free of virtue. This type of trade was looked down upon by Aristotle (Solomon, 2004.) The way we think about business these days fits the ideas of Aristotle, who expressed those ideas about 2,400 years ago.

Solomon (2004) developed his theoretical framework named "an Aristotelian approach to business." Solomon named this approach "Aristotelian" to remind us about the old and perspective way toward a decent life in corporations that have gotten lost in the destructive profit-oriented thinking of the contemporary business world. Aristotle's idea unites business and the rest of life in a coherent whole where corporations and their members are part of a larger community. This idea navigates modern business ethics and views business life beyond conflicting limitations between business and society.

The Aristotelian approach to business ethics includes the following six essential parameters:

- community;
- excellence;
- membership;
- integrity;
- judgment; and
- holism.

Organizations are communities comprising individuals with shared interests. Organizational communities demonstrate excellence not only by "doing well" but also "by doing good." The concept of membership relates to the organizational identity of the members of an organization. Integrity is a complex of virtues working together and forming a consistent character. Judgment links to the decision-making skills of the management and staff. Holism emphasizes the cultivation of organization members during business activities, not just as business or professional specialists (Solomon, 1992b). "Community and teleology capture the essence of the Aristotelian framework, in which a sense of collective purpose and social well-being define the aspirations and virtues of the individual" (Solomon, 1992b, p. 161).

However, this image of harmony does not always take place in reality, and even the best business organizations may have tensions and conflicts due to miscommunications, conflicts of loyalties and obligations, and contrary conceptions of responsibility. The last four parameters of Aristotelian ethics are mainly concerned with "the navigation of virtue throughout the sometimes convoluted passages of community, organizational purpose, and personal virtue" (Solomon, 1992b, p. 161).

Figure 4 shows that the Aristotelian approach to business invites us to view every human as a member of a larger community (organization, country, world), where we have a shared history and human practices affecting our actions from eating to worshipping (Solomon, 2004).
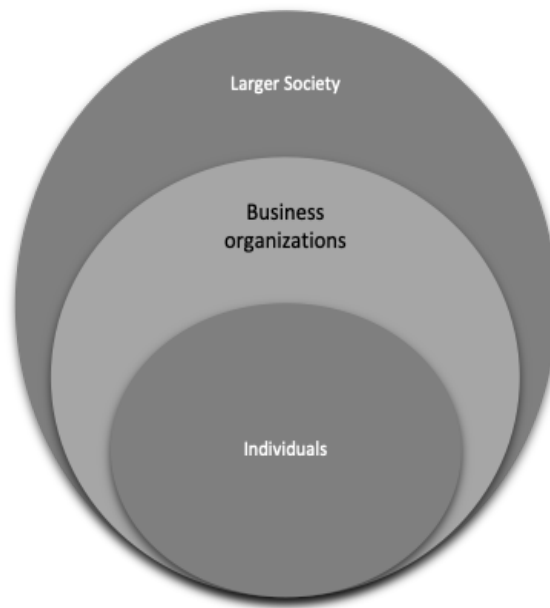
FIGURE 4   The core levels of the Aristotelian approach to business ethics

As Figure 4 shows, we are not just autonomous, self-defining, and self-sustaining individuals without social influence. The virtues of individuals and their shared enterprise are a source of unexampled human achievements. Larger communities, such as business organizations, in turn, determine virtues. Therefore, individual self-interest and the larger good of communities are not separate from other things. As a part of a community, we have shared interests that define our self-interests greatly. In this way, business as a social activity includes a coherent community with mutual concern and self-interested individuals prospering from the competition (Solomon, 2004).

Following Aristotle's logic, Solomon (2004) argued for the identification of businesspeople in line with their companies, and the policies of those companies usually are not sufficient to form ethics. Business organizations are part of a larger societal and global community, which means that members of business organizations are citizens of several communities. The ethical theory in business aims to cultivate a particular way of thinking about ourselves in and out of business. The Aristotelian approach to business ethics exhibits two sides of the coin by emphasizing individual virtue and integrity and organizational and social level policies and practices that support and maintain individual virtue and integrity. The focus on community, the business community, and the larger community, including nature, makes the approach to business ethics "Aristotelian." On the other hand, the importance of individuals and individual responsibility are not hidden because of the emphasis on community. A community is a proper environment for the development of individuals whose integrity depends on the community and gets meaning and manifestation (Solomon, 2004).

According to virtue ethics, individuals are relational and context dependent. For example, an individual from one society might be understood wrongly or fully accepted, not fit in another society, and might be

misunderstood. A society shapes individuals who follow specific standards established by that society. For example, the participants of official events in their workplaces follow certain clothing values. Exceptional individuals are also social creatures but do not precisely emphasize the essential virtues of society to serve social needs (Solomon, 2004).

The identities and meanings of individuals take place within communities. A person defines themselves in terms of a job, liking or complaining about it. This person will be involved in social relationships with colleagues and customers and will succeed if they have social skills. Aristotle viewed individuals as a part of the larger community if most of the self-interests of the individuals are similar to the larger interest of a community. Competition does not take away mutual interest and cooperation. Our workplace has a remarkable influence on whether we have a good job, a positive identity, and a good life. Therefore, it is important to choose the right organization to reach eudaimonia. A workplace becomes an immediate community for employees who live within the defined values of that community. Life in organizations encouraging mutual cooperation and virtues is very much different from organizations emphasizing competition, opposition, and enmity toward recognition of the achievements of individuals (Solomon, 2004).

According to Solomon's business ethics philosophy, business organizations are citizens and members of larger communities, and they are unimaginable apart from communities. Business organizations are not independent and autonomous entities because they are made up of individuals who are part of larger communities that formed their identities. Consequently, business organizations are social entities, and their social responsibility is an inner part of their nature. It is possible to question what the social responsibilities of businesses are but not whether they have social responsibility. Moreover, business organizations are communities themselves. It means that the actions and ethics of business organizations as communities have responsibilities and obligations beyond the communities surrounding them. All stakeholders play at least dual roles, such as employees and members of a larger community, managers and friends, and consumers and stockholders (Solomon, 2004).

Business organizations as communities bring new criteria to judge what makes business organizations work. Efficiency is dependent on how business organizations shape and define internal working conditions and operations, affecting interrelationships, coordination, rivalries, teamwork, and ethics of organization members. According to the lens of virtue ethics, the profit motive is not the primary driver of business corporations. To fit in business organizations, to do a job, and earn the respect of others and self-respect, employees exert efforts to prove their value through work performance, be independent, positively or negatively influence managers or subordinates, and so on, and, finally, be rewarded with wages (Solomon, 2004).

Naturally, an organizational community is not a monolithic entity that includes a single mind and motive but a diverse unit of personalities varying in

their characters, views, values, aims, work methodologies, rivalries, and so on. For example, employees with various national backgrounds with varying values and ways of working tend to be more diverse than employees with the same societal background (Schein & Schein, 2020; Wijewantha, 2016). In addition, business organizations deal with the already pre-established differences in specializations and labor division. In this way, heterogeneity is an unavoidable condition for a business community, especially when we speak of a multicultural organization. People make up business organizations, and organizations define those people. Thus, the ethics of business organizations is mainly about the collective morality of the organization members instead of ruling over organization members by business organizations as autonomous and autocratic agents. Managers and other positions of a similar nature, the most visible exemplary organization members, are the most influential in forming and establishing organizational morality. It is an intrinsic nature of business organizations to shape and develop the morals of organization members who dedicate half of their adult lives to working. There can be a contrast between an individual's ethics in the workplace and at home with family and friends. A different sense of right and wrong may also occur inside business organizations between various departments. Organization members become aware of such things due to their close attachment and connection to organization ethics. Given that communities are significant moral units, business organizations have to play both social and organizational roles in balance and cooperation within working places and beyond with larger communities (Solomon, 2004).

The central idea of the "Aristotelian" approach is in the purposiveness or "teleology." Corporate social responsibility is one of the famous purposes in the current business life, placing a significant role in business activities in the larger society. This teleology includes the concept of excellence on the individual and organizational levels through domination in practice and service of the larger social purposes. The analogical idea is presented in Aristotle's logic that emphasizes individual character and virtues (personal excellence) taking place in human actions and providing service to the larger community. The Aristotelian approach to business ethics mainly concerns the role of both individuals in business organizations and business organizations in society and, therefore, considers business as a human institution in terms of service to humanity. Aristotelian ethics emphasizes the final purpose of human action and business. According to this approach, the ultimate goal of a business organization is to be rewarded for the service of the public good and social needs. This goal directs missions and the criteria to judge business organizations. The lack of a mission makes business organizations as organized groups of people making money without valid reasons for their working and living. Meaningful business activities intend to do good instead of unintentionally doing good on the way to selfish or competitive purposes (Solomon, 2004).

The central concept of Aristotle's philosophy is happiness (eudaimonia) in the sense of "flourishing" or "doing well," but not as a form of satisfaction or contentment that varies from person to person (Solomon, 1992b). One's life should be viewed as a whole, not as something separated into different segments like personal, professional, or pleasure. Happiness is mainly about becoming the type of person someone wants to be through a wide range of things someone does "for a living." Corresponding to the world of other people and sharing the good life and "good job" with them means happiness in the sense of flourishing. A well-paid or relatively easy job is not a good one. A good job has meaning, brings useful and tangible outcomes, and is one that an individual enjoys doing. Happiness is a holistic idea characterized by comprehension of all the parts. One's character and integrity set happiness, which also holds true for organizations and organization members (Solomon, 2004).

In Aristotle's eyes, eudaimonia for employees is mainly about enjoying the practice of virtuous actions in organizations. It is right to say that profit is not the overriding purpose of business organizations, and there are opportunities to cultivate and habituate virtues and reach eudaimonia. The Aristotelian virtue ethics theory answers questions about satisfactory conditions for the ethical behavior of employees, that is, a virtuous character (Hartman, 2013).

The Aristotelian word *arete* might be translated into "excellence" and "virtue." The word excellence or virtue has great significance, and the meaning of mission and commitment is deeper than potential profit. It is about both "doing well" and "doing good." In this way, the word combines the requirements of ethics and business simultaneously. Aristotle's philosophy of virtues assumes that success and happiness are in line with excellence. Analogically, excellence is crucial and central to success in the business environment. It is common to focus on the end results of business activities instead of the processes and procedures of that activity. The Aristotelian approach to business ethics instructs to protect meritocracy and encourage excellence. For example, collective responsibility in teamwork does not exclude the importance of individual responsibilities for complementary roles for a project's success, which is contrary to mediocrity—just trying to fit in a team. "Excellence is mutual inspiration and support, including contradiction and controversy, in pursuit of a shared purpose" (Solomon, 1992b, p. 157). Excellence is a rewarding performance, but it is not accomplished for reward. Telos or purpose is a measurement of excellence (Solomon, 1992b).

Virtues are a conceptual link between individuals and their communities. A virtue is a widespread excellent and admirable character trait in a large social context. This trait is key to fitting into a particular society to be a good human and contributing to it. For instance, if a society does not practice the virtue of honesty and everybody lies, no one would believe and trust anyone. Liars always exist, but not a society of liars if honesty is encouraged in practice. Similarly, there are always cowards in a society, but most members of a society would manifest courage for social values and freedom. These are examples of

more general virtues. Different institutions, activities, and practices have their specific virtues. For example, spontaneous creativity and unpredictable behavior are suitable virtues for an artist but are not likely to be suitable for organization members working together in a team for a common project. Virtues are always measured in a larger arena, even though they specifically concern institutions, activities, and practice. In other words, virtue is individual excellence determined partly by its contribution to the public good, including those specific circumstances. In Aristotle's eyes, virtues are essential components of eudaimonia. On the one hand, virtues are an essential part of individuals. On the other hand, virtues are required excellence by a society. A person is good by virtue of his or her place and role in a community, by virtue of his or her actions and sense of judgment, and by how all virtues work together (Solomon, 1992b).

The context of business activities navigates essential virtues. Being context-bound, business virtues are connected to different business practices, activities, roles, and circumstances; therefore, they might be of little or great importance in various situations. People in different work roles and positions may not have virtues in common because virtues are often specific to professions and roles. Thus, virtues depend on a larger context, that is, the context of practice itself (football, art, business) that fosters social good. In this way, the business world requires a careful attitude toward virtues that might be ridiculed in civilized contexts (Solomon, 1992b).

In light of Aristotle's philosophy, virtues in business ethics are about the joint efforts of organizational members and their concern for customers and colleagues. It means that personal and organizational integrity is the central point of business ethics in the sense of virtue. Both virtue and integrity do not come from anywhere. A virtue originates from social contexts and human practices; therefore, it takes place beyond individuals and connects individuals to larger communities (Solomon, 2004).

Integrity as "wholeness" might be considered partially in the context of business organizations and communities. In addition to individual autonomy and "togetherness," organizational virtues, such as loyalty and congeniality, cooperation, and trustworthiness, are integral components. In this case, when business organizations play the role of morally and socially responsible agents, the responsibility and integrity of the organization members do not lose their importance in the context of organizational communities working together for common goals. This view on organizations brings benefits and enrichment to everyone working together in a community, not just to a limited number of people at the top (Solomon, 2004).

In Aristotelian ethics, integrity is the backbone of virtues because it unites virtues in times of conflict and disunity and protects against personal disintegration. Integrity as "wholeness" means one's identity as a product of a larger society, including other people and one's social roles. Personal integrity makes people follow defined rules and practices in the workplace, and people move away from distractions and contradicting desires. In other words,

integrity is about combining one's roles and responsibilities and the virtues shaped by them in both harmony and conflict situations (Solomon, 1992b).

Solomon (2004) presented the idea of organizational culture as an Aristotelian metaphor and an essential viewpoint to virtue ethics at the organizational level. Organizations have their own organizational culture. Organizational culture is referred to as "…the shared mental software of the people in an organization…" (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 47). "The way we do things around here" or shared values and behavioral expectations are the components of organizational culture influenced by organizational leaders that can be learnt by listening to others and through observation (Krizan et al., 2008, p. 25). This topic has been of interest in management literature since the early 1980s (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Organizational culture is a social concept involving an established community and rejecting split individualism. Culture has its historical background and structure, which may be safe for a certain period of time. Demands for ethics take place in culture. Individuals who participate in, develop, and fit into a culture become part of it. Cultural harmony is reached when people cooperate and share at least a minimum view of life. Culture is a capacious concept that includes ethics in the shape of basic rules dealing with and protecting society, rituals and rules of communication and behavior, and dress code requirements as examples. Cultural habits may protect us from and prevent possible disasters or indicate only the way things can be done. All cultural components are based on accepted values that determine the rule of membership within a culture.

A difference influences an organizational culture significantly in the time of organizational upheavals. Basically, organizational culture is a cooperative enterprise with social and individual purposes because it includes shared knowledge, experience, and values holding a culture together and concerns organizational mission, stakeholder obligations, and social responsibility. Organizational culture cannot be described in terms of the legal functions of organizations, an economic mechanism, or the numbers of annual reports but in terms of the established values, norms, habits, and practices of a group of people working together. Solomon (2004) argued that business organizations are primarily characterized by their communal and cultural features and, after that, by their legal actions. Organizational culture refers to a structured community of individuals with their personalities and functional and social roles in that community, along with work duties, security of interpersonal relationships, cooperation, mutual respect, shared purposes, and benefits (Solomon, 2004).

2.3 Virtue ethics versus other ethical approaches in business

The field of ethics is full of various theories offering competing views on morality to ensure the rightness of human actions for the sake of human well-being. This chapter discusses and compares three main groups of ethical

theories in business, such as the utilitarian theory (theology, consequentialism), deontology (Kantian ethics, rights-based), and virtue ethics, to explain the choice of this study to investigate the research interest. Each of these ethical reasonings has its own strengths and limitations.

TABLE 3   Summary of ethical theories

Ethical theory	Moral consideration
Utilitarian theory	The consequences of an act are examined to determine if the act is moral or immoral
Deontology	An act is the focus. Acts are intrinsically right or wrong
Virtue ethics	The character of the agent is under consideration. A virtuous agent act morally

Table 3 represents a summary of three main groups of ethical theories considered in this chapter. The first column on the left lists the names of the theories. The second column on the right clarifies their moral focuses representing varieties of ethical solutions about what is right or wrong. There are a number of ethical problems that may arise in business organizations, so there is a need to solve those problems based on rational, systematic and justified arguments.

Utilitarian ethics mainly concerns the consequences of human actions, not only for us but also for other parties and, thus, requires choosing actions that provide an excess of good over bad or benefit over harm. However, this approach has barriers concerning its practical implementations, such as subjectivism and ignoring some consequences, benefits, and costs to stakeholders. Consequently, it allows one to commit hidden unethical actions toward particular individuals. (Marcus & Hargrave, 2019.) For example, if somebody breaks a promise and whether it is right or wrong depends entirely on the act's consequences (Frederik, 2007). Deontology works with human intentions by asking to take actions according to universal ethical rules, considering human rights and dignity regardless of the consequences (Marcus & Hargrave, 2019). We should act in such a way that we are willing to accept every other person's action in a similar scenario, and we should always consider other people as valued individuals, not only as a tool of furthering our own goals (Crane & Matten, 2010). This approach is not problematic because doubts arise whether certain actions complying with ethical rules but causing devastations are ethical. Virtue ethics, as the third major approach of ethical reasoning, addresses the importance of character development in relation to ethical decisions. The cultivation of virtues as a part of someone's character plays an important role in making solid ethical decisions. (Marcus & Hargrave, 2019). In this case, moral conduct is determined by personal traits (virtues) as a precondition for guaranteed right choices in moral dilemmas, not by a universal code of conduct or outcomes of actions, as described in the utilitarian and deontological theories above. Moreover, happiness is also a part of the virtue

theory for certain traits of the character of individuals providing an ethical and happy life (Baumane-Vitolina et al., 2016).

The Aristotelian approach to business ethics argues for the importance of ethics, with a focus on personal ethical dimensions, concepts, and values that disclose individual characteristics and role behaviors as an integrated part of a business community. In other words, it is about personal self-awareness of virtues and values in the context of business organizations and not in the meaning of private or subjective in the personal sense. Usually, business ethics are about questions of policy. Business ethics like the Kantian deontology and utilitarianism that represent certain principles and policies to govern overall systems constitute opposite ideas. Naturally, policies are a part of different ethical theories that support a variety of positions. Practically, businesspeople may not find any use for policies except for the possibility of discussing and arguing about them and finding themselves as victims of one or another policy direction. Policy disputes may resolve policy issues but do not have enough to offer to ordinary managers or business students. Legislation does not have enough power to control the business world and does not consider personal values and integrity. They cannot improve our understanding of business ethics on a daily basis. Managers usually deal with ethical problems of connecting to staff and routine decision-making procedures. Policies are missing personal responsibility that is central to ethics. Ethics is a subject for everybody, not just for people with administrative responsibilities. (Solomon, 1992b).

On the contrary, the Aristotelian approach focuses on any community of people performing a job for common purposes, in addition to communal context and principles. Good organizational and social policies create preconditions to and originate from the cultivation and encouragement of individual virtue. The Aristotelian approach to business ethics accounts for personal dimensions and practicing ethics that affect daily decisions. In this case, business ethics is more personally oriented in comparison with public policy. It is not meant to be subjective; rather, it is social and institutional self-awareness when individuals are very close to the business world and manifest the virtues and values of this world. The Aristotelian approach to business ethics concerns the responsibility of individuals working in business who are a part of society. Businesspeople have responsibilities as individuals, partly in accordance with their roles and duties in a business organization and beyond. A larger community, in turn, defines the responsibilities and roles of businesses. The Aristotelian approach does not spread rational principles but formulates the understanding of what rational action means. Aristotle's philosophy emphasizes the cultivation of character for correct and virtuous behavior long before we start rationalizing our actions. (Solomon, 1992a, 1992b).

Business ethics is understood as a set of imposed restrictions instead of motivational factors of ethical behavior in organizations. However, prohibiting rules and ideas causing careful consideration should not be part of business ethics. The virtue ethics theory offers an alternative virtuous approach to drive a good/happy life based on the motivation of smooth interrelations among

organization members admiring virtues and refusing vices. Living a well, happy, and successful life consist of ethics as a default, according to Aristotle's view. This ethics is not about restrictions against human natural inclinations but is, in fact, in line with them. Virtues represent standards of human behavior in business and rule the business world along with profit. Profit is not the main goal but how someone generates profit and remains ethical and respectful. The virtuous approach to business is the strategy of happiness that brings an understanding regarding business goals, priories, and ways. (Solomon, 1992b).

Some may argue against Aristotle's eudaimonia as the end and purpose of human nature because it limits human liberty to create lives that people prefer to live (Hartman, 2013). Individuals differ in their abilities, preferences, and goals (Ross & Brown, 2009). The motivational factors of human behavior might be such subjective states as fear, hunger, desire, and others. Therefore, living well might be only about good feelings and satisfied desires. The Aristotelian virtue ethics claims that eudaimonia is the end aim of all human actions. Aristotle means eudaimonia in such a way that individuals take actions representing pleasurable activity, but not in the sense of feelings or state of mind. In this way, Aristotle's ethics do not reject self-interest (eudaimonia, pleasurable act, flourishing, living well) for the sake of the activity itself, even though they may not always match, but it is possible and desirable for a good person (Hartman, 2013).

In comparison with principle-based theorists, the virtue-based approach provides clear guidance of human actions and helps evaluate them, even though at first glance, the differences between the guidance for good and bad actions are not clear. However, the virtue ethics theory is not precise. It may engender a question on what to do if somebody is asked, for example, to be generous (Hartman, 2013). Moreover, becoming instantaneously generous is impossible; it needs some time. An adviser may describe a situation inviting generosity, such as providing help to a needy and deserving person (Hartman, 2013) or giving the right people the right amount at the right time, and so on, with pleasure (Ross & Brown, 2009). Some people might seem to exemplify generosity and, thus, a source of knowledge. The understanding of how generosity looks in practice may be directed between two vices by breaking the idea of egoism and extreme liberty. However, knowledge is sometimes not sufficient and does not lead to action because of social pressure, intolerance of somebody, or not feeling the will. In this case, somebody needs to have the will to help and use the rational soul (practical wisdom) on acting generously. There should not be forceful help if the offer of help is rejected. In general, there is a need to figure out if it is the right time, if it is the right person, and so on, for generosity. In other words, virtue ethicists would recommend acting according to the principles coming from the nature of generosity while also considering the details of the situation. There are no written characteristics or principles describing specific conditions, for example, of a needy person in relation to whom generosity should be applied. This virtue-based guidance does not offer a universal decision-making procedure suitable for any specific

or all situations. A virtue is context-sensitive, and it is difficult to understand what is the virtuous thing to do in different situations (Hartman, 2013). However, it might be considered a strength of the virtue theory, which offers flexibility in practicing virtues according to situations.

It is necessary to know that virtues do not represent examples of general ethical principles. Virtues tend to be generalized due to their contribution to the general good, like how it would be if everybody is honest. Despite the generalization and the instantiation of general ethical principles of virtues by people, virtues are not the illustration of actions based on principles. Being honest means not lying; however, an honest person does not think about lying at all. The concept of morality is usually linked to the usage of general principles. However, a person with virtue does not think this way and just acts spontaneously when necessary. The majority of virtues do not oppose the "self" to "others." A virtue is a desirable trait that pleases and benefits others and is not altruistic. A generous person may take pleasure in the well-being of others, but it is not compulsory and does not make them feel proud. To summarize, the virtue of generosity means to act and be motivated by generosity without any need to distinguish self-interest and altruism, among others. Virtues do not require deliberation due to their spontaneous nature in practice. If a person deliberates too much, such as by asking, "Should I be generous in this situation? Should I leave a lesser tip?", it means that it is questionable whether that person has virtue. Virtues are not connected with abstract rules and principles; however, it is possible to generalize about virtues and create "rules of thumb." Virtues have nothing to do with such thoughts and guidelines. We can practically distinguish the hallmarks of virtues established in one's character after years of cultivation and practice. (Solomon, 1992b).

A good character gives a person autonomy over their life and the direction of moral development; however, such a degree of control over oneself is not easy. Aristotle's ethics is beyond principle-based ethics because of its emotional and desiring elements. A virtuous person wishes to practice virtues, enjoy this practice, and uses an opportunity to practice them. A person with developed practical wisdom can identify suitable virtues for different situations with the help of emotions. In addition, a good sense of virtues itself is needed. (Hartman, 2013).

It is not easy to identify the virtues of individuals because there is a need to collect additional information. It is important not to rush when observing virtues to conclude somebody's behavior without proper background information. It is helpful to speak about the virtues of people than their right actions (Hartman, 2013). For example, it is more acceptable to describe a person in a resume as patient, not as a person who accepts problems without becoming annoyed.

The Aristotelian approach to business ethics and its emphasis on roles and contexts indicate the potential overlap and clash of different contexts and conflict of duties. It is obvious that people working in business have several roles to play. One role relates to a workplace; others are based on family and

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friendship, for example. These roles and their duties might be in conflict with one another, and as a result, the virtues may undermine one another. However, it is quite normal and natural that people play various roles thought their lives, along with conflicting responsibilities. The disunity of virtues and the significance of a role at work as a contextual basis for virtues cannot be denied. (Solomon, 1992b).

Although the Aristotelian virtue ethics has certain disadvantages, it is still dominated with strengths and offers a good and innovative ethical framework to study the ethical side of business organizations, overcoming the gap between organizations and larger societies.

2.4   Literature review of organizational virtues

The rapidly changing world brings new challenges in the life of organizations that are different from those of the past (Daft, 2012; Nuseir & Ghandour, 2019). Daft (2012) clarified that the ethical misconducts of organizations are under the scrutiny of governments and the public. Consequently, modern organizations have to follow high ethical standards and deal with new ethical practices. Thus, research in organizational ethics is evolving, and managers and leaders have a broader responsibility than before to adapt their organizations to increasing ethical needs. As a result, the focus on organizational virtues has emerged as an important research branch within organizational ethics studies devoted to its considerable expansion.

This chapter provides a review of the published literature toward a clearer picture of synthesized and analyzed research investigations in organizational virtues. The studies from 1992 when the Aristotelian approach to business ethics was introduced by Solomon until 2022 (the latest possible within this study) that have investigated virtues in organizational settings are reviewed and summarized in Appendix 1. The purpose of the literature review is to provide a clear picture of prior research on organizational virtues, including the kinds of discovered organizational-level virtues. The literature review methodology of this study is presented in Figure 5.

First, an extensive literature search was carried out. A literature selection process was then undertaken. Finaly, the selected data were extracted, synthesized into different categories, and analyzed according to the established research objectives.
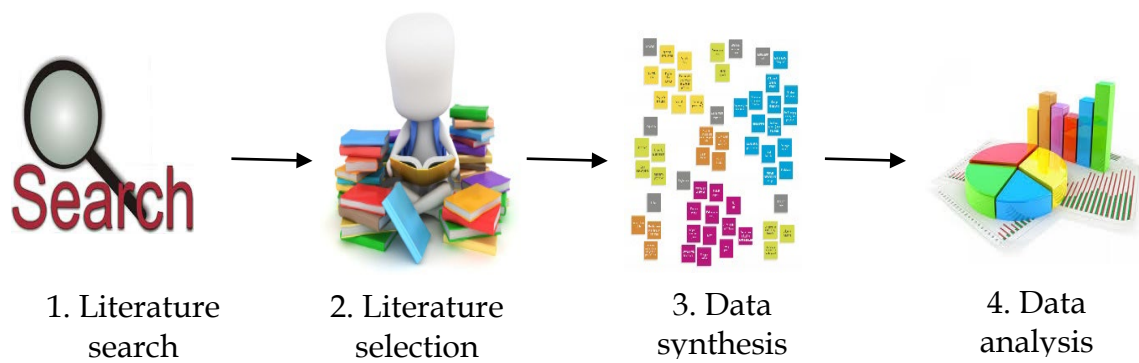
FIGURE 5   Steps of the literature review

The literature search was conducted, including horizontal (through general searchers, e.g., Google Scholar, PCI search) and vertical (through relevant journals, e.g., SAGE Journals, Taylor and Francis Online, ScienceDirect, Willey Online Library, Springer Link, Business Source Elite) searchers. A search for accessible English language literature containing various keywords, such as "organizational virtues," "corporate virtues," "institutional virtues," "organizational-level virtues," "virtues in organizations," "virtues of organizations," and "workplace virtues," throughout texts of peer-reviewed journal publications, books, working papers, and conference papers was carried out in all databases. An investigation period was not set to examine all possible developments in the field. In addition, the literature search was continued by checking the reference lists of the key articles.

The second step of the literature review process was conducted after obtaining the results of all search options. The publications were analyzed to choose the suitable ones according to the following actions: (1) the titles, abstracts, keywords, and conclusions were considered to identify the relevance of the publications for the study; (2) full texts of the publications were read to select the ones that investigated the organizational-level virtues, their description, and development. Afterward, the literature selection was narrowed down to 148 publications. The number of selected articles is small in comparison to the number of original hints due to such reasons as the duplication of articles from different electronic searchers and the use of keywords once throughout the articles of similar disciplines and research areas.

In the third stage of the literature review, the data were extracted, categorized, and grouped in accordance with the research objectives. The extracted data were placed in a tabular form, with the focus for each publication on the names of authors and co-authors, the main focus of the publications, the year of the publications, the research methodology, data collection methods, demographical distribution of the studies, theoretical trends, and the discovered virtues at the organizational level. This information was then synthesized into categories and themes. Finally, in the fourth stage of the literature review, these categories and themes were described in text form and presented in tables and graphical shapes, such as column charts and line charts.

The literature review shows that organizational virtues have been investigated from a variety of research streams and domains. All of them share a similar idea that the virtue-based behaviors of stakeholders, organization members, leaders, and organization managers can be acquired and developed. Thus, the developmental aspect of the theory is adopted widely.

From the theory viewpoint, the Aristotelian virtue ethics approach is the main source upon which the virtues in organizations were defined and discovered in most of the reviewed studies (e.g., Alzola, 2008, 2017 a, b; Arjoon, 2017; Ferrero & Sison, 2014; Hartman 2013, 2017; Kaptein, 2008; Solomon, 1992 a, b, 2004). The theories applying the virtue theory in organizations are called character-based theories in the literature (Gotsis & Grimni, 2015). These theories consider the connection between virtue, practical wisdom, and eudaimonia. Virtue is important to reach eudaimonia, and practical wisdom navigates the virtuous behavior of people in accordance with reason related to a situation (Ferrero & Sison, 2014). For example, the character-based approach was used by Solomon (1992 a, b) to discuss and outline business virtues and by Kaptein (2008) to discover the virtues of the ethical culture of organizations.

Ethical frameworks other than the Aristotelian virtue framework were used to discover virtues at the organizational level and their development in the reviewed literature. One of these is inspired by MacIntyre (e.g., Beadle & Moore, 2006; Chun, 2005; Moore, 2015). Originally, MacIntyre was an Aristotelian philosopher, but his approach to virtues, practices, goods, and institutions offers ideas regarding the issue that goes beyond Aristotle's philosophy. MacIntyre's book about possible conditions for virtue in the Post-Enlightenment world was an inspiration for MacIntyrian authors to continue the discussion (Ferrero & Sison, 2014). According to MacIntyre's view, the production of goods internal to practices is a priority to attain meaningfulness (Beadle & Knight, 2012).

Other ethical frameworks used in the reviewed literature to investigate virtues in organizations were created by combining and harmonizing the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory with the ideas and principles coming from modern trends or different schools of thought. There is a wide range of examples of this combination from the literature review. Whetstone (2003) conceptualized excellence in management based on the synthesis of the Aristotelian virtue ethics with deontology and utilitarianism. Organizational virtue was investigated and discussed based on the harmony between the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory and positive organizational scholarship (e.g., Bright et al., 2011; Cameron & Gaza, 2002; Cameron, Bright, & Gaza, 2004). Weinstein (2017) combined Adam Smith's theory and virtue ethics to outline the principles to cultivate virtues in a commercial society. The integration of the virtue ethics theory and the principles of Catholic Social Teaching was used by Moreno-Salamanca and Melé (2017) and Naughton (2017) to theorize virtues in organizations. These ideas and principles might be acceptable to Aristotelian theorists or could be considered incompatible with Aristotelian traditions (Ferrero & Sison, 2014).

Finally, in the academic realm, there has been an increasing focus on examining the potential benefits that organizational virtues can confer upon both individuals and the organizations to which they belong (Zhu et al., 2022). Recent research has highlighted the positive impact of organizational virtues on various aspects of employee performance and well-being. Setyoko and Kurniasih (2022) found that such virtues enhance employee performance, while Demo et al., (2022) and Setyoko and Kurniasih (2022) reported their positive impacts on performance and employee well-being. In addition, Zhu et al., (2022) indicated that organizational virtues foster constructive behavior, work engagement, and self-worth integration among employees. Moreover, organizational virtues are recognized to create value during periods of earnings uncertainty (Jancenelle, 2021) and influence the relationship between leadership and human resource management practices (Coura et al., 2022 a), citizenship behavior (Demo et al., 2022), and IT security policy compliance in organizations (Chatterjee et al., 2021), among other things. Some of these studies are based on different types of scales that can assess and measure organizational virtues. There are research articles validating these scales. For example, Toro-Arias, Ruiz-Palomino and del Pilar Rodríguez-Córdoba (2022) showed a good level of reliability and validity of the Spanish version of the shortened Corporate Ethical Virtues model (CEV) developed by Kaptein in 2008.

The majority of the selected publications in the literature review, namely, 108 out of 148 (73%) in the past two and a half decades, were conceptual, including mainly theoretical considerations of the research topic, while 40 (27%) publications out of 147 were empirical. Quantitative research was the most popular in empirical studies and was used in 26 out of the 40 empirical publications. Only eight studies used qualitative research methodology, while seven studies applied a combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

The results of the literature review showed three main topics of the research on organizational virtues in the organizational ethics literature. The following themes were perceived to be important for analysis:

- meaning of the concept of organizational virtues;
- classifications of organizational virtues; and
- characteristics of organizational virtues.

The themes are discussed next.

2.4.1 Meaning of organizational virtues

Organizational scholars have expressed their interest in understanding the organizational virtues that led to the ethical behavior of organizations and their members. Although organizational scholars use the term "organizational virtues" and its related terms in their studies quite often, not all of them are clear in their understanding of the concept. These scholars define the concept of organizational virtues in different ways. This diversity of opinions about the meaning of organizational virtues may cause the vague use of the term in

organizational practices. In general, the literature review shows that, in essence, the meaning, types, and characteristics of organizational virtues need to be clarified in studies.

An antecedent of "organizational virtue" has Greek roots, where virtues were applicable to individuals and organizations because both can demonstrate virtues (Schudt, 2000). When scholars define the concept of organizational virtues, they consider them moral characteristics of organizations as a whole (Park & Peterson, 2003, p. 37), morally desirable characteristics of organizations (Kaptein, 1999, p. 630), organizational conditions (Kaptein, 2015, 2008), moral competencies (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015), "a habit of corporate action…" (Schudt, 2000, p. 713), a "sediment of a value infusion process throughout the organization"(Pursey et al., 2008, p. 100), "aspirational ethical beliefs and values" or "an orientation towards ethical beliefs and values" (Payne et al., 2011, p. 260), "…ethical character traits…" (Chun, 2005, p. 272), "…the factors embedded in the corporate structure" (Graafland, 2002, p. 291), "the positive or desirable operational traits and dispositions of human beings and groups, as primary and secondary moral agents, respectively" (Ferrero & Sison, 2014, p. 389), "…as characteristics of the organizational context…" (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021), and "…organizational behaviors…" (Martin, 2022). These definitions commonly present organizational virtues as organizational ethical characteristics, behaviors, strengths, traits, or attributes of organization members and organizations, indicating moral excellence embodied by individuals or groups, structure, procedures, and culture. This fragmented character of definitions in the research literature is caused by the diversity of research perspectives on the phenomenon.

According to the literature review, the main difference between organizational virtues and individual virtues defined by Aristotle is that organizational virtues can locate in individual agents demonstrating them in the workplace context and beyond (Gotsis & Grimani, 2015). There are also research articles emphasizing team/group/collective-level virtues (Cabana & Kaptein, 2021; Coppola, 2022; Prijić Samaržija, 2020; Varagona et al., 2022). Collective-level virtues can be one of two types. Bright et al., (2006) provided a distinction between virtuousness in the organization and virtuousness through the organization. Virtuousness through the organization refers to organizational settings like structure, systems, and processes (Cameron, 2003; Sison & Ferrero, 2015) leading to virtuous activities of the organization members (Cameron et al., 2004; Cameron, 2007). Virtuousness in the organization means "the behavior of individuals in organizational settings that helps people flourish as human beings" (Bright et al., 2006, p. 252). This way, organizational virtue or virtuousness might be defined as a collective property expressed by organization members and by a human organizational system itself (Cameron, 2003; Cameron et al., 2004; Caza, 2017) in terms of corporate character (Cameron & Winn, 2012; Park & Peterson, 2003), encouraging both individual and organizational well-being and flourishing. In this sense, the character of organizations can be described through their history, routine

practices, and leadership actions that constantly influence the behavior of organization members to act like others (Caza, 2017). For example, if there is a system in an organization to care for one another, the virtue of the organization is caring.

Organizational virtues reflect the ethical conditions of organizations as "being" not "doing" (Chun, 2005). Organizational virtues may be emphasized and expressed through the description of the characteristics of the organization members. For example, employees of certain organizations might be distinguished by humility, wisdom, trustworthiness, and other similar examples. Practices are a place where organizational ethics, especially virtues, might be found (Hartman, 2011). This way, it is possible to conclude that the literature on the meaning of organizational virtues suggests that constant behavior makes organizations virtuous in their daily life. Virtues are cognitive, emotional, and behavioral experiences (Cameron, 2003). Thus, the literature indicates that it is a mistake to interpret organizational virtues by concentrating on their behavioral characteristics alone. This way, practitioners need to follow a more holistic view in the cultivation and development of organizational virtues (Bright et al., 2011). To interpret organizational virtues, one should focus not only on behavior but also on the invisible drivers of that behavior, such as thoughts, feelings, emotions, aspirations, values, and beliefs (Cameron, 2003).

Organizational scholars used other related terms while discussing organizational virtues in the literature. For instance, Wright and Goodstein (2007) utilized "corporate or organizational virtues," Sison and Forntrodona (2012) noted "institutional or corporate virtues," Peterson and Park (2006) called organizational virtues as organizational-level virtues in their research, Moore and Beadle (2006) mentioned institutional-level virtues, Moore (2015) used corporate-level virtues, Morales-Sánchez and Cabello-Medina (2015) simply spoke of virtues in the workplace, and Beadle (2013) and Argandoña (2011) mentioned virtues in organizations.

The ideal features of character or good traits defining good character in a given context and a certain situation are virtues. There are so many different virtues, and recalling all of them is a difficult task. Each virtue has related virtues like honesty and truthfulness. Despite the fact that moral language on virtues is rich, people use such narrow impressions as "good" and "bad" as well as "right" and "wrong" when speaking about the topic. Without a doubt, the majority of virtues are good and serve as a guide to the right actions, whereas most vices are bad and cause wrong actions. (Solomon, 1992b.) This narrow ethical language teaches us to ignore organizational virtues. This missed focus is important for our ordinary ethical judgments; for example, whether to trust work colleagues, build friendships with them, and so on. Organizational trust greatly affects socialization, cooperation, and teamwork between organization members; therefore, appropriate managerial practices need to be used to enhance it (Lämsä & Pučėtaitė, 2006). This way, business ethics is the study that is beyond right and wrong. Such labels as "wrong" or "a good person" are no longer interesting; details are more important. Researchers

exert efforts to extend our virtuous language by developing trait-based personality inventories that help describe people in everyday language (Taylor & de Bruin, 2006).
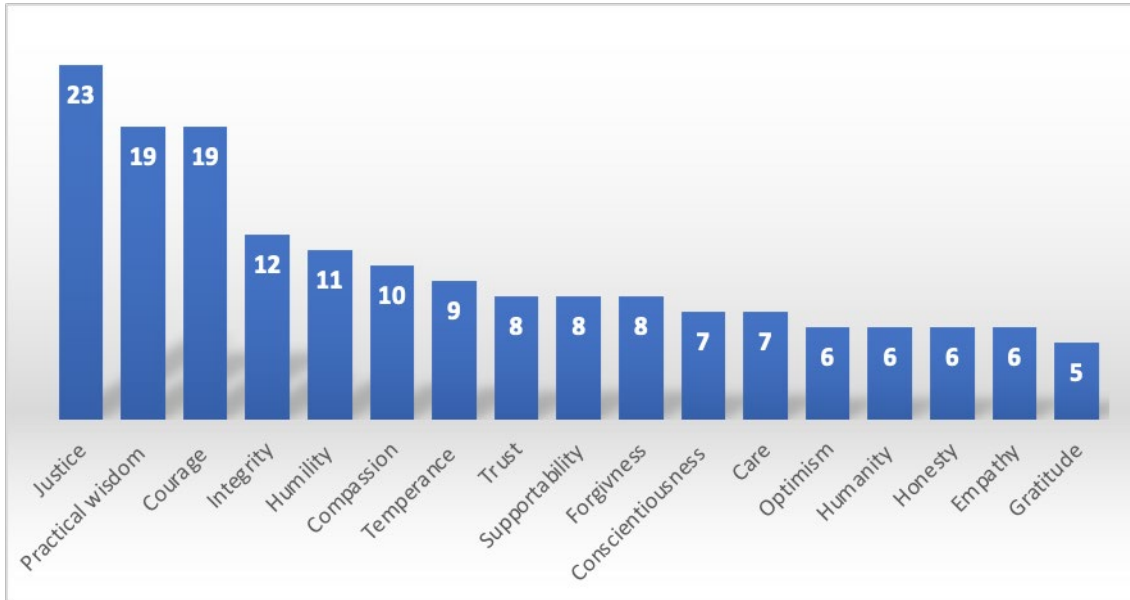
FIGURE 6   The most frequently mentioned virtues in the organizational context across the literature review

There are many organizational virtues discovered and defined in the literature on organizational ethics. The summary of all 112 virtues across the literature review are presented in Appendix 2. Among them, 17 are the most noted in the literature. They are presented in summary (Figure 6).

According to the literature review, there are 17 most frequently mentioned virtues in the organizational context (Figure 6). The top three are justice, practical wisdom (prudence), and courage, seeming to be more important to be considered in the organizational ethics literature. In general, the literature is rich with different types of virtues that play a crucial role in the life of virtuous business organizations.

2.4.2   Classifications of organizational virtues

From the time of Plato, there have been many efforts by moralists to find certain principles to classify virtues. However, nobody was able to attain universal acceptance (Athavale, 1975; Wright, 1907), and this aspect remains unresolved these days. The "…inherent difficulties of the problem" (Wright, 1907, p. 156) might be the reason for the unsuccessful versions of the formed classifications of virtues. Wright (1907) clarified that there is one common way to classify virtues. In this way, virtuous actions are identified and then compared. Afterward, virtues are united in one group based on points of similarity or set off based on different characteristics. It means that certain principles of

classification distinguish one group of virtues from another, and it is a comfortable reference for classification.

Wright (1907) explained that one principle of classification might be based on the object of reference. For example, prudence and temperance are classified as a self-regarding group, while justice and sympathy are associated as social virtues. Human capabilities that come into play during virtuous actions might be another principle for the classification of virtues. For instance, tolerance and sincerity are intellectual virtues, courage and self-control are virtues of the will, and kindness and loyalty are virtues of affection. The classification of virtues by Thomas Aquinas is an example of the most general classification approach. He classified the virtues into two groups, natural and supernatural, according to the source of the virtues. The supernatural virtues (charity, faith, hope) are products of God's power in humans. Natural virtues are products of the exercise of human power. Meanwhile, the second group of virtues are classified into two other groups, intellectual and moral virtues, according to human capabilities. The moral virtues (justice, prudence, courage, temperance), in turn, are classified according to the object of reference. In this case, justice is about the good of others, and the remaining moral virtues are mainly about the good of self (Wright, 1907).

Unfortunately, this classification approach demonstrates some disadvantages. First, it represents subjective results because of the individual choice of a classification principle. As a result, the virtues classified this way may fit any other indefinite classification groups based on the chosen classification principle. For example, if a classification principle of virtues is a source of the individual nature or the end toward which a virtue is directed, then tolerance may be united with sincerity in the group of intellectual virtues or with justice as a social virtue. Second, subjectively chosen, a principle of classification "affords no test of the fitness of any activity to be admitted to the system of virtues" (Wright, 1907, p. 157). It means that any activity aimed at the welfare of the self, for example, cunning, might be classified as a self-regarding virtue. Therefore, there are no barriers to choosing a principle of classification. All these disadvantages of the generally used classification method come from one "…fundamental defect" (Wright, 1907, p. 157), which is about choosing a principal of classification that "…is not organic to the field of its implication" (Wright, 1907, p. 157). Therefore, the existing classifications of virtues are limited and cause doubts and debates. Thus, we need a better approach to classifying virtues.

As a modern example, Kaptein (2008) defined and classified the CEV based on the criteria of organizational conditions for the ethical conduct of employees. These virtues are clarity, congruency, feasibility, supportability, transparency, discussability, and sanctionability. Gotsis and Grimani (2015) developed a two-dimensional classification to distinguish and classify virtues in organizations. This typology understands organizational virtues from two primary dimensions, namely, levels and focal groups. Virtues in organizations might be confined to the micro-individual level, which refers to individual

character traits shaping individual responses to external stimuli. This individual level takes into consideration different individual agents, such as managers, leaders, or employees. The virtuous behavior of the three types of organizational agents is associated with individual outcomes in the beneficial influence on psychological processes, attitudes, or behaviors of others. Virtues in organizational settings might be conceptualized as character traits of managers, leaders, or employees who display virtuous behaviors in the work environment. In this case, virtues are practiced in organizations.

Organizational-level virtues are distinctive organizational features that support and encourage the practice of virtues through vision, culture, and leadership. Virtues at the organizational level might be considered holistically if they circulate within different groups and organizational stakeholders. Organizational-level virtues might be reflected in the behaviors of managers, leaders, and employees. This type of virtue is enabled by organizations. Finally, organizational virtue may take place at the societal level at places of intersection between organizations and the surrounding societal environment. Organizational- and individual-level virtues can be manifested by distinct organizational actors in their initiatives to promote the common good and social welfare. These three levels are simultaneously distinct and interpretative (Gotsis & Grimani, 2015).

2.4.3 Characteristics of organizational virtues

The literature review shows that it is possible to distinguish the three main features of organizational virtues:
- Organizational virtues play a connecting role in attaining eudaimonia (human flourishing);
- The positive effect of organizational virtues on employees' behaviors; and
- Organizational virtues have a tendency to be acquired and developed.

The first and most important feature of organizational virtues is that they play a connecting role in attaining eudaimonia (human flourishing) (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021). All organizations unite individuals into communities, and human flourishing (or doing well and living well) is a necessary aspect to be promoted by organizations within those communities (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003). The beneficial outcomes of virtuous behavior do not stop at the individual level; they spread within teams and organizational entities (Gotsis & Grimani, 2015). The interconnection between human flourishing and virtues was understood by early Greek philosophers (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003; Cameron & Gaza, 2002). More details of this interconnection were explored by current scholars only recently (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003). Therefore, it is obvious to conclude that the cultivation and development of virtues in organizations is a promising solution to survive and succeed in an ever-changing and competitive business environment.

The research literature reflects the following purposes and significances of organizational virtues: to be a part of the corporate culture (Park & Peterson, 2003; Schudt, 2000), to achieve the corporate good (sustainable profit) (Schudt, 2000), to contribute to the satisfaction of the organization members (Chun, 2005; Park & Peterson, 2003) and external stakeholders (Chun, 2005), to encourage and stimulate ethical behavior of organization members (Graafland, 2002; Kaptein, 2015, 2008) and organizations (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015), to serve the moral goals of organizations (Park & Peterson, 2003), to contribute to the good of society, and personal fulfillment (Nilsson, 2010). Organizational virtues drive not only the inner ethical world of organizations (corporate culture, corporate goals and profit, satisfaction of external and internal stakeholders, ethical behaviors of employees) but also the ethical world beyond them (good of society and employees' personal fulfilment). Organizational virtues are not isolated from virtues necessary for life outside of organizations. This fact underscores the importance of organizational virtues, especially of famous and successful organizations, as examples for societies.

Studies show that promoting organizational virtues can encourage ethical behavior and discourage unethical behavior in organizations while also emphasizing moral values within the workplace (Cabana & Kaptein, 2021; Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021; Martin, 2022). Wright (1907) emphasized the important role of virtues in the development of moral behavior because virtues might be understood as steps in the evolution and development of moral human behavior. For example, a person aiming at an ideally organized moral life harmonizes different impulses and fits narrow personal interests to a wider social good, which is possible through virtuous activities (virtues) as steps of moral development.

From the viewpoint of the effects, the virtues displayed by the organization members and integrated into organizational life increase the well-being and performance of employees (Fiksenbaum et al., 2010). Organizational virtues bring the feeling of satisfaction among employees regarding their workplaces, and as a result, they like to be there. Fulfilment or satisfaction is an integrated part of actions manifesting virtues (Park & Peterson, 2003). Hidalgo (2017) reported the importance of developing virtues for meaningful work, and the consequences are improved job performance and job satisfaction. In addition, according to Beadle (2017b), the cultivation of virtuousness is necessary in the workplace for self-actualization as a process of the self toward higher well-being.

Organizational virtues contribute to higher levels of desired organizational outcomes, success, and performance (Bright, 2017; Cameron et al., 2004; Chun, 2005). These aspects are realized in interactions with others and manifested in contributions to the wider community. For example, the organizational ethical virtues of feasibility, discussability, supportability, and congruency of management support organizational innovativeness that affects the production of innovative products and services (Riivari & Lämsä, 2019).

Working with virtues is a way to accomplish a greater good for others and enrich our understanding of good work (Manz et al., 2017). Virtues of human beings is crucial for human businesses oriented to serve customers, even in conjunction with competitors (Sandelands, 2017). Business is powerful enough to spread justice out of organizations and, as a result, to establish conditions for the development of human capabilities and the common good (Vogt, 2017). The place of business virtues in a productive and meaningful business life is important. It is not only about their contribution to the bottom line. More specifically, it means that business virtues contribute to the social harmony of business organizations, manifest the best ideals of business organizations, and provide organization members "whole" without tearing a person into contradicting aspects of personality (Solomon, 1992b).

Based on the literature review, organizational virtues have numerous features that need to be learned and developed by organizations. An accumulative perception of organizational behavior on a daily basis is a learning source of organizational virtues (Chun, 2005), and regular practice of organizational virtues is the way to entrench it (Kaptein, 2015). Individuals in senior leadership roles are typically expected to maintain ethical standards within their organization because of their enhanced capacity to influence others, as outlined by Kaptein and Wempe (2002). Therefore, in the literature, it is stressed that managers and leaders are potential agents influencing the ethical environment of an organization (Coura et al., 2022 a; Huhtala et al., 2013; Neubert et al., 2009; Whetstone, 2003). It is their responsibility to cultivate organizational virtues (Goodpaster, 1997). Such individuals are expected "not only to behave from virtue, but also to create opportunities for the development and expression of the virtues" (Alzola, 2012, p. 394). Arjoon (2017) specified that virtuous leaders with virtues of justice, courage, temperance, and practical wisdom create a space for followers to pursue the virtues. There is no universally appropriate virtue for all organizations because organizational virtues are naturally dynamic (degradation or betterment) and manifested differently (Vera & Rodrigues-Lopez, 2004) due to their limitations to the context (Whetstone, 2003).

The longer an employee remains with an organization, the more significant their actions and omissions become in promoting organizational virtues. Consequently, individuals who have been with the company for an extended period carry a greater responsibility than newly hired employees. The level of responsibility for influencing ethical behavior is also contingent on one's proximity to unethical practices. Those in closer proximity to the source of unethical conduct bear a more substantial burden of responsibility. In addition, employees in specific departments have varying degrees of responsibility for upholding distinct organizational values. For instance, individuals in the human resource department are accountable for supportability, compliance for clarity, and control or audit for visibility. It is crucial for organizations to equip their employees with the appropriate tools to make ethical decisions (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021).

Cameron and Gaza (2002) and Cameron et al., (2004) underlined that virtues have a positive effect on organization members produced by two important effects of organizational virtues. An amplifying effect of organizational virtues takes place through the observations of the virtuous behaviors of fellow colleagues and initiates the "self-reinforcing upward spiral" toward such behavior. This positive effect enhances the performance of individuals and organizations as a whole and triggers more virtuous behaviors, positive emotions, flourishing, improved relationships, and prosocial relationships. A buffering effect works as a preventer (moderates the impact of) against dysfunctional behavior and illnesses of individuals and groups in organizations due to crises, traumas, and difficulties in organizations; as Morse and Cohen (2017) mentioned, downsizing.

It is noteworthy that several sources, including Bright et al., (2006), Fernando (2010), and Coura et al., (2022 b), identified three key attributes of organizational virtues. First, these virtues have a significant impact on the individual and moral progress of human beings (Cameron et al., 2004). Second, they embody moral goodness, encompassing desirable character traits in both individuals and organizations (Bright, 2006). Finally, organizational virtues extend beyond personal benefits to promote social improvement (Cameron et al., 2004). These attributes collectively underscore the importance of cultivating a virtuous organizational culture.

Virtues in business should not be considered as something noble but as something usual in the organizational performance as a part of harmony, mutual respect and, finally, success. "Getting along" intending the well-being of the larger community is the criterion to test virtues. It is the complete opposite of the strategy of "going along" and might be equivalent to the metaphor "team spirit." This aspect of virtues of specific communities is the basis for excellence and is an integrated part of integrity or wholeness in relation to sensitivity and social harmony of a community (Solomon, 1992 b).

2.4.4 Organizational virtues in Finland

Previous research literature about organizational virtues in the Finnish context has mainly focused on the CEV scale developed by Kaptein (2008) to explore whether there is a link between ethical organizational culture and the different kinds of organizational processes and outcomes. This conceptual model is chosen by many researchers because it is "one of the few scales that can assess and measure virtues at the organizational level" (Huhtala et al., 2018, p. 238). The framework of the model is rooted in the philosophy of virtue ethics, specifically drawing from Solomon's approach to business (Solomon, 2004). Furthermore, the model incorporates Aristotle's concept of virtue as a balance between two extremes, allowing for continued growth through habitual practice (Kaptein, 2017). The focal point of the model is to emphasize the critical significance of cultivating virtuous behavior in the realm of business.

The research conducted by Riivari and her colleagues revealed a significant correlation between ethical culture, as assessed by the CEV, and

various indicators of organizational innovation in Finnish and Lithuanian organizations (Pučėtaitė et al., 2016; Riivari & Lämsä, 2014; Riivari et al., 2012). The dimensions of ethical culture with the most profound impact on organizational innovativeness were found to be congruency of management. Furthermore, the qualitative research based on 39 organizational interviews conducted by Riivari and Lämsä (2019) confirmed that ethical virtues, such as feasibility, discussability, and supportability, in conjunction with congruency of management, played a pivotal role in fostering organizational innovation.

The CEV scale of Kaptein was successfully applied to study the ethical features of non-business organizations in Finland. Kangas et al., (2014) quantitatively studied the factorial validity of the 58-item CEV scale (Kaptein, 2008). The study results indicated that the 58-item CEV scale is a valid tool to measure the aspects of ethical organizational culture in different organizations. In 2018, Huhtala et al., contributed to the validation of the shortened CEV scale (the eight-factor model of the scale) for assessing virtues at the organizational level. Riivari and Heikkinen (2022) contributed to the discussion of organizational virtues in sport management research. Their study found that the ethical organizational culture of the top Finnish sports organizations is quite ethical. Ethical organizational virtues, such as transparency, discussability, congruency of management, and supportability, play essential roles in maintaining, developing, and challenging organizational ethics in sports organizations. Salonen et al., (2021) investigated the ethical culture of five Finnish university hospitals. The highest ethical culture was rated for clarity, congruency of supervisors, and discussion ability, while congruency of senior management, supportability, and transparency were rated the lowest.

In addition, the eight-dimensional CEV scale of Kaptein helped establish whether ethical organizational culture influences managerial turnover (Kangas et al., 2018) and sickness absence (Kangas et al., 2017). This study showed that the nutrition of ethical organizational virtues can encourage managers to stay longer. The study of Huhtala et al., (2013) determined whether managers' self-evaluations of their ethical leadership style are associated with their assessments of the ethical organizational culture. Their research findings showed that managers who appraised their leadership style as ethical also evaluated the ethical culture of their organizations more positively. The result implies that an ethically behaving leader can develop the culture of his/her organization toward more ethical practices. Promoting ethical virtues in organizations can lead to a virtuous circle, supporting ethical culture and leadership. The second study's findings (Kangas et al., 2017) indicated that an ethical organizational culture significantly enhances employee well-being measured as a sickness absence.

The existing research literature reveals a limited scope of prior research on organizational virtues in the Finnish context, primarily concentrating on the CEV scale formulated by Kaptein (2008). Other studies are needed to serve as initiatives to broaden the current narrow emphasis in research on this subject.

2.4.5 Differences among skills, values, and virtues

The concept of virtue is abstract and does not have any physical or concrete entity. Therefore, this concept might be easily associated and replaced with other similar concepts, such as values and skills. Without a doubt, all these concepts have their own distinguishable meanings; thus, they are different in relation to one another. One way to have a clear understanding of virtues is to contrast and compare them with values and skills.

Aristotle's idea of virtue has nothing to do with any specific human skills or talents; rather, it means excellence. This excellence is about "an exemplary way of getting along with other people, a way of manifesting one's own thoughts, feelings, and actions, and the ideals and aims of the entire community" (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 192). For example, honesty is a virtue if it reflects some values like "…the ideal of straight dealing, fair play, common knowledge, and open inquiry" (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 192). However, it is not a skill of any attempt or the best way to deal with most social things.

Both virtues and skills have a knowing component of how to act well in specific situations. The moral knowledge of a virtuous person is similar to the practical knowledge of a skilled expert. The main difference is that skills are based on acquired practical knowledge to do something (e.g., building a house, driving a car), while virtues are based on practical knowledge about how to act well (e.g., acting honestly). Skilled experts show high levels of performance, while virtuous people achieve high levels of moral behavior. There is a disanalogy between virtues and skills regarding the motivational aspect. Knowing how to act well and being motivated to act well means being a virtuous person. An expert has skills regardless of motivation to act skillfully (Stichter, 2018). Virtues as stable dispositions do not refer to mood or temporary commitment. Education of feelings, emotions, and cognitive aspects is a result of the habituation process, does not block willingness to take virtuous actions, and does not create a conflicted inner state. A virtuous person enjoys acting well. On the contrary, an expert performing a skillful act does not necessarily experience pleasure.

Schroeder et al., (2019) described three primary meanings of values. The first meaning connects to measurability in different fields. For example, values of mathematics can be discrete or continuous, values for artists might be lightness or darkness of colors, while economists can measure the value of a company in terms of money. The second meaning is about certain features or entities valued by people. Individuals have different values. One person may value security and routine and, therefore, want to have a regular income. Meanwhile, another person may value personal freedom instead of security and routine and feel happy from occasional income. A particular thing valued by most humans becomes universally valuable. The last meaning of values refers to goals and ambitions in the moral context. Values guide us toward morally right things (Raz, 1999), and they are not too prescribing. Values leave space to develop agreements across cultures. Values have the potential to establish

moral goals and motivate people (Schroeder et al., 2019), and virtues are the way to reach those goals.

Virtues and their cultivation are one way to operationalize values (Schroeder et al., 2019). The Greek philosopher Aristotle viewed virtues as character traits that cause human flourishing, and they, in turn, make somebody a "good person." In other words, virtues are "morally good personal characteristics" dictating a person's behavior or being (van Oudenhoven et al., 2012, p. 29). Virtues refer to dispositions or tendencies from one's character to act virtuously (Hühn et al., 2018 b). Virtues are manifested by people and can be considered the expression of ethical values. The focus of virtues is a moral agent, not decisions for standards and principles. Both values and virtues need an agent (a person) to exist. Virtues occupy different important documents on learning and wisdom internationally as well as historically. Virtue is a good concept to guide ethical actions. Observing real people behaving virtuously and following them are ways to learn virtues (Schroeder et al., 2019). This feature of virtues is beneficial for business organizations.

2.5   Employee empowerment

2.5.1   Employee empowerment and virtue ethics

The concept of empowerment has been widely used in studies in the field of organizational behavior. Over the last few decades, empowerment has come to be recognized as a significant notion in organizational practice (D'Innocenzo et al., 2016). The definition of empowerment depends on the discipline in which it is applied (Petchsawang et al., 2022), for example, feminism, education, politics, and others (Lincoln et al., 2002). Consequently, there is no universal way to define this concept (Abdulrab et al., 2017; Badjie et al., 2019), and it remains ambiguous (Lincoln et al., 2002; Honold, 1997). In addition, the concept of empowerment is multidimensional (Honold, 1997) and may be described from various perspectives, for example, organizational, motivational, psychological (Ongory, 2009), and relational (Badjie et al., 2019). Practically and from the viewpoint of organizational studies, business organizations face contradictions affecting the meaning of employee empowerment because of varying contexts and individual differences in perception and experience (Lincoln et al., 2002; Petchsawang et al., 2022). Thus, the definition of employee empowerment is the main issue and a ground for researchers to define and clarify the concept of employee empowerment. Unless there is no clear operational definition and understanding of the employee empowerment process, business organizations may face barriers to its implementation into practice.

Many informational sources describe employee empowerment with a focus on internal organizational settings (Badjie et al., 2019). As a result, employee empowerment is most commonly understood as the amount of autonomy and authority given to employees over their daily work (Ivanova &

von Scheve, 2020; Leach et al., 2003; Mohapatra & Mishra, 2018). Employee empowerment is applicable across different countries and cultures, depending on the type of empowerment (Fock et al., 2013). This study considers employee empowerment from the perspectives of the internal organizational environment (organizational practices) and organizational ethics because the research phenomenon is inherently an ethical concern. Solomon (1992b) clarified that Aristotle's ethics emphasizes the concept of a community composed of individuals who are members of that community. In this case, ethics involves the commitment to one's values as a community member instead of personal values. This approach mainly concerns concepts and values describing individual responsibilities and role behavior in relation to a larger community. Business organizations practicing employee empowerment are made of individuals and represent small communities. Employee empowerment is based on a set of moral beliefs and commitments in organizational life (Carter, 2009; Ciulla, 2020), which are shared among organization members. It is a social feature belonging to a business community, not a feature of one's individual character.

This ethical characteristic of employee empowerment refers to an organizational stance, principles and values in terms of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate in the behaviors of employees performing different organizational roles. It means employee empowerment as an ethical idea that defines the moral dimensions of the employees' behavior that is necessary for the existence of an organizational community aiming to achieve collective goals. Understanding and implementing morality enable organization members to put into practice the norms, values, and standards in the implementation of professional tasks. It means that shared power and authority among the empowered employees come with moral autonomy that enables self-discipline, self-monitoring, and self-control in putting into operation morality and acquisition and refinement of virtues by the employees. Organizational practices establishing empowerment, in turn, communicate and establish the moral standards of organizations coded in ethical organizational culture. Such a culture fosters harmony among organizational structures, processes, and intangible elements and role models inspiring ethical behavior (Colaco & Loi, 2019). This way, the study defines employee empowerment as a set of empowerment processes and practices that enable sharing of information, rewards, power, and morality down the hierarchy with the employees so they can be motivated, productive, virtuous, and happy. It is possible to conclude that organizational virtues and related organizational practices advance employee empowerment and ultimately lead to human flourishing in the workplace. The arguments supporting this idea are discussed in light of virtue ethics in the remaining text of the chapter.

The Aristotelian approach to business ethics provides an innovative view of the employee empowerment process in business organizations. More specifically, this approach helps argue that employee empowerment is an ethical idea due to two reasons.

First, one of the most fundamental aspects of the Aristotelian approach to business ethics is the purposiveness (teleology) at some good. The ideal and ultimate purpose of business is not to make money but to be rewarded for the service of social demands and the public good (Solomon, 2004). Lincoln et al., (2002) concluded that the non-management literature mainly interprets power in terms of domination and oppression. They proposed considering empowerment in connection to power as a process to achieve an end or a purpose but not as an end power itself over another. Employee empowerment activities aim at a good, that is, "to improve the quality of working life for ordinary employees" (Lincoln et al., 2002, p. 271) and, finally, be recognized for quality goods (services), unless it is not a managerial tool providing unauthentic empowerment. Employees do not believe they are empowered if they do not find consistency between words and behavior (Craig & Steinhoff, 1990), and feeling empowered is an important mindset that generates proactive behaviors (Boudrias et al., 2009). It means employee empowerment is not just a managerial tool or technique reflected in the bottom line of business organizations to increase organizational productivity but an organizational activity dealing with humans aiming at some good. The quality of human resources determines organizational productivity (Khan et al., 2019). In this case, ethics can offer a perspective where employee empowerment with a purpose for good leads to the moral behavior of organization members reflecting virtues.

Second, virtues cause eudaimonia to occur. Eudaimonia is the highest good and the final end of all human actions. It means happiness, flourishing, or doing well in the sense of sharing with other people a good working life and good work results by enjoying, living, and doing despite some periods of frustration. Work takes a great portion of time in human lives; hence, there should be links connecting to happiness. Happiness is not an occasional feature of work but an essentially natural part of work. Work may be seen as an activity for humans to flourish. There is a big difference between a working employee and a flourishing employee. Employees who flourish are more productive, creative, and engaged (Achor, 2011). Employee empowerment is one way toward human flourishing at work.

Empowerment at the workplace creates an atmosphere where employees perceive that they fit their job and organization; hence, they have fewer fears and anxieties. Employee empowerment raises employees' confidence (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013) in their ability to contribute to organizational objectives (Ongori, 2009), in turn causing a feeling of independence due to the process of identification with decisions and a desire to realize them successfully. Empowered employees experience a sense of belonging to the organization in daily job activities (Lashley, 1999; Ongori, 2009). This paves the way for job involvement and organizational commitment (Lashley, 1995; Ongori, 2009; Valverde-Moreno et al., 2019; Yukl, 2013), unveiling more innovation, learning, and initiative, greater persistence against obstacles, and stronger optimism for success (Yukl, 2013). This way, employee empowerment

satisfies basic human needs, such as acceptance and ownership. Communication is essential (Jennings & Yeager, 2020) and effective communication based on trust and good relationships is another advantage of employee empowerment. Employees' work becomes exciting, stimulating, enjoyable, and meaningful (Ongori, 2009). It means employees have positive emotional and psychological connections with the organization when their internal working life is pleasant and happy. In addition, as shown in previous research, employee empowerment functions as a foundation for raising employee productivity (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013), quality service (Shahril et al., 2013; Ukil, 2016), organizational success (Ongori, 2009) and, consequently, job satisfaction (Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016; Lim & Lau, 2017; Yukl, 2013), as well as the feeling of importance and value in organizational life (Ongori, 2009). By contrast, if the level of empowerment is low, the organization is less relaxed, autonomous, and more rigid (Sutherland et al., 2007).

The importance of employee happiness in the workplace is increasing because organizations recognize the importance of its promotion (Rothmann, 2013). However, various measures (VanderWeele, 2017) and, consequently, understanding, of human flourishing at work are presented. Human flourishing is usually linked to a certain subjective measure of well-being; however, this concept is much broader (Rothmann, 2013; VanderWeele, 2017). Well-being is about the good experience of one's working life (Hendriks, et al., 2020). For example, Bakker and Oerlemans (2011) distinguished three forms of work-related well-being, namely, job satisfaction, work-related effect, and work engagement. Job satisfaction refers to the cognitive evaluation of one's work, while the work-related effect is an experience of positive emotions (Hendriks et al., 2020). Work engagement is "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011, p. 180), reducing performance gaps and waste (Nienaber & Martins, 2020). According to VanderWeele (2017), there are major determinants of human flourishing, namely, happiness and life satisfaction, physical and mental health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue (promotion of all circumstances), and close social relationships (friendships, relationships). There are no doubts about the importance of meaningful work affecting the quality of working life by increasing employees' motivation, well-being, and commitment (Martela et al., 2021). Rothmann (2013) explored two dimensions of happiness at the workplace, which are feeling good (satisfaction from own job) and functioning well (phytologically and socially). The final example of well-being is given by Johnson et al., (2018), which is based on three main parts, namely, physical (exercises, sleeping, habits), social (social network), and psychological (positive attitude).

The concept of human flourishing at the workplace in the study broadly incorporates two dimensions of happiness: working well and working good (Hartman, 2017; Solomon, 2004). These two dimensions are not specified and explained by Solomon (2004) and Hartman (2017) and can be seen to cover aspects that are beyond individual well-being. Therefore, they can be defined in

the following ways. The word "well" is an adverb and can characterize a verb. It means the working process is going well. It may include different functioning aspects like psychological (i.e., self-determination, meaning and purpose, harmony, etc.), physical (i.e., exercise and food breaks), organizational (i.e., smooth working processes), social (i.e., social integration) and so on. Good is an adjective that describes a noun. Flourishing employees who are working good show quality work outcomes, satisfaction, and positive emotions from completed jobs. This frame of happiness unites the elements mentioned by the other researchers mentioned above.

2.5.2 Critiques of employee empowerment

Employee empowerment practices are not always effective (Siegall & Gardner, 2000) and may cause potential risks and losses; however, they may also bring a wide range of benefits and are crucial for the eudaimonic life in organizations.

There is an interdependence between external factors of empowerment (work environment) and internal factors of employees (experience, beliefs) (Petchsawang et al., 2022). Empowerment might not be beneficial if the employees' perceptions of their empowerment are in contradiction with the empowerment practices within organizations (Jo & Park, 2016). In addition, Petchsawang et al., (2022) explained that there might be a conflict between perceived experiences and perceived expectations about empowerment by employees because of different organizational structures and cultural constraints. For instance, the employees have an expectation of authority in the decision-making procedures, but they do not practically experience nor feel this kind of empowerment. In other words, the employees' ideology and reality are in conflict with each other.

Yukl (2013) noticed that employee empowerment would probably be effective in certain conditions; otherwise, potential benefits are unlikely to occur. The realization of potential benefits depends on how different employee empowerment forms are implemented in business organizations. Participative leadership might be ineffective in empowering if subordinates are not in line with leaders' goals, are not willing to participate in the decision-making process, do not trust the leader, and certain situations make it impossible to consult with individuals and hold any meetings. In addition, a manager is supposed to have special skills to handle the participation of employees in groups where conflicts and different group-related problems may appear. Some managers are limited in delegation because of their lack of confidence in their subordinates and their desire to consolidate power. The potential benefits of the delegation process may take place if used for appropriate decisions in a competent manner. Other factors discouraging employee empowerment are a fear of losing one's job and the employee's unwillingness to take responsibility for their actions (Ongori, 2009).

Yukl (2013) also mentioned that in the advancement of employee empowerment, the implementation of self-managed work teams that is often used is difficult due to their sensitivity to inappropriate situations and

incompetent leadership and support. Several conditions have been suggested for the implementation of a self-managed team: clearly defined and shared objectives, complex and meaningful tasks, small size and stable membership, members who can determine the work processes, members who have relevant skills, members who have access to relevant information, appropriate recognition and rewards, strong support by top management, and a competent external leader. Unresolved interpersonal conflicts may weaken the trust and cooperation between team members and negatively affect the process of work performance. As far as self-managed work teams are concerned, the amount of autonomy and how team members feel their collective empowerment are the aspects behind the realization of the potential benefits of employee empowerment. For example, the given authority to a self-managed team does not necessarily bring a collective feeling of empowerment among members because the team may continue using different types of social pressure, securing strict norms and established procedures within the team.

According to Yukl (2013), as potential risks, employee empowerment programs may increase costs to have skilled employees and arrange trainings. There are possibilities that some employees may make inappropriate decisions during the work process. Middle managers may take opposing actions to empowerment due to their feelings of threat. Empowerment programs also have the potential to bring conflicts between employees with high expectations and top management personnel who establish limits and levels for empowerment. In general, employee empowerment may negatively impact the recruitment process because it demands special characteristics and skills necessary to handle empowerment (Ongori, 2009).

The list of potential risks while implementing employee empowerment may still continue. Therefore, it is important to understand that employee empowerment as a virtuous process may contribute to eudaimonia in business organizations if certain kind of aspects, preparations, and risks are taken into account before its practical implementation.

2.5.3 Empowering organizational practices

Employee empowerment is a natural way to respond to the needs of organizations in the 21st century, functioning at a time of increasing uncertainty and little control (Bunders et al., 2021) and run by several leaders simultaneously. Organizational efforts are necessary to generate individual empowerment among members (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004) who believe in one's own power and strength to influence the organization and their lives (Zimmerman, 1995). Rothman et al., (2019) reported that most of the research literature until 2004 has investigated what empowers employees at the individual level. Individuals are not only a component to consider without organizational influence. More specifically, organizational practices that increase empowerment for members within organizations need to be taken into account. The research literature discusses and emphasizes the relationship between organizational practices and employee empowerment (Burke et al.,

2015; Rothman et al., 2019). Certain organizational practices help distribute power and emphasize support and cooperation among organization members. In the following subsections, the practices are introduced and described.

Organizational practices have the tendency to lead to employees' well-being and professional quality of life. Moreover, practices of participative decision-making associated with employee empowerment have been highlighted as virtuous organizational practices (Aubouin-Bonnaventure et al., 2021). Organizational virtues are not exclusive to the workplace but emerge from cumulative human interactions that shape an organization's practices and culture (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021). These facts underline the significance of organizational practices for the virtuousness of employee empowerment. This study looks at organizational practices providing the very conditions in organizations that make possible the realization of empowerment and its virtuousness. In other words, organizational practices promoting virtuousness for employee empowerment through organizations refer to organizational settings like structure, system, and processes. Organizational settings direct the daily work behaviors and actions of employees that are aligned with the core values of the organizational culture. Internal organizational practices affect the relationships, interactions, and accomplishments of empowered employees. They include elements of organizational structure, the way work is organized, systems and processes for work, training and development, performance management, internal communications, and technologies used to accomplish one's work. Organizational practices are about the organization's way of creating opportunities that affect the degree of empowerment within the organization.

Democratic organizational structures and processes make it possible for organization members to cooperate and influence important decisions through the formal decision-making producers in business organizations. For example, some organizations hold meetings that allow members to decide important issues by a majority vote. Large-scale organizations usually struggle to arrange direct participation of employees in the decision-making process, so they elect representatives from big subunits as a part of the governing council or representatives from the lower-level members participating in the board of directors. Common members of many organizations from the public sector can attend open meetings of the board or council and express their opinions before the actual decisions (Yukl, 2013). Employee empowerment programs like information sharing about business performance, plans, goals, and strategies make it easier for employees to cooperate and participate in important decisions of the organization (Lawler et al., 1998). These are called open-book programs and might be realized through the process of communication and learning. "Books are opened" in front of employees by top management for a clear understanding of things that are happening in their workplace. This empowerment program should include trainings for employees to increase their comprehension of information and enable them to use it, thereby contributing to organizational productivity (Yukl, 2013). Trainings have a

positive impact on the empowerment of employees who are able to adjust to constant organizational changes (Noe, 2020; Ozkeser, 2019; Saremi & Nezhad, 2014) and develop virtues (Whetstone, 2017). Finally, managers can use feedback systems for the performance improvement of employees (London, 2003).

Based on the systematic literature review about organizational empowerment by Rothman et al., (2019), the following six organizational practices might be necessary to empower employees within an organization:

- incentive management;
- subgroup linkages;
- opportunity role structure;
- social support;
- group-based belief system; and
- team empowerment.

Incentive management includes efforts to facilitate organization members to participate in organizational life. Facilitation is based on incentives (e.g., opportunities to socialize, learn new skills, gain information) and decreasing costs of expenses incurred as a result of participation (e.g., child care) (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004.) *Subgroup linkages* are processes to build connections between different groups within an organization, leading to their cooperation (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004; Rothman et al., 2019). *Opportunity role structure* refers to the accessibility of organization members to various roles and positions at the workplace to develop new skills and competencies (Rothman et al., 2019). *Social support* handles the emotional experience of organization members facing challenges at the workplace (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004). A *group-based belief system* includes organizational values and culture guiding desired behaviors and outcomes in sustaining goal-directed efforts. Outcomes of social support and group-based belief create a bond between the members and the organization and generate a sense of community (Wilke & Speer, 2011).

Team empowerment means that teams function as powerful social units made of individually empowered organization members (Rothman et al., 2019). In this research, the concept of self-managed teams is preferable to use due to its broader meaning of autonomy in self-planning and management of own teamwork (Cooney, 2004; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). Self-managed teams replace the standard model when managers/leaders who hold most of the authority and responsibility turn over the management position to team members. In most cases, self-managed work teams produce a distinct product or service. A self-managed form of team governance is usually applied in teams performing the same type of operational tasks repeatedly and dealing with relatively stable membership over time; otherwise, any team might be self-managed. Another feature of a self-managed work team is that it normally consists of members from the same functional background as maintenance technicians, production operators, and so on. The team members take shifts in performing the different tasks under their team responsibilities. The mission, scope of operations, and budget are determined for self-managed teams (Yukl, 2013).

Leadership is another element of organizational practices that is necessary for any organization to succeed (Dotse & Asumeng, 2014) in empowerment. Empowered organization members who can lead their work effectively and be productive are essential. There is a close connection between empowerment and leadership (Appelbaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999; Bunders, Broerse, & Regeer, 2021; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Keller & Dansereau, 1995) because leadership is exhibited in the offer of necessary support and resources to employees for independent decisions, as well as in the coordinating efforts of a group of people where everyone plays the role of a leader. Different empowering leadership practices are utilized to empower subordinates (Keller & Dansereau, 1995; Yukl, 2013).

The study draws upon the leadership practice approach. It assumes that employee empowerment is created socially by organization members through leadership practices rather than through the actions of individual leaders and managers. Leadership practices provide an environment for empowerment, where organization members take action and make decisions collectively and independently for common needs. Moreover, efforts taken together by managers for empowerment enable employees to be engaged in daily leadership activities. Leadership has a great potential to frame positive moralization among employees within organizations because "in leadership, we see morality magnified" (Ciulla, 2003, p. xi). It is conclusive that leadership encourages the cultivation and development of virtues. Consequently, leadership is not only important for employee empowerment itself but also necessary for the virtuousness of employee empowerment. Therefore, the study purposefully focuses on observable leadership practices of doing things rather than specific styles or inherent characteristics of individual leaders. The practice approach is a feasible way to look at various kinds of leadership practices facilitating the practice of virtues of employee empowerment.

Research in leadership usually focuses on the individual characteristics of leaders, for example, their traits and behaviors (Kangas & Lämsä, 2020; Raelin, 2016). Consequently, most studies on leadership argue for the importance and effectiveness of a single person holding a hierarchical power (Hunt, 1991). However, it is also necessary to accept the significance of leaders at different organizational levels (Hunt, 1991; Surty & Scheepers, 2020), especially for employee empowerment, which is the focus of the study. The study follows the idea of leadership as a practice defined as a leadership activity that arises through a coordinative effort of the participants to mobilize actions aiming at distinctive outcomes and "…emerges and unfolds through day-to-day experience" (Raelin, 2016, p. 3). In this process of collective efforts, leadership may arise from the actions of individuals in managerial roles, as well as from anyone in the organization, providing the awareness of reasons, perspectives, and patterns (Raelin, 2016). Leadership is manifested in everyday actual practices in cooperation between organization members. Practice, like an engine, provides power for collaboration and leadership to appear while people cooperate and make decisions (Raelin, 2016). People in formal leadership and

managerial positions are often the initiators of activities across different organizational levels in which other organization members are involved to cooperate. As a result, leadership supports the virtues of employee empowerment instead of the individual characteristics of separate leading personalities.

The framework of Crevani et al., (2010) is adopted to distinguish leadership practices from direction, co-orientation, and action space. Leadership interactions produce direction in organizing processes. This could be illustrated with employee empowerment strategies and directions necessary for the realization of the strategies throughout the organization. The conceptualization of co-orientation affects the flow of practices through consideration and understanding of the different views, opinions, and arguments of all parties involved, that is, how far different views in organizations on different issues within employee empowerment can be expressed and taken into consideration and negotiations. The last notion is action space, which is concerned with the construction of possibilities, opportunities, and limitations regarding individual or collective actions through the interaction process. It means that the organizations demonstrate a degree of openness to individual and collective initiatives. Therefore, the study focuses on the kinds of leadership activities that support the initiatives of empowered employees.

It is also useful to consider leadership practices from the viewpoint of empowerment. This study focuses on the manifestation of leadership practices for employee empowerment as described by Yukl (2013). According to Yukl, empowering leadership practices are based on two prospects, namely, participative leadership and empowerment. *Participative leadership* is about power sharing by leaders who exert efforts to involve other people in making important decisions. Meanwhile, *empowerment* refers to the perspective of followers, how they perceive the opportunity to define their work roles, accomplish meaningful work, and have an impact on significant events in business organizations.

Four different levels of leadership practices have been distinguished in the field of participative leadership. These levels vary in the level of shared leadership and cooperation between the organization members influencing the decision-making procedure. The first is autocratic leadership, which means that direction-setting and decision-making are in the hands of a few people or even one person. A manager/leader makes the decision alone without effort to ask for opinions or suggestions from others. The second is consultative leadership, where a manager/leader collects the opinions and suggestions of others but makes the decision alone based on the collected concerns. The third is joint decision leadership, which includes meetings with discussions about particular problems, and decisions are made with all the participants. This leadership means that a manager/leader has the same amount of influence on the final decision as anybody else. The fourth leadership is based on the idea of delegation. In this case, employees are assigned new tasks and given authority

and responsibility to make decisions that were previously in the hands of managers/leaders. (Yukl, 2013).

Delegation is a significantly different form in comparison with consulting and joint decision-making. In most cases, delegation is assigned only to employees, and this participative procedure redefines roles by shifting primary responsibilities for certain decisions to an individual or a group. Delegation means different forms and degrees of shared power with employees. An employee with little delegation has to ask about future actions in case of unusual problems. Moderate delegation allows an employee to determine the plan of action that needs to be approved before the implementation of decisions. If an employee can make important decisions and implement them without prior approval, it is called substantial delegation. Reporting the requirements and the flow of performance information are other aspects of delegation that describe the level of subordinate autonomy and reduce their dependency. Autonomy is greater when reports are rarely required, and they describe only the results without the procedures behind them, as well as when detailed performance information flows to a subordinate directly. A manager/leader is always responsible for the work results of employees; thus, delegation is never absolute (Yukl, 2013).

These four types of decision procedures represent a ranking from no influence to high influence on decisions and cooperation between organization members. The actual behavior of managers/leaders in these four levels of leadership may not be exactly as described. Consultations may take place outside of formal meetings at one point in time. Participative leadership may include a mixture of different decision procedures, like consultation on a problem with a list of predetermined solutions. Participative leadership is naturally dynamic and changes over time. For example, consultations slowly become joint decisions or vice versa. It is important to know that what looks to be participation is sometimes a false one. Managers/leaders may ask for ideas but ignore them during the decision-making process or may ask employees to make a decision in a way that they would feel fear to have initiative (Yukl, 2013).

According to Yukl (2013), leadership practices empowering employees and giving them leadership possibilities come through self-managed teams and democratic organizational structures and processes. The level of authority and types of decisions are different for business organizations in terms of self-managed teams, different organizational meetings, and learning activities. For example, self-managed teams typically have the authority and responsibility for handling discussions to set goals, define quality standards, assign work tasks and schedules, purchase necessary supplies and materials, deal with customers and suppliers, evaluate the performance of team members, and solve appearing problems.

Yukl (2013) also clarified that there are internal and external leadership roles in self-managed teams. This research believes that this idea is also applicable to any other organizational and learning gatherings of organization

members. Management responsibilities assigned to a team and shared among group members are a part of internal leadership. It is typical for self-managed teams to have an internal leader elected by team members, and this leader position can be shifted among members regularly. An elected or appointed team leader does not hold the most important responsibilities within a team and does not replace the top management level. The main responsibility of such a leader is to coordinate and facilitate teamwork, including making and implementing decisions, conducting meetings, and preparing work schedules and administrative paperwork. In addition, other forms of internal leadership in self-managed teams are possible besides the rotation of the team leader position. The amount of shared leadership and its aspects are different. For example, team members have meetings and discuss important issues and finally make a collective decision. A team member with relevant expertise may take responsibility for providing coordination and direction on certain team actions. Administrative routines might be taken through the initiative of an individual or might be assigned to somebody. Such supervisory function as enforcing group norms may be accomplished collectively. External leadership is about managerial responsibilities delegated to a leader out of teams. External leaders come from middle management, former first-line supervisors, or special facilitators. An external leader usually works with several teams as a coach, facilitator, and consultant who helps team members learn how to plan and organize their teamwork, make group decisions, resolve conflicts, and cooperate within a team. Experienced team members may later take responsibility for coaching new team colleagues. Moreover, external leaders link teams and organizations by building cooperative relationships and providing effective exchange of information.

The research stream about leadership and empowerment mainly sheds light on the leadership styles that motivate and inspire employees to perceive power in the workplace. These styles include transformational leadership (Tepper et al., 2018; Özaralli, 2003; Arnold et al., 2007; Zaersabet et al., 2013; Polychroniou, 2008), transactional leadership (Young et al., 2021), servant leadership (Murari & Gupta, 2012), charismatic leadership (Choi, 2006), visionary leadership (Dambe & Moorad, 2008; Nwankwo & Richardson, 1996), moral/ethical leadership (Dambe & Moorad, 2008), and so on. Leadership styles also might include characteristics of different countries like Asian and American leadership styles (Mills, 2005).

According to Tran and Spears (2020) and Blanchard and Broadwell (2018), servant leadership is based on a notion of common good and contributes to moral development (Searle & Barbuto, 2011; Sison & Potts, 2021). Transformational leadership is important to activate the learning capabilities of organization members (Mutahar et al., 2015; Xie, 2020) and, thus, affect virtuous behavior. This study assumes that all other types and practices of leadership supporting employee empowerment similarly aim at Aristotle's idea of purpose and serving virtuous growth. It is not possible to consider all leadership styles because of their individualistic factor and to find one particular leadership style

for empowerment because of the different personalities of employees. Moreover, many leadership styles overlap with each other (Murari, 2015.) Some research publications have also discussed leadership and empowerment with a focus on leadership practices. For example, Bunders et al., (2021) explored empowering leadership practices (relational management navigating interactions) in complex transformation processes and classified them according to the four dimensions of psychological empowerment (self-determination, competence, impact, and meaning). Keller and Danserau (1995) emphasized leadership practices based on the social exchange theory supporting self-worth and negotiating latitude to empower employees.

2.5.4   Employee empowerment in the Finnish context

Empowerment of individuals in Finland starts with the Finnish government implementing and practicing democracy. The Finnish constitution gives the right to participate in and influence the development of one's own life as well as the life of society. Everybody is given the freedom to practice a religion without the application of any force. Individuals have the rights to choose how to earn their livelihood through employment or occupation of commercial activity. The private life of individuals is promised not to be disclosed. Everyone has the freedom of expression, entailing the rights to express, spread, and receive information. Everybody is allowed to arrange meetings, demonstrations, or associations without a permit, as well as to participate in them (Constitution of Finland, 1999). Equal opportunities for employees are ensured for everybody (InfoFinland, 2022) to avoid discrimination, obtain productive work (Hepple, 2001), and provide respect (Dillon, 1992). In sum, people living in Finland are provided with opportunities for empowerment at the societal level through freedom of expression as individuals and collectively. Moreover, they are supported to have self-management in their life.

With the help of the six-dimensional (6-D) model developed by Hofstede et al., (2010), it is possible to get familiar with the Finnish national culture. Although organizational culture is different from national culture because organization members do not grow in it and spend only some time in it for the sake of work, previous research results on the link between national culture and organizational culture show that national culture affects organizational culture (Hofstede et al., 2010; Hofstede Insights, 2019). Every organization has its own culture, which is the analogy of the Aristotelian approach to business ethics and a significant aspect of virtue ethics at the organizational level.

The 6-D model of national culture is based on six dimensions (Figure 7). The first dimension is the power distance index, which reflects the way a society exhibits unequal power among people. The second dimension is individualism versus collectivism, where people define themselves in terms of "I" or "we." The third dimension is masculinity versus femininity, where society prefers achievements and completions or caring and quality of life. The fourth dimension is about the uncertainty avoidance index, where society tries to control the future or just lets it happen. The fifth dimension is long-term

orientation versus short-term normative orientation, which reflects how strong the link a society has with the past while handling the present and the future. The last dimension is indulgence versus restraint, which is when a society has strict social norms or allows enjoying life and having fun (Hofstede Insights, 2019).

FIGURE 7   Results of the 6-D model on Finnish national culture (Hofstede Insights, 2019)

According to the 6-D model (Hofstede Insights, 2019), it is possible to conclude that the Finnish culture in general and the culture in organizations tend to be rather individualist and feminine-oriented. Finland has low scores on power distance, which means that hierarchy exist in organizations only as a way to proceed easily with different official procedures. People from higher-power positions are usually accessible to rank-and-file employees, and attitudes toward them are informal. Organization members tend to address each other by first names. In fact, power is decentralized and control is disfavored (Hofstede Insights, 2019). The work of employees is not continuously monitored by supervisors. The details on how to complete a given task are expected to be decided by employees independently. If it is not possible, employees can always ask for direct instructions (InfoFinland, 2019). Therefore, organization members tend to be autonomous and self-managed to a certain degree and have equal rights. Managers facilitate and aim to empower others, relying on the expertise of their team members. Organization members communicate directly with each other and fully participate (Hofstede Insights, 2019). Speaking out and explaining what one means are normal in Finnish working life. The opinions of employees often influence job planning. The work process is usually jointly discussed and agreed upon at meetings. A flexible working-hour policy is in place in many Finnish organizations, for example, employees can start their work between 7:00–9:00 and end between 15:00–17:00 after completing the length of the working day (InfoFinland, 2019). Some organizations also allow distant work or working outside of the workplace, which is becoming increasingly common nowadays.

The Finnish society fosters a higher degree of independence among individuals. Individuals take care of themselves and, often, their nearest family members; however, the social security system guarantees living for everyone. Contract-based relationships between employers and employees promote mutual benefits. Merits are conserved main criteria driving the hiring and promotion decisions in organizations. The management process is mainly about the management of individuals exerting efforts to reach a mutual agreement. Finland is a feminine country. Consequently, "working in order to live" is the focus of people. Managers are oriented toward a consensus of opinions among organization members who appreciate equality, solidarity, and quality of working life. Compromise and negotiations are important tools for resolving conflicts. Flexibility and free time are often preferred as motivational factors. The status of people is not shown in public, but well-being is the center of attention. Decision-making and participation go hand in hand. Finland has a high preference for avoiding uncertainty, and as a result, people remain busy working hard (Hofstede Insights, 2019). Honesty, punctuality, and equality are appreciated norms of the Finns, including in one's working life (InfoFinland, 2019). Normative Finnish culture orients people to achieve quick results. Finally, a high score in indulgence speaks about a positive attitude and optimism, a willingness to follow desires, and have leisure time to enjoy life and have fun (Hofstede Insights, 2019).

In conclusion, previous research suggests that the Finnish organizational culture typically aims to allow employees to participate significantly in decision-making concerning their work in organizational life and influence their own work arrangements; thus, an important aim is to empower employees. An informal work atmosphere aims to support equality and open and direct communication among organization members, leading to discussions, agreements, and decision-making. Supportive and facilitating managers can guide and direct the efforts of the empowered teams and individual employees. Well-being and good-quality work results are central aspects of the valued organizational culture. In light of the foregoing, the culture in Finnish organizations can generally be seen as suitable and welcoming for employee empowerment.

3 RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, which has been growing in popularity in the field of organization studies in the past decades (Cassell et al., 2017; Charmaz & McMullen, 2011; Flick, 2009; Patton, 2002). The study understands qualitative research as an adequate research approach to knowledge production (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016, p. 5). It provides access to the perspectives of people experiencing the research phenomenon in ongoing settings (Hennink et al., 2020) while getting closer to and making distinctions toward an improved understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Qualitative research presents important and unique perspectives to researchers in the field of business ethics (Lämsä et al., 2018). The increased popularity of qualitative research relates to social changes that make life more complex than before, for example, in terms of various moral orientations that lead to researchers having to deal with new social contexts and perspectives (Flick, 2009). For example, business internationalization has been growing rapidly, widely spreading complex changes in the working environments of organizations aiming to find different ways to adjust to uncertainties (Gray, 2017). Qualitative research offers ways to study the complexity of business-related aspects in their settings (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). Therefore, it is important to emphasize the value of qualitative research in tracking and dealing with newly emerged questions in business ethics (Reinecke et al., 2016), for example, in the context of multicultural organizations in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2019). Qualitative methods are useful in understanding the complicated ethical issues in business (Reineck et al., 2016) due to their immeasurable nature (Campbell & Cowton, 2015).

A strength of the adopted qualitative approach is that it allows a holistic and multiple understanding of the topic. As a result, it brings a chance to discuss the possibilities of a change in organizational ethics in practice in the study context into the direction of virtuousness.

The subsequent chapter is concerned with the research strategy and methods of this dissertation. The chapter introduces the selected case study approach and the research methods used to collect the data, the background

information of the research participants, the data analysis procedures and ethics, and the trustworthiness of the study.

3.1 Case study approach as interpretive sensemaking

Case study research in business ethics is useful for focusing on complex ethical situations by investigating the relevance of actions, reasoning, and decisions within those situations that have ethical aspects (Mills et al., 2010). The distinctive need for case study as a research strategy lies in its facilitation of an in-depth understanding of such a complex social phenomenon as the virtuousness of employee empowerment. A case study connects academic research with work–life experiences from practice (Mills et al., 2010).

In this research, a case study is an empirical inquiry where the topic, which has no control over behavioral events in its ongoing context, is investigated (Yin, 2017). It means the collected evidence of the topic is situated in organizational settings where they actually took place. In other words, in this study, a case study approach is a way to understand the real world involving important contextual conditions (Yin & Davis, 2007).

The adopted case study approach as a form of interpretive sensemaking aims to provide a deep examination of the topic under investigation in its context through understanding particular case studies in their entireties (Welch et. al., 2020) and their description (Farquhar, 2012; Yin, 2017). The "particularization" of the case studies in their whole stresses the uniqueness in which interview participants attribute meaning to their own experiences and behavior and the researcher is a member of this process. It means that the research issue is comprehended and interpreted by a researcher by evaluating how the issue is intended and subjectively experienced by the research participants. Interpretive researchers value the contextual knowledge where the issue occurs as well as the participation of both researcher and research participants in the process of producing knowledge. Interpretive researchers value context, and personal participation on the side of the researcher. The case studies' rich contextual description allows for a better grasp of human experience. (Welch et. al., 2020).

The main research questions and the research setting are descriptive and aim to explore and describe the main aspects of the research phenomenon. In this study, not all features and details of the cases are under research consideration. The research is focused on topics relevant from the viewpoint of the theoretical approach and context of the study. However, it is important to understand that the descriptive results are discussed from the normative viewpoint of virtue ethics. In this sense, the dissertation has a normative viewpoint.

The current research considers two multicultural business organizations as instrumental cases facilitating an in-depth understanding of the investigated topic itself, not the cases (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016; Mills et al., 2010). In

other words, this instrumental case study research is concerned with the investigation of the topic in two business organizations, which are the cases comprising this study. The strength of multiple case study research with an instrumental focus is that it is a holistic, in-depth investigation that includes a more specific range of people, organizations, or contexts (Gray, 2017) than a single case can provide (Mills et al., 2010). This instrumental multiple-case study analyzes the topic in-depth and compares the studied phenomena between the two cases. The selected multiple-case study has the potential to produce more descriptions of the topic than a study in a single-case organization (Mills et al., 2010).

3.2   Data collection

This chapter explains the data collection procedure, including details about the case organizations, interviews, and interview informants.

3.2.1   Case organizations

Two case organizations in Finland were selected for the empirical study. As promised, for anonymity reasons, the organizations were labelled A and B in this report.

Organization A is located in a big city in South Finland. It is a privately held company and a part of a globally operating network specializing in expert research-based consulting and training for companies. More specifically, the company provides services, including expert knowledge, consulting, training, tooling, and certification in the fields of organizational culture, intercultural management, and consumer culture. At the time of the data collection the company had operated for 15 years in its industry. The organization represented a multicultural work environment with approximately 20 organization members, among whom 50% were employees of Finnish nationality. The chief executive officer (CEO) of the company is not originally a Finn.

Organization B is operating in one of the largest cities in terms of population in Southern Finland. This organization represents the private type of ownership and offers licensed education and daycare for two- to six-year-old children in the English language. The crucial aim of the strategy of the company is that children are provided with an international environment of positive reinforcement, respect, and opportunities for learning. At the time of data gathering, this organization had operated for approximately 22 years. The diversity of nationalities among the organization's workforce made the workplace multicultural. About 60% out of the 20 organization members were employees of different nationalities. The director of the educational center is not a Finn.

Purposeful sampling (Emmel, 2013) was used to select the case companies. The idea was to find business organizations that would have the potential to provide rich information about the topic. Two criteria were set. First, business organizations were targeted because the interest of this study is in the business field. Second, the business should have multicultural personnel in terms of various nationalities. At least half of the organization members needed to have a nationality other than Finn. The snowball technique was used in searching for organizations that would fit the criteria. This strategy meant that information about the recommended cases to study was collected from suitable people who knew companies with the selected criteria (Patton, 2002; Gall et al., 1996). The snowball technique is a purposeful sampling strategy that can contribute to the richness of data (Patton, 2002; Seawright & Gerring, 2008).

The snowball process was started by asking suitable contact people from my surroundings, such as colleagues, university teachers and professors, friends, and course mates, about potential multicultural business organizations that might be interested in participating in the research. The snowball process took about six months, and there was a long list of recommended organizations. The next step of the selection process was to obtain access to suitable organizations. This step included making initial contact with the central people, like CEOs, of the recommended organizations to obtain permission for the collection of empirical data. At this stage, it was crucial to make the research idea understandable and beneficial to them.

Most of the recommended organizations declined to participate in the empirical part of the research due to the lack of time. Altogether, about 20 companies were contacted. Access to the current case organizations occurred after they received the e-mail with the letter of research, including information about the research background and interview invitation. These organizations showed their interest by sending speedy positive replies and showing a cooperative attitude in scheduling and arranging interview sessions within a short period of time. The search process for the case organizations and the data collection process took 12 months.

3.2.2 Semi-structured interviews and presentation of the interviewees

Semi-structured interviews were chosen to gather research data to investigate the research topic in-depth. The semi-structured form of interviews included a set of predefined and flexibly worded questions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006) covering all necessary topics for the purpose of the study. In addition to the predefined interview questions, follow-up questions were asked to discover issues of interest more deeply, as this is allowed in semi-structured interviews (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The preparation of questions for the semi-structured interviews was an important basis to meet the requirement of this case study research, which are, according to Yin (2017), to ask good questions and create a rich dialogue. Semi-structured interviews are useful to have conversational and informal interviews and arrange the collected data in a systematic and comprehensive way

(Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). The main topics covered by the semi-structured interviews conducted in the empirical part of the study are based on the research questions and include examples of employee empowerment from the work life of the case organizations, such as details about the actors involved in employee empowerment, their behaviors, what drives their behaviors, human flourishing, and organizational practices influencing employee empowerment. The interview guide is shown in Appendix 3.

Interviewing is a skill that requires practice and experience (Gray, 2017). Semi-structured interviews work well if a researcher has experience or well prepared for it (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). Before the actual interview sessions with the organization members of the case organizations, the semi-structured interview, as a data collection instrument, was tested on three people. In other words, pilot interviews were conducted to test the applicability of the interview guide and prepare for the actual interviews. One of the pilot interviewees was my colleague from the academic world, while two others were from the practical world of the information technology (IT) industry. This way, the interview questions were developed and improved from the academic and practitioners' points of view (Gillham, 2000). Moreover, the pilot interviews were useful for me to learn more about the role of an interviewer (Horsdal, 2012), who needs to take care of all the aspects outlined in the predefined interview questions and probe for in-depth answers simultaneously (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016).

There is no optimal and generally accepted sample size of interviews in the case study research design. Case study researchers follow different criteria to define the optimal amount of data. The main effort was to reach out to all organization members in the case organizations, and those who were willing were interviewed. The research participants included 41 interview informants who represented different organization member groups, such as interns, employees, and managers. The involvement of the organization members from different work positions made it more likely to illuminate the research questions of the study widely through all levels of organizations.

Detailed information about the research participants can be found in Tables 4 and 5. The interview respondents are representatives of different genders, ages, citizenship, education, work position, and length of work experience. From the gender distribution point of view, there are more females (63%) among the interview participants. The age distribution varied between 21–62 years old. As shown in Tables 4 and 5, most of the interview participants are between 21 and 45 years old, which is the working age range. The minor part of the interview participants are aged between 47 and 62 years old.

TABLE 4　　Background information of the research participants (Case organization A)

N (coded names)	Gender	Age	Nationality	Education	Work position	Length of work experience on this position	Length of work experience in the current organization	Length of work experience in general
1 (EA1)	Female	29	Russian	Master's Degree	Coordinator	5	8	9
2 (MMA1)	Female	52	Dutch	Master's Degree	Project manager	0,3	8	27
3 (EA2)	Male	26	Ukrainian	Master's Degree	Product developer	3	3,5	7
4 (MMA2)	Female	31	French	Master's Degree.	Project manager	3	3	5
5 (IA1)	Female	27	Norwegian	Master's Degree	Intern	0,2	0,2	1
6 (TMA2)	Male	34	Finnish	Master's Degree	Managing director	5	10	15
7 (EA3)	Female	24	Finnish	Master's Degree	Coordinator	0,5	1	4
8 (EA4)	Female	25	Finnish	Master's Degree	Coordinator	3	3	7
9 (EA5)	Female	24	Finnish	Bachelor's Degree	Project assistant	1	1	3,5
10 (EA6)	Male	41	British	Bachelor's Degree	Social media analyst	4	0,5	26
11 (MMA3)	Male	34	Australian	Master's Degree	Project manager	4	8	9
12 (MMA4)	Female	33	Mexican	Master's Degree	Project manager	1,1	1,6	8
13 (EA7)	Male	34	Belarusian	Master's Degree	Programmer	5	5	11

N (coded names)	Gender	Age	Nationality	Education	Work position	Length of work experience on this position	Length of work experience in the current organization	Length of work experience in general
14 (IA2)	Female	26	Finnish	Bachelor's Degree	Intern	0,3	0,3	5
15 (MMA5)	Male	34	Finnish	Bachelor's Degree	Project manager	10	10	15
16 (MMA6)	Male	32	Spanish	Master's Degree	Chief Legal Officer (CLO)	5	9	18
17 (MMA7)	Male	38	Finnish	Master's Degree	Project manager	5	10	15
18 (TMA2)	Male	61	Finnish	Doctoral Degree	Partner and advisory board member	12	12	40
19 (TMA3)	Male	38	Finnish	Master's Degree	Chairman of the board	12	14	20
20 (EA8)	Male	41	Finnish	Bachelor's Degree	Architect	15	15	18

TABLE 5   Background information of the research participants (Case organization B)

N (coded names)	Gender	Age	Nationality	Education	Work position	Length of work experience on this position	Length of work experience in the current organization	Length of work experience in general
21 (MMB1)	Female	25	Finnish	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	1	1	2
22 (EB1)	Female	25	Croatian	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant	0,8	0,8	2
23 (EB2)	Female	37	Portuguese	Master's Degree	Assistant	3	3	13
24 (EB3)	Male	46	American	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant graphic designer	7 20	7	28
25 (EB4)	Female	21	Finnish	Vocational school	Assistant	2,5	1	3
26 (EB5)	Female	27	Finnish	Vocational school	Assistant	6	1	12
27 (MMB2)	Female	36	Indian	Master's Degree	Teacher	8	8	12
28 (MMB3)	Male	42	Australian	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	7	7	22
29 (MMB4)	Female	35	German	Master's Degree	Teacher	7	8	8
30 (EB6)	Male	62	British	Doctoral Degree	Assistant	7	7	42
31 (EB7)	Female	36	Finnish	Master's Degree	Assistant	0,8	0,8	5
32 (TMB1)	Female	62	Finnish	Bachelor's Degree	Coordinator	16	16	25

N (coded names)	Gender	Age	Nationality	Education	Work position	Length of work experience on this position	Length of work experience in the current organization	Length of work experience in general
33 (EB8)	Female	38	Finnish	Bachelor's Degree	Finnish teacher	7	7	16
34 (MMB5)	Female	34	Finnish	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	6	7	11
35 (EB9)	Female	26	Canadian	Vocational school	Assistant	1	1	7
36 (EB10)	Female	37	Spanish	Vocational school	Assistant	3	4	15
37 (TMB2)	Female	41	Peruvian	Master's Degree	Head teacher, preschool teacher	17	17	23
38 (EB11)	Female	38	Finnish	Vocational school	Assistant	1	1	6
39 (MMB6)	Male	45	American	Master's Degree	Teacher	1	1	21
40 (MMB7)	Female	29	Greek	Master's Degree	Teacher	3	3	6
41 (TMB3)	Female	58	American	Master's Degree	Managing director	23	23	40

Tables 4 and 5 show the population of the interview participants by nationality, which includes 17 Finns as the biggest group. Although several of the interviewees are Finns, the composition of the respondents in terms of their nationality is diverse and contains a few or single representatives from 19 nationalities: America, Britain, Portugal, Spain, Netherlands, France, Germany, Greece, Norway, Belarus, Croatia, Ukraine, Russia, Peru, Mexico, India, Canada, Austria, and Australia. Table 4 also shows that the interview participants are well-educated. They have appropriate levels of education for their job positions. The majority of them (56%) have a master's degree. About 39% of them completed vocational and bachelor's degrees, which are the minimum required qualifications for the job in the organizations. In addition, some of them have doctorate degrees (5%). With regard to the focal groups, 63% are employees, including interns, 22% are middle-level managers, and 15% are top-level managers. The mean age of the interview participants was 36 years old, the mean length of work experience in their current positions was five years and was around six years in their current organizations, whereas the mean total length of work experience in multiple organizations was 14 years.

Due to the ethical requirements of the research, the names of the investigated business organizations and the names of the interview respondents need to remain anonymous, as was promised to the participants. Therefore, the organizations and the interviewees are referred to in this study as follows. Organization A is a company specializing in consulting, where the top manager is TMA, the middle managers are MMA (team managers/project managers, coordinators), the employees are EA, and the interns are IA. Organization B is a licensed educational center and private daycare for two- to six-year old children, where the top manager is TMB, the middle managers are MMB (team managers), the employees are EB, and the interns are IB.

3.2.3   Conducting the interviews

I personally conducted all 41 interviews. I was surprised and glad to see the active participation of the organization members, not only in the interviews but also in their cooperation and management in scheduling the interviews and finding suitable venues. The individual interview sessions were scheduled and confirmed in advance with every interviewee. The organization members spread the information about the interview invitation within organizations and informed me about their preferred days and time. Most of the interviews took place in the workplaces of the interviewees, where we had separate rooms with a quiet and peaceful atmosphere. This opportunity helped me learn more about life in the organizations because I could experience and observe the work atmosphere of both organizations and have small talks with the people around. Seven participants were interviewed through Skype since they were unable to attend the in-person interviews. Except for one interview, which was conducted in Russian, all interviews were conducted in English.

The data collection process included certain factors that influenced the quality of the interview data. First, the "right" individuals who are involved

and experience the research phenomenon were invited to participate in the individual interviews (Creswell, 2009) because only those people are able to describe the research phenomenon. People at different organizational levels and tasks, such as the interns, employees, and managers of the case organizations interested in participating, were chosen for the interviews because they are the key people experiencing employee participation practices and are able to co-produce rich information on the research phenomenon.

Second, since the data collection process involved the participation of people, ethical issues and research behavior were important to take into account. The interviewer aimed to adhere to ethical principles during the data collection process through the following. Research consent was obtained from the organization's executive managers and the individual research participants (Gray, 2017). The interview participants signed the letter of informed consent through which they were briefed about the study subject and the purpose of the interview process and were ensured confidentiality and privacy. The interview participants were asked for permission to record the interviews on a voice recorder (Hancock & Algozine, 2006) for the accuracy of the collected data (Yin, 2017). Third, my task as an interviewer was to make the interviewees feel comfortable to talk openly (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975) and share their experiences of employee empowerment practices. To establish an open and trustful atmosphere, I introduced myself as a doctoral student. Then, I briefly described my personal background in the first few minutes of the interviews. Lastly, interviewers are supposed to be good listeners (Yin, 2017). It means that I had to follow not only what was precisely said by the interview participants but also what they meant by making observations. This last aspect was especially difficult to perform during the Skype interview sessions, even though some of the interview participants opened the camera translation due to the low quality of the video and improper lighting.

It was important to communicate with the research participants in a language that could be easily understood (Gray, 2017). Therefore, the concept of "employee empowerment" was clarified and partly replaced with the idea of "employee participation" during the interview session as an alternative for an easier understanding of the research topic by the interview participants. The interviewees were asked to share their descriptions of employee empowerment with the help of the critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954). From the very beginning of the interview sessions, this technique allowed me to ask the interviewees to recall and share their perceived realities and experiences about employee empowerment:

> Could you please describe any event where you have experienced employee participation in your workplace?

This first step was important and fundamental for the subsequent data collection process. The spoken descriptions were guided and directed slightly by the follow-up questions, helping to catch key information for the research. It was important to figure out several specific aspects of the described examples of employee empowerment to answer the research questions. For example,

when we look at the virtues and vices of employee empowerment, it is necessary to determine the actors, behavioral patterns, drivers of that behavior, and human flourishing as a final result. These small details were asked through the follow-up questions during the description of employee empowerment experiences in order to outline later, from all the combined details, the virtues and vices. Other follow-up questions were asked to shed light on the practical sides of the virtuousness of employee empowerment influenced by organizational practices. In addition, the interviewees were asked about the effects of virtuousness on employee empowerment during the data collection process.

Each interview session had its own characteristics. All the interviews were recorded, and their durations varied from 30 minutes to 1 hour and 20 minutes. In total, the length of all recorded interviews was 36 hours and 41 minutes. All interviews were transcribed word for word. I completely conducted the transcription process to become familiar with the data. More detailed information about the duration of each interview is given in Appendix 4.

3.3 Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is suitable for case study research (Mills et al., 2010) with a descriptive orientation (Drisko & Maschi, 2016), as is the current study. This analysis method was chosen due to its strength in demonstrating the meaning of the data (Neuendorf, 2017; Payne & Payne, 2004), which helps develop general knowledge about the research phenomenon and describe the data once they have been coded and categorized (Drisko & Maschi, 2016).

The analytical strategy of the content data analysis process in this study combines two contradictory approaches responding to the research questions, namely, theory-driven and data-driven approaches. These approaches differentiate traditional (predefined codes from theory) content analysis from qualitative (codes generated from data) content analysis (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). The theory-driven development of codes was used in the study to explore the categories of virtues and vices of employee empowerment. Such elements of the virtuous and vicious actions of actors, the content of actions, drivers of actions, and human flourishing defined within the virtue ethics theory adapted to business organizations are the components of the deductive content analysis to discover the virtues and vices of employee empowerment. These theoretical backgrounds helped to guide and organize this part of the data analysis process (Yin, 2017). Categories formulated regarding the organizational practices and the effects of the virtues on employee empowerment were formed based on the codes that capture the meaning of the content found in the data. This is called "open coding" (Drisko & Maschi, 2016). The data-driven approach establishes patterns and meanings, suggesting relationships between the variables (Gray, 2017).

In this study, the methods of qualitative content analysis suggested by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2016) and the traditional content analysis by Krippendorff (2018) were applied. The analysis process was carried out through the following steps.

First, I transcribed all recorded interviews word by word. Second, the transcribed data were read multiple times to get familiar with the text and to zoom in to specific sections of the data, which is called the primary resource package (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016; Krippendorff, 2018). Third, the actual primary resource packages were formed. Such resource packages unite all relevant pieces of the text and context around particular examples of employee empowerment. This is important because content analysis aims to describe the meaning that is not possible without context (Schreier, 2012), which clarifies certain circumstances forming the settings for employee empowerment. Below is an example of a resource package:

> If I have any ideas, I can just go and tell the principal. If she is not here, I could share them with the assistant principal. If it is something about teaching and children, I usually go to the head teacher. She knows these things, and she has to make decisions. She is willing to help. With the assistant principal, I can talk about field trips or something else. I can easily go there and ask for something or if I have something. …I go to her (principal) and ask if we can talk. I usually go to work very early and see if she is available. Usually, when I want to talk to her in the morning, she is available. When my four-month period came to an end and I was asked if I'd like to be here and stuff like that, I told her that I was happy here. … She has this questionnaire if we have any problems. However, if I have problems, I go and talk to her. It is not that hard. … You can see if she is in a bad mood or tired. It depends on her mood. … -EB9

Table 6 shows an example of the fourth step of the data analysis process.

TABLE 6   Example of the fourth stage of the data analysis process

Form of EE	Actors of EE	Actions of actors	Drivers of actions	Human flourishing	Organizational practices
Democratic decision procedures (<u>weekly meetings</u>)	managers, employees, interns	Everybody is allowed to share their opinions if they have any questions regarding the tasks or upcoming projects, or any other thing, for example, if we need someone else to focus on it. We can share our ideas and thoughts that are related to the projects. -EA4 They also discuss possible solutions to the presented problems and difficulties. Everyone participates in this constructive approach and expresses their opinions if they have something to say. -IA1 …the meetings are followed by discussions on what the alternatives are and what we should do. -TMA3	….to get ideas from all colleagues. -EA4 …we look for solutions. -EA1	For example, if we want to have some kind of summer party, we decide that in the weekly meeting. We ask what we would like to do and stuff like that, so we can decide on the weekly meetings and get some ideas. -EA4 …it is an option to find a solution and not fault the people behind that. I feel my participation in the life of the company. I feel that I am a part of my company. -EA1	This is the first thing they told me, which is very nice: "If you have any ideas on the things we can do for the products, we are very open to that." They always encourage us to bring our own ideas, even as interns. -IA1 Weekly meetings became regular, which did not occur previously. -EA1

The primary source packages were formed, and the amount of the transcribed data was reduced for the purpose of the study. In the fourth step, Microsoft Excel was used to prepare the data for the actual data analysis process. At this stage, the information from the primary source packages was sorted out in the table under the predefined categories reflected in the research sub-questions of the study for each case organization separately.

Finally, the data that were divided and arranged, as shown in Table 6, were analyzed through the procedures of content analysis. The purpose of content analysis within the study is to produce the "big picture" of the research phenomenon through a holistic and factual description of the data (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). The content analysis mainly concerns categories summarizing the content and highlighting the key content of the data (Drisko & Maschi, 2016). At the beginning of the content analysis process, the coding units (related to each other's sentences or paragraphs) within the sorted-out text in the Microsoft Excel table were identified within each predefined category. Afterward, the selected coding units were paraphrased into shorter descriptions reflecting the core meaning of the description. In the following stage, the paraphrased units were coded. In the end, categories were formed based on the previously identified codes.

The content analysis process starts with the analysis of each case organization separately; this is called within-case analysis (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Yin, 2017). The individual case analysis includes general descriptions of the case structured in thematic order, emphasizing the topics and issues that disclose answers to the research questions. The main target of the within-case analysis is to describe the research phenomenon through the connection of empirical topics and issues to each other to provide a holistic view of the cases. All the empirical data in each case were analyzed and organized into a comprehensive entity. This phase was followed by a cross-case analysis. Cross-case analysis means a comparison of the cases in terms of the similarities and differences between them (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016; Yin, 2017). A table was used as a tool to represent the key aspects patterned in each case, notice commonalities and differences, and develop more general explanations. A cross-case examination contributes to an in-depth understanding of the research phenomenon, strengthening the theory and increasing the generalizability (Mills et al., 2010).

3.4 Ethics and trustworthiness of the study

Ethics and trustworthiness are an integrated part of any research following a variety of criteria, which will be discussed next.

3.4.1 Ethical considerations

The study draws attention to research ethics in accordance with the three main ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioral sciences and the proposals for ethical review established by the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics (NABRE) in 2009. The first ethical principle is respecting the autonomy of the research subjects through the provision of voluntary participation and information for the research subjects (NABRE, 2009). Participation in the study was voluntary and accompanied by a letter of informed consent. The consent was general, reflecting information about the research, the form in which the data are recorded and archived, and the conditions for the use of the research results. In addition, the letter of informed consent stated the participants' right to withdraw from the study at any stage. The multicultural business organizations A and B in Finland that accepted the request to invite organization members to participate in individual interviews were provided with a letter of introduction and invitation to the research. Information about the research and its purpose was provided in the letter briefly and clearly from the perspectives of the research subject. In particular, the academic concept of employee empowerment was replaced by the concept of employee participation to ease the understanding of the research topic by the interviewees.

The second ethical principle demands avoiding possible harm resulting from the data collection process, data storage process, and publication of the results (NABRE, 2009). It is important to treat the multicultural interview participants during interviews with respect to avoid mental harm. People may understand things and react to them in different ways during the interview process. In this case, the interviewer should determine whether the informants voluntarily participated and did not experience mental strain and negative feelings like hate, sadness, shame, and so on. For example, possible further force or pressure was not applied during the interview when the interviewer observed that the person did not want to provide more information on the question asked or the person was not willing to give more time. Another way to avoid mental harm to the interview participants is to report the research findings in a respectful way. The research results of this study were not reported judgmentally or negatively, with proper argumentations in this regard. Hopefully, they do not contribute to social harm.

The third ethical principle of NABRE (2009) is about the data protection and privacy issues taking place in the protection of the research data and confidentiality, storing of the research data, and publication of the research results. The letter of informed consent that was agreed with every interview participant promised the protection of privacy and confidentiality throughout the whole research process. All recorded materials were used and stored without any direct identifications. All personal information, identifiers, and the produced data were destroyed once the study was finalized and defended due to the reason that the analyzed data might be used to verify the research findings by the scientific community. The reported results of the study do not

present the research subjects in an identifiable way, nor do they use any indirect identifiers (age, organization, nationality, etc.). The principle of data protection and privacy was applied to all information identifiable to the interview participants in all stages of the research process.

The study also follows the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) that became applicable in 2018 across Europe. With the help and guidance of a data protection specialist, the majority of the considered and applied ethical aspects in the research were verified to be in line with the GDPR. An additional form was filled out to provide the missing information according to GDPR, such as data security measures indicating the place where the data are stored and when they will be destroyed.

3.4.2 Criteria of trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a crucial aspect affecting the quality of research. This study applies the following four criteria of trustworthiness by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to convey the reliability of the research findings:
- credibility;
- transferability;
- dependability; and
- confirmability.

The first criterion is *credibility*, which means confidence in the findings (Macnee & McCabe, 2008; Mills et al., 2009). Credibility determines whether the research conclusions are plausible, and the data are accurately interpreted (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The current study responds by applying the strategies of triangulation, negative information, and peer debriefing to manage the credibility of the study.

Triangulation is a validity procedure used to establish the credibility of the research results. This interpretative research relies on the researcher's interpretation of the data concerning the experiences of the informants. The research data were "triangulated" to minimize potential flaws of the interpretation and consider the research phenomenon from different sides. In this research, triangulation concerns the combined data sources (Carl, 2009). In particular, the research data were collected from two business organizations in Finland. The data represent different perspectives from 41 interview participants, including managers, employees, and interns. These facts add to the credibility of the study because the research results are established based on converging multiple cases and multiple respondents who provided additional insights and different perspectives.

Moreover, the selected well-known and commonly used case research strategy was applied consistently in the empirical part to increase the credibility of this study. The analysis and findings are reported in a transparent way so others who share an interest in this study can understand how the research was conducted. The case study approach reports the interview process and the research findings clearly using authentic quotes in reporting.

Presentation of negative information that runs counter to the themes (Creswell, 2014) is another procedure used to improve the credibility of the findings. Real operation in business organizations is not ideally ethical because it is composed of different and conflicting perspectives that are not always in line with morality. More specifically, information about the vices for employee empowerment in the case organizations is presented and described and conclusions are drawn. The contradictory pieces of evidence make the research findings more realistic and valid.

Peer debriefing is the last procedure that took place in the research to contribute to the credibility of the results. The accuracy of the study results was enhanced through the presentation of results from different research seminars and conferences where other professionals and colleagues (professors, academic staff, teachers, doctoral students, etc.) were willing to provide scholarly guidance, review, and feedback and ask questions about the study. This strategy enabled interpretations of the findings beyond the researcher's viewpoint to be encompassed (Creswell, 2014). It was not limited to the analysis of the data but also included the presentation of other parts of the study, such as the research introduction, theoretical background, methodological approach, and research results.

The second criterion is *transferability*. The degree to which the findings of the research can be applied to different contexts or settings with different respondents is referred to as transferability. It is equivalent in meaning to generalizability (Bitsch, 2005). Qualitative research projects are usually not responsive to the requirements of generalization because they are mainly oriented to describe a certain phenomenon in a specific context. However, the ideas of qualitative research findings may be transferred to other settings than those of the original settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The transferability judgment of this study was facilitated through purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling was used in the research to select the case organizations and research participants based on the specific purposes associated with answering the research questions. It is helpful for the researchers to focus on the key informants due to their knowledge about the investigated issue (Schutt, 2006). Purposeful sampling leaves space for judgments regarding the selection of research participants (Ary et al., 2010). This way, the researcher decides the reasons for the specific group of research participants to be involved and obtains more in-depth findings, maximizing the information to be uncovered, not for the purpose of generalizability. Moreover, the research strategy and outcomes of the current dissertation are novel and have not yet been replicated in other cases with the same circumstances. Thus, it is impossible to generalize the results of this dissertation. Although this dissertation used a multiple-case study research design, empirical generalization is still limited to two cases in the Finnish multicultural environment. Nevertheless, the current study acknowledges that each case organization has certain affecting variables, but the views of the 41 interviewees are relatively coherent. It is thus proposed that although the study describes solely the experience of the organization members

in the cases, the findings might be transferable to other multicultural workplaces in Finland and may represent future working life conditions in Finland. At the very least, the results provide a novel basis for organizations to reflect on the findings and conclusion and consider what can be learnt from them in their own case.

The third criterion is *dependability.* It is about "the stability of findings over time" (Bitsch, 2005, p. 86), which demonstrates the consistency and repeatability of the research results. Consistency of the findings is achieved through the consistency of the face-to-face and online (via Skype) in-depth semi-structured open-ended interviews. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. The current study's data collection method was generally constant. The interviews were conducted consistently using the same interview guide, with the participants receiving identical introductions at the start of the interview. Pre-interview communication with the participants was also standardized. However, each respondent was given an opportunity to speak freely without interruption, and the researcher asked different types of clarifying questions depending on the individual. The interviews conducted via Skype could negatively affect the understanding of non-verbal language, which gives deeper comprehension and more insights between people. Regarding the stability of the findings over time, it is not possible to say that the findings will be similar in the future. However, the virtues of employee empowerment are not a rapidly changing phenomenon since, according to Athavale (1975), time, place, and context define some virtues to appear and exist indefinitely unless these elements alter. As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that the identified organizational virtues may remain similar in Finnish business organizations dealing with multicultural employees as a current and future trend.

The final criterion is *confirmability.* It means the level to which researcher bias, motivation, or interest does not influence the study results. Confirmability is "concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination but are clearly derived from the data" (Tobin & Begley, 2004, p. 392). The idea of how easily the findings of the study could be replicated or validated by other investigators is what is meant by the term "confirmability" (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). Information about the research topic and the details were delivered to the research participants in advance so they would have time to consider independently the appropriate things to report during the interview sessions. Pilot interviews were conducted, the actual interviews were consistent, and triangulation of the sources was used, as previously mentioned, to minimize the interviewer's effect or achieve confirmability. Moreover, confirmability ensured the unbiased selection process of the case organizations based on the snowball method. All potentially suitable organizations were invited to participate in the empirical research. All voluntary respondents from the case organizations took part in the research. This way, there was distance between the researcher and interviewees. Consequently, the respondents and the study were not influenced by the subjective view of the researcher.

4   EMPIRICAL RESULTS

The purpose of this section is to report the findings. The results that answer the empirical research questions are described similarly from both case organizations. First, the characteristics of each virtue for employee empowerment and the related vices are described. Afterward, the organizational practices, which are perceived by the respondents as necessary for the organization to be virtuous for employee empowerment, are introduced. Subsequently, the effects of the discovered virtues of employee empowerment on the flourishing of the employees are provided.

4.1   Virtues and related vices for employee empowerment

The following virtues of employee empowerment were analyzed and interpreted based on the data analysis process:
- information transparency;
- participation;
- helpfulness;
- respectfulness;
- responsibility;
- fortitude; and
- continuous learning.

Next, the characteristics of the virtues of employee empowerment and related vices are presented and discussed, followed by a summary of the results.

4.1.1   Information transparency

According to the analysis, the members of both case organizations, A and B, manifest the virtue of *information transparency* to be significant for employee empowerment. This virtue refers to the degree to which both negative and positive information is shared openly by the organization members.

Consequently, it deals with the opportunity of getting information on previous experiences, current situations, and plans concerning work arrangements, processes, and performance, as well as the challenges at work and the company goals and results in general. The key characteristics of information transparency are that it is concerned with what kind of information is made accessible to the employees and how the access is organized. What is considered virtuous behavior in the case organizations is that the organization members share and exchange with each other relevant and reliable information from their professional viewpoint through effective and multiple communications, both face-to-face and virtually. Therefore, different viewpoints and ideas become visible and known in the work community.

The respondents mentioned that they are able to make decisions and act in an appropriate and constructive way in different situations when relevant and trustworthy information is available and can be used. For example, Kaptein (2008) argued, based on his virtue ethics approach, that transparency in the organization affects ethical decision-making and behavior due to the disclosure, feedback, and diminished room for misinterpretation and dishonesty. The following quotations from the respondents highlight the idea of information transparency:

> The main purpose of the staff meetings is to keep everybody updated. -TMB1

> …the presentation of the CEO aims to update everybody on how things are going, the financial status, and the major projects or concerns. We usually have updates from the team managers…about their teams (annual meetings). - MMA3

> It is more about telling people or giving updates on what we are doing to let everyone to know what is going on (weekly staff meetings). - IA1

> The thing was important for us because we were doing many things and, for me, it is very important that people get a general idea of all the things that are going on (from notes written on weekly staff meetings). - TMA2

The meaning of the virtue of information transparency is to spread work-related information among the employees within the workplace to increase the understanding of the collective purpose of the organization, advance cooperation between organization members, improve work performance, and decrease misunderstanding and problems due to work division and employee diversity in the organization. All are important aspects of the Aristotelian virtue approach (Solomon, 1992 b, 2004). According to the respondents, it is crucial to advance not only vertical but also horizontal information flow in the organization. The respondents stressed that this virtue requires that the information shared needs to be accurate, timely, and reliable. In addition, people need to be motivated to share information and understand that they are accountable for the information they are sharing.

As highlighted in the literature on virtue ethics (e.g., Hartman, 2013; Kaptein, 2017; Kraut, 2018; Ross & Brown, 2009), each moral virtue is a mean between two corresponding vices presenting deficiency and excess. In other words, every virtue has two associated vices: a deficient vice and an excessive vice. From the viewpoint of deficiency, the vice related to the virtue of

information transparency is *information opaqueness*. According to Kaptein (2017), information opaqueness refers to a situation wherein organization members cannot pay attention to the consequences of their unethical behavior toward others because the lack of information makes the consequences unknown and not observable in the organization. The data analysis shows that information opaqueness occurs, especially in case organization B. The organization members sometimes do not get relevant information to do their work properly. An example that took place between a teacher and an assistant in case company B highlights this issue. The teacher did not share the teaching plans with the assistant, and as a result, the assistant encountered trouble performing her work duties well on time. This issue, which was mentioned to occur every now and then, was related by the assistant in the following way:

> …she is doing lesson plans, but I have no idea what is going to happen. I can come in on Monday morning but I have no idea what is going to happen this week because she did not give me the lesson plan. At worst, she did not come to work, and I did not have lesson plans. I was left with half an hour to do the planning to teach the children, which should never happen… - EB10

The respondents stated that information opaqueness causes problems and conflicts among team members. The members have difficulties working together in a smooth and constructive way and making the right decisions. As mentioned by an interviewee:

> …there was a new teacher in my group and two assistants.… One assistant was seated at the computer... I tried to do things as we used to do with the previous teacher. I went to clean when that teacher and the assistant were in the room, but the new teacher found that to be wrong. It was a big issue. -EB8

In the above examples, information opaqueness arises because some people in the organization want to keep information to themselves. In particular, not sharing relevant information with the employees who are lower in the hierarchy, which are the assistants, tends to happen in organization B. This refers to the unequal valuation of people in work groups, which causes scarce information sharing. Lack of access to information is a means of using power, typically informally, in the organization.

Information opaqueness also occurs because the knowledge-sharing system in case company B is underdeveloped. The following excerpts highlight this viewpoint:

> It varies what assistants hear about what was decided. If we ask, we might hear more, but we do not know what happens at those meetings. It would be interesting to have a better understanding for the assistants. It might also be beneficial for us to have an idea of their meetings and decisions to keep us on track about what is going on. It may help foster open communication in our organization. - EB7

> After the meetings (teacher meetings), if anything was productively discussed or if there were any changes … It would be the teachers' job to pass the information to the assistants, which was also a broken part of the wheel because of a lot of teachers would forget to transfer the information. -MMB3

The next example refers to the existence of information opaqueness between the teams who do not share information with each other because a properly

operating functional knowledge-sharing system does not exist between the teams:

> In the playground, we can see (other teams); otherwise, I do not know what is going on in the pre-school. We can see them on the field trips, hear them in the corridors, or see the plans in the corridors. I generally do not talk with them so much about what they are studying. We just have basic assumptions about each other. - EB7

As for the excess of the virtue of information transparency, called *information overexposure* by Kaptein (2017), the interviewees of case organization B remarked that the top manager shares simplistic routine-based information during staff meetings. In the same way, the head teacher tends to share irrelevant information in teacher meetings. In the situation of information overexposure, information overflow prevails, which causes problems for the employees in understanding and noticing relevant information. It can be suggested that these situations in case company B are a way to hide important information from the employees, or the administration may not be conscious of what information is relevant to employees. These situations decrease the employees' level of satisfaction and increase frustration. Some examples of this are presented in the interview citations below:

> They really do not discuss anything that helps you, which feels like a waste of time. For example, not everything that we talked about there would affect me. I can listen to it, but it does not really matter if I am there or not. Sometimes, it is interesting and helpful; more often, it is not. … you can tell everybody wants to go home. - MMB4

> …they have to look after their children and sit in meetings, listening to someone who says there is not enough toilet paper or something like that. -MMB3

> In teacher meetings, a lot of times, I felt that they were not on topic. The meetings should be about what is going on here in our classrooms. It should not be about the home life of one of the teachers. I do not care about that. I care about what we are teaching, what we are teaching next, how we all are teaching it, to learn from each other and not to complain about parents. It is useless. - MMB6

To conclude, the deficiency of information opaqueness tends to refer to the informal use of power in the organization in a way that underlines that knowledge is a source of power, and its possession is related to hierarchical and unequal social relationships in the organization. Moreover, the vice occurs because of underdeveloped formal information systems and channels. Information overexposure refers to managers sharing too much irrelevant information with the employees. This frustrates the employees and complicates their understanding of and access to relevant information.

4.1.2 Participation

Another important virtue for employee empowerment in the case organizations that was brought up in the data analysis is *participation*. The virtue of participation was defined by the interviewees in both case companies A and B as the opportunity for the employees to be a part of the decision-making, developmental activities, and knowledge sharing of the organization. In addition, participation for the respondents meant that they felt socially and

psychologically included in their work community and team. From the viewpoint of empowerment, this virtue deals with the crucial aspects of empowerment, such as employees' involvement and feeling of practical and psychological ownership of the purpose, activities, and social community of the organization (cf. Lincoln et al., 2002). Moreover, participation provides opportunities for employees to influence and have power in the workplace, which are significant features of empowerment (Ciulla, 2020). The respondents in both organizations did stress neither the legal nor financial dimension of participation (Yukl, 2013) but focused on the behavioral and communicative perspective. The reason may be due to the case organizations being rather small and the mindsets of the organization members—at least in the interviews— tended to be related to everyday life in the workplace rather than formal regulation or administrative and financial issues. The following interview citations highlight the virtue of participation:

> It is information that we need to know (annual meetings)… - EA5
>
> The idea is to get information (weekly meetings)… - EA4
>
> We really have to understand it and grasp the idea (intercultural management course). - IA1
>
> We get informed on what is going on around here (staff meetings). -EB8
>
> If there are some things scheduled for next month, we get informed, or something about safety, or new information from the city… We get new information about the school… - EB9
>
> …we can look at the possible solutions and see which are preferable for us (team meetings). - EA7

As can be seen in the citations above, participation can take different forms, and the respondents understood that the level of participation varies. First, at the more passive level, the organization members mentioned participating in activities such as listening and watching. According to the interviewees, at this level, the employees attend staff and team meetings, training sessions, courses, or other organizational gatherings. Thus, they can be considered rather passive recipients in participatory activities. Second, at the more advanced level, the characteristics of participation include the employees' active behavior and communication. The employees discuss and show openly their views of the positive and negative things and the issues they face in the workplace and their work. The employees actively make suggestions, proposals, and comments, as well as provide feedback to each other. They ask questions and advice for the issues they are worried about and consider problematic. At this active level, argumentations, discussions, conversations, and finding solutions to problems are crucial. In general, the interview respondents recalled their increased motivation to practice the virtue of participation after feeling that they are an important part of the organizational community where their contributions bring change toward organizational success and well-being. This active level of participation in the case organizations resembles the virtue of discussability in

Kaptein's (2008) CEV model. According to Kaptein (ibid.), discussability is a characteristic of a virtuous organization and deals with the opportunity employees have to discuss and raise various concerns and problems in the workplace.

In sum, the virtue of participation to the respondents means that the employees stay updated about different aspects of the organization's and team's activities to have the opportunities to influence them. Furthermore, it is crucial to be able to influence and develop one's own work conditions and performance, as well as create and maintain close bonds with work colleagues to create good and fruitful social relationships in the workplace. Participation means an easy exchange of opinions and discussion with work colleagues with different backgrounds, knowledge, and experience to discover new things and produce new ideas and ways to handle various situations. The respondents underlined that the virtue also requires the organization members' own interest, responsibility, and willingness to be part of the organizational community and contribute to it.

From the perspective of vice, the analysis showed that several representatives from case company B (but not from company A) complained about the requirement and pressure to participate once a month in staff meetings after working hours, which demands extra energy and effort from their already-overloaded day. This can be called the vice of *participation overload*. Examples of extra participation concerning staff meetings were told in the interviews as follows:

> I have to say that we are usually tired … A meeting typically takes 45 minutes, so everybody is quite happy to go home. It is tiring because it is after 17:00. Many people like me would prefer to have a chance to meet during the day at work, which is not possible because we need to be with the children. It is sometimes difficult to meet at 17:00 on a weekday because, of course, people want to go home. We are not really excited that we are going this way. It is, of course, possible to do it and to go there. Sometimes, it is also nice to talk about important matters, but often, it also feels like we are there because we have to be. - MMB4

> I would like to be at home instead of being in meetings. It entails so much pressure … - EB9

As highlighted in the above examples, the schedule of the meetings was perceived by the respondents as neither appropriate nor carefully planned from the viewpoint of workload and well-being of personnel. The employees mentioned that they feel pressured by the manager to participate in the meetings after working hours. They do not have a strong desire to participate due to tiredness and wanting to spend time at home with their families instead.

The respondents—also only from case company B—pointed out that the deficiency of participation exists in the company in the form of *non-attendance*. They reported that they can be excluded from participation so that their voice is neither heard nor valued. Therefore, some of them have started not to speak out at all. The interviewees described this issue in the following way:

> It was easier to sit and be quiet because I tried to express my idea and bring changes once, but it did not work. I decided to just watch and wait for the end of the meeting. - MMB6

> Maybe the only thing is that some people do not express their opinions; they keep them inside. They may get very angry with something, for example. If they do not say it, they keep it inside, and it may cause some problems in their work…there are people who do not express themselves and keep everything inside, and then they reach a point like, "I do not care anymore."- EB10

> When I have a problem, I prefer to go directly to the director and talk to her. However, there are people who do not do it and keep everything inside until they reach the point like, "I do not care anymore." So, it also depends on one's personality. - MMB7

The data show that the behavior of the manager tends to cause the vice of non-attendance to occur and spread as a habit in the organization. This was highlighted by a respondent as follows:

> You know, if you try to do something, to give your opinion, or have your voice heard, she (the director) will ignore it by saying yes, yes. If you try to take it to the city authorities, you will bring changes, but she will make your life impossible, like, she will yell at you and force you to do a job that you're not supposed to do. We just come to work and do our eight hours, and then leave. - B16

The role of the manager in exercising this kind of vice is discussed by MacIntyre (1984), who said that it is the managers of the organization who represent the institution and centrally influence its habits and ways of acting. When the sense of power misuse connected to a status finds its way into a manager's behavior, a door to exclusion, especially among those who are lower in the hierarchy, is opened in the organization. This tends to lead to a vicious circle of non-attendance, where employees who are excluded do not want or dare to speak up, which causes further problems (e.g., under-use of expertise) to both the team and the organization.

4.1.3 Helpfulness

The data analysis shows that the employees in both case organizations regard exercising the virtue of *helpfulness* as essential for empowerment. This virtue is about caring and helping other organization members and assisting them when a need for help and assistance is at stake. Consequently, helpfulness is the possibility and willingness to influence and support other employees, for instance, to develop their work performance. Kaptein (2008, 2017) postulated that this kind of virtue in an organization is connected to the view of the social bond theory. According to this theory, organization members are committed to helpfulness when they are attached to an organization and its purpose to do good. The feeling and understanding of the purposiveness at some good is the crucial aspect of employee empowerment (Lincoln et al., 2002, p. 271).

Under this virtue, the organization members give advice, support each other's work performance, develop novel initiatives in their work, and assist others in difficult situations. The interview respondents mentioned that they are able to get attention, help, and support from work colleagues in times of

difficulties and problems and, consequently, overcome them with the help of their colleagues. The employees help each other by sharing work duties voluntarily, for instance, when it is a busy day at work. They can give psychological support to each other, such as showing care, empathy, and compassion for problems, as well as encouragement in new ideas. The key characteristic of the virtue of helpfulness is that assistance and care are provided to each other in the organization whenever help is needed by someone. In the data, the forms of helpfulness tended to be practical (e.g., doing work for someone, giving advice) and psychological (e.g., showing empathy and encouragement). The following excerpts from the data represent the idea of helpfulness:

> Then, I will do what I can to make the process easier for her. - MMA6

> The head teacher is a really nice person. We do not have any problems with her. She is willing to help us with everything. The head teacher is very helpful. When I go to the head teacher, I feel that I am going to a friend; it is a very friendly environment. You can talk to her about anything. She does not misunderstand. - MMB7

The virtue of helpfulness is important for employee empowerment because, as the respondents shared, this kind of virtuous organization allows the organization members to have initiative as well as give and receive help. In this regard, this virtue supports employee empowerment and increases the quality of working life as an integrated part of eudaimonia (Solomon, 1992 b) by making service, care, encouragement, and assistance to others available. This can be considered an aim toward internal good at the workplace (Ross & Brown, 2009). The interview respondents believed that it is highly important that the organization members help and assist each other at all levels of the organization, both horizontally and vertically. They emphasized that for this virtue to occur, the organization members must also take the initiative and give extra time and effort.

From the viewpoint of deficiency, the vice of *indifference* can occur. Especially in case organization B, the respondents mentioned that indifference tends to occur between the teams. An interviewee from B spoke of this issue as follows:

> Teamwork could get better by collaborating. I think once I become a teacher, I will go to other teachers and ask, "Would you like to come play with us? or Would you like to jointly prepare a show for the children?" Something like that. - EB1

According to the interviewees, indifference emerges because supportive cooperation and organizational system for cooperation between teams have not been developed in the workplace. An example in the data shows that the teachers from different teams do not cooperate with other teams, for example, in arranging common events and activities for the children, due to a missing cooperative system. When helpfulness between organization members is scarce or lacking, isolation and selfishness tend to occur. Kaptein (2017) argued that the result is that organizations stimulate egoistic and opportunistic behaviors in their activities.

Indifference does not only emerge between teams but also between team members. This happened both in companies A and B. For example, a respondent from company A highlighted such a problem. The example deals with a project in the organization where the project manager does not provide the team members enough support and help them do their tasks properly:

> I contacted the project manager, but he is slow in his replies or may not reply at all. It does not always happen, but sometimes it does. Sometimes, I could not continue my work without additional information coming from the project manager or the customers. It does not positively affect the work process; instead, it slows it down or even stops it. - EA1

Another example is from company B, where an interviewee compares her experiences to that of other teams and feels that a teacher behaves in an indifferent way:

> I saw that they work as teams; they make lesson plans together. Practical nurses also do rounds. They do everything together. They plan even the parents' meetings, and they are not teachers. Meanwhile, here, it is just the parents who do all these things. - EB10

The vice of indifference refers especially to the lack of organization members' motivation to behave ethically to build cooperation (Ivanova & von Scheve, 2020) and social bonds among people (Blanchard et al., 2001; Lincoln et al., 2002), which are central aspects for employee empowerment (Ciulla, 2020). A reason for organization members being indifferent to each other and the other team's needs seems to be under-developed cooperative channels in the organization. Thus, organizational arrangements are scarce in this sense. It could also be possible that indifference is based on the difficulty of clearly understanding the need to provide help to others. The excess of the virtue of helpfulness, which is called *zealotry* by Kaptein (2017), was not detected in the empirical data. However, logically, it means people are overcommitted to help. When people take an excessively enthusiastic role in helping, this can lead to a culture where people who are helped excessively can take a passive role and do not become active and independent actors. They can also use helpers to do their work. This is obviously an indication that organization members have difficulties in drawing a line between those who really need help and the independent agency of a person.

4.1.4 Respectfulness

The virtue of *respectfulness* was perceived as valuable for employee empowerment by the members of the case organizations. This virtue relates to the idea that organization members are attentive and show polite, gentle, trustful, wise, open-minded, and friendly behaviors to work colleagues. Moreover, they are responsive to the intentions of other organization members and show that they value them despite possible disagreements. Consequently, the key characteristics of this virtue concern two main aspects, namely, attentive listening and discussion in communication as well as polite behavior

between organization members. Attentive listening and discussion stress that taking care of good relationships in the workplace and giving space to finalize one's speech with others' full attention is significant. Furthermore, it includes opportunities to express opinions, show trust in the professionalism of work colleagues, understand and judge situations in a logical and sensible way, keep sensitive information secret, create a friendly environment, and remain conscious of multicultural differences.

From the viewpoint of politeness, the respondents said that respectful behavior, which pays attention to politeness, is based on several guidelines. In general, formal rules such as professional codes and laws (e.g., early-childhood teacher's codes, employment law) are important guidelines, yet they are not enough for respectfulness to occur. According to the interviewees, many unwritten rules and norms of conduct in the culture of the organization, which deal with work etiquette and appropriate behavior, create guidelines. The interviewees spoke of the importance of polite behavior and attentive listening, for example, in the following ways:

> You show that you are listening… but usually, I try to be friendly and listen, too. - IA2

> We should listen when someone talks and ask questions after. - EA4

> You always take into consideration if somebody is talking… You are going to pay attention because you also want to be heard when you have to say something. You also expect others to listen to you, not interrupt you, and not to be on the phone and ignore you. - EB1

> Do not make anyone feel uncomfortable. - MMA6

> Just be polite. - TMA2

> It is always politeness. - MMB1

> Just generally being polite. You treat them in the way you want to be treated. - EB7

> I know not to have my phone on me when we have important meetings. Your phone should be on silent mode because you need to pay attention to what is going on… - MMB4

Interestingly, in the last quote, the respondent refers to the so-called Golden Rule in the field of ethics, which is usually expressed as, ''Do unto others as you would have others do unto you'' (see Burton & Goldsby, 2005, p. 372). Burton and Goldsby mentioned that the rule emerges in most of the world's religions and philosophical systems. According to them, professionals need to show respect and listen when they interact with one another, even though their viewpoints about the issues in question and their backgrounds may vary. Such behavior is important because it is morally right to behave. It was stressed by the respondents that when people show professionalism, maturity, and reliability in their attitude and behavior at work, the virtue of respectfulness is at a high level. The maturity of people particularly means that people are able to control their behavior in a polite way, for instance, in problematic and controversial situations.

Respectfulness is important for employee empowerment because the virtue offers the organization members a moral setting (Ciulla, 2020), a respectful workplace, and a work environment that allows someone to feel valued, safe, and treated fairly with dignity. This way, respectfulness improves the quality of working life within the workplace by contributing to the moral environment that governs the relationships between the organization members. Moreover, respectfulness in the attitudes and behaviors of organization members advances opportunities to work well, which is a significant part of Aristotle's eudaimonia (Solomon, 1992 b).

The employees, especially in case organization B (but not from A), shared their concern about the vice related to the virtue of respectfulness from the point of view of deficiency. This vice is called *disrespect.* For the respondents, disrespect means that some people's ideas and opinions in the organization are perceived to be less respectable and valued than others, and some organization members' importance is regarded as lower compared with others. The interviewees gave examples of disrespect, especially in the behavior of the top manager of the organization. They described situations wherein the manager, typically based on her positional power, rejects to consider and value the opinions of the employees, even if the employees' professional knowledge and skills are relevant and important. This is highlighted in the following quotations from the interviews:

> When we feel strongly about an issue, it is something that we experience. We are the teachers; we see it every day. We feel that something could be done better, differently. She is not a teacher, so she does not necessarily see it. We feel that sometimes she does not see our point of view. If she listens but does not want to understand, that is the barrier that we sometimes have. When we feel that she disagrees with some things, we feel like she does not listen to us. Of course, it makes us unhappy. She is trying her best, but this is something she does not do. This is the biggest barrier. - MMB5

> It would be nice if we also have more input in school-related major decisions because, right now, it is a very strong leadership, and the boss will make the decisions for you. It would be nice to have input because we can reason it out and give a good pedagogical reason. We want it this way because it works better than being told that not everybody does it this way. It would be nice if they would listen a little bit more if we have a good argument, if we have good reasons to change something. - MMB4

> Sometimes, the director will say yes, but nothing changes. - MMB7

> I tried to give a suggestion, and I came personally, but nothing happened. The director said yes, but nothing happened. - EB10

The interview respondents noticed that disrespect expressed in the attitude and behavior of the manager toward the opinions and suggestions of the employees makes the employees lose interest in being an active part of the community and participate in the development of organizational activities. This aspect was presented by the interviewees, for example, in the following way:

> With most of the rules and everything that we have, I can live with them and do not need to agree with them, but I can live with them. It is just easier; it is not my school. - MMB4

> Basically, there is a boss and a head teacher who make the decisions. Maybe after making such decisions, they will tell you and ask you what you think. There is no such thing, or at least I felt that way. We just come to work, do our eight hours, and then leave. - EB10

As shown in the interview quotations above, due to being undervalued, the employees tend to become alienated from the purpose of the organization, which is problematic from the viewpoint of a virtuous organization (Hartman, 2013; Solomon, 2004). An example that highlights disrespect deals with the behavior of a manager who showed impolite or even rude behavior toward the employees. The manager had given a strict order that the use of mobile phones is not allowed during workdays. The rudeness occurred when the manager threatened the employees that they would be dismissed and lose their jobs if they used their mobile phones during work hours as well as during breaks. According to the respondents, the manager's threat experienced by several employees was stressful and even traumatic. The manager was not willing to listen and value the opinion of the employees that more flexibility would be necessary in this issue. An example that highlights the negative aspect of the manager's behavior was told in the interview. The example deals with an employee who received a call from her mobile because her child became sick at school and was taken to a hospital:

> One time, they tried to contact one worker because her child was really sick, but because of the rule, she did not even notice that they called her. I think they were taking the child to the hospital, and she did not even know. - EB10

The child's schoolteacher tried to contact the parent but could not reach her, not even during lunch break due to the manager's order that no calls are allowed, even during breaks. The employee was shocked when she finally got the information. This event caused the other employees to become fearful and stressed, thinking that the same situation would happen to them. If one does not obey the order, there is a danger that she or he will be dismissed. Later, the manager understood that she needed to revoke the rule. According to the respondents, employees should be allowed to use their mobile phones, especially during breaks. This is a legal right. The respondents believed that the manager learned a lesson from the event described above and started to recognize gradually that threatening is not a polite and appropriate way to act in her role.

Another example cited by the interviewees was that the manager wanted the organizational culture to resemble habits from the United States. As a result, the traditions of other cultures were undervalued, and the employees were forced to adapt to the dominance of U.S.-based traditions. For instance, different U.S. holidays needed to be celebrated but not others. Only American English must be used at work. Furthermore, an American leadership style was stressed. Directive leadership is common in an American leadership style, wherein executives are in charge and give directions to others (Mills, 2005). The organization members who originally came from different countries and represented various cultures had trouble adapting to this one kind of acting and

the dominance of traditions from the U.S. The respondents spoke of this issue, for example, as follows:

> Of course, it is sometimes difficult for them because it is the American way. Our own backgrounds have strong inputs as well because you cannot just have an American leadership if people in the school are from different nationalities. - MMB4

> Here, there is a big hierarchy, like in America. They do not follow the Finnish system, which is really sad because they should follow it. - EB10

The respondents stated that they sometimes feel that the manager does not appreciate their professional competence. According to them, this manifests in the manager's impolite behavior when the manager suddenly enters the classroom without notice, for instance, without knocking, to see and control the teaching situation. An interviewee described this in the following way:

> When she comes to my classroom, I feel a bit surprised because she just opens the door and gets inside. Of course, I'd feel pressured and ask myself if something is wrong. - MMB7

The respondents said that they are emotionally stressed and feel fear and worry about that kind of behavior. As a result, as highlighted by the interviewees, the employees distance themselves from the manager to relieve fear and angst. In addition, one example of disrespect deals with the treatment of people who represent different positions in the organizational hierarchy. For instance, an assistant said:

> Sometimes I feel offended because I see that they do not respect me. - EB10

In the example above, it was a question of an assistant who explained that disrespect in the organization tends to be focused on employees with low positions in the organizational hierarchy, namely, the assistants. According to the respondents, for instance, a teacher can ignore an assistant when the teacher greets the children and other teachers in the morning. Disrespect is also shown by other entities. They make it clear that they know that the teacher is higher in the hierarchy and, consequently, requires more recognition than an assistant. The respondents said that this kind of behavior causes feelings of insult and annoyance in the organization and deteriorates its organizational culture. In general, the interviewees indicated that the top manager of case organization B wants to keep major control of organizational performance without sharing ownership with others, as is expected in employee empowerment (cf. Ciulla, 2020; Ongori, 2009). This phenomenon refers to the dominance of the power of authority embedded with unequal treatment of employees by the management. As a result, it is difficult for employees to flourish (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003; Cameron & Gaza, 2002) when an atmosphere of fear and inequality exists.

It is also necessary to mention the vice of the excess of respectfulness, which logically might be called *adulation*. This vice can be characterized by showing excessive eagerness to please others. Such behavior was not described by the interviewees of case organizations A and B. However, it can be considered that people and organizations practicing obsequiousness would aim

to satisfy and please others to gain favors in exchange. Meanwhile, employee empowerment is based on opposite values, such as autonomy, quality of work (Yukl, 2013), and moral relationships (Ciulla, 2020).

4.1.5 Responsibility

The virtue of responsibility was recognized by the interviewees in the behaviour of the members of both organizations A and B as important for employee empowerment. The key characteristics of responsibility understood by the interviewees were that the employees must do their duties and work thoroughly and as promised to meet the organizational goals (Sutherland et al., 2007). In other words, this virtue manifests as virtuous behaviour when the organization members perform their daily duties properly by following the organization's goals, strategies, rules, and guidelines and do their work actively according to agreements, decisions, and circumstances. This finding recalls the idea of Williams (2008), who considered responsibility as a virtue and defined it as "…the readiness to respond to a plurality of normative demands" (p. 459).

The virtue especially deals with how the employees adapt to and perform their daily work tasks and routines and, thus, can be considered a regulative organizational virtue following the idea of Kaptein (2008). By working in this manner, predictability of action is possible. However, what was important to the interviewees was that the employees needed to show responsibility to produce quality work according to the goals, strategies, and guidelines independently. Thus, no close control by the management and administration was necessary. A high level of trust was connected by the respondents to belong to the occurrence of this virtue. The following citations from the interviews describe the virtue of responsibility:

> We make sure that everything is done in the way it is needed. - EB7
>
> I do my one-month planning and submit it at least a month ahead so they can review it, and the head teacher can go through it. - MMB2
>
> We have to have ethics to do our job properly. This should be behind everybody. It is not just for a person who is trying to do work properly. - EB5
>
> Team members have the responsibility to make sure that their parts are performed. - MMA6
>
> I have to make sure that they have enough materials for those flowers. It is my job. - EB1
>
> They trust me to do it. They just told me, "Okay, make sure that you have the unit and virtues in mind, and you can choose the way to go." … They trust me and my choice of what is appropriate to read for the children. I plan in terms of the units, and then I try to contribute ideas we could do… Within the classroom, there is more freedom for employee initiative and doing what you think is fit than the organization at large. - EB7

The first two quotations above underline the idea that order in doing work duties is crucial for responsibility. This means that employees perform and arrange their job in an orderly and tidy manner, in agreement with

organizational work rules and procedures. Other examples from the interviews highlight the importance of dutifulness. This refers to keeping one's principles and moral obligations to show reliability and build trust in the organization. Responsible employees display purposeful, willing, and detail-oriented behaviors. These aspects are highlighted, for example, by Taylor and de Bruin (2006). However, it may take some time for employees with a multicultural background to understand and learn the ways, rules, and regulations of their work processes and duties due to the fact that they may be different from what they have been used previously elsewhere than in Finland. In addition, the development of trust in the organization requires time, especially when the background contexts of the employees vary (Lämsä & Pučėtaitė, 2006).

In sum, the virtue of responsibility seems to create the possibility for organization members to handle their work and related daily operations so they can do their duties effectively and correctly according to the requirements of the workplace. Responsibility focuses on promoting efficiency and effectiveness in the organization (cf. Taylor & de Bruin, 2006). This way, this virtue supports employee empowerment by maintaining the required quality of employee performance (Suntherland et al., 2007). The interviewees mentioned that remarkable organizational outcomes could be expected from the employees (Suntherland et al., 2007) when an appropriate level of responsibility prevails in the organization. This can be considered a manifestation of and a way toward human flourishing in organizational life (Hartman, 2017; Solomon, 1994, 2004).

By contrast, the interview respondents from both case organizations reported vices presenting excess and deficiency related to responsibility. According to the data analysis and from the viewpoint of the excess of this virtue, employees who show a level of responsibility that is too high display the tendency to take work overload because of exaggerated commitment and obedience toward the organizational goals and responsibilities to achieve them. Over-responsibility can be called *perfectionism* as a vice. It refers to the idea that people aim to do their work perfectly, keep their promises without any exceptions, and stay on schedule always. For instance, the interviewees shared that some employees give too much attention and devotion to their work responsibilities by working extra hours in the evenings. An example from the data highlights this aspect:

> She (the teacher) writes lesson plans at home. Because it takes a lot of time, she does it at home. During nap time, when the kids are sleeping, that's when we have time to sit together and talk (as a team). - EB11

The example is from case organization B and deals with a teacher who does a part of her work after work hours while the other teachers handle the same work task in the workplace. Another point was mentioned by a team manager from case organization A. The manager noticed that one of the employees tended to take too much responsibility, and the manager needed to stop the employee's habit. This is highlighted below:

> I realized that one employee from Lithuania is getting tasks from others, and I tried to put a break on it so that he does not get too overloaded. It is not about having too

> little work for him. I think this is the case for everybody. Everybody has enough, so it is more about what the limit is and how much you can do. - MMA3

Finally, the events where a low level of responsibility was mentioned to occur are from case organization B. This vice of deficiency can be called *irresponsibility*. Irresponsible employees show uncaringness toward organizational goals, as well as irresponsibility for certain rules and procedures in their work. For instance, it was reported that an employee working with children in the classroom used to do her own knitting instead of taking care of the children and looking out for their safety. In addition, some younger employees come late to work on Monday mornings because of too much partying with friends during the weekend. The following example highlights these aspects:

> One day, I saw that they were in the classroom and they finished snack time, and one of our employees was knitting. I do not think that it is okay to have knitting sticks in the classroom with three- to four-year-old babies. I told the person that it was dangerous. The person said I do it only when I have time. I said no. Think about children coming to you and running, and you have knitting sticks. Please put them away. I also paid attention to young people who like parties. If a person is not here on time on Mondays, and it happens frequently, we can discuss it with our occupational health service and get advice from them. - TMB1

A manager from company B expressed her concern about irresponsibility and mentioned that to avoid it, it is important to emphasize an employee's inner motivation and understanding of the meaningfulness and procedures of work in hiring situations. According to the manager, it is crucial that the employees love their work and are not just looking for any job available:

> If you do not love what you do, then it is not your place. That is more important to me. There are a lot of things one can do in Finland, so do not stay in a job you do not love. This is why I remind them often: If you want to be here, be here; if you do not want to be here, please do not be here. - TMB3

It is a well-known idea that people are the most important source of an organization's effectiveness in a competitive business environment, and their performance highly depends on employee empowerment (Khan et al., 2020). Obviously, the vice of irresponsibility causes problems in the workplace because the employees do not use their skills and knowledge and are not motivated and committed to contributing to organizational goals. On the other hand, it can be assumed that perfectionism can emerge due to the lack of self-management skills as well as unskillful management of the work processes in the organization. In organizational culture, working too much may be valued, which can lead to situations where people want to work too much and go on overtime to show their value.

4.1.6 Fortitude

Several interviewees from case organization B highlighted that some work colleagues displayed the value of the virtue of fortitude for employee empowerment. This virtue indicates the level of courage expressed by the

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organization members in situations where they stand up for the right things in conditions of pressure and strong opposition. The virtuous behavior of employees practicing the virtue of fortitude in case organization B is shown in their courage to take risks, face difficulties, and work on overcoming obstacles against the illegal or unjust things supported by the administration. In their behavior, the organization members raise their voices continuously, trying to convince the administration to change the wrong things several times despite being rejected previously during the democratic decision procedures. Another way is by reporting to other legal authorities dealing with issues outside the organization. Thus, ethically wrong things taking place in the organization under the support of the administration become transparent to others and finally attract attention to be changed by a third party.

Fortitude as a habit helps deal with difficult situations effectively (Arjoon et al., 2017) toward the right things. This way, the virtue of fortitude enhances morality in the organizational culture through the employees' moral commitment. Consequently, it plays an important role in employee empowerment, wherein morality takes place (Ciulla, 2020). The interview respondents said that the virtue of fortitude helps disclose to organization members and, sometimes, other legal authorities the hidden ethical misconducts at the workplace. This way, the virtue of fortitude supports employee empowerment by improving work conditions within the workplace and the quality of the service provided to society. Pointing out unacceptable conduct by the administration to a wider community makes it possible to augment the force required to fight against them.

The idea of fortitude is highlighted in the following quote from an interviewee:

> There was one worker here about two years ago…she called the city authorities to complain about the food provided to the children. …the employee tried to bring change despite the bad experience of being ignored. …I noticed that it is not only I who gives suggestions, even in staff meetings. I remember it was, maybe, last year. The park outside the daycare had no fence, so I suggested that maybe for the small children, especially babies, to be safer, there should be some closed area for them. There are always moments when some children want to escape, and if there are no fences, there are many exits to the road with a lot of cars. It is dangerous. - EB10

Based on the examples given by the interview respondent, it is apparent that the virtue of fortitude integrates ethics and social good. The meaning of the virtue of fortitude is to discontinue unethical issues in the workplace causing harm to employees and customers. Business for the sake of business is not an appropriate strategy anymore these days because business also means social contribution inside as well as outside the organization (Solomon, 1992 a, b, 2004). The virtue of fortitude discovered in this study is in line with Aristotle's meaning of courage, that is, to do good things and be noble (Ketola, 2017; Ross & Brown, 2009). According to the interview respondents, there are not many people motivated to practice the virtue of fortitude in the workplace and struggle with potential risks and difficulties.

The interview respondents from case organization B also reported the vice of the virtue of fortitude, which is *cowardice* from the point of view of deficiency. Most of the organization members show a lack of the virtue of fortitude. They are selective about topics to speak up for in the presence of administration due to fear of things becoming problematic and, as a consequence, lose their jobs. In this situation, they prefer to complete their daily work duties without any intervention in their organizational life. It can be assumed that this fear is connected to the vengeful behavior of the top management. Such an example took place and was described by an interviewee. One employee was placed under difficult working conditions by the top manager after the information about the low quality of food for the children was passed to the legal authority by the said employee. This accident was mentioned by the teacher in the following way:

> …after that, the boss made the life of that person (who complained to the city authorities about the food) impossible. It is not really easy to change anything if the boss goes against you. She takes revenge. You may give your suggestion, and that's it. You do not want to end up in this kind of situation. We just come to work, do our eight hours, and then leave. If you try to do something, give your opinion, or have your voice heard, she will ignore it by saying yes, yes. If you try to take it to the city, you will bring changes, but she will make your life impossible, like, she will yell at you and force you to do a job that you are not supposed to do. In the case of that woman, she was pregnant and had a really difficult pregnancy from the very beginning. She's being careful not to move too much, but the boss sent her to the babies, and with babies, you have to work hard physically. Thus, she suffered from heavy work, was having back pains, and so on. She sent her there even though she knew it was going to be dangerous for her. She did it for revenge. There are not that many options we can do. We can try, but… -EB10

> There are some things you can speak about and some things you cannot. If I were honest, there are other things I would say, but I would not because I have limited job opportunities in Finland, and I cannot speak Finnish fluently. There are a few work opportunities for me. It is the same with many people here. Sometimes, you have to put up with more things than you would do if you worked in your country. This is what employers here often rely on when employing people from other countries. They cannot speak the language. It is difficult to get a job if you do not speak Finnish. -EB6

In sum, the vice of cowardice occurs in relation to the hierarchical power of the administration forcing employees to accept the wrong things in the workplace and limiting the empowered employees' rights for ownership. In this situation, the employees are excessively concerned about their job security. The vice of excess, which might be called in the Aristotelian way as *rashness* (Ross & Brown, 2009), was not detected in the data analysis. This vice means that someone fails to think about the harmful consequences for themselves or others before taking actions oriented to standing up for the right things in conditions of strong opposition. The actions of a person, in this case, would be characterized as irrational, spontaneous, and maybe even extreme. Possibly, the vice was not mentioned by the interviewees from both case organizations because of a developed sense of self-protection, which might relate to the educational background of the organization members. The given examples of fortitude

show the rational approach of the individuals toward their actions, aiming to try and exert effort to bring changes.

4.1.7 Continuous learning

According to the respondents, the virtue of continuous learning refers to the quality of the organization members of being able and motivated to learn, upgrade, and renew their professional knowledge, competency, and skills. In other words, the key characteristic of this virtue is that the organization has the capability to learn and renew itself continuously (cf. Arjoon, 2000; Fontrodona et al., 2013; Kaptein, 2008; Solomon, 2004). In addition, the data show that continuous learning means the organization members do not only adapt to and apply particular norms and customs in their behavior but also reflect and renew them with the pursuit of excellence. In line with the suggestion of Moberg (1999) concerning virtues, it can be said that continuous learning is related to being open to experience and, as found in this study, being able to reflect the experience. According to Vera and Rodriguez-Lopez (2004), openness to new paradigms and ideas, as well as an eagerness to learn from others, are key characteristics of a virtuous organization. The interview respondents emphasized that self-discipline is a crucial requirement to develop their professional knowledge and, therefore, practice this virtue. Moreover, they clarified that the organization members need to be motivated and devoted, as well as responsible for acquiring new knowledge and applying it in practice to develop a level of professionalism. Finally, it was noticed that the virtue of continuous learning should take place not only in the current work but should be exercised continuously throughout the entire life of people.

In general, it is possible to say that this virtue can be seen as the underlying basis for other virtues detected in this study. In Aristotelian virtue ethics, the developmental and cultivation aspect is the fundamental feature (Arjoon, 2000; Crane & Matten, 2010; Fontrodona et al., 2013; Solomon, 2004). The emphasis on renewal and learning makes it possible for continuous learning to be a constant habit in the organization to achieve good organizational life and eudaimonia (Solomon, 2004; Hartman, 2013). The exercise of this virtue was mentioned to increase the understanding of professional values, duties, and responsibilities and, as a result, improve the quality of work and reduce potential problems related to the multicultural background of work colleagues and customers. All these aspects are integrated as parts of the Aristotelian eudaimonia (Solomon, 1992). In the interviews, the virtue was highlighted, for example, as follows:

> We study anything we want and develop ourselves. It could be languages, news, e-learning, or something else. It is up to you to decide. - EA3

> It is a lecture, and there are quite a lot of cases, so it is during the group discussion that we talk about how we should solve this case like in real life (course intercultural management). - EA3

> Everyone has funny, instructive, and informative stories that are related to multicultural experiences (course organizational culture). - EA1

> People learn all the time. We are different, and we never stop learning. - EB4

> I use these hours to improve what I think is relevant. My colleagues can go and improve their professional skills. - IA2

The interviewees' comments dealt especially with the development of professional knowledge and competency related to technical skills (e.g., language and digitalization skills) and social skills (e.g., customer relationships, teamwork). However, the respondents also cited, to some extent, the value-laden dimension of the virtue of continuous learning. In this respect, it was mentioned, for example:

> Last time, there was a training wherein we were divided into teams (3–4 people) and had to choose a product from the ones offered by our company. We had to introduce and advertise it from our point of view and offer areas where this product might be introduced/used. …It was a very valuable experience because it made us rally and listen to the opinions of colleagues who originally came from other work fields/professions that are different from mine. As a result, we made the final decision and presented our ideas…Some of those ideas were realized because they were successful. I feel positive about that because we contributed to the success of our company. - EA1

> …funny, instructive, and informative stories that are related to multicultural experience. …These consultants have so many such stories, and they are able to share with us the most informative and suitable stories on the website. Finally, we can have a collection of the most beautiful stories from life and use them for our clients. These stories are interesting, like how to handle certain situations, which is also helpful in our work. - EA1

> I talk to my children in the classroom the whole day. I talk to them in the language of virtues. This comes after many years of practice. It does not come automatically. You have to learn these things. We have many classes based on that. It started at the beginning of the academic year. …For example, some children play with food, and they drop the food on the floor. Could you participate in it somehow with the virtue? - MMB2

These interview citations are examples dealing with the value aspect of continuous learning, which is described as contributing to the good of the organization members by learning to see the perspectives of others and the good of clients by providing a better quality of service to them.

In general, the virtue focuses on the development of practical wisdom (Hartman, 2013; Ross & Brown, 2009) so the organization members are able to do and frame their work situations and events professionally and properly, avoid doing work the wrong way, and learn to have better competencies for the future. The interviewees stressed that this virtue needs to be supported so various educational arenas and arrangements are accessible and organized for the employees. They said that formal trainings are important, but learning by doing, experience, and knowledge sharing between the employees are also important. The data show that the continuous learning capacity of the organization helps the organization members develop their professionalism both content-wise and morally, so the organization can contribute to society by offering good-quality services or products. For instance, a respondent shared:

> I always tell people here that, in my opinion, this is the most important job, working with children… They (employees) remind them (children) that everybody has a gift, but they have to figure out what it is, so they can find their purpose in life. One of the biggest issues with youth, crime, drugs, and alcohol is the lack of purpose. If a child or an adult lacks purpose, then what is the sense of living? We need to feel that we have a purpose to live and that what we are doing is purposeful. I think this job—working with children—is very purposeful and very important. We work with children, their souls, minds, and bodies. We work with everything with them. We provide the children with a positive image of themselves, like how they are helpful and courageous, and so on, rather than the negative things that they hear from other places like they are ugly, stupid, or lazy. However, it will take some courage and a great deal of effort in practice to be kind. It is an amazingly huge job. Employees understand how important their role is. The children also understand how important they are and what is good about them, not what is wrong about them, but what is good about them. - TMB3

Based on the interviewees, the virtue of continuous learning is significant in employee empowerment because practicing this virtue contributes to such aspects as broadening one's perspective, advancing open-mindedness, and devoting to and appreciating learning. For example, the respondents reported that when having learning possibilities, they can deal with their work tasks better and more independently by applying new knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes in accordance with the expectations and demands of the workplace (cf. Saremi & Nezhad, 2014). Thus, the data indicate that this virtue can increase the employees' proactive orientation at work, feel competent in their work role, and show self-discipline to do their responsibilities properly. All of these are crucial elements of employee empowerment (cf. Boudrias et al., 2009) and can contribute to high-quality work results (Yukl, 2013).

The data analysis also includes the viewpoint of the vice related to the virtue of continuous learning from the viewpoint of deficiency. This viewpoint was reported in case organization B. In the situation of deficiency, the organization gets stuck in a rut because no renewal happens. This vice can be called *stationariness*, which refers to the organization's tendency to stay in the same condition and not move ahead and make changes in existing circumstances and behaviors. In other words, the organization members keep the situation as it is and do not learn new habits and ideas. In organization B, the tradition of not fully paying attention to diverse employee groups' needs and even devaluing the needs of some groups was especially mentioned as an example of stationariness. A respondent highlighted this issue as follows:

> These meetings where you teach the staff about children, this kind of trainings and others, are usually in Finnish, which is why the Finnish people go. - EB4

As a result of this existing habit, teachers with foreign backgrounds stated that they feel they do not learn to do their work well and lack the possibility to elevate their professional pedagogical expertise to a better level. Another example told was about the habit, which also remained set and limited learning. The teachers reported that they do not have the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills from each other because work arrangements do not allow them to have, for instance, team-building meetings and exercises. The main argument for this restriction in the organization is that the teachers need to

remain busy with children during workdays, and no time for other activities is available. According to the interviewees, this assumption tends to be self-evident and stuck in the minds of people. By contrast, in case organization A, the interviewees stated that the organization offers a variety of educational opportunities to their employees, like an hour per week for educational activities of their own choice and various trainings provided by the organization itself and external service providers.

Although the excess of the virtue of continuous learning did not occur in the data, it can be deduced that the excess would mean that the organization members would focus on any learning and developmental opportunity without proper planning. Their focus on learning might not be appropriate from the viewpoint of work goals and duties. As a result, the conduct of everyday work might suffer. Such vice could be called *futile learning*, which refers to pointless learning that does not produce advantageous outcomes for the organization.

4.1.8 Summary of the characteristics of the virtues and related vices

Table 7 provides a summary of the discovered virtues and related vices for employee empowerment.

TABLE 7   Summary of the virtues and related vices for employee empowerment

Excess (vice)	Mean (virtue)	Deficiency (vice)
Information overexposure (too much irrelevant information is shared)	Information transparency (the degree to which both negative and positive information is shared openly by the organization members)	Information opaqueness (relevant information is not shared)
Participation overload (mandatory participation in meetings after working hours)	Participation (opportunity for the employees to be a part of the decision-making, developmental activities, and knowledge sharing of the organization)	Non-attendance (exclusion from participation at the level of voicing)
Zealotry (overcommitment to help)	Helpfulness (possibility and willingness to influence and support others)	Indifference (lack of motivation to help)
Obsequiousness (showing excessive eagerness to please others)	Respectfulness (attentive listening and discussion in communication, as well as polite behavior between organization members)	Disrespect (some people's ideas and opinions in the organization are perceived to be less valued than others', and some organization members' importance is regarded as lower compared with others)
Perfectionism (people aim to do their work perfectly, keep their promises without any exceptions, and always stay on schedule)	Responsibility (employees do their duties and work well, thoroughly, and responsibly to meet organizational goals)	Irresponsibility (employees show uncaringness toward organizational goals and irresponsibility toward certain rules and procedures in their work)
Rashness (failure to think about harmful consequences for yourself or others before taking actions oriented to stand up for the right things in conditions of strong opposition)	Fortitude (level of courage to stand up for the right things in conditions of pressure and strong opposition)	Cowardice (selective approach to topics to speak up in the presence of administration due to excessive concerns about job security)
Futile learning (pointless learning that does not produce advantageous outcomes for the organization)	Continuous learning (quality of the organization members to be able and be motivated to learn, upgrade, and renew their professional knowledge, competency, and skills)	Stationariness (organization members do not learn new habits and ideas)

This table provides an overview and summary of the main findings of the detected virtues and vices of employee empowerment across the two studied business organizations. The virtues of employee empowerment are listed in the central part of the table. The vices of excess are located on the left side of the table, while the vices of deficiency are noted on the right side of the table. The underlined virtues and vices were reported by the interview respondents from case organizations A and B in the data analysis. The vices that are not

underlined were proposed as a logical continuation of the Aristotelian idea of the golden mean (Kaptein, 2017; Solomon, 1992). The table synthesizes the results that define the main characteristics of the explored virtues and related vices for employee empowerment.

Taken together, the results show that there were no big differences in the discovered virtues of employee empowerment in the studied organizations. Six out of the seven detected virtues were found to be significant in both organizations. The virtue of fortitude was discovered only in case organization B, where the employees needed to show this virtue because they had faced unethical misconduct from the management side. From another side, looking at the vices in both organizations, the picture appears different. Almost all vices of excess and deficiency took place in case organization B. In case organization A, only one vice of excess, namely, perfectionism, could be detected. In general, we may say that the virtuousness of case organization A for employee empowerment can be interpreted to be at a more advanced level compared with organization B.

4.2   Organizational practices for employee empowerment

This section presents the key organizational practices that were analyzed from the data to support the detected virtues of empowerment. In addition, the connection between specific practices and specific virtues is shown. Finally, a summary of the practices and their connection to the specific virtues is provided. The organizational practices perceived by the respondents that the case organization can be virtuous for employee empowerment are introduced. Four main categories, namely, organizing, organizational culture, human resource management, and leadership, were distinguished from the data. The categories and related practices are as follows:

Organizing
- self-managed work teams
- organizational forums for participation and multidirectional communication
- follow-up and feedback system for the evaluation
- meaningful work responsibilities

Organizational culture
- trust-based relationships
- low power distance
- equal opportunity practices

Human resource management
- well-being at work
- human resource development

Leadership
- shared leadership
- caring
- development

4.2.1 Organizing

Organizing, which refers to making systematic arrangements to coordinate people's efforts to cooperate, was stressed by the respondents to be important in achieving virtuousness of an organization. A similar finding has been reported by several researchers, who also mentioned that organizing is needed to build a virtuous organization in a way that can contribute to employee empowerment (Burke et al., 2015; Cameron, 2003; Rothman et al., 2019; Sison & Ferrero, 2015).

Self-managed work teams
The respondents mentioned that the form of organizing needs to include *self-managed work teams*, in particular, to advance virtuousness. For the interviewees, a self-managed work team as a form of work system means a team where members are expected and allowed to do their work with little control. In such a team, autonomy and responsibility for planning and taking care of work by the employees themselves with a low level of supervision was said to be important. The following excerpt from an interview illustrates the practice of a self-managed work team:

> I went with my assistant to the classroom, had a small team meeting, and discussed that we start the unit this year. We looked at how many kids we have, what we could do with them, and how we are going to teach in this unit with them. Then, I formulated some lesson plans, and we discussed whether it would be fine. I discussed it with my team members. We then agreed that it sounded like a good plan, so we moved ahead with it. -MMB2

As the quotation above shows, working in a self-managed team was considered a practice that can foster employees to develop and maintain their self-management skills to plan and do their work, cooperate, make decisions, and organize work arrangements and schedules. This finding is in line with several authors (e.g., Aubouin-Bonnaventure et al., 2021; Cooney, 2004; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Yukl, 2013) who claim that these skills are important features that support employee empowerment in an organization. The respondents highlighted that working successfully in a self-managed team requires delegation of responsibility and authority from manager to employees. Although a manager in a formal position above the team exists, an appropriate amount of delegation is needed at the team level, as mentioned in the following quotation:

> Every month, we have staff meetings with everyone and our boss. We talk about different things related to work. We also have meetings with our own team. - S1

Organizing work based on self-managed teams is one of the commonly used ways of work among the members of case organizations A and B. Consequently, it is considered crucial to employee empowerment in both organizations. Each interview participant reported being a member of either a temporary or a permanent team. Thus, employees from both organizations saw this kind of organizing as an ideal that should be followed as the main organizing practice.

This kind of organizing can be interpreted to especially advance the virtue of *responsibility* because employees can identify with and commit to their decisions, agreements, and goals, which they have decided themselves, as noted also by Wilke and Speer (2011) and Yukl (2013). This helps employees perform their work duties well, thoroughly, and independently compared to a situation where the work duties are given by a manager to the employees. Noe (2020) also mentioned that working in such a team is a useful way to increase the responsibility of employees. Moreover, a self-managed team in organizing can be considered a practice that has the potential to advance the virtue of *information transparency*. This is due to the fact that the employees need to share and exchange relevant and reliable information from different viewpoints to be able to make common decisions and cooperate with one another. For instance, Yukl (2013) stressed that when employees get and share relevant and sufficient information on issues related to their work, their decisions improve.

Organizational forums for participation and multidirectional communication
Another important form of organizing mentioned by the interviewees to support working in a self-managed team is *organizational forums for participation and multidirectional communication*. According to the respondents, creating forums throughout the organization offers the potential for employees' participation, knowledge spreading and sharing and, in general, being aware of topical and relevant issues. The respondents stressed that it is crucial to ensure that the employees are given an opportunity to affect their work and its conditions. According to Solomon (1992), this kind of practice can support people to flourish in the workplace.

In general, the respondents stressed that it sometimes feels difficult to discuss work problems and speak of them critically to reach for solutions. Therefore, it is crucial for forums to exist and that they can be relied on and used. Both formal and informal forums for communication were described to be important, as the following example shows:

> Open space is when everybody can talk to each other. Of course, the fastest way to communicate is through Slack and Skype. - IA2

> We changed from Skype to Slack. It is much more useful for us because it is less immediate communication for us. It increased our formal as well as informal communication on the platform. It is much easier for people who work part-time. They can stay updated on what is going on because one can follow multiple projects on that software. - MMA2

> We mostly make decisions during meetings. When we are facing something, we schedule or plan to see what we have to do. We make a to-do list, and everyone can modify it. During meetings, we discuss it further with the team. - IA2

> They are always happy to go to teacher meetings because there are always a lot of things to discuss, including units, children, and different issues. -MMB7

Although formal forums, such as face-to-face and online meetings and newsletters to ensure multidirectional communication are important to produce relevant and timely official information that can be relied on by employees, informal forums were also mentioned by the respondents to be important. The informal forums to the respondents meant that unofficial and spontaneously shared information between organization members are also useful to take under discussion and are therefore worth sharing in the organization. Although the sharing of informal information does not follow the formal rules and systems of the organization, it was stressed that the forums to obtain informal information are necessary to get updated on what is going on in the organization.

The respondents brought up that although informal information can sometimes be irrelevant in the forums, sharing such knowledge and participating in related discussions are also important because they can advance the sense of collective purpose, mutual bonding, and cooperation between employees. According to Solomon (1994 b, 2004), these are crucial features of a virtuous organization. However, as mentioned by the interviewees, a challenge of informal knowledge is the reliability of the knowledge. The interviewees mentioned that despite its advantages, informal information could be problematic because it can include rumors and inaccurate information. The evidence of such information can be difficult to prove. This challenge is highlighted in the following:

> We have another tool called "Slack." It is an internal system where all the employees are included, and we write using slide chatting. Sometimes, we also joke around on the platform. We became a little closer here. Sometimes, we also put things like, "Yes, we did it!" There are also jokes from Facebook, YouTube, or whatever they put on it. - MMA1

The data show that significant differences in these practices between the case organizations were described by the respondents. Particularly in the case of organization A, various forums and possibilities for multidirectional communication were described to exist. The interviewees mentioned that the head of the organization is a role model in this respect. According to the virtue ethics approach (e.g., Kaptein, 2008, 2015; Moberg, 2000; Riivari & Lämsä, 2014, 2019), active and exemplary behavior from the side of the managers is crucial to influence employee behavior in an organization. In organization A, the managing director was mentioned to be very active in communicating, sharing information, and discussing results, future tasks, aims, and customer issues. The manager also encouraged employees to communicate with one another and with customers. In general, the interviewees from case organization A reported various arenas of communication, information sharing, and participation in

both online and face-to-face forms. This way, as the respondents stressed, they become aware of key information so they can do their work well, influence it, and participate actively in the development of their work and its conditions. Moreover, they mentioned that the practices help them feel more committed to the work community and its goals.

In organization A, in addition to the top manager, team managers and team members are key actors who participate, update, and communicate actively about work, what is expected from the organization members, and what is going on in the organization and teams. It was mentioned that important information is shared with everybody regularly, for example, via electronic letters. Moreover, the organization provides an online communication platform for all employees to communicate. The existence of platforms and channels was described by the respondents in the following way:

> We have a weekly meeting, so everyone is updated on where we are. -MMA6

> Personally, I prefer to use Skype, but in Slack, we can share news, what is happening outside, or other interesting topics. If I want something or just have a quick question for someone, it is easy to write it there. - EA7

According to the respondents, the team meetings used in organization A are good participatory forums for the virtue of *information transparency* to occur. In the meetings, the members of a team present and discuss team performance, as well as general issues related to the organization. In addition, the interviewees mentioned that the team members' own achievements and problems are brought up willingly in the meetings to receive feedback, and the team members learn from one another's experiences. The meetings were organized weekly on a regular basis or whenever needed. A comment from a respondent highlights the regular basis of the weekly meetings:

> We have team meetings weekly. - MMA3

The members from organization A also stated that they discuss general summarizations and outlines of the organization's future prospects and actions in the meetings. In organization A, there is a person tracking information and taking notes during the meetings to increase information transparency. The notes are later made available online for everybody. Therefore, those who are not present also gain access to the information. The interviewees spoke of the importance of the weekly meeting and notes in the following way:

> In the weekly meetings, we typically make sure that in every team we have, at least one person will talk about what is going on in their team for the past week, in the next week, or the next two weeks. - TMA2

> Usually, someone takes down notes during the weekly meetings so I can refer to the document, see what we just discussed, and know how the teams are doing. - IA2

An informal forum that was explained to support information transparency and participation in organization A include daily coffee breaks, which the employer wants to be maintained. The respondents mentioned that during the breaks, the organization members meet colleagues and exchange interesting information

and ideas with one another. These forums were described by an interviewee as follows:

> Recently, we introduced compulsory coffee breaks because we did not have any. Everyone has to stop their work at 10:30 and have coffee, tea, water, or whatever. We can also have a chat with one another. - MMA2

In case organization B, the vice director was mentioned to be the key person in charge of communication. The director shares information with the employees. More specifically, the vice director shares and distributes information so that necessary changes regarding cooperation among employees and between employees and customers can occur. The interviewees in organization B mentioned that they can participate and share relevant information regarding work and how work has been done, how it is going, and what will happen in the future. The forums for participation and communication include staff meetings, team meetings, and personal meetings with one another. Moreover, the interviewees stated that the director sends e-mails when the director sees it as important.

In organization B, the head teacher was also mentioned to be an important actor who shares information with the employees in staff meetings about what is going on in the organization. The teachers who are responsible for planning teaching activities share this information with their team members. They said the head teacher is responsible for sharing information from the teacher meetings with the top management. Thus, the head teacher is a key link in communication from upward to downward and vice versa. As an example of communication from upward to downward, it is either the top manager or the head teacher who informs the teaching staff when a child is not coming to the daycare. Such information is important for the smooth and appropriate everyday work of the staff.

In organization B, as the respondents described, the teaching staff participate and share information with each other about their work in the face-to-face team meetings. However, they also communicate using e-mail and phone messages. The meetings were highlighted by the interviewees in the following way:

> We also have teacher meetings. - S9

> We have a team meeting. We do not involve everybody—only our team. My assistants and I, we all sit together. - S7

In general, the organizational forums for communication and employee participation in organization B are understood to be important. However, the results suggest that the practices are not as developed and as many as those in organization A. As highlighted above, vertical communication is emphasized more in organization B than in organization A. The employees from organization B also brought up that problems related to the practices of the forums exist, such as scarcity, lack of meetings, and poor quality of communication, as mentioned below:

> Until last year, we used to have teacher meetings every week. This year, the meetings were dropped for some reason. - EB1

> We have team meetings but very rarely. She is doing lesson plans, but I have no idea what is going to happen. - EB9

> There is zero communication on that base between teams, between us, and the head teacher… It would be the teachers' job to pass the information to the assistants, which was also a broken part of the wheel because a lot of the teachers would forget to transfer the information. The communication is poor. – MMB3

The organizational forums for participation and multidirectional communication are practices that can be interpreted to develop and maintain the virtues of *participation* in an organization. The respondents believe that multi-sided and effective forums offer employees a way to participate in organizational activities because the forums provide an appropriate resource for employees to influence and share knowledge. The forums do not only provide conditions for knowledge sharing but also show the employees that knowledge sharing is appreciated in the organization. In particular, the virtue of *fortitude* is strengthened when problematic issues in the organization and work are made visible. The employees perceive and understand that open communication and information sharing are valued in the organization. In other words, the interviewees stressed that the employees need to be aware that the forums not only exist and are available, but it is also legitimate to speak openly in the forums. Previous research has shown that it is crucial for employee empowerment for resources and possibilities in an organization to exist so employees can share their ideas and opinions (Ciulla, 2020; Rothman et al., 2019).

In general, the respondents of both organizations stressed that providing possibilities to discuss critically and solve work problems is necessary, and this requires that the virtue of fortitude is valued in the organization. It was mentioned that the meetings and gatherings between organization members make it possible for the employees to express adverse and disapproving comments and judgments about problematic issues in the workplace and aim to solve them. However, especially in organization B, critical discussions of the problems were described to be challenging to discuss. It takes much fortitude from an employee to be the initiator of such a discussion. It was stressed that if a problem is related to the ideas or actions of the top manager, much fortitude is needed from the employee to start talking about the problem. As an example, employees in B perceived that the quality of the food served to the children was not good; however, it was not easy for them to bring this problem to the awareness of the top manager. Another example took place when the teaching staff in organization B was critical of the order that cleaning would be one of their duties. The employees hesitated for quite a while to raise this issue with the management. An excerpt from an interview highlights this issue:

> For example, about this cleaning thing, many teachers and workers here were saying that it is important to have somebody who takes care of the cleaning. It is not about cleaning tables and stuff but cleaning in general. It takes so much time, but we have to be with the kids at the same time. It took a couple of years to tell it. - EB8

In sum, various human and technology-based organizational forums for participation and multidirectional communication at different levels in the case organizations were described by the respondents to be crucial to be exercised for the organization to be virtuous. Case organization A can be interpreted to be more advanced in this sense compared with case organization B. However, in general, all organizational forums for participation and communication can be interpreted to provide a proper organizational environment for employee empowerment when they improve and maintain the virtues of information transparency, participation, and fortitude. Multidirectional communication and formal and informal arenas of participation play a crucial role in the virtuousness of the organizations. A similar claim has been presented in previous research (e.g., Cameron & Gaza, 2002; Cameron et al., 2004; Riivari & Lämsä, 2019).

Follow-up and feedback system for the evaluation

To the respondents, an important form of organizing to support employee empowerment was a *follow-up and feedback system for the evaluation.* They stressed that to be able to contribute to their work and teams and perform their work properly, it is necessary for success, well-being, and work performance to be evaluated regularly. According to the respondents, an appropriate follow-up and feedback system has two main aims. First, evaluative information on how employees have succeeded and how their team has succeeded is needed. Second, information from the system is necessary to modify and improve current practices and procedures so development becomes possible. Consequently, the follow-up and feedback system helps obtain information to be able to take into consideration the past and current situation, as well as support future development.

As an example of the feedback and follow-up system, the interviewees mentioned a regular personnel survey. In the survey, feedback concerning organizational culture, job satisfaction, and employee well-being is collected to be able to make corrections to the current situation and provide direction for the future. The respondents mentioned that it is crucial that the results of the survey are made visible to the employees and discussed openly in the organization. The following excerpts highlight the role of the survey:

> They got us recently to answer how the year went. Would you like to continue here? Who would you like to work with? We can always tell. I do not remember by heart the questionnaire, but there were many questions. -S12

> We received feedback on organizational culture scanning, and we thought of what we could do better. We do an organizational culture scan when everyone receives a link to the survey we need to fill out. Then, we gather the data and generate the organizational culture report. -MMA2

> We scan organizational culture every two years, and we motivate people to participate. - MMA2

> There were questions on how you would like to improve the working environment. - EB11

The interviewees emphasized that regularity in the survey is important so that the direction of change can be seen. Overall, they said that feedback information from the survey helps create a clear picture of future expectations, goals, and needs toward an understanding of the situation, wherein the organization and its employees are moving to, why, and how. The organization can make conclusions that indicate its strengths and weaknesses and discuss how they can be tackled.

Especially in organization A, the interviewees described how the follow-up system would operate well. They stressed that in addition to the regular survey, the system includes evaluation research, which is conducted in such a way that some employees are responsible for data collection. They conduct interviews and report the results for common discussion. An interviewee described the role of the research as follows:

> We had a lot of internal communication issues, so we had to solve them. By interviewing, we obtained some information. Based on the data, we realized we should do something and that we need to communicate better. - MMA2

In case organization B, it can be said that the follow-up and feedback system is not as advanced as in organization A. The interviewees noticed that a feedback system exists, and they highlighted that the system is important. According to them, the top manager introduced rather recently the system for collecting written replies from the employees. In this data collection, the employees' opinions, experiences, and feelings concerning the strong and weak sides of the workplace were asked. The respondents shared that not many people offered feedback partly because the system is quite new. However, the top manager was encouraged by the employees to continue the system. The interviewees from organization B spoke of the feedback system in the following way:

> We had to answer questions like, How was the year? Would you like to continue here? What went wrong that you were not satisfied with? - TMB1

> It is a disappointing part. As employees, we could fill it out, but a large portion did not. I was disappointed. The top manager was disappointed as well. She felt that there would be more participants because she was trying hard to make sure that the environment was pleasant and positive. She said that if you still want to fill it out, you can do so. I encouraged her that if it did not go well in the first year, she should still continue to do it because it is important. Show your efforts to see that we are enjoying what we are doing. - EB3

The follow-up and feedback system for the evaluation can be said to play an important role in exercising the virtues of *continuous learning*, *participation*, and *information transparency*. Basically, the follow-up and feedback system described by the interview respondents produces evaluation information. This information mainly reflects evaluative and corrective data about certain processes and actions. For example, London (2003, p. 1) said, "Feedback guides, motivates, and reinforces effective behaviors and reduces or stops ineffective behaviors." A follow-up and feedback system for the development of virtuousness means to guide, motivate, and reinforce productive action among employees; thus, it was experienced to support continuous learning in

organizations. At the core of the virtue theory is the continuous development of virtues (Whetstone, 2001). In addition, evaluative information is a means for employees to practice the virtue of informational transparency because such information helps share knowledge and discuss it in work teams and in the organization in general to improve current action. Finally, the virtue of participation is supported by producing feedback and evaluative information because the employees can express their opinions and views when evaluative data are collected and shared.

Meaningful work responsibilities

According to the interview respondents, organizing should be done so that *meaningful work responsibilities to organization members* are created in the organization. They highlighted that such responsibilities include appropriate roles and tasks for each member of a team so that a person can focus on work where she or he is motivated and has competency. The interviewees mentioned that to be able to work, especially in a self-managed team, the degree of autonomy required in such a team cannot possibly be handled if their work responsibilities are not clear. Thus, meaningful work for the respondents also meant that work responsibilities were defined clearly. Furthermore, it meant that the vision of how each employee contributes to the organization's overall purpose and functioning through his or her work needs to be articulated (Nienaber & Martins, 2020). In other words, an employee is not only motivated to fulfill her or his own needs; they need to understand the purpose of their work to the whole organization.

Meaningfulness also includes the idea that the work has some significance and value to other people. Some variations in the respondents' comments could be noticed. Some of them simply considered the outcomes of their work, while others thought more deeply about the overall purpose and objectives of the organization. The interviewees also said that the tasks and roles must not only be clear but also suitable for them so they can work in the roles that fit them. This finding is in line with Beadle (2017 b), who postulated that the roles of employees need to be clear for an organization to be virtuous. Moreover, Gotsis and Grimani (2015) mentioned that for the virtuousness of an organization, it is crucial that people are allocated in an appropriate way in their work context. The respondents spoke about meaningful work as follows:

> We cannot sit and talk on our cellphones because our job is to be with the children—to watch them, guide them, and help them. - MMB6

> I want you to be here because you love your job, you love working with children, and you love your co-workers and everything. - TMB3

According to Solomon (1992 b), meaningful work is a reflection of a high-quality work life. If employees truly experience meaningful work, their work impacts the organization and society in general. Thus, work and its outcomes mean something to the employees personally, and they experience enjoyment, satisfaction, and fulfillment at work. As mentioned by Solomon, such

orientation means that people can flourish at work and, consequently, their motivation to do a good job increases.

Yukl (2013) stressed that meaningful work performance and the possibility to influence important events by the employees in the organizations are significant for employee empowerment to occur. The interview respondents from both case organizations A and B could easily describe their work roles and duties and connect them to the overall team to aim to provide a service or a product to customers. Clear and meaningful work responsibilities were found to be an important basis for developing and practicing the virtue of *responsibility* in the employees' daily work-related routines and decisions. Experiencing meaning and purpose in the workplace leads to employee motivation and commitment (Martela et al., 2021). In other words, clear and meaningful work responsibilities make employees concerned and loyal for the discharge of their work duties and roles. Moreover, they feel responsible for necessary decisions and actions for successful completion.

4.2.2 Organizational culture

The importance of developing good organizational culture was stressed by the respondents. Virtuousness is a part of organizational culture, and it manifests in individual activities and collective actions (Cameron, 2003). Organizational culture—the shared values, beliefs, behavioral expectations, and norms among organization members—is a key organizational condition for virtuousness to occur, according to Solomon (2004) and Kaptein (2008). Previous studies have shown that the ethical quality of the culture is related to people's well-being and motivation to work for and stay in an organization (Colaco & Loi, 2019; Huhtala et al., 2011; Kangas et al., 2018), which is important for employee empowerment (Ciulla, 2020; Yukl, 2013). In this study, the respondents saw that trust-based relationships, low power distance, and equality are significant cultural dimensions for the practice of employee empowerment and virtuousness of an organization. To the respondents, creating and maintaining trusting relationships, having a low power distance between organization members, especially between managers and employees, as well as equal treatment of diverse employees with a multicultural background, are the characteristics needed in their work organization's culture for virtuousness to become possible.

Trust-based relationships
According to the interviewees, trust-based relationships occur through the shared belief of the management and employees in the reliability of the organization members to perform their duties professionally without any strict control by superiors. Thus, a not-too-controlling practice from the side of superiors was seen to be crucial in the maintenance and development of trust-based relationships among the organization members. In this study, the cognitive aspect of trust-based interpersonal relationships (see Lämsä & Pucetaite, 2006) was emphasized by the respondents, where the employees'

professional knowledge and competency were understood in such a way that their strict control is not needed. In other words, they are known to be competent to perform and develop their work as they see appropriate and necessary. According to the respondents, the organization members tended to be recognized to know their work duties and be competent to do them professionally and on time. In addition to the cognitive aspect of the trust-based relationship, for the respondents, the relationships also involved an affective element. It meant positive feelings of a cooperative atmosphere and not being afraid to ask questions and even make critical comments. Moreover, it meant the feeling of being cared for and a feeling of security to have a chance to get advice and instructions from other employees and supervisors when such information is needed. The following quotations illustrate trust-based relationships, especially their affective element:

> Here, I can trust people. If I do not understand, I can ask questions. - MMA7

> Team meetings are often like coffee breaks. We have a cup of coffee and discuss freely about various topics. - EA8

> They trust me to do it. They told me, "Okay, make sure that you have the unit and virtues in mind, and you can choose the way to go." - EB7

The interviewees in company A stressed that trust-based relationships exist in their workplace. The existence of both cognitive trust-based and affective trust-based relationships could be interpreted in the data from company A. For example, some employees disclosed that they are trusted to do work distantly from home without visiting the actual office often. Moreover, it is quite a normal routine for them to have critical discussions with work colleagues to find solutions to different problems and difficulties together. In the discussions, the feeling of being guilty of openly expressing one's opinions and making one's ideas visible was set aside. The employees highlighted the existence of high trust-based relationships in the company as follows:

> Everybody is managing things well. We have several managers who are competent in their areas. - MMA2

> I hire people because they know what they are doing. It is nonsense if I start getting involved in their work. - TMA2

However, in case organization B, some problems related to cognitive and affective trust-based relationships could be detected in the respondents' comments. Specifically, the top management in company B showed controlling behavior by making unexpected visits to classes; thus, she did not always rely on the employees' capability to do their work in an appropriate way. In addition, certain employees sometimes have secret discussions behind other employees with their closest colleagues. Moreover, sensitive and controversial topics were sometimes kept silent because of the risk that speaking about the problems may negatively affect those who made them visible. It was explained that fear toward the top management's reaction is the main reason for ignoring the problems. An example of a quotation that describes fear toward the top

manager from the side of the employee is presented below. The employee is afraid of the negative reaction and controlling behavior of her manager:

> Sometimes, the children misbehave and shout, and when she comes in on this kind of day, I would go, "Oh no." I try to calm them down, and everything looks good. Sometimes, she comes when I have been sitting for five minutes next to one kid and helping them with their homework. When I see her coming, I do not know why, but I immediately stand up. I do not know why I do it. - MMB7

Trust-based relationships are argued to be an important part of Finnish organizational culture (Hofstede Insights, 2019). In particular, the cognitive trust element supports the virtue of *responsibility* for employee empowerment, as the research data indicate. Managers in Finland are expected to guide their employees and act more like facilitators than controllers toward the employees (Hofstede Insights, 2019). Management tends to trust that employees do their work in a responsible way and expects them to produce good-quality work and be independent in reaching their targets. In other words, an organizational culture that includes and nourishes trust-based relationships between organization members and between managers and employees invites the employees to practice the virtue of responsibility because the employees are given considerable space to deal with their professional tasks without too detailed interference. For example, according to the classical Theory Y by McGregor, a trust-based relationship between managers and employees encourages greater responsibility for work (see Adler & Gundersen, 2008). Too detailed control can be considered an unnecessary activity that does not utilize human skills and experience properly. The classical "Theory X" states that tight control makes employees irresponsible in their work. In addition, unrestrictive supervision motivates competent employees to do their best work (Adler & Gundersen, 2008). Adler and Gundersen stressed that the trust managers show toward their employees has a beneficial influence on the behavior of the employees to do their work properly, responsibly, and effectively which, in turn, contributes further to the development of trust-based relationships in an organization. Consequently, a positive reinforcing circle that supports smooth work processes in the organization can occur.

On the other hand, this study also indicates that affective trust is important for employees to be willing to give their time, care, and energy to practice the virtues of *participation* and *fortitude.* A secure and cooperative environment caused by the affective element was found to give freedom and opportunity to organizational practices wherein employees can participate in discussions and decision-making procedures, as well as share opinions freely with one another and stand up for the right things in the organization.

Low power distance
Power distance was an essential aspect of the organizational culture that the interviewees considered. This dimension describes the extent to which members of the organization view and expect power relationships between superiors and subordinates. Typically, employee empowerment occurs in low-

power distance cultures (Fock et al., 2013). This study's data analysis indicates that a low power distance is preferable to a high-power distance among organization members to promote employee empowerment. In this study, a low power distance indicates shared and effectively distributed power, causing community members to view themselves as equals (Dotse & Asumeng, 2014).

The interviewees from organization A emphasized the significance of low power distance in the workplace by referring to it as a "flat organization." It meant that organization members were responsible for their work performance methods, that official hierarchical roles were merely for convenience, and that superiors were quickly accessible to other organization members. The interviewees from organization A described low power distance as follows:

> We are quite a small company, and there is an open culture. In this sense, we do not often have a strong hierarchy. - MMA5

> There is little hierarchy; it is only needed because signatures are required for official documents. Employees come to me, and I go to them. - MMA6

> It is a very Nordic type. We are very open, with a flat hierarchy, and everybody is kind of a manager here. - MMA2

By contrast, organization B had a more visible hierarchy among the organization members. The interviewees frequently referred to their co-workers by their hierarchical position or title, such as boss, head teacher, or teacher. Alongside this, the decision-making ability of those in higher organizational positions was frequently emphasized. Comparatively, the interviewees from organization A utilized phrases such as "he is from the technical team or multimedia" when discussing their co-workers. Thus, in organization A, the interviewees did not emphasize or pay much attention to the organization's hierarchical positions.

The low power distance in organization B was described to occur but only within specific teams. In these teams, practices such as displaying an open attitude and the willingness of superiors to engage in dialogue with employees were cited as examples of practices that were valued and followed. In addition, it was stated that superiors encourage team members to participate in the team's decision-making processes. The staff members voiced their disapproval of the hierarchical system, which was said to be mostly upheld by the American manager in charge. According to Hofstede Insights (2019), power distance in the United States is more significant than in Finland. Furthermore, individualism as a cultural characteristic may impact the situation in organization B. Individualism in the United States is significantly higher than in Finland. Thus, when these cultural features are combined, a possible outcome is that the American manager from the United States frames her management practices and behaviors based on her native culture so that the manager's individual decision-making is needed and important based on her status in the hierarchy and her valuation of the capability to make individual decisions. In Finland, according to Hofstede Insights (2019), high individualism tends to be considered a selfish behavior; instead, commitment to a team is generally

appreciated, which refers to higher collectivism in the culture. The respondents emphasized the necessity of adhering to the local standard of low power distance and team spirit in Finland because the organization operates in Finland, not in the U.S. The following excerpts highlight this viewpoint:

> She will lead our meetings, of course. She is the director of the school. I will be more of an observer, but they trust my design capabilities. However, I am more in a position to just take information. - EB3

> I would like it when I can also decide, and the boss would ask me how I feel. I would like to talk about whatever it is. - MMB7

> First, I would not run this place like we were in America. I think that we need to follow the Finnish system, where everybody has a voice and everybody works as a respected member of a team. There is no hierarchy like teachers and assistants. - EB5

Organizational culture where low power distance is practiced can be seen as necessary for employee empowerment because it has the potential to support the virtues of *participation* and *fortitude*. Low power distance makes the distance between employees and managers small so they can collaborate at work and have joint decision-making, which are crucial for the virtue of participation to occur (Valverde-Moreno et al., 2019). In addition, communication between managers and employees becomes more open and direct in an organization with low power distance, thereby strengthening the existence of the virtue of participation (Valverde-Moreno et al., 2019). In turn, open communication facilitates the disclosure of mistakes or problems, pointing out and focusing on work processes and procedures that need improvement (Jennings & Yeager, 2020). Thus, employees can face danger and endure adversity with courage and ultimately demonstrate the virtue of fortitude.

Equal-opportunity practices

Practices that support the organizational culture of low power distance can reduce inequalities among organization members (Lim & Lau, 2017); therefore, the interviewees emphasized the importance of equal opportunities in the workplace. According to the interviewees, taking into consideration equal opportunities can promote fair representation, eliminate exclusion, and decrease institutional barriers to improve the full participation of the employees. Equality is a basic right of employees in Finland, which is secured by the Equality Act and Employment Contracts Act (InfoFinland, 2022). According to the data analysis, equal opportunities comprised one feature of organizational culture that supports virtuousness for employee empowerment. The interviewees from both case organizations emphasized that organization members need to be valued and treated equally regardless of factors such as professional skills and work positions at the workplace. They viewed equal opportunities to be an important part of a virtuous organizational culture. The interviewees discussed the topic in the following manner:

> Very often, it is equal because we have different specialties. Somebody knows better about design and layout, somebody knows customers, while somebody knows

> marketing; in this sense, everyone is quite equal. Of course, it is a personal thing as well that those stronger persons might lead the weekly meeting. - MMA5

> Everyone is equal in discussions because they (assistants) start the discussions many times. - MMB6

The results indicate that when the subject of equal opportunity was raised, the employees cited professional knowledge and skills, languages, and work position as the most prominent aspects of diversity that directly impacted the work process and the organization's productivity. The respondents believed that increasing the participation of diverse employees was essential to achieving equal opportunities. The interviewees from both case organizations reported various practices granting employees the right to participate in decision-making and developmental and knowledge-sharing activities. The employees were encouraged to attend meetings, training sessions, courses, and other organizational activities, even if their participation might sometimes be passive by nature. Their active participation was encouraged via self-management, two-way communication, autonomous teams, and shared ownership. The practices governing any interpersonal communication and information sharing in the organization were arranged in English, which was the common language for all members of the organizations.

In general, the interviewees from case organizations A and B were pleased with the state of equal opportunity in their workplaces. However, there were a few instances where inequity was practiced, such as the project manager from organization A being excluded in the making of some decisions. Such an incident happened because there needed to be more communication between the top management and the project manager. The interviewee stated that the project manager would have preferred it if he had been given the opportunity to express opinions on some specific topics before final decisions were made. Another example is a teacher assistant from organization B who complained of being neglected during morning greetings by the teachers and children due to workplace hierarchy. These occurrences are mentioned in the following interviews:

> In most cases, I like that we can make fast decisions and continue to the next step. However, he should sometimes discuss a little bit more with me and ask my opinion before making decisions, or we could try to find solutions together… - MMA5

> There are still many things that I would like to change, like this tendency that she is the teacher and I am an assistant… For example, as simple as every morning when she comes in, she says, "Good morning, boys and girls," and they reply, "Good morning, Miss X…How are you today?" and that is it. She never says good morning to the assistant. - EB5

Developing equality in organizational culture to value equal opportunities can be seen as crucial with respect to the virtue of *respectfulness*. The value of equality is in respect because, according to Dillon (1992), respect is the act of paying attention to and considering another person seriously despite who he/she is. Within this organizational culture, emphasizing human dignity fosters the concept that every individual, regardless of background or identity,

deserves to be treated with decency and respect. In other words, an organizational culture where this kind of act is adopted can provide employees with a sense of respect and can foster the virtue of respectfulness.

4.2.3   Human resource management

Human resource management was seen by the interview participants as a crucial aspect of an organization to advance its virtuousness for employee empowerment. According to the respondents, human beings are the most important element for business organizations to succeed; therefore, the management of human issues and affairs is required to make employees contribute effectively to the tasks and aims of the organization. As stressed by the study participants, this responsibility to be promoted belongs especially to those working in the human resource management field. Human resource management as an ethical issue can affect the virtuous outcomes of both the organization and individual employees and, consequently, the quality of working life of the employees (Meglich, 2017), as well as employee empowerment (Ciulla, 2020). Appropriately implemented human resource management can be a significant key to workplace human flourishing. In the data, the advancements in employee well-being at work and human resource development were detected to be important human resource management practices to support the virtues of employee empowerment.

Well-being at work
The development of activities that support employee well-being at work was considered by the respondents as an important human resource management practice. Workplace well-being to the respondents meant meaningful and satisfying work that stimulated their professionalism. The interview respondents in both case organizations emphasized the social and psychological well-being that are needed. Physical well-being was mentioned only by the employees from case organization B who experienced a challenge in maintaining a healthy life because of excessive fatigue due to staff meetings taking place after work hours once a month. Typically, this aspect of well-being in Finnish organizations is taken under consideration, also being legally required by the Occupational Safety and Health Act (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2002). Social well-being was mentioned to be specifically based on the experience of social belongingness. The respondents emphasized that it is important for organization members to have constructive relationships. Moreover, frequent interaction between organization members wherein people can speak openly was mentioned to be an essential practice to achieve social well-being. This practice creates a sense of relatedness, leading to positive and lasting interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Compared with face-to-face communication, virtual social interactions enable employees of case organization A to initiate discussions on work-related issues immediately and save time. In addition, the respondents from both case organizations emphasized the significance of articulating feelings about difficulties and

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problems as a component of psychological health. The employees reported experiencing positive emotions by sharing their negative feelings with others and receiving mutual support. As a result, the respondents believed themselves valued. They are able to manage stress better because of this sharing and support.

The interviewees of organization A described social and psychological well-being as occurring vertically and horizontally in interpersonal communications and interactions across all organizational levels and work positions. However, in the case of organization B, the employees reported psychological and social well-being mostly solely within their team or with their most trusted co-workers. The following interview situations illustrate the well-being as described earlier:

> I think people are open to ideas and discussions. This is a sense of positivity and openness. I have not seen any negativity toward ideas. In general, the atmosphere is positive and constructive... This kind of open communication… - EA6

> We try to be open and have open communication. I think people can talk. They can come to me, the school director, or the coordinator. I do not think that anybody was left without being heard. - TMB2

> One member of every team on weekly meetings presents the team results, both successful and unsuccessful ones. They also discuss possible solutions to the presented problems and difficulties. - IA1

> During the day, we can call each other if there are problems and discuss how we should deal with them (team). - MMB7

Activities that promote social and psychological well-being at work can be linked to the virtue of *helpfulness.* For example, Johnson et al., (2018) stressed that employees' well-being in the workplace goes beyond productivity and involves relationships with work colleagues and how they treat one another and help each other. Jonson mentioned that job satisfaction as a single factor is not enough for human flourishing at the workplace if there are difficult relationships between organization members and a negative mental state of individuals prevails. Psychological well-being enables people "to handle the stresses of daily life and maintain a positive attitude and a sense of purpose," while social well-being includes a "positive and supportive social network" (Johnson et al., 2018, p. 4). The data show that empowered employees experiencing well-being in their workplace are willing to influence and support others through help. On the other hand, as evidenced by case organization B, physical well-being is necessary for the virtue of *participation*. In organization B, the employees had no interest and energy to participate in decision-making and knowledge-sharing processes due to tiredness.

Human resource development
Another important form of human resource management that was highlighted by the respondents was human resource development. For them, it meant the extension of the employees' personal skills and knowledge. The respondents especially stressed activities such as formal trainings and experiential learning

possibilities to be important. For example, Yukl (2013) noted that the initiatives of human resource development are recommendable practices to advance employee empowerment in organizations because developmental practices enhance the employee's understanding of the knowledge and information necessary to do their work properly. Consequently, as Yukl noted, organizational outcomes are possible to achieve. In addition, extending employees' competencies through human resource management practices can contribute to their human flourishing (Solomon, 1992).

As described by the interviewees, the case organizations provided formal trainings through the provision of free supplementary courses at the workplace or access to externally arranged courses. It was stated that organization A has a more developed training system and a greater variety of courses than organization B. For instance, the data analysis revealed that the members of organization A could select appropriate courses based on their individual needs, which the organization could pay for if the training met the organizational objectives. It could be a language course, online education, or another option. During annual meetings, the interviewees mentioned that the members of the organization acquire diverse knowledge and skills through team-building activities and self-training. It was stated that the employees in organization A can organize voluntary training for co-workers. As for the members of organization B, it was mentioned that the teachers must acquire teaching techniques during organizational training at the beginning of the year and, if necessary, throughout the year. In addition, the employees in organization B have the opportunity to participate in city-sponsored training. The interviewees described the training practices as follows:

> Usually, those meetings (annual meetings) include different kinds of trainings. … Sometimes, we arrange trainings for help in using our software. - EA1

> There was a course (Hofstede model) here two weeks ago. People pay for this course to become consultants for a company. Another intern and I were allowed to take the course for free. It is a very good course by the founder of the company for the entire week. - IA1

> The city arranges these meetings about teaching children; it is a kind of training. - EB4

The data also show that experiential learning activities were perceived to be important. Experiential learning to the respondents meant learning by doing. According to the respondents, working in practice and learning from experience and from colleagues can direct the employees toward the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills necessary to perform work tasks competently. This can be regarded as another way to contribute to human flourishing as well as be meaningful to achieve good organizational performance. The interviewees said that learning through one's own work experience is especially important in a multicultural organization to comprehend contextual, cultural features and viewpoints that cannot always be explained or taught theoretically. In other words, according to the metaphorical expression by the respondents, the employees are "thrown in the water to learn how to swim." Experiential

learning was seen as necessary, especially in an environment that is multicultural and which has a diverse workforce, for example, in terms of differences in age, gender, nationality, and professional expertise. In addition, the respondents noted that such learning provides the employees with enhanced learning opportunities in the multilingual context of the organization, where the employees' native languages vary. Since they all need to communicate in English, the language used in the workplace, the respondents believed that they are in an equal position to learn from one another linguistically.

The interviewees from both case organizations A and B concurred that learning by doing is most effective when teams are self-managed. However, the employees of organization A reported that they participate in a greater variety of activities that allow them to learn through experience and practice compared with those of organization B. For instance, by attending and participating in numerous team meetings in English, a Russian employee shared that her English language skills greatly improved. Moreover, the interns stated that they gained familiarity with the workflow of the teams and the organization in general by taking notes during weekly meetings to be able to perform their jobs. In both instances, the employees also mentioned challenges in acquiring new professional skills and knowledge. Primarily, these issues were described to be related to the beginning of an employee's career when they could not comprehend everything and perform all tasks correctly. They said that they needed to exert much effort to cope with the situation and that it was an uncomfortable feeling. The interviewees discussed their experiential learning concerning new skills as follows:

> The practice of communication in English during weekly meetings helps a lot because I can hear English and learn to understand it. - EA1

> When I was taking notes for the first time, it was so confusing. I had no idea what everybody was talking about. However, after a week, I understood better. I remembered certain things from what they said last week. It made more sense. - IA1

> …what is happening is that I am giving my assistants a bit of teaching, and they get out of their assistant roles and take responsibility for something. When assistants get teaching responsibilities, they decide how and what to arrange. Of course, if they need my help and opinion, I will interfere and give them my opinion. - EB2

> I spend the whole day talking with my children in the classroom. I talk to them in the language of virtues. This comes after many years of practice. It does not come automatically; you have to learn these things. - MMB2

Human resource development practices, such as formal trainings and experiential learning possibilities, can be viewed as a suitable way to support and encourage the virtues of *continuous learning* and *responsibility*. Human resource development is an essential factor that affects the behaviors of employees, their job satisfaction (Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016), and their performance and can contribute to meeting competitive needs (Ozkeser, 2019), including employees' motivation to learn (Noe, 2020). Therefore, such positive outcomes of development can motivate employees to continuously upgrade

their professional knowledge, competencies, and skills and cultivate their responsibility to keep their professional competency at a high level.

4.2.4 Leadership

Seen from the viewpoint of leadership, the respondents in both organizations stressed that leadership plays an important role in the occurrence and development of a virtuous organization, as noticed in the literature (Huhtala et al., 2013; Kaptein, 2008; Pučėtaitė et al., 2016; Riivari & Lämsä, 2014, 2019). Leadership practices were defined by the research participants as collective efforts of the organization members to mobilize actions aimed at achieving certain goals on a daily basis—an idea which is also stressed by Raelin (2016). The respondents emphasized the need for three different types of leadership practices to support the virtuousness for employee empowerment. The first is shared leadership, which enables the members of an organization to exercise their leadership both individually and collectively. The second and third leadership categories are concerned with care and development. They can be interpreted to cover the topic of the influence and direction of the other organization members. In this sense, the empirical portion of the study takes leadership into account as a means of leading, which advances the efforts of organization members toward the achievement of organizational goals.

Shared leadership
The research data show that the respondents believed that *leadership needs to be shared* to be a virtuous organization. In other words, the respondents stressed that leadership needs to be based on delegation and inclusion. In addition, leadership needs to support the employees' agency. The research data show that such leadership practices are important to identify and establish action space, direction, and co-orientation, as described in previous studies (Crevani et al., 2010). According to Crevani, action space as an idea is about possibilities, opportunities, and limitations for individual and collective actions and initiatives at the workplace. Direction is a course along which the leadership process is organized. Co-orientation refers to the understanding of diverging arguments, interpretations, and decisions of all participants in a leadership process.

According to the respondents, shared leadership practices can support self-autonomy in the workplace, leading to the establishment of an action space while the employees participate in the decision-making, developmental activities, and information-sharing processes. In addition, shared leadership practices have the potential to encourage social and psychological inclusion in the work community and support the employees' agency, where their actions and initiatives take place through intercommunication. Thus, through shared leadership practices, the boundaries of action space, direction, and co-orientation become defined. According to the respondents, such leadership practices are required to lead to mutual knowledge sharing and responsibilities among the organization members so the employees feel free to have open

interactions and social relationships with one another. This finding is in line with the argument of Crevani et al., (2010).

According to the data from both case organizations, delegation—a crucial part of shared leadership (Yukl, 2013)—meant to the interviewees that an individual or group has a certain degree of responsibility and authority to make decisions. In both organizations A and B, decision-making related to one's own professional duties and sufficient influence on the decision-making of one's team activities were mentioned to be rather widely occurring. There were also examples given by the interviewees wherein the team meetings are handled by any team member. Anybody can initiate team meetings or open discussions with team members about his or her duties affecting the work process of the whole team.

In addition, the interviewees from case organization A stated that they have the authority to arrange and lead weekly meetings and other organizational activities, such as sharing knowledge through internal trainings with colleagues, celebration of holidays, and so on. Delegation in this regard was experienced by the respondents to encourage active and passive forms of participation of the organization members, as well as provide them with a sense of ownership in decisions and activities and specify proper and clear boundaries within which they can act. The data show that there are fewer delegation options for the employees in organization B. The delegation activities in organization B can be interpreted to be more limited in comparison with organization A, where more of such activities are mentioned to be present. The interview citations below are examples of the discussed shared leadership points:

> When our top manager is not here, anyone can lead the meetings. - IA2

> If the top manager is at the meetings, he will probably take the lead. If so, that he is just a follower in some meetings he will just listen to. … - MMA7

> …there are different teams, and we work on different things. - IA1

> I went with my assistant to the classroom and had a small team meeting…. -MMB2

> The volunteer organizes several things. However, we help and discuss together what kind of program we could have and what issues we need to discuss. One person leads the whole planning while the others help. - MMA2

The research data demonstrate that the inclusion of the employees in the life of the organizational community supports the employees' agency. Shared leadership in both organizations was mentioned to contribute to the openness in communication among the organization members. It was stressed that it is crucial for organization members to share information and discuss in a transparent, honest, and consistent way with one another, both horizontally and vertically. As mentioned by the study participants, the employees get support through open communication when they are given information in a versatile way. It was also mentioned that open communication and interactions among the organization members construct a sense of common direction on the topics and questions to discuss in the meetings so everybody is free to

contribute. The comparison between case organizations A and B demonstrated that more boundaries in the internal communication and relations of the employees were experienced in company B. The respondents stated that horizontally, the teams in organization B do not always communicate, and the employees simply do not have a good opportunity to easily cross the borders of the teams in their daily work routines. The following interview citations provide examples of problems in interactions:

> We do not have much time to socialize among ourselves as teachers. We even rarely meet other teachers from other buildings…- EB6

> Being in three separate buildings, staff from this building may not know the challenges of the staff in another building. - EB7

According to Yukl (2013), shared leadership refers to the distribution of leadership influence across multiple organization members and team members. Yukl stressed that team-based organizations are more likely to have shared leadership practices, where team leaders act more as facilitators instead of controllers. To advance the virtues of *participation*, *information transparency*, *respectfulness*, *responsibility*, *helpfulness*, and *fortitude*, shared leadership practices must go beyond one leader's communication of information and presentation of tasks and responsibilities to the employees. Instead of focusing narrowly on the influence of an individual leader, multiple and multidirectional knowledge exchange, participation, communication, and leadership responsibilities for daily operations among organizational members are crucial.

Caring
The interview respondents mentioned that it is important to have a leader who cares for others, respects others, and contributes to low power distance in their organizations. According to previous studies, this kind of leadership refers to servant leadership because it mainly focuses on the concern of others (Tran & Spears, 2020). In the servant leadership approach, the care of organization members is stressed. In addition, leaders should also pay attention to what happens in their employees' lives within and outside the organization (Johnson & Hackman, 2018). Moreover, prior literature has argued that servant leadership is based on a long-term approach to taking care of employees to bring positive changes in their work and lives in general (Tran & Spears, 2020). The interview respondents noted that the practice of servant leadership has a tendency to identify the needs of people through receptive listening or to assume somebody's needs through empathy in order to take virtuous actions. It means that servant leaders take care of employees and show their commitment to the growth and development of the employees (Blanchard & Broadwell, 2018). Yukl (2013) mentioned that servant leadership covers care and respect and, as a result, affects the quality of working life by attending to the needs of the followers, thereby making them healthier and wiser and increasing their will to accept responsibilities. As stressed by the interviewees, this kind of leadership requires mutual influence and trust between organization members. Moreover, a low power distance in the organization's culture was seen to be

beneficial. It is possible that servant leadership may also feminize organizational culture, which is in agreement with Finnish low power distance and feminine organizational culture, as stated by Hofstede Insights (2019).

According to the data, leadership that follows the principle of caring creates an organizational environment where the organization's members and customers can receive help, support, and respect from one another. Moreover, the respondents mentioned that such leadership contributes to the creation of a good work environment and enhances open communication and a service-oriented atmosphere in the organization. The respondents from organizations A and B mentioned that such leadership facilitates a working environment where the organization members can organize different events, even informal ones, in the workplace (trips, games for work colleagues, etc.), lead meetings, work in teams, and collaborate with colleagues. Moreover, they highlighted that this kind of leadership can play a mediating role between conflicting parties. Such leadership also contributes to treating customers in a constructive and caring way. The following quotations highlight the idea of caring in leadership:

> This is my responsibility, and I also guide my assistants if they have any questions or need help with something. - MMB1

> Sometimes, a person may need help or has a very difficult customer. We will meet and try to help that person or find a solution together on how to do it. -MMA5

> If I disagree, I interrupt. However, I usually try to be friendly and listen. -IA2

> Whenever I go to the head teacher, I feel like I am approaching a friend. It is a very friendly environment. You can talk to her about anything. - MMB7

Regarding the virtues of employee empowerment, the interviewees emphasized that the virtues of *helpfulness* and *respectfulness* can be contributed by practicing caring in leadership. The data show that caring is needed in leadership practices that show exemplary behavior in caring for the needs of the organization members, having a respectful attitude toward others, and open communication with organization members. According to the research literature, caring as an important part of servant leadership has the potential to advance the moral development of leaders and followers (Sison & Potts, 2021) and positive behaviors at different levels of an organization (Searle & Barbuto, 2011).

Development

Leadership practices, including change-oriented behavior and encouraging employees to develop their professional knowledge, competency, and skills, is the last category of leadership practices stressed by the research participants to support the virtuousness for employee empowerment. This category links to the idea of transformational leadership in the leadership literature because this leadership approach stresses changes in individuals (Yukl, 2013). It means that one feature of transformational leadership is to motivate and encourage followers to achieve outcomes beyond regular expectations (Arnold et al., 2007). Thus, employees are inspired and supported to increase their level of morals, motivation, beliefs, perceptions, and association with business goals (Metwally

& El-bishbishy, 2014). In other words, transformational leadership is ultimately about the development of employees by responding to the needs and goals of individual followers and, as a result, the stimulation of extraordinary outcomes.

Prior literature has stated that transformational leadership is based on an increasing awareness of the importance of task outcomes, influencing one to go beyond their own self-interest for the sake of the organization and making higher-order needs active (Yukl, 2013). Tepper et al., (2018) stated that employees can be motivated even in situations where they need to put their personal interests aside for the sake of the development of the organization. However, there are no examples of such sacrificing approach in the research data of this study. The interviewees from both organizations A and B provided examples of development in leadership that motivated them to grow professionally. These examples exemplify transformational leadership by emphasizing employees' awareness of the importance of proper knowledge and skills for success in the workplace and employees' self-interest, leading to the exchange of benefits. It means that the employees could not be enticed to invest in work and develop knowledge and skills at any cost. They expect to have something from their work in return. For instance, a respondent from organization A mentioned that she studied the Hofstede cultural model to be productive and be able to build a constructive multicultural environment in the workplace. She said that an important return was the feeling of increased self-esteem and self-actualization. The citation provided below illustrates the importance of leadership, which highlights the importance of the development stressed and the transformational leadership approach:

> There was a course here two weeks ago. People paid for this course to become consultants for a company. Another intern and I were allowed to take the course for free. It is a very good course by the founder of the company for an entire week. My job is to answer e-mails from participants who wanted to learn about the Hofstede model…Thus, I have to be knowledgeable about the model and how it works to be able to answer them. I feel like people here know the model, and when I discuss it with someone from a different culture, I will understand why. If I openly criticize something, I have to remember the origin of everyone to understand if it is okay. When I started working, I got a book for free about that. People here have a good understanding of the model; this is what we work with, and our product is based on it. It is a very good tool to have when one is working. I think this is why it does not matter if there are different cultures. There are more advantages than disadvantages because people understand culture and its importance. -IA1

The research literature states that transformational leadership has a significant effect on the learning capabilities of employees (Mutahar et al., 2015) and the learning and development of organizations (Xie, 2020). Therefore, transformational leadership, which is mainly based on development, is vital for the virtue of *continuous learning*. The data show that leaders who inspire professional development in their followers make them feel as though they are an integral part of the organization. As a result, the members of the organization are motivated to perform at their highest level by updating, creating, and developing their professional skills, knowledge, and competencies.

To conclude, the respondents emphasized that the elements of shared leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership are crucial to ensure that the employees are virtuous for employee empowerment. These leadership styles were prevalent in the research discussions in relation to employee empowerment.

4.2.5 Summary of the organizational practices

According to the adopted virtue ethics approach, the virtuousness of an organization is manifested in organizational practices (Hartman, 2011; Solomon, 1992, 2004). The data analysis reflects the existence of certain organizational practices supporting the cultivation and exercise of the virtues of employee empowerment. Following the idea of Riivari and Lämsä (2019), the organizational and leadership practices are summarized according to the detected virtues in Table 8.

TABLE 8   Organizational practices supporting the virtuousness for employee empowerment

What are the key virtues of employee empowerment?	Which elements of these virtues contribute to employee empowerment?	Which organizational practices are crucial for the virtues that contribute to employee empowerment?
Information transparency	Organization members share and exchange relevant and reliable information from different professional viewpoints	Organizing: - self-managed teams and multidirectional communication channels and arenas - follow-up and feedback systems for the evaluation Leadership: - shared leadership
Participation	Employees are an important part of organizational activities, decision-making, and work community	Organizing: - organizational forums for participation and multidirectional communication - follow-up and feedback systems for evaluation Organizational culture: - trust and low power distance Leadership: - shared leadership
Helpfulness	Organization members help and care for each other	Human resource management: - promotion of work well-being Leadership: - shared leadership and caring

What are the key virtues of employee empowerment?	Which elements of these virtues contribute to employee empowerment?	Which organizational practices are crucial for the virtues that contribute to employee empowerment?
Respectfulness	Organization members show attentive listening and discussion, as well as polite behavior toward each other	Organizational culture: - equal-opportunity practices Leadership: - shared leadership and caring
Responsibility	Employees perform work duties well, thoroughly, and responsibly	Organizing: - self-managed teams - clear and meaningful work responsibilities for employees Organizational culture: - trust-based relationships Human resource management: - human resource development activities Leadership: - shared leadership
Fortitude	Employees show courageous actions to stand up for the right things	Organizing: - organizational channels to report problems Organizational culture: - trust-based relationships and low power distance Leadership: - shared leadership
Continuous learning	Organizational members learn continuously to develop their competencies	Organizing: - follow-up and feedback systems for the evaluation Human resource management: - human resource development activities Leadership: - development

Table 8 summarizes and presents the main empirical findings about organizational practices supporting the explored virtues of employee empowerment. The first column shows the names of the virtues. The second column defines the meaning of the virtues. The third column decomposes the main categories and related organizational practices for each virtue. Overall, there are replications of organizational practices to support the virtues. As an exception, some leadership practices were repeated as necessary conditions for different virtues. For example, shared leadership is a top necessity for all virtues, and caring in leadership was mentioned to be important for two virtues (helpfulness and respectfulness).

4.3 Effects of the virtues of employee empowerment on flourishing

This chapter presents and discusses how the virtues of employee empowerment are experienced to affect employee flourishing in the workplace. Earlier in this study, it was determined that eudaimonia or human flourishing in the context of business organizations means that employees tend to experience well-being at work while working well and feeling well and find that their work is meaningful (Hartman, 2017; Solomon, 2004). The virtues of employee empowerment assist the employees in enhancing the quality of their work and experiencing a good working environment in the workplace. This chapter explains in more detail how the virtues can affect the flourishing of the employees. The following effects were analyzed from the data:

- organizational workflow;
- ownership;
- social network; and
- professional development.

4.3.1 Organizational workflow

According to the research findings, management of the *organizational workflow* is affected positively by the virtues of information transparency, participation, responsibility, and helpfulness. The research data define organizational workflow as a systematic way of organizing resources and procedures to process information, coordinate organizational operations and actions, and organize various organizational events.

The interviewees reported that information transparency and participation are essential for employee empowerment because they establish informational awareness in the organization, which means access to a broad knowledge pool for the employees so they can be aware of relevant work-related issues. Both virtues are necessary to work well in an organization. These virtues support the flourishing of the employees because practicing them can improve the quality of working life by providing employees with information suitable to their decision-making processes. According to the respondents, information transparency and participation contribute to comprehending organizational objectives, strategies, and everyone's role within the organization and its work processes. In addition, the information flow that results from practicing the virtues of informational transparency and participation makes it easier for the organization members to reveal, anticipate, and address problematic and sensitive issues and can help prevent potential problems in the organization's everyday workflow. The following quotes from both organizations A and B illustrate these effects:

> We have weekly meetings where we summarize information about the projects, like how many days they will take and so on. - MMA7

> Usually, people listen to the report of the boss because it is nice to know. For me, it is important to know what is going on in the other parts, although those things are not mine (annual meetings). - IA4

> Definitely, all these meetings (weekly meetings) have a positive effect. They are very helpful. Our internal company meetings make us aware of the work of our colleagues and their customers. - EA1

> I also came to know different information about the workplace, reflecting its success or problematic sides that everyone should pay attention to in order to contribute (annual meetings)… - EA1

> …You get a basic overview of what stuff you do for the whole academic year. Once you get this whole picture of what happens, each teacher goes to the classroom (seminars for teachers)… - MMB1

> At teacher meetings, we are kept updated about how they want us to do things. For example, there is a unit and we get clarifications on it and what needs to be done. - TMB2

> …if something like that (behavior difficulties with a child) happens, we will meet and discuss the best thing to do (team meetings). - EB1

> If we have a special child, for example, the parents are divorced or other problems related to the police, we have to inform every employee that if that person comes, they should not let the child go with that person. - TMB1

The indirect contributions of information transparency and participation in various organizational meetings to the management of organization systems are evident in the research data. The interviewees indicated that these virtues are significant because they bring together the organization members to accumulate diverse viewpoints and ideas from various professional perspectives and determine the best among them. Therefore, the virtues contribute to the organizational workflow. Specifically, the virtues aid in the regulation and direction of organizational operations, as well as in judging whether organizational goals are being met and whether (some) actions require correction. The interviewers from organizations A and B described the issue as follows:

> …on the same day, when everyone shares more or less about what they are doing, it is kind of a control panel kind of situation (weekly meetings)… -MMA6

> …is to let the boss see (teaching plans)… so the boss can see them as well. -MMB7

> Everybody's knowledge and expertise are taken into consideration to find good solutions in the end. - EB1

> …and then we discuss and come up with ideas to figure out how to make it better. What we do, for example, is open issues for brainstorming and talk about it. Then, we say, "Okay, it sounds like a good idea. How about we try it for a week between the meetings? If it does not work, then we do not do it." -TMB2

The virtues of information transparency, participation, and responsibility were deemed essential for coordinating the standard workflow procedures for the common goals, which include the contributions of several individuals. Specifically, these virtues aid in establishing clear distinctions between the allocated tasks of the organization members. This saves time by reducing the

need for extra clarifications concerning the work division to organize the work process, as indicated by the interviewees from case organization B in the following citations:

> You have certain rules, and you do not have to go over them. They are set to keep us together. If somebody is not working within the parameters of those rules, it would be difficult for everybody else. Imagine if one class at the same level would teach something completely different or something else, and they come to the pre-school and half of them knows something while the others do not. - EB8

> For example, if we have a child in a group who has difficulties, for example, behavioral difficulties. … then we meet and talk about it. We talk about what kind of approach we should choose. Thus, we can complement each other. Everybody is on the same page while helping and working with the child. - EB1

> We (assistants) know our tasks in advance because the teacher makes lesson plans in advance, and we already know what we are going to do next week with the children. Any of us can look at those plans and go, "Okay, on Tuesday, I have to do this and that." - EB1

> I have more responsibility in that sense than the assistants. The assistants do not really have to worry about parents or meetings with parents. That is my job. - EB1

It was noticed in the data analysis that the virtue of helpfulness facilitates the organization in the arrangement of diverse meetings and events for the common good at the workplace. This practical aspect of employee empowerment concerns the individual's internal self-control and dedication in each employee (Lashley, 1995). Notably, the interviewees mentioned how the virtue contributes to organizing and arranging team meetings and various events as well as resolving disagreements between disputing parties because someone takes care of all the organizational aspects. In addition, the virtue of helpfulness minimizes the workload of the teachers in case organization B, who share their lesson ideas and keep the work process flowing even when one employee is absent due to illness. Due to their helpfulness in writing down notes during meetings, the interns from case organization A became acquainted with the workplace quickly, which is crucial for their adaptation and adjustment to the organization and their contribution to the everyday workflow. The interviewees provided a variety of specific examples:

> We did it, and it worked (arrangement of the trip). - MMB4

> I try to make sure that everybody participates because I know that if one person sees one solution, another will give solution number 2 and number 3. Thus, it is better to discuss everything at once; otherwise, after we implement some solutions, somebody else will say it is not enough. We try to involve as many people as possible from the start so that everybody speaks, then we decide what is the best. - EA7

> It was funny when somebody came there to see how the teacher was teaching, and that person asked, "Did you decide before who is going to the bathroom, who is going to play with them, who is going, and so on? She said, "No, we just do it." - EB4

> …they do not have to do two times the work (the teachers plan lessons together). They can come up with a project, and both can use it. They come up with a plan for units and virtues, and both use it. - TMB3

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> When our teacher is absent, we have to take her place. If she is sick, for example, we, as assistants, teach the kids. We do her work and also our work. - EB11

> For them (interns), it (taking notes) is an exercise first on how you follow the discussion and take notes. Second, it is the best way of getting inside. They immediately emerge or are kind of thrown into deep learning very quickly. It is not just to take notes, but I also observe if they have questions afterward. - TMA2

> ....to get into the job fast. I was writing notes, and it was difficult to understand what everyone was talking about because they were talking about customers I had never heard before and could not recognize the names. I could ask the customer team if I can have a look at their notes from what was presented today, and they could send it to me and read it for better understanding. When I was taking notes for the first time, it was so confusing, and I had no idea what everybody was talking about. However, after a week, I understood better. I remembered certain things from what they said last week. It made more sense. - IA1

It is possible to say that the virtues of information transparency, participation, responsibility, and helpfulness for employee empowerment benefit the organizational workflow in such a way that they not only improve the quality of working life but can also positively affect the employees' performance at work (Yukl, 2013) and, as a result, boost organizational productivity (Carter, 2009).

4.3.2   Ownership

The data indicate that the virtues of *information transparency*, *participation,* and *fortitude* also enable the employees to experience *shared ownership* in work-related organizational issues. Shared ownership as an idea to the interviewees meant the opportunity to feel that they are owners who have a stake in their employer's success, not just in the workplace to create better business but also to do the right things.

The interviewees, primarily from case organization A, stated that recognizing oneself as a significant member of the work community is essential for employee empowerment and the employees' being able to participate in the organization's activities. Thus, practicing the virtues of information transparency and participation positively influences the feeling of shared ownership. According to the data, an employee's identification with organizational outcomes and accomplishments increases his or her sense of ownership and satisfaction. In case organization B, ownership was not stressed as much as in the case of organization A, except occasionally by a few team members. In particular, how the quality of one's working life was enhanced was highlighted:

> It is very helpful to listen to the report by the boss (annual meetings) because I feel, to some degree, my involvement in my workplace. I can see that my efforts, our efforts, bring results… I feel my participation in the life of the company. I feel a part of my company (weekly meetings). - EA1

Based on the data and the research literature, employee empowerment can have a significant impact on the establishment of moral values among organization members (Ciulla, 2020), who demonstrate a desire to provide quality service to

customers and a positive working environment (Shahril et al., 2013; Ukil, 2016). As a component of human flourishing at work, the virtue of *fortitude* makes it possible to bring justice, implement the right things in the workplace, and improve the quality and conditions of work. In business organization B, as mentioned by the interviewees, an employee could influence the quality of customer service by changing the quality of food supplied to the children. Another instance in which employees of organization B were mentioned to affect their working conditions was when they asserted their right to a lighter cleaning workload, in addition to their primary professional responsibilities. Both instances are described in the following:

> There was one worker here about two years ago… she called Tampere City to complain about the food provided to the children. They came here to check and realized that there was not enough food or that the food was not good enough. Yes, things changed a bit compared to how it was before… -EB10

> So, we asked if we could have a cleaner. Our boss was not happy with the idea at first and said no. She does want to spend money on this, and she has had bad experiences. It took a lot of convincing, and we had to talk to her about it many times. In the end, she said, "Okay, let's try. So, we got a cleaner, and everybody was really happy. It made our life so much easier. -MMB4

In line with previous literature, for example, in Yukl (2013), the data analysis revealed that through employee empowerment, the experience of ownership can be achieved in an organization. Such experience can improve both the quality of work life within organizations and the quality of the employees' work. It means that essential work conditions and outstanding performance by empowered employees are crucial not only for the achievement of organizational success and the maintenance of market competitiveness but also for the flourishing of employees in the workplace.

4.3.3 Social network

The interview respondents from organizations A and B disclosed that the virtuousness of employee empowerment facilitates a better *social network* in their organizations. For them, this idea means positive social interactions and relationships between the organization members. Specifically, organization A's respondents perceived that *informational transparency* and *participation* helped maintain and advance social relationships among organization members by bringing them closer in the informal work environment. They demonstrated that organization members improve the emotional climate of the workplace by developing a sense of closeness through participation in various meetings and exchanging information regarding work arrangements, work experiences, goals, performance, and others. Compared with case organization A, case organization B seemed to be significantly weaker on the issue of social networking due to its members' more limited contacts. According to the adopted virtue ethics approach, this aspect of social well-being and the feeling of togetherness are essential to the flourishing of individuals in organizational

life (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003; Cameron & Gaza, 2002; Hartman, 2013). The following quotations illustrate the issue:

> (staff meetings) I think the atmosphere is quite relaxed. We have a cup of tea or coffee and snacks and talk about things. It is not that bad of an atmosphere. The people are relaxed, joking, and laughing. - MMB4

> … this way, I meet my colleagues personally (annual meetings)… - EA1

> The weekly meetings are not held to make decisions. They are intended to create a group spirit, to share information, and get access inside. That is it. -TMA2

> So when they come across it, they probably remember what their colleagues have said and can say, "Okay, I heard you talking about that. Can you tell me more?" or "I have a question about that. Can you tell me more (after team meetings)?" - TMA2

> It starts with the strategy. You make it very clear that every employee knows the strategy of the company and where we are going. Just stay close. … Everybody needs to understand and know the strategy very well. So, we need to understand why we are here.… You need a division of work for different tasks, but the most important is to understand the goal alongside your own participation … Nowadays, it does not mean that you are physically close because you are globally all over the world, but you keep this contact… - TMA18

The data analysis showed that the virtues of *helpfulness* and *respectfulness* also play an important role in the establishment of good relationships among the organization members of both case organizations A and B. Hence, they bring a positive, friendly atmosphere in the workplace, attentiveness and support from work colleagues, and satisfaction from the work process in such a social environment. The interviewees emphasized that helpfulness and respectfulness help reach a high level of understanding without detailed talks and clarifications. In addition, these virtues erase any hierarchical differences among the organization and team members. As a result, they impact the working environment and offer comfort in interactions where there is no need to consider and stress about how to behave with the managers. It is reasonable to suppose that the feeling of *equality* (being on the same level) enhances the atmosphere of comfort and sociability within teams and the business. All of these are discussed in the subsequent comments:

> We are really a team. We do things together, and nobody is unhappy. We work well together; otherwise, this year would be hard. It has actually been a very easy year working together. I have the best workmates; they are really awesome. - EB4

> It is very pleasurable because I feel that I am a part of my team. I am not just isolated, and I do not just do my work alone. We always try to help each other. The atmosphere in my team is benevolent. - EA1

> We have worked together for so long. We know our work well. The teacher is much better at languages than I am, so she does all English and literature types of things. I (the assistant) can discuss with the children about animals, dinosaurs, etc., so we complement each other. … Given that we have known each other for a long time and we know our strengths, we do not need to discuss much. We know what we are going to do. - EB6

> He (the teacher) is not like boss. We work together; it is cooperation. It does not matter that he has a teaching degree. We can do that. … We are all at the same level. It should not be that we are on different levels, up and down. -EB9

> However, if you speak to the assistant of the director, she is very open, very honest, and discusses things nicely. She is the one who wants to discuss if you have issues. You feel like you have a meaningful dialogue with her, and there is a chance to change something. - EB1

> ... I put aside this kind of fear that I was talking about in the beginning. As a human, of course, I have made mistakes, but I never felt bad about them because my boss certainly supports us. Yes some mistakes have been committed. However, he has this thing wherein he takes pointers in every situation. That is why this kind of support and trust encourages you to go beyond, go forward, and go farther. - MMA4

It is generally accepted in the previous research literature as well as in the current research findings of this study that employee empowerment fosters positive relationships between organization members (Blanchard et al., 2001; Ciulla, 2020; Lincoln et al., 2002).

4.3.4 Professional development

Based on the research findings, it is evident that the practice of *continuous learning* in case organizations A and B influences *professional development*, in turn promoting human flourishing by contributing to the higher quality of work generated by the employees. As a result of their positive contributions to the company's performance, the organization members can have a better working life, feel good about it, and enjoy it. The data reveal the respondents' contentment and stability, as they claimed that their professional qualities and skills were enhanced and helpful in various work settings. For instance, Yukl (2013) posited that the professional development of employees is an integral aspect of employee empowerment. Professional development is one of the primary priorities of businesses seeking to increase their competitive edge in the age of technology and globalization (Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016). The following interviews from case organizations A and B highlighted the connection between their acquired professional abilities and knowledge and the caliber of their work performance:

> We would like to have more people who would be better at selling things and communicating, maybe improving how they communicate with the customers. For the Finnish course, we are still in Finland. People want to learn Finnish and use it because they have not been to Finland before. They want to know more, and it is good for the company. You can always improve your communication. We would communicate better internally. First, it is external communication with customers and then internal communication within the company. ...so my colleagues can go and improve their presentation skills and use them in practice. - IA2

> I feel like people here know the (Hofstede) model. For this reason, I will understand better when I discuss with someone who is from a different culture. If I openly criticize something, I have to remember the origin of everyone to determine if it is okay. - IA1

> I spend the whole day talking to my children in the classroom, I talk to them in the language of virtues (that was inculcated at the beginning of the academic year). - MMB1

According to the research findings, human flourishing caused by the virtues of employee empowerment fall under the two dimensions of happiness outlined

by Solomon (2004) and Hartman (2017). The interviewees reported that they experienced both working well (organizational workflow, ownership, social network) and working good (organizational workflow, professional development, ownership) while practicing the virtuousness of employee empowerment. These two dimensions of human flourishing are complementary.

4.3.5 Summary of the virtues' effects on flourishing

Table 9 shows the summary of the discovered virtues of employee empowerment and the interviewees' experiences of their effects on human flourishing in business organizations.

TABLE 9   Discovered virtues of employee empowerment and their experienced effects on human flourishing

Virtues of employee empowerment	Effects of the virtues of employee empowerment on flourishing
Information transparency	Organizational workflow Ownership Social network
Participation	Organizational workflow Ownership Social network
Helpfulness	Organizational workflow Social network
Respectfulness	Social network
Responsibility	Organizational workflow Social network
Fortitude	Ownership
Continuous learning	Professional development

This table provides an overview and summarizes the findings on how the virtues of employee empowerment were experienced to affect the flourishing of the employees from the case organizations. The virtues of employee empowerment are listed in the first column of the table, while the effects of the virtues leading to human flourishing are presented in the second column. The table synthesizes the research results defining the flourishing effects of each virtue for employee empowerment. The most common effect of the virtues of employee empowerment dealing with a good working environment is social network. This effect is observed in five out of seven virtues of employee empowerment. Organizational flow and ownership are in the second place of popularity, contributing to the flourishing of the organization members through improvement of the work conditions and quality of work. They are the results of four out of seven virtues of employee empowerment. Finally, professional

development as another aspect of human flourishing in business organizations is especially supported by the virtue of continuous learning and is important for good work to be done by the employees.

5 DISCUSSION

In this discussion part, the dissertation results are summarized and discussed. More specifically, this section presents an overview of the research findings and provides a discussion thereof. Theoretical and practical implications, as well as study limitations, are discussed. Finally, suggestions for further study are made.

5.1 Findings and implications

The primary focus of this dissertation was to extend our knowledge and understanding of the organizational virtues of employee empowerment. The study was conducted in two multicultural business organizations in Finland with the help of an instrumental case study approach (Mills et al., 2010). Theoretically, the study used the Aristotelian virtue ethics approach in its investigation. Although the virtue ethics theory mainly deals with the virtues revealed by the character of individuals behaving ethically for the sake of eudaimonia, the end of human flourishing, and living well (Arjoon, 2000; Pearce, 2013; Ross & Brown, 2009), the dissertation adopted the idea that the theory is also appropriate and can be used to study ethics at the level of an organization. In other words, an organizational-level viewpoint was adopted in this study. From this viewpoint, organizations also possess and demonstrate virtues, just as individuals do, but the virtues are practiced jointly by the members of the organization (e.g., Cabana & Kaptein, 2021; Coppola, 2022; Cameron & Winn, 2012; Park & Peterson, 2003; Prijić Samaržija, 2020; Schudt, 2000; Solomon, 1993; Varagona et al., 2022). Consequently, the dissertation relies on several researches in the field of virtue theory (e.g., Chun, 2005; Fontrodona, Sison, & de Bruin, 2013; Graham, 2000; Hartman, 2013; Kaptein, 2008, 2015; Solomon, 2004; Solomon, 1992 a, b, 2004; Whetstone, 2017; Williams, 2008; Young, 2011) that the virtue approach can be applicable at the level of an

organization, specifically in the two multicultural business organizations investigated in this study.

The meaning of an organizational virtue

The research field of virtue ethics in organizational ethics has increased in popularity in recent decades (Abedi et al., 2014; Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2020; Ferrero & Sison, 2014; Manz et al., 2008; Mion et al., 2023; Shaw, 2022; Sison & Hartman, 2021). It is stressed that virtue ethics is a promising avenue to study ethics in organizations and business life in general because the approach allows focusing on the motivation behind how an organization can succeed through virtuous behavior and advance its members' well-being and quality of life (Ferrero & Sison, 2014; Solomon, 1992 b). However, despite its increasing popularity, there are multiple study fields and conceptual haziness often occurs. Therefore, to support the empirical study, the first task of this dissertation was to increase knowledge and understanding of the meaning of organizational virtue. This task was realized as a part of the theoretical background building for the empirical study by making a literature analysis of key studies concerning organizational virtues. The analysis implies the following suggestions.

First, fragmented definitions of organizational virtues are offered in the prior research literature on organizational virtues. However, a common and general understanding of the idea tends to be that an organizational virtue is practiced commonly by the organization's members and takes place in organizational systems, structures, processes, and culture, aiming to foster the organization members' flourishing (Cameron et al., 2004; Cameron, 2003; Caza, 2017; Gotsis & Grimani, 2015; Kaptein, 2008). In line with previous studies, it is suggested here that *an organizational virtue is manifested as the character of an organization, with its strengths, qualities, and attributes as evidence of moral excellence. It is enabled, encouraged, and developed in cooperation with the members of the organization* (e.g., Chun, 2005; Ferrero & Sison, 2014; Gotsis & Grimani, 2015). The character refers to the quality of everyday organizational practices manifested as common habits in the organization and developed through the practices (Kaptein, 2008; Riivari & Lämsä, 2019; Solomon, 2004). Based on the analysis, this kind of understanding was a cornerstone of this dissertation.

Second, the literature analysis showed that several kinds of organizational virtues are listed and perceived as crucial in prior studies. Thus, no common system to classify organizational virtues seemed to exist. However, given that the virtues are contextually embedded (Athavale, 1975; Whetstone, 2003), it is suggested here that *it may not be possible to make any universal list of organizational virtues; rather, the virtues need to be understood and defined in relation to some other phenomenon, such as employee empowerment in this dissertation research*. This suggestion supports, for example, the studies of Riivari and Lämsä (2014, 2019), who investigated the organizational virtues for organizational innovation and found that specific virtues are linked to innovativeness. In this dissertation, specific virtues were also found to be significant for employee empowerment, and they differed from those for innovation. Moreover, according to the

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literature review, organizational virtues tend to be theorized, examined, and defined based on the Aristotelian virtue ethics (e.g., Alzola, 2008, 2017a, 2017b; Arjoon, 2017; Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021; Ferrero & Sison, 2014; Hartman 2013, 2017; Kaptein, 2008; Solomon, 1992a, 1992b, 2004), which was the framework also adopted and proven to be beneficial in this dissertation. The literature analysis also showed that the importance of organizational virtues for higher organizational performance and ethical behavior tended to be adopted.

Overall, the literature review was a crucial step in the construction of the theoretical framework for this study because it provided clarity to the understanding of the idea of organizational virtue, which is an ambiguous construct by nature. In addition, the investigations concerning the topic are scattered into different research streams and domains. The conducted literature review, as an important part of the construction of the theoretical framework for this study, can assist other researchers in the field and practitioners in everyday organizational life in identifying the important aspects of the idea of an organizational virtue, give the concept a common meaning, and determine this idea from others. The establishment of such identification and making it explicit might help avoid confusion in research and organizational communication, thereby advancing better cooperation and common understanding between the parties in question. This is important in any community that aims to flourish (Manz et al., 2008).

Employee empowerment from the Aristotelian virtue theory viewpoint
As part of the theoretical framework, the second research task of this study was to analyze the idea of employee empowerment defined in previous research literature from the viewpoint of the adopted Aristotelian virtue theory. This analysis suggests that *employee empowerment is defined as a combination of organizational processes and practices, which include features such as knowledge sharing, delegation and power sharing, low organizational hierarchy, and the possibility of employees' autonomous acting and independent decision-making* (Badjie et al., 2019; Ivanova & von Scheve, 2020; Leach et al., 2003; Mohapatra & Mishra, 2018). It is also mentioned in the literature that the morality of employees, their motivation, productivity, and feeling of ownership in organizational issues can advance when organizational virtues are practiced successfully (Blanchard et al., 2001; Kaptein, 2008). Such outcomes may support the happiness and flourishing of employees at work, which is a crucial aim of virtue ethics (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003; Cameron & Gaza, 2002; Pearce, 2013).

This theoretical clarification of employee empowerment from the perspective of the Aristotelian virtue ethics provided an argument to study the virtuousness of employee empowerment empirically in a more detailed way in this dissertation. In particular, *the literature review was useful to theoretically consider that employee empowerment is an ethical idea and identify its virtues in the empirical analysis.* In addition, the literature review helped establish that there is not much research on employee empowerment from the perspective of virtue ethics and, concomitantly, no research in the multicultural organizational setting, which was the focus of this dissertation. This finding encouraged the

investigation of organizational virtues qualitatively in this dissertation because empirical research conducted qualitatively can open the door to a more versatile understanding of the topic. The definition of the ethical nature of employee empowerment solves the primary concern for academics to disclose it and may remove potential obstacles when implementing the idea into practice. Overall, such knowledge increases understanding and underscores the importance of employee empowerment with regard to organizational ethics, so the potential of empowerment can be considered seriously.

The empirical study

The main task of this dissertation was to conduct an empirical study. The following research questions were investigated: Which organizational virtues experienced by organization members in the case organizations are significant for employee empowerment? Which organizational vices constrain the case organizations' virtuousness for employee empowerment to occur, as experienced by the organization members? Which organizational practices experienced by the organization members in the case organizations are crucial for the virtues of employee empowerment to take place? How do the organizational virtues of employee empowerment affect the human flourishing of the employees, as experienced by the organization members?

The summary of the empirical results is presented in Table 10.

TABLE 10   Summary of the results of the empirical study

Virtues (vices) of employee empowerment	Organizational practices contributing to employee empowerment	Effects of the virtues of employee empowerment on flourishing
Information transparency (information overexposure, information opaqueness)	Organizing: - self-managed teams and - multidirectional communication channels and arenas - follow-up and feedback systems for the evaluation Leadership: - shared leadership	Organizational workflow Ownership Social network
Participation (participation overload, non-attendance)	Organizing: - organizational forums for participation and multidirectional communication - follow-up and feedback systems for the evaluation Organizational culture: - trust and low power distance Leadership: - shared leadership	Organizational workflow Ownership Social network

Virtues (vices) of employee empowerment	Organizational practices contributing to employee empowerment	Effects of the virtues of employee empowerment on flourishing
Helpfulness (zealotry, indifference)	Human resource management: - promotion of work well-being Leadership: - shared leadership and caring	Organizational workflow Social network
Respectfulness (obsequiousness, disrespect)	Organizational culture: - equal-opportunity practices Leadership: - shared leadership and caring	Social network
Responsibility (perfectionism, irresponsibility)	Organizing: - self-managed teams - clear and meaningful work responsibilities for employees Organizational culture: - trust-based relationships Human resource management: - human resource development activities Leadership: - shared leadership	Organizational workflow Social network
Fortitude (rashness, cowardice)	Organizing: - organizational channels to report problems Organizational culture: - trust-based relationships and low power distance Leadership: - shared leadership	Ownership
Continuous learning (futile learning, stationariness)	Organizing: - follow-up and feedback systems for the evaluation Human resource management: - human resource development activities Leadership: - development	Professional development

Table 10 presents the overall empirical research results. The column on the left shows the virtues and related vices for employee empowerment. The vices of excess and deficiency are inside the brackets in this column. The column in the middle represents the analyzed organizational practices and their categories in relation to each virtue. The column on the right shows the detected effects of the virtues of employee empowerment on the flourishing of the employees.

In general, this research, as one of the empirical examples, follows the way of business ethics in organizational studies by applying the Aristotelian virtue theory (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2021; Del Baldo, 2020; Fontrodona et al.,

2013; Hartman, 2013; Solomon, 2004) by focusing on a fresh perspective in the study field, namely, the virtues of employee empowerment. The research findings not only support the idea about the ethical potential of the employee empowerment phenomenon (Carter, 2009; Ciulla, 2020; Huq, 2016) but also presents the research phenomenon in a novel way by making visible and theorizing *the seven significant virtues of employee empowerment in the study context: information transparency, participation, helpfulness, respectfulness, responsibility, fortitude, and continuous learning.*

In the conducted literature analysis concerning organizational virtues, the following virtuous characteristics of organizations were found to be meaningful: fortitude, respect, and responsibility (Bright et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2004, 2011; Ketola, 2017; Payne et al., 2011; Williams, 2008). In this study, the same virtues were shown to be meaningful for employee empowerment. However, other virtues were also found. An explanation may be that the three organizational virtues (fortitude, respect, and responsibility) found here and reported in prior literature might be more common than just being a part of the virtuousness for employee empowerment. This implies that some virtues may be more common than others, which might be more contextually bound. Moreover, this study preferred to use the term "respectfulness" instead of "respect" because the word "respectfulness" is a noun describing the condition of being respectful. Meanwhile, the word "respect" can be a noun and a verb, and this double meaning might be confusing in the understanding of this virtue.

Moreover, it was discovered that for them to be realized, the *organizational virtues of employee empowerment need to be manifested in the behavior of individuals and groups of an organization, as well as practiced jointly by organization members in groups and across them.* This finding lends support to previous studies (Cabana & Kaptein, 2021; Cameron & Winn, 2012; Coppola, 2022; Kaptein, 2008; Park & Peterson, 2003; Prijić Samaržija, 2020; Schudt, 2000; Solomon, 1992a, 1992b, 2004; Varagona et al., 2022). Moreover, as mentioned in prior studies (Arjoon, 2000; Hartman, 2013; MacIntyre, 1984; Pearce, 2013; Riivari & Lämsä, 2019), *the virtues to be manifested need to be included in various organizational practices,* as also shown in this study. The adopted Aristotelian approach to business ethics (Solomon, 1992 a, b) helped understand that the studied organization members were able to show virtuous behaviors for employee empowerment. Notably, they should be committed to and share the values of their organizations. This viewpoint must be given attention in any organization (Solomon, 2004), particularly in a multicultural organizational setting where people's values may differ from one another. When organization members know why, when, and how to behave in an appropriate way, they may also enjoy their virtuous actions.

On the other hand, following the idea of the Aristotelian virtue, it was assumed that virtue is the mean state between an excessive and a deficient vice (Kaptein, 2017). In other words, the virtues of employee empowerment have their vices, which were highlighted in this dissertation. It was shown which vices took place in the behavior of the organization members in the investigated

case organizations. The finding concerning the vices in this research lends support to the suggestion of Kaptein (2017, p. 302) that *if it is possible to define the vices of excess and deficiency of a virtue — as was done here — it can be said that the finding is a real virtue*. Overall, to be able to understand the virtues of employee empowerment in a versatile and rich way, it is important to investigate not only the virtues but also make visible their corresponding vices.

Practical contribution
From a practical point of view, the results of this dissertation have *the potential to enrich the language about organizational virtue and, perhaps, ethics in general in business organizations*. This is because, as proposed by Benson et al., (2015), business organizations that adopt the idea of an organizational virtue into their everyday language can show higher performance outcomes of employees in comparison with organizations that do not use such language. Although virtue ethics has become an increasingly popular topic among organizational scholars as well as companies looking forward to responsible, healthy, and humane work environments (Manz et al., 2008, p. 5), the expressions and ideas related to virtue ethics and ethics, in general, specifically the narrow terminology of ethically "good," "bad," "right," and "wrong," are used in practical organizational life (Solomon, 1992 b). Instead, the emphasis on the language of economics and financial success tends to prevail. For instance, based on the findings from other studies, Cameron et al., (2004) mentioned that topics on business performance mostly forget the concepts of virtue and ethics. Other terms that are considered more neutral, such as corporate social responsibility, prosocial behavior, and employee morale, tend to replace ethical terms.

As highlighted in this study, employee empowerment is more about the distribution of power in the organization and employee autonomy at work (Ciulla, 2020), which can be promoted with the help of specific organizational practices. It was shown here that by exercising organizational virtues, it became possible for the studied organizations to advance and support employee empowerment. The study results imply that *the virtues of employee empowerment demand special practices and processes to be exercised in the organization to bring them to life* (Blanchard, 2001; Huq, 2016). The empirical study showed that the following organizational practices are necessary to support the discovered virtues of employee empowerment in the studied case organizations: *organizing, organizational culture, human resource management, and leadership*.

The findings imply that the appropriate organizational practices need to allow democratic ways of acting in the organization, as also stressed by Yukl (2013). The practices that particularly promote various connections and information sharing between people representing different roles, tasks, and positions and also allow cooperation across hierarchical levels and teams to develop new skills and new ways of acting were found to be important. This finding is in line with Rothman et al., (2019). Especially in this research, self-managed teams, among other reported practices, proved to be an important way to contribute to the virtues of employee empowerment in the studied setting, as also stressed in prior literature (Cooney, 2004; Kirkman & Rosen,

1999; Rothman et al., 2019; Yukl, 2013). This dissertation also revealed that the virtuousness of employee empowerment requires that employees have meaningful work responsibilities, which is a topic not so often discussed in previous studies concerning empowering organizational practices. Furthermore, in line with Kaptein (2008) and Riivari and Lämsä (2019), it can be said that organizational culture and its development, which was found to play a significant role in the virtues of employee empowerment, requires time and its development process can be slow. In the field of human resource management, the maintenance and development of employee well-being at work and the development of professional knowledge and skills were found to be crucial. This research implies that leadership practices focusing on sharing, caring, and development are necessary to support all discovered virtues of employee empowerment in practice. A similar idea had also been presented in prior studies (e.g., Appelbaum et al., 1999; Bunders, Broerse, & Regeer, 2021; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Keller & Dansereau, 1995). Overall, it can be said that various organizational practices can make the virtues of employee empowerment manifested in the studied organizations. It is suggested in line with Riivari and Lämsä (2019) that *specific virtues and related organizational practices are important to employee empowerment.*

Finally, the study results showed that the virtues of employee empowerment can have various advantageous effects that support employee flourishing at the studied workplaces. It is proposed that a significant advantage is that *the virtues have the potential to improve the quality of working life and employees' work performance, thereby contributing to their flourishing at the workplace.* This result confirms that working good and doing well are two interrelated components of human flourishing, which go hand in hand.

5.2 Limitations and further research

There are limitations to this dissertation, which should be given attention by future studies. The limitations and further research suggestions are presented in this section.

The main aim of this dissertation was to conduct an empirical study of two multicultural organizations. The focus on these organizations attracts attention to the selected multicultural organizational context. A limitation is that, in the empirical analysis, the organizations' multicultural settings and their nature were not given as much attention as they could have been. Despite some minor comments in the analysis, the setting was pretty much taken for granted. This limitation calls for a more detailed investigation of the empirical data. In general, given that the number and role of multicultural organizations in terms of different nationalities as the idea of multiculturalism, as understood in this dissertation, have increased and are increasing in Finland and in other societies (European Migration Network, 2022; Lämsä et al., 2019; Guilherme et al., 2010; Tilastokeskus, 2015), it would be useful to study the virtues of

employee empowerment, focusing solely on a multicultural viewpoint. For example, how a multicultural organizational setting affects the formation of the organizational virtues of employee empowerment would be a relevant topic to investigate in more detail. A study concerning the development of a virtuous way of acting in such a setting would be beneficial. Moreover, the kind of advantages and disadvantages a multicultural workforce could bring to the virtues of employee empowerment is an interesting topic. Conducting an organizational intervention in which organizational practices for virtues of employee empowerment were developed would be a feasible approach to investigate in the future. This way, it is possible to provide important information related to the development of organizational ethics in general and in organizational settings where the virtues of employee empowerment are aimed.

This study applied a qualitative case study research methodology as interpretive sensemaking in two multicultural business organizations operating in Finland as its empirical inquiry approach. This means the topic in the investigated organizations is bound to its context (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2017; Yin & Davis, 2007). This contextual feature indicates a challenge to generalize the research results in relation to other multicultural business organizations in Finland and elsewhere (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2017). However, it was possible to offer in this dissertation an intensive and detailed description of the topic in the studied context and show what was at least possibly related to the topic. In future studies, a broader sample would be beneficial. For instance, differences between the virtuousness of employee empowerment in private and public organizations, as well as big and small business organizations, might occur, so a comparative case study between them could be beneficial. Moreover, studying the virtuousness of employee empowerment in different societal environments would allow a broader perspective on the topic.

The qualitative data in this dissertation were collected with the help of semi-structured interviews. The focus of the interviews was the experiences of the respondents. Interviews were selected as the data production method because these allowed the obtainment of a deep view of the studied topic (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). However, using only interviews in the empirical analysis could be a limitation (Stake, 2010). The combination of different types of data from various sources, for example, from interviews and observations, might have offered a more versatile view of the topic. Such data gathering could be fruitful in further studies. The data were collected using a cross-sectional setting from many different individuals in the studied business organizations. It might be useful to apply a longitudinal research setting in the future.

It should be noted that the interview sessions of this research were time-consuming, and their quality varied to some extent. Most respondents were able to give much time and effort to the interviews, which were important and useful. However, a few participants gave only brief answers to speed up the interview process, as described and discussed in subsection 3.2.3 Conducting

the interviews. This is acknowledged to be a rather general limitation in interview studies like this (Yin, 2017). In general, the information collected from the study participants provided a sufficient basis to conduct the analysis and answer the research questions.

Language accuracy is an important aspect of the research process affecting the research results. English was the main communication tool used with the interview participants. The English language skills of the researcher and study participants made it possible to collect data in the multicultural work environment from the respondents coming from different parts of the world. However, one limitation is that one interview needed to be conducted in Russian and was later translated into English because of the lack of English skills of the respondent. However, it is important to note that neither the interviewer nor most of the interviewees are native English speakers. Both parties in the interview process had to exert effort to express their ideas and understand each other in English. Consequently, the data produced in the study may include some inaccurate English wording and may have caused some shortages in the research results. However, the research questions could be answered with the collected data. Moreover, the focus of this dissertation was the contents of the topic and not a linguistic analysis. Thus, it can be assumed that the main contents could be detected clearly despite some language challenges.

The study relied on the data coming from multiple views of the organization members. The research topic was analyzed and theorized in light of the selected Aristotelian virtue ethics theory targeting to understand the members' individual experiences and perceptions. Its advantage is the in-depth nature of the research data seeking uniqueness from the studied organizational context; however, less commonality can be reached (Stake, 2010). One avenue for further research is to conduct quantitative investigations concerning the topic and carry out statistical analysis. Such an approach allows for a bigger number of informants to be able to generalize the research results when such generalization would be targeted. Finally, an option would be that future investigations could be conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Such an attempt might create a broader view of the topic.

Lastly, it is essential to emphasize that the research data was collected prior to the post-COVID-19 era. The world has undergone significant transformations since the advent of COVID-19. For instance, the pandemic accelerated the adoption of various digital behaviors, such as remote working, online collaboration tools, virtual team meetings, and others. It is conceivable that such changes may have had an impact on the dynamics of employee empowerment and its associated practices. Therefore, future studies may find it worthwhile to explore the virtues of employee empowerment in the digital era.

6   CONCLUSION

Interest in employee empowerment philosophy and practice has been increasingly spreading in business organizations to better understand the concept's benefits to employees as well as the business organizations themselves and their management (Badjie et al., 2019; Huq, 2016; Tiambo, 2019). However, despite the popularity and benefits of the employee empowerment phenomenon, previous studies have tended to recognize it as a managerial tool to promote the bottom line of the business. Only a few studies (Carter, 2009; Ciulla, 2020) have conceived of employee empowerment as an ethical phenomenon. In response to this gap in prior research concerning organizational life, the present study aimed to examine and understand the employee empowerment phenomenon in organizational life differently and conceptualized it by applying the Aristotelian virtue ethics theory. It was assumed and also shown empirically in this dissertation that employee empowerment can contribute to employee well-being and doing well at work, which are crucial components of human flourishing and a crucial part of virtue ethics (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003; Cameron & Gaza, 2002).

In its theoretical part, this dissertation shed light on the haziness of the concept of organizational virtue. Moreover, in this part, the phenomenon was analyzed from the adopted Aristotelian viewpoint to expound on the ethical nature of the employee empowerment phenomenon. However, the main aim of this dissertation was to conduct an empirical qualitative study among organization members in two multicultural business organizations in Finland. The empirical investigation is among the first studies—or maybe even the first—that focused on the virtuousness of employee empowerment. As its theoretical contribution, this dissertation shows the existence of virtues and related vices for employee empowerment. This way, the study extends our knowledge about and conceptualizes the research phenomenon. Moreover, the research results show that certain organizational practices support the virtues of employee empowerment and that positive effects of the practice of the virtues on the human flourishing of employees can occur.

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As its practical contribution, this dissertation offers ideas and information to business organizations to be virtuous and promote organizational ethics. The study has the potential to enrich the "organizational virtue" language in practice and, as a result, enhance ethical development and outcomes in organizational life. The virtue ethics viewpoint on employee empowerment stresses the importance of the cultivation of virtues (Solomon, 2004, 1992 a, b). Aristotle mentioned during his time that a good upbringing has something to do with ethics. It is suggested that in an organizational context, various types of trainings and educational activities among organization members—both employees and managers—would be crucial to advance the virtues of employee empowerment. Moreover, practical experiences, along with imaginative experiences through literature and the feelings and actions of other people in case studies, can provide reflection and a deeper comprehension of one's actions (Solomon, 1992 b).

Finally, from the societal perspective, this dissertation highlighted its topic in the multicultural organization setting in Finland. Information concerning employee empowerment from an ethical viewpoint is generally needed at the societal level because the immigrant workforce is increasing rapidly in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2019). A multicultural organization can be a challenging environment to practice employee empowerment due to employees' diverse backgrounds and previous socializations, for example, a more autocratic way of acting in their country of origin than in Finland. However, it is fair to say, as also discussed in the chapter concerning research limitations, that this viewpoint was only touched upon superficially in this dissertation. More future studies are needed.

To conclude, it is proposed in this study that specific virtues, namely, information transparency, participation, helpfulness, respectfulness, responsibility, fortitude, and continuous learning, are connected to employee empowerment, and specific organizational practices can advance these virtues. Moreover, to be able to understand the virtues of employee empowerment, knowledge of vices related to the virtues is necessary. Overall, this study contributes to the knowledge and understanding of organizational ethics from the selected viewpoint by offering an in-depth analysis of its topic.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1   Summary of research studies on organizational virtues, listed by year

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
1-2	Solomon (1992 a, b)	Conceptual	Aristotle's ethics in business	Business virtues are one of the dimensions of the Aristotelian approach to business ethics. Business virtues: honesty, fairness, trust and toughness, friendliness, honor, loyalty, shame, competition, caring, compassion, justice. Corporate vices: envy and resentment	Virtuous business, organizational virtues and vices
3	Moberg (1999)	Conceptual	The big five and organizational virtue.	In personality research point to an alchemy of character composed of five elements: extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. This paper surveys this research for its implications to the study of the virtues in organizational ethics. After subjecting each of these five character traits to several tests as to what constitutes a virtue, the empirical evidence supports an organizational virtue of agreeableness and an organizational virtue of conscientiousness. Although the empirical evidence falls short, an argument is mobilized on behalf of an additional organizational virtue of openness to experience.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
4	Kaptein (1999)	Conceptual	Integrity management	An organization's integrity can be determined based on moral virtues: clarity, congruency, feasibility, supportability, transparency, discussability, sanctionability.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
5	Graham (2000)	Conceptual	Civil virtue organizational citizenship behaviour from political philosophy	Civic virtue as a form of OCB is about keeping informed and attending meetings. Such HRM practise as job design, job analysis, selection, training and development, are supervision likely to contribute to civil virtue in organizations.	Conceptualization and development of organizational virtues
6	Moberg (2000)	Conceptual	Role models and moral exemplars for employees to acquire virtues	The moral behaviour of employees should be visible as possible to other employees. There are different practices to do so. For example, Month awards for moral behaviour and job performance to employees. Articles in newsletters or web pages may attract attention to virtuous employees. Employee training could include actual cases of moral acts and virtuous individuals.	Development of organizational virtues
7	Pruzan (2001)	Conceptual	Organizational consciousness: can organizations have values, virtues and visions?	The competency for conscious and national behaviour in organizations is based on certain conditions. All talk of organizational values and ethics is metaphorical, but management can be associated with organizational values, virtues and visions.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
8	Romar (2002)	Conceptual	Confucian ethics in business organizations	Confucian ethics is based on knowledge, hierarchy, individual responsibility and virtues of benevolence, trust and rightness.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
9	Cameron & Caza (2002)	Conceptual	Organizational and leadership virtues and the role of forgiveness	There is the potential impact of organizational virtue of forgiveness on individual and collective outcomes. Leaders have play important role in demonstrating virtuous behaviour	Conceptualization of organizational virtue and its development
10	Beck-Dudley & Hanks (2003)	Qualitative research: interviews, US	On virtue and peace	Organizations and their members should choose to act on the virtue of placableness. Peace is not possible without the cooperation by other people, so all in organizations should understand profits of peace. It enables employees to live fuller lives and a workplace becomes a desirable place to work.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues and their development
11	Whetstone (2003)	Qualitative and quantitative research: interviews, observations, historical and documentary analysis, questionnaire, US	The language of managerial excellence	Practicing managers use fluently virtue language. Virtue language plays important role in the understanding of managerial excellence. Virtues defining the excellent manager depend on the societal, industry, and organizational context.	Development of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
12	Emmons (2003)	Conceptual	Gratitude in organizations	Gratitude is a virtue proving trust and goodwill serving positive organizational performance. This virtue makes people to live harmoniously among others and affect the negotiation of their moral and interpersonal lives.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
13	Cameron, Bright & Caza (2004)	Quantitative research: survey, 804 employees US	The relationships between organizational virtuousness and performance	Virtuousness in organizations play two major functions: an amplifying and buffering functions.	Features of organizational virtues
14-15	Peterson & Seligman (2004); Peterson & Park (2011)	Quantitative and qualitative research: self-report questionnaires, interviews, reports, experiments, observations, US	Character strengths and virtues	The Values in Action classification includes 24 positive traits organized in terms of six virtues.	Moral language of organizational virtues
16	Vera & Rodriguez-Lopez (2004)	Conceptual	Humility in organizations	Humility is a strategic virtue as a Source of Competitive Advantage. The following tools are useful to develop and support strategic humility: exemplar leadership, humility as a part of firm's strategy and culture, practices improving individual humility, practices rewarding humility, rejection of arrogant behaviors.	Conceptualization and development of organization virtue

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
17	Chun (2005)	Qualitative and Quantitative research: the content analysis of 158 Fortune Global 500 firms' ethical values, a survey of 2548 customers and employees, UK	Ethical Character and Virtue of Organizations	Identified 6 dimensions of organizational virtue: integrity, empathy, warmth, courage, conscientiousness and zeal. There is a scale development of the virtue of organizations	Conceptualization and development of organizational virtues.
18	Brigh, Cameron & Caza (2006)	Qualitative and quantitative research: interviews and questionnaire, US	The amplifying and buffering effects of virtuousness in downsized organizations	Virtuousness is an extension of ethics in organizations. Leaders and members of organizations affect virtuous culture by keeping alive amplifying and buffering effects. Discussions of ethics and virtuousness in organizational actions are important,	Features of organizational virtues and their development
19	Lämsä & Pučėtaitė (2006)	Conceptual	Organizational trust and employee's work ethic	Development of trust in organizations can be stimulated by raising the level of work ethic with organizational practices.	Development of organizational virtues
20	Moore & Beadle (2006)	Qualitative research: longitudinal case study, UK	In search of organizational virtue in business: Agents, goods, practices, institutions and environments	A conceptual framework for virtue ethics in organizations developed upon the framework of MacIntyre is applicable to find virtues and practices. It proposes a mapping for virtue in organizations.	Assessment of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
21	Graham & Van Dyne (2006)	Quantitative research: questionnaire of 245 employees and their supervisors, US	Two forms of civic virtue organizational citizenship behavior: gathering information and exercising influence	Two forms of civic virtue are related and also different.	Conceptualization of organizational virtue
22	Manz, Cameron, Manz & Marx (2006)	Conceptual	Values and virtues in organizations	Research summary of the leading scholars takes a step forward in understanding and utilizing the concept of virtues in organizations.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
23	Beadle & Moore (2006)	Conceptual	MacIntyre on virtue and organizations	MacIntyre is clear about the responsibility of individual managers for their own vices. More need to be said about the concept of a practice and the idea of internal goods in order to develop Macintyre's ideas in the context of organizations.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
24	Peterson, & Park (2006)	Conceptual	Character strengths in organizations	Qualities of individuals leading them to desire and pursue good is character. They can be cultivated and developed by institutional practices.	Conceptualization of individual organizational virtues
25	Cameron (2007)	Conceptual	Forgiveness in organizations and its effect on organizational performance	The virtue of forgiveness causes productivity and quality in organizations. Leaders are important to foster and enable forgiveness.	Conceptualization of organizational virtue its features and development

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
26	Kaptein (2008)	Quantitative research: questionnaire	Ethical culture of organizations	Corporate Ethical Virtues Model includes 8 virtues representing the ethical quality of organizational culture: clarity, congruency of supervisors, congruency of management, feasibility, supportability, transparency, discussability, and sanctionability.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
27	Williams (2008)	Conceptual	Responsibility as a virtue	Responsibility as a virtue can be possessed by individuals and organizations. It occupies a distinctive place in the moral needs and achievements of liberal societies.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
28	Alzola (2008)	Conceptual	Debate between dispositionalists and situationists about the existence, status and properties of character traits and their manifestations in human behaviour. Whether virtue ethicists need to abandon the very enterprise of building a character-based moral theory in business ethics and organizational behaviour.	The situationist argument is built on misinterpretation of the experimental evidences. The experimental evidence does not indicate to abandon character and virtues.	Conceptualization of organizational character and virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
29	Dufresne & Offstein (2008)	Conceptual	The virtues of secrecy in organizations	The foundation of all secrets is to protect high value information. It plays pivotal role in the development of strategies, businesses, research and innovation.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
30	Peterson, Park, Hall & Seligman (2009)	Quantitative research: questionnaire of 9803 employees, US	Zest and work	Zest is a trait reflecting a human approach to life with anticipation, energy, and excitement. Dispositional zest predicts general life satisfaction, work satisfaction, and the stance that works is a calling.	Conceptualization of individual organizational virtue
31	Greenwood & Van Buren (2010)	Conceptual	Trustworthiness in the organization–stakeholder relationship	Stakeholders lacking power depend on organizational trustworthiness. This virtue relates to corporate culture, institutional memory and top management orientation and values.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
32	Fiksenbaum, Koyuncu & Burke (2010)	Quantitative research: questionnaires of 286 , Turkey	The relationship between virtues and indicators of work engagement, satisfaction and psychological well-being	The virtues of optimism and proactive behaviour are positively correlated. Female managers and professionals with higher level of virtues would be more engaged with their work.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues and their effect
33	James (2010)	Conceptual	Vices and virtues in capacity development by international NGOs	In order to implement good practice capacity development, organizations need to restrain their vices and cultivate virtues of humility, patience, determination, generosity, self-control and honesty.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
34	Riggio, Zhu, Reina & Maroosis (2010)	Quantitative research: questionnaire of 672 managers	Virtue-based measurement of ethical leadership	Leadership Virtues Questionnaire (LVQ) is a rating instrument for assessing leader virtues. It is proved to be a valuable tool for the assessment and development of leader virtues and ethics.	Measurement of organizational virtues
35	Rahschulte (2010)	Conceptual	Virtues for leading change	The virtue of self-control is a human capacity to manage one's self and others through life, especially in time of change.	Conceptualization of individual organizational virtues
36	Argandona (2011)	Conceptual	Love in firms	Based on an approach to the human action within the organization, love can and must be in firms to perform effectively, to be attractive for stakeholders and act consistently in the long run.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
37	Bright, Alzola, Stansbury & Stavros (2011)	Conceptual	Integrative framework between "positive deviance" (POS) and virtue as a mean between extremes in virtue ethics	Individual disposition avoids deficiency and excess and surpasses expectations of adequacy to achieve excellence. Such individual character can be facilitated by the social context. Specific behaviours of forgiveness and prudence are described as mean between extremes. Organizations help people to become virtuous.	Conceptualization and development of individual organizational virtues
38	Sander-Staudt (2011)	Conceptual	Care as a corporate virtue	It is argued based on a feminist care ethic, care should be understood as a corporate virtue. It is defined as a habitual disposition and practice of individuals with corporate governing powers and reflected in corporate policies. Sub-virtues of care are attention, responsiveness and respect.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
39	Vaccaro & Sison (2011)	Conceptual	Transparency in business: the perspective of catholic social teaching and the "Caritas in veritate"	Transparency is important for the well-being of individuals, organizations and civic society as a whole. Transparency is a corporate virtue that should be operationalized through the balance of information disclosure between two extremes of "full disclosure" and "full opacity".	Conceptualization and development of organizational virtue
40	Young (2011)	Conceptual	The virtues of organizational integrity	Integrity has structural and ethical dimensions. Ethical integration includes humble and heroic virtues. Balanced ethical dissonance (one-plus challenge and support) is suitable leader's approach.	Conceptualization and development of organizational virtues
41	Huhtala, Feldt, Lämsä, Mauno & Kinnunen (2011)	Quantitative research: questionnaire of 902 managers, Finland	Ethical culture of organizations and managers' occupational well-being	The ethical culture of organizations is a very significant aspect of the managers' occupational well-being.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
42	Bright & Exline (2012)	Conceptual	Forgiveness at intrapersonal, relational, collective-group and organizational levels	Forgiveness as a virtue is relevant to be considered in organization studies. This virtue shows how people deal with human-initiated difficulties.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
43	Owens, Rowatt & Wilkins (2011)	Conceptual	The meaning and relevance of humility in organizations	Humility is important trait within organizational contexts. The virtue of humility concerns human limits.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
44	Hackett & Wang (2012)	Conceptual	Aristotelian and Confucian perspectives on virtues and leadership	Six virtues courage, temperance, justice, prudence (by Aristotle), humanity, and truthfulness (by Confucius) were common to all leadership styles.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
45	Bhattacharjee (2012)	Conceptual	Virtues and values of organizational sustainability	It is suggested that organizations have the capacity to move from generation to generation like an immortal soul when the virtues and values become a part of the organizational DNA.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
46	Riivari, Lämsä, Kujala, & Heiskanen (2012)	Quantitative research: a survey of 147 respondents within the public sector in Finland	The ethical culture of organizations and organizational innovativeness	A positive link was found in the ethical culture of an organisation and organisational innovativeness: ethical culture was important to behavioural, strategic and process innovativeness. Within the ethical culture of an organisation, the dimension of the congruency of management in particular had an important role in organisational innovativeness.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues for innovativeness
47	Bragues (2013)	Conceptual	Aristotelian business ethics	An Aristotelian business ethics argues that the money-making in business need to be based on courage, self-restrain, generosity, magnificence, sociability, justice, prudence and wisdom. An educative role of government in the character formation of its citizens affects the lifehood of those virtues.	Organizational virtues and their development.

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
48	Akpotu & Lebari (2013)	Quantitative research: questionnaire	Relational Virtues and Organizational Health in the Nigerian Aviation Sector	Relational virtues (trust, integrity, reciprocity and esprit de corps) are predictors and they relate strongly with organizational health. It is recommended to involve the culture emphasizing relational virtues in the aviation sector.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues and their development.
49	Sadler-Smith (2013)	Conceptual	Organizational Environmental Virtuousness	Organizational environmental virtuousness might incorporate the following environmental virtues: appreciation, attunement, benevolence, endurance, position, and reciprocity.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
50	Owens, Johnson, & Mitchell (2013)	Quantitative and qualitative research: survey, experiment, US	Humility in organizations	The study supports the validity and reliability of an observer-report format humility scale. Humility explains unique variance in performance above and beyond general mental ability, self-efficiency and conscientiousness.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
51	Hartman (2013)	Conceptual	Aristotle's ethics in business	Practices need support and protection from institutions. Internal goods and external ones connect with each other. Organizations thrive to encourage employee's excellence.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
52	Huhtala, Kangas, Lämsä & Feldt (2013)	Quantitative research: questionnaire of 902 respondents, Finland	Ethical leadership and ethical culture	It is important to develop both ethical leadership and the ethical culture of organizations. A virtuous circle: organizations socialize managers in more ethical leaders, and managers affect the organizational culture towards more ethical.	Conceptualization and measurement of organizational virtues.
53	Calkin (2014)	Conceptual	The virtues of commerce of Adam Smith	Adam Smith's main business virtues: self-command, prudence, justice, universal benevolence (social sympathy).	Virtuous business. Cultivation and development of organizational virtues
54	Kangas, Feldt, Huhtala & Rantanen (2014)	Quantitative research: survey, questionnaire, Finland	The factorial validity of the corporate ethical values scale	The 58-item CEV scale is a valid tool to measure organizational culture in different organizations	Development of organizational virtues
55	Vandekerckhove (2014)	Conceptual	Virtues ethics and management	Stakeholder theorists characterize business and management as maintaining cooperation and relational aspects in enterprises. Care, compassion, honesty, and accuracy are some virtues that are relevant to management.	Conceptualization of individual organizational virtues
56	Riivari & Lämsä (2014)	Quantitative research: questionnaire of 719 organization members, Finland	Organizational ethical culture and innovativeness	There are particular virtues of ethical culture that are relevant to different dimensions organizational innovativeness. For example, awareness would be suitable for effective and focused development.	Measurement of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
57	Guitián (2015)	Conceptual	Service as a Bridge between Ethical Principles and Business Practice: A Catholic Social Teaching Perspective	Service is a virtue because it is repeated acts of assistance based on a desire to assist/help others through work. Availability, professionalism, diligence, kindness and courage are virtues involved in service.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
58	Kaptein (2015)	Conceptual	A struggle theory	Personal and organizational combativeness are one of the dimensions of an ethical struggle. This virtues has seven characteristics. Struggling is one way to develop combativeness.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues in relation to innovativeness
59	Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina (2015)	Conceptual	Integrating character in management: virtues, character strengths, and competencies	Moral competencies re virtues practiced in the workplace. There are 16 moral competencies or virtues that can be implemented in organizations through the incorporation of them in competence management.	Conceptualization of organizational virtue
60	Moore (2015)	Conceptual	Corporate character and corporate virtues, MacIntyre	Context-dependent categories of the virtues. A philosophically grounded framework enables to discuss on virtues for business organizations. There is a preliminary taxonomy of corporate virtues.	Conceptualization and development of organizational virtues
61	Schilpzand, Hekman & Mitchell (2015)	Qualitative research: 94 interviews of employees, US	Process model of workplace courage	Two-stage conceptual model of workplace courage resolves major disagreements in the courage literature regarding the antecedents of courageous workplace actions	Conceptualization and development of organizational virtues

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62	Chatterjee, Moody, Lowry, Chakraborty & Hardin (2015)	Quantitative research: a cross-organizational survey of 250 employees, US	Information technology in organizational innovation and organizational virtues	Core organizational IT affordance positively influence organizational virtues which in turn impact organizational improvisational capabilities and innovation.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
63	Bernacchio & Couch (2015)	Conceptual	The virtue of participatory governance: MacIntyre's virtues, practices and institutions schema	Employee participation in governance can play an important role in development of individual virtue and to mitigate the conflict between the individual and common good.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
64	Gotsis & Grimani (2015)	Conceptual	Virtue theory and organizational behaviour: an integrative framework	The article offers a multi-level and multi-foci framework integrating distinct but interrelated research streams on virtue and virtuousness in management studies.	Development of organizational virtues
65	Beadle (2016)	Conceptual	Individual and organizational virtues	Business organizations influence the development of morality of their employees. An appropriate institutional context provides an opportunity to develop virtues.	Conceptualization and development of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
66	Pučėtaitė, Novelskaitė, Lämsä & Riivari (2016)	Quantitative research: surveys, Finalnd and Lithuania	The relationship between ethical organizational culture and organizational innovativness	Ethical organizational culture affects organizational innovativness. Ethical virtues: congruency of management, discucssability and clarity can be explained by institutional context. Tansparency and sanctionability in the Finnish organization and congruency of supervisors, supportability and feasibility in the Lithuanian organization are based on a socio-cultural context.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
67	Ketola (2017)	Conceptual	Leadership and virtuous sustainable development	There is need to share values among business organizations based on the virtues of fortitude, justice, prudence and temperance towards sustainable development. Sustainable development is possible if leaders of companies have a virtuous character.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
68	Hartman (2017)	Conceptual	Aristotle's ethics in business	Virtuous organizations need employees with good character who are able to use their virtues in actions.	Concdptuslization of organizational virtues
69	Beadle (2017 a)	Conceptual	MacIntyre's influence on business ethics	Corporations require moral concern from managers. Virtues can be developed through practices where the quality of work and workers is distinguished. Practices can be identified based on relevant goods, histories and narratives, goods-virtues-practices-institutions framework	Development of organizational virtues at macro-societal level

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
70	Beabout (2017)	Conceptual	Practical wisdom as a virtue integral to excellence in managing an institution	Excellence of managers at planning, leading and organizing in the context of one's institution requires the cultivation of practical wisdom.	Virtuous business. Need for organizational virtues.
71	Dobson (2017)	Conceptual	Capability of business organizations to pursue internal and external goods, VPI model	There are practices facilitating the pursuit of internal and external goods. It is compatible with pursuit of human flourishing. Institutional virtues ("primary virtues") are necessary for survival of practice and virtues related to practices (tertiary virtues") are supported by institutions and not focused on maintaining institutions. Need balance between these virtues. Tertiary virtues must be evaluated from the perspectives of primary virtues.	Virtuous managerial behavior, virtue-inculcating practices in business, pursuit of excellence in business
72	Koehn (2017)	Conceptual	Aesthetic dimensions of Aristotle's virtue ethics	There are four senses of aesthetics: virtues are desirable and inspiring beauties, judgment and perception of a more virtuous person is more correct, a virtuous character is a living harmoniously beautiful work of art, virtuous emotions are part of virtuous actions.	Individual organizational virtue of managers
73	Alzola (2017)	Conceptual	Virtues of business people and good citizens	Different constitutions (government, organization) require own ways of being a good citizen and own ideals of human flourishing.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues.

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74	Crockett (2017)	Qualitative research: interviews from three social ventures in Rwanda.	Conceptual lens for identifying organizational virtue, an empirical tool Interactive Joint Inquiry Exercise (IJIE). The presence of virtue in nonprofit and business organizations in the developing country of Rwanda.	IJIE for identifying organizational virtue seems to work in different environments, the list of internal and external goods are different in organizations, but they share some similarities regarding success, "excellence" comes before "success".	Virtuous business. Cultivation and development of organizational virtues.
75	Weinstein (2017)	Conceptual	Good life, principles and conditions motivating people towards excellence in a commercial society.	Living well and the cultivation of virtues in a commercial society are responsibilities that individuals must understand on their own.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues.
76	Guitián (2017)	Conceptual	Service as a virtue in management and business ethics	Catholic social teaching presents service as virtue that takes place in business organizations and contributes to human flourishing.	The IJIE methodological tool helps to study organizational virtue compatible with MacIntyrian concepts. This tool is designed to measure organizational priorities in internal and external goods.
77	Naughton (2017)	Conceptual	Practical wisdom of business leaders.	Business leaders are not just market technicians, but they are practical wises who can handle practical affairs along with tensions.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
78	Moreno-Salamanca & Melé (2017)	Conceptual	How truthfulness, justice, gratuitousness and other virtues and principles play role in the six groups of HRM practices 1) job design, 2) staff and recruitment, 3) training and development, 4) benefits and compensation, 5) performance appraisal and promotion and 6) layoff	Christina thought about people's dignity, rights, and human development requires virtues to reach within organizations. Justice and truthfulness are essential to assure certain minimums and courage is necessary to carry out painful decisions.	Organizational virtue
79	Chua (2017)	Conceptual	The virtue of eutrapelia	Eutrapelian participation of God's play is a new way of being virtuous for business professionals.	Individual organizational virtue of business leaders
80	Gregg (2017)	Conceptual	New classical natural law theory (NNLT) , its application to discussions of business, economy and the moral life, its help in potential sound moral reasoning, promotion of virtue and all-round human flourishing in business.	Based on NNLT perspective the legitimacy of business is to promote integral human flourishing. Organizational owners, managers and members are responsible to contribute in an environment where work is understood as a good in itself.	Role of organizational virtues in the conduction of HRM practices ethically. Virtuous business.

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
81	Pinto (2017)	Conceptual	A theory of the firm based on the concept of the common good along with the moral and political philosophy of John Finnis.	Firms are comminutes of cooperative work towards the satisfaction of needs. Therefore, human work might be seen as a virtue. The firm's common good might be defined as a community of cooperation, of virtuous work and of friendship.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues.
82	Mangini (2017)	Conceptual	The natural law of thinking (NNLT) proposes the list of basic goods that are not enough for satisfactory ethical approach in relation to the full potential of virtues. Virtues for business ethics.	The ethical potential of NNLT in business ethics is limited because of the neglection of the combined work of practical wisdom and the virtues suitable for the individual good life.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues.
83	Jackson (2017)	Conceptual	The legitimacy of global economic governance in terms of new natural law theory.	The rule of law is important to help people and organizations to exercise virtue in the context of contemporary global economic governance.	Organizational virtue

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
84	Vogt (2017)	Conceptual	Business, capabilities theory, and the virtue of justice.	Capabilities theory provides a vision of human flourishing under the inspiration by Aristotle. Hence, A good human life includes freedom to cultivate and exercise valuable capabilities. A just society may foster suitable conditions to develop human capabilities. Businesses have power to establish the vision of justice in and out of their organizations. For this purpose, the ends of business and good management must include the goal to expand human capabilities and the common good.	Individual organizational virtues
85	Kulkarni (2017)	Conceptual	Integration of Amartya Sen's capabilities approach (SCA) with virtue ethics to examine normative core of a firm's enterprise strategy.	In relation to the notion "justice as a virtue", firms need to provide justice (freedom) to its stakeholders to develop their capabilities and well-being.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues
86	Kelly (2017)	Conceptual	Capabilities theory and virtuous managers	Capabilities theory clarifies that certain excellences (virtues) are important for virtuous managers like justice, fidelity, courage, humility and prudence.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues.

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
87	Lai (2017)	Conceptual	Reliability in a Confucian account of character	Confucian business ethics requires businesses to keep continuing vigilance on their undertakings. A deep sustained ethical commitment motivates vigilance to arise. In this sense reliability is a central part of virtue involved in the ethical orientations of people.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues.
88	Chan (2017)	Conceptual	Features of the Confucian virtue of humility and its contribution to virtuous leadership	The virtue of humility is not enough for efficient leadership, but it is an integrated part of it. The Confucian virtue of humility corresponds to some extend to the attributes of humble leadership.	Individual organizational virtues
89	Romar (2017)	Conceptual	Importance of relationship with customers in order to bring products to market.	Confucian virtue ethics focuses primary on the cardinal virtue of benevolence might be useful for business organizations perform product distribution	Individual organizational virtues
90	Kim, Mondejar & Chu (2017)	Conceptual	Filial piety is a foundational virtue in the Confucian tradition.	Filial piety is a moral virtue that is significant in its application to the ethics of business management.	Organizational-level virtues of leadership
91	Sadler-Smith (2017)	Conceptual	Moral intuition	Moral intuition, as the proper reaction to ethical events can be considered as a virtue, but not always.	Marco-societal organizational virtue
92	Miller (2017)	Conceptual	The psychology of virtue	Conscientiousness is a virtue relevant to the business community	Organizational virtue
93	Robinson (2017)	Conceptual	Possession of virtues and vices	It is debatable matter if anyone possesses virtues and vices. We must be mindful of if virtues and vices are used normatively or descriptively in business ethics.	Individual organizational virtue

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
94	Crossan, Mazutis, Reno & Rea (2017)	Conceptual	Leadership virtues and character	Leadership character framework including 11 dimensions of leadership character for effective leadership in practice.	Organizational virtue
95	Bright (2017)	Conceptual	Positive Organizational Scholarship and virtues ethics in business organizations	Positive social science and virtue ethics understand virtue as an attribute of excellence in individuals and organizations. Integration of both domains can influence each other.	Organizational virtues
96	Sekerka, Comer & Godwin (2017)	Conceptual	Professional moral courage (PMC)	If employees are expected to do what is right when they face ethical challenges they need PMC. Emotional signaling, reflective pause, self-regulation, and moral preparation are moral competencies supporting moral courage. Balanced experiential inquiry help organizations to cultivate those moral competences.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
97	Caza (2017)	Conceptual	Organizational virtue from positive organizational scholarship's empirical research perspective.	Organizational virtue refers to the virtuous characteristic embodied in organizations as collectives. Mechanisms of buffering and amplifying show relationship between organizational virtue and virtuous outcomes.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
98	Sandelands (2017)	Conceptual	The virtue of human being. The perfection and flourishing of human being in business.	Business organizations are different in their support the acts by which we are perfected and flourish and personhood of their members because human being itself is the virtue of business. Hence, business leaders need to minister employees to be more fully human.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues.

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
99	Moore (2017)	Conceptual	Virtues and vices of organizations and of individuals with them.	There is the interrelationship between individuals and organizational virtues. Understanding organizations in this way brings possibility to reform organizations to promote the common good and possession and exercise of virtue.	Conceptualization of organizational virtue and its outcomes.
100	Manz, Marx, Manz & Dillon (2017)	Qualitative research: a case study of CEO Dean Cycon and his exemplary organization Dean's Beans Organic Coffee Company	A Justice-based virtuous organization	The case discloses lessons about the positive relevance of virtuous organizational practice to moral imperatives. The language and activities of traditional business can a task for a justice-based leader. Social justice, sustained commitment, courage, integrity and wisdom are additional virtues for leaders aiming to bring social justice to economic life and business organizations.	Organizational virtue and its development
101	Weaver (2017)	Conceptual	Organizations and the development of virtue	Relationship quality, behavioral modeling, discourse practices, and opportunities to practice are factors of organizational influences on virtue.	Organizational virtues
102	Whetstone (2017)	Conceptual	Development of a virtuous organizational culture according to an Aristotelian-Thomistic ideas	According to an Aristotelian-Thomistic understanding, in order to develop virtuous culture in organizations need to focus on: the aretaic purpose or common good of flourishing, the exemplary role and virtuous character of leaders, and the exercise of practical wisdom by organizational members.	Individual organizational virtue of leaders

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103	Neubert (2017)	Conceptual	Teaching and training virtue in the classroom of universities and organizational workplaces	There are seven primary virtues (prudence, temperance, justice, courage, faith, hope, love) and their behavioral measures to use in teaching and training. Pedagogical approaches promote virtues in universities and organizations.	Development of organizational virtue
104	Malloch (2017)	Conceptual	Teaching virtues to business professionals	Leaders must consider traditional higher learning from outside of organizations rooted in the teaching of virtues and practical wisdom in order to cope with learning in the Knowledge Age. Executives want and learn more in dialogue with fellow peers.	Organizational virtues ad their development.
105	Bosch (2017)	Conceptual	Role of intellectual virtues in decision-making	Intellectual virtues related to knowledge and reason are crucial in the decision-making process	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues
106	Bhuyan (2017)	Conceptual	Role of character in decision-making and virtue development	Character plays a very important role in ethical decision making. The character development is a continuous process from the experience we undergo. By this way, we perfect our moral sensibility and moral reasoning. Business environment emphasizes certain virtues relevant to the profession.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues
107	Aguirre-Y-Luker, Hyman, Kevin & Shanahan (2017)	Conceptual	Virtue ethics measures for business academicians and practitioners	There are different developed virtue ethics measures in a business context. However, we still need to clarify virtues and reach an agreement how to measure them.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
108	Morse & Cohen (2017)	Conceptual	Moral character traits and their influence in the prediction of moral and immoral organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) and counterproductive work behaviours (CWB).	In contradiction with situationist perspectives and psychology, it is argued that moral character exists and determines workplace behaviours. Honesty-humility, conscientiousness and agreeableness key personal dimensions influencing CWB and OVB.	Cultivation and development of organizational virtues
109	Alzola (2017)	Conceptual	The explanatory and predictive powers of virtues in the workplace	Virtues can be meaningfully and successful used to explain and predict behaviour. Virtue attribution is aimed at describing how a person is different from others, at explaining a person's beliefs, desires, emotions, motivations, and behaviour, at predicting what a person would do, and at assessing moral qualities of a person.	Measurement of organizational virtues
110	Fernando & Chowdhury (2017)	Conceptual	Cultivating virtuousness and self-actualization at work	The virtue of courage is important for employees to choose who they to become and to work virtuously in a manner consistent with that choice.	Conceptualization of individual organizational virtues
111	Beadle (2017 b)	Conceptual	Virtues and meaningful work	A virtue-informed conception of human agency invites to think seriously about the design of work that may encourage the development of virtues and human goods.	Conceptualization of individual organizational virtues
112	Hamilton (2017)	Conceptual	Corporate codes and virtues	Corporate codes is used effectively are an important tool to promote more virtuous business environment.	Conceptualization of individual organizational virtues.

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
113	Dyck (2017)	Conceptual	Spirituality, virtue and management	There is a qualitative difference between the virtues associated with conventional management (utilitarian consequentialist philosophy) and radical management (virtue theory). Spiritual people are more likely to practice radical management.	Development of organizational virtues
114	Monge & Naughton (2017)	Conceptual	The divided life is a danger to virtuous work	All level managers should recover the virtue of integrity by reunification of split identities.	Development of organizational virtues
115	Ciulla (2017)	Conceptual	Morality in the miniature	Leaders and followers need to do both reinforce each other's good habits (virtues) and take not to destroy each other's virtues. It is useful to study leaders and followers how they engaged their virtues in routine practices and interactions.	Development of organizational virtues
116	Hidalgo (2017)	Conceptual	The virtue of loyalty and leadership.	Loyalty for leaders might be both virtue and vice depends on the background institutional context.	Development of organizational virtues
117	Bauman (2017)	Conceptual	Virtues and virtuous motivation of business leaders.	Virtuous leaders (justice, courage, temperance, practical wisdom) walking on their virtuous path create a space for followers to pursue virtues.	Assessment of organizational virtues
118	Preti (2017)	Conceptual	The role of moral imagination in the development of character	Moral imagination is a catalyst for developing excellence in character. It helps business leaders to be oriented to human welfare and flourishing.	Conceptualization of individual organizational virtues of leaders
119	Hajduk & Schank (2017)	Conceptual	Corporate governance: compliance and integrity	Integrity is an essential complement to compliance. Organizational integrity can be achieved by "discursive infrastructure".	Development of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
120	Arjoon (2017)	Conceptual	Corporate governance: virtues, compliance and integrity	More recently, approaches to corporate governance have recognized the need and critical role of ethics in restoring confidence in the fairness and integrity of markets in recognizing the deficiencies in motivating accountability, responsiveness, responsibility, and transparency in the practice of good governance.	Development of organizational virtues
121	Meglich (2017)	Conceptual	People management from the perspectives of virtue ethics	It is possible for HR professionals and HR practices to provide a framework for organizations and their members to act virtuously and to develop true "virtue"	Development of organizational virtues
122	McGhee & Grant (2017)	Conceptual	A virtue ethics approach to knowledge management	Knowledge management in the light of virtue ethics contributes to eudaimonic outcomes along with the encouragement of appropriate organizational cultures and management practices developing certain epistemic virtues.	Development of organizational virtues
123	Karakas, Sarigollu & Uygur (2017)	Qualitative research: interviews of 58 managers, Turkey	A multidimensional framework based on the concept of moral imagination for analysing and capturing diverse virtues in contemporary Turkish organizations.	There is an inventory of Turkish organizational virtues, which can be associated with different forms of virtuous organizing. These nine forms are based on integrity, affection, diligence, inspiration, wisdom, trust, gratefulness, justice, and harmony.	Development of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
124	Kaptein (2017)	Conceptual	Aristotle's doctrine of the mean and the corporate ethical virtues model	The corporate ethical virtues model defines the mean and the corresponding vices for each seven virtues. Patronization, pompousness, zealotry, overexposure, talkativeness, and oppressiveness are excessive vices increase the possibility of unethical behaviour of employees.	Development of organizational virtues
125	Kangas, Muotka, Huhtala, Mäkikangas & Feldt (2017)	Quantitative research: questionnaires 2192 employees from one public sector city organization that included 246 different work units	Is the ethical culture of the organization associated with sickness absence? A multilevel analysis in a public sector organization.	At the individual level, perceptions of a strong ethical organizational culture were associated with less sickness absences after controlling for the background factors. This link was not found at the work-unit level. The findings indicate that an ethical organizational culture plays a significant role in enhancing employee well-being measured as sickness absence.	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on organizational ethics
126	Sison, Ferrero & Guitián (2018)	Conceptual	Virtue ethics in business, Aristotle	Virtues may be found in different dispositions: actions, habits, character, and lifestyles. Practical wisdom at the heart of virtues.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues
127	Hühn, Meyer & Racelis (2018 a)	Conceptual	The virtues of modern leaders	Leaders need to practice the following virtues: diligence, professionalism, competence, courage, justice, temperance and sobriety, honesty, humility, prudence, love kindness and magnanimity.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
128	Pinto-Garay & Bosch (2018)	Conceptual	Virtues in human resource management	HR principles to develop a virtuous organizations: job security, selective hiring, self-managed teams, extensive training, reduction of status differences, information sharing, high compensation contingent on organizational performance.	Identification of individual organizational virtues
129	Ogunyemi & Hamilton (2018)	Conceptual	Virtues in corporate legal practice	The adaptation of "compliance plus integrity" practice fosters the development of virtues necessary for the eudaimonia of internal and external stakeholders.	Development of organizational virtues
130	Sison & Hühn (2018)	Conceptual	Practical wisdom in corporate governance	Practical wisdom is crucial for such activities as leadership, management and governance. In order to institutionalize practical wisdom in governance there is need to embody in individual biographies and in community narratives or traditions.	Development of organizational virtues
131	Kangas, Kaptein, Huhtala, Lämsä, Pihlajasaari & Feldt (2018)	Quantitative research: questionnaires	Why Do Managers Leave Their Organization? Investigating the Role of Ethical Organizational Culture in Managerial Turnover.	Those managers who stayed in their organization perceived their ethical culture to be stronger than those in turnover groups, by nurturing ethical virtues an organization can decrease job changes and encourage managers and supervisors to want to remain in their organization	Validation of the shortened CEV scale (the eight-factor model of the scale) for assessing virtues at the organizational level

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
132	Huhtala, Kangas, Kaptein & Feldt (2018)	Quantitative research: two survey studies of two independent groups (managers and school psychologists), Finland	The shortened Corporate Ethical Virtues scale: Measurement invariance and mean differences across two occupational groups.	We found that despite the contextual differences, the shortened scale measures the eight dimensions of organizational ethical virtues, as intended	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues in periods of uncertainty
133	Riivari & Lämsä (2019)	Qualitative research: 39 interviews, Finland	Organizational ethical virtues of innovativeness	Organizational ethical virtues of feasibility, dicussability, supportability, and congruency of management are supportive for innovativeness.	Development of individual organizational virtues
134	Zhu, Yang & Chen (2020)	Quantitative research: total of 862 questionnaires	Organizational virtues and their influence on constructive behaviour	it was found that organizational virtue positively influenced employees' constructive talk behavior; constructive responsibility perception partially mediated the positive relationship between organizational virtue and employees' constructive talk behavior; proactive personality strengthened the positive influence of organizational virtue and constructive responsibility perception, and also moderated the influence of organizational virtue on employees' constructive talk behavior through constructive responsibility perception.	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on constructive behavior

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
135	Constantinescu & Kaptein (2020)	Conceptual	Virtue Ethics and CSR: The Two Sides of Sustainable Organizational Performance	Organizations need to address Corporate Ethical Virtues and CSR in order to reach a desirable level of long-term, sustainable performance, with the good news that both can be improved through ongoing practice.	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on organizational performance
136	Banker & Bhal (2020)	Qualitative research: In-depth interviews of 10 middle and senior managers	This article examines how practicing managers construe the concept of compassion and the logics that they use to label their organizations as compassionate or otherwise	Data revealed two roles that respondents play while conceptualizing compassion. These roles are: receiver and giver; both having uniquely different views and perceptions. Based on these two views, we established an operational definition of compassion for business organizations. Excessive focus on short-term goals in an organization acts as a major pressure leading to low level of compassion, and these problems can be addressed through empathetic leadership practices.	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on CSR

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
137	Prijić Samaržija, (2020)	Conceptual	Epistemic Virtues of Institutions. Institutions in Action: The Nature and the Role of Institutions in the Real World	(i) as a socialentity, an institution is an autonomous collective epistemic agent (ii) being an epistemic agent, the intellectual virtues (vices) displayed by institutions are identical to those displayed by individual agents, (iii) the virtues (vices) displayed by an institution as a whole should not be reduced to the virtues (vices) of its virtuous (vicious) members, that is, a virtuous institution is not (necessarily) an institution of virtuous individuals (and vice versa). An epistemically virtuous institution is an institution which applies scientific knowledge (knowledge about what is real) in everyday life (knowledge about how to act) in order to improve the quality of overall life for all (knowledge about what is good or bad for citizens)	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on performance and employee well-being
138	Chatterjee, Chatterjee, & Chatterjee (2021)	Quantitative research: survey	Influence of Organizational Virtues on Information Technology Security Policy Compliance	Our theory considers four cardinal organizational virtues: wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance. We propose that an organization that develops, practices, and implements these virtues achieves greater compliance with IT security policies.	Conceptualization and development of organizational virtues for innovativeness

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
139	Constantinescu & Kaptein (2021)	Conceptual	This article advances research on moral responsibility in organizations by drawing on both philosophical virtue ethics grounded in the Aristotelian tradition and Positive Organizational Scholarship research concerned with virtuousness	Develop a two-level account of moral responsibility in organizations that connects individual and organizational moral responsibility through the concepts of virtue and virtuousness. This is further operationalized into practical guidelines to ascribe degrees of individual and organizational blame, which can be used as a tool by managers, policymakers, or industry regulators	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on IT security policy compliance in organizations
140	Jancenelle (2021)	Quantitative research	Executive cues of organizational virtue and market performance: Creating value during times of earnings uncertainty	Organizational virtues are recognized to create value during periods of earnings uncertainty	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on the relationship between leadership and human resource management (HRM) practices
141	Toro-Arias, Ruiz-Palomino, & del Pilar Rodríguez-Córdoba (2021)	Quantitative research	Measuring ethical organizational culture: validation of the spanish version of the shortened corporate ethical virtues model	Showed a good level of reliability and validity of the Spanish version of the shortened Corporate Ethical Virtues (CEV) model developed by Kaptein in 2008	Conceptualization and development of compassion

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
142	Salonen, Leino, Lepistö, Kaunonen, Helminen et al., (2021)	Quantitative research: survey	The Ethical Organizational Culture of University Hospitals in Finland	The highest ethical culture was rated for clarity, congruency of supervisors, and discussion ability, while congruency of senior management, supportability, and transparency were rated the lowest	Validation of CEV by Kaptein
143	Zhu, Yang & Chen (2022)	Quantitative research: total of 862 questionnaires from employees of state-owned enterprises, private enterprises and other enterprises and institutions	The Influence of Organizational Virtues on Employees' Constructive Behavior: The Role of Constructive Responsibility Perception and Proactive Personality	It was found that organizational virtue positively influenced employees' constructive talk behavior; constructive responsibility perception partially mediated the positive relationship between organizational virtue and employees' constructive talk behavior; proactive personality strengthened the positive influence of organizational virtue and constructive responsibility perception, and also moderated the influence of organizational virtue on employees' constructive talk behavior through constructive responsibility perception	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on organizational moral responsibility
144	Setyoko & Kurniasih (2022)	Quantitative research: online questionnaire	The Role of perceived organizational support (POS), organizational virtuousness (OV) on performance and employee well-being (EWB) of non-profit organizations in the post-pandemic period.	Organizational virtuousness (OV) has a positive and significant effect on performance and employee well-being	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on constructive behavior, work engagement, and self-worth integration among employees.

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
145	Martin (2022)	Quantitative research: survey questionnaires UK	Organizational virtues and organizational anthropomorphism	Firstly, high evaluations of Empathy influence evaluations of Courage through a halo effect. Secondly, heuristic evaluation of the firm's CSR practice also influences perceptions of Empathy and Courage. The paper also includes a discussion of the critique of organizational virtues by virtue ethicists in an effort to advance the dialogue between the two traditions	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on ethical organizational culture
146	Coura, Demo & Scussel (2022 a)	Quantitative research: a survey with 673 employees in Brazil	Leadership and Human Resources Management Practices: The mediating role of organizational virtues.	Findings show that organizational virtues mediate the relationship between leadership and HRM practices. We confirm the positive effect of leadership on organizational virtues, the influence of organizational virtues on HRM practices, and the impact of leadership on HRM practices.	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on ethical behavior
147	Coura, Costa, Demo, Fogaça & Scussel (2022 b)	Conceptual	Scientific itineraries on organizational virtues	A panorama of the scientific publications on organizational virtues. Essentially, the interest of the researchers in the subject was increased, given their strategic nature for the organizations, as well as the dominance of American, English and Irish production.	Conceptualization of organizational virtues

N	Author(s) and year	Research design (methodology and sample characteristics)	Research focus	Findings	Outcome(s)
148	Riivari & Heikkinen (2022)	Mixed methods approach: questionnaires and interviews with representatives from Finland's top sports organizations	Virtuousness in Sports Organizations: Examination of Ethical Organizational Culture and Its Virtues	The findings show that the questionnaire participants evaluated the perceptions of ethical organizational culture of the Finnish top sports organizations as being quite ethical. The findings also show that the ethical organizational virtues of transparency, discussability, congruency of management, and supportability have a special role in maintaining and developing but also challenging organizational ethics in sports organizations.	Examining the potential benefits of organizational virtues on well-being

APPENDIX 2   List of virtues in organizations in the alphabetic order and their
definitions

	Name of Virtues	Definition
1	Achievability	formulating achievable expectations for employees regarding… a responsible choice…viv-a-vis the organizations, within the organization, and on behalf of the organization (Kaptein, 1999, p. 630)
2	Accuracy	Vandekerckhove (2014)
3	Agreeableness	trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, tendernindness (Moberg, 1999, p. 250); refers to the extent to which an individual is altruistic, modest, trusting, cooperative, and good natured refers to the extent to which an individual is altruistic, modest, trusting, cooperative, and good natured (Morse & Cohen, 2017)
4	Appreciation	one of organizational environmental virtues, "positive, affect-laden behavioral connection with the biosphere and expression of "friendship" with the natural world in organizational settings…" (Sadler-Smith, 2013, p. 140)
5	Art (or Technique)	is the capacity to perform a practical activity well (Bosch 2017, p 710)
6	Attunement	one of organizational environmental virtues, the adjustment of individuals' drives and emotions in eco-socially constructive ways (Sadler-Smith, 2013, p. 139)
7	Beauty	reflects exceptional craft skills (humor, interpersonal communication, organizational politics, or something else) that enable small things to work perfectly and beautifully (Taylor, 2012, p. 4)
8	Benelovence	one of organizational environmental virtues, "active and consistent concern for integrity and stability of the whole…" (Sadler-Smith, 2013, p. 137)
9	Care	…a morally admirable trait conductive to individual and social flourishing, that inclines business agents to care-about and fir others (Sander-Staudt, 2011, p. 259)
10	Civic virtue	responsible participation in the political life of the organization (Graham, 1986, p. 11). There are two forms of civic virtue OCB (or two types of responsible participation): gathering information (prosocial and cooperative behaviors) and exercising influence (change-oriented intention to make positive organizational contributions) (Graham & Van Dyne, 2006, pp. 91-92); both forms of civic virtue are proactive and promotive (Graham & Van Dyne, 2006, p. 103)

	Name of Virtues	Definition
11	Clarity	providing clear expectations for employees with regard to making a responsible choice… viv-a-vis the organizations, within the organization, and on behalf of the organization (Kaptein, 1999, p. 630); concrete and understandable expectations regarding the conduct of employees (Huhtala et al., 2011, p. 232); an organization needs to make a clear distinction between ethical and unethical aspects of behavior for employees (Riivari, et al., 2014, p. 3); clarity is employees' ability to understand expected behavior (Kaptein, 2008)
12	Coherence	as one of the virtues of the structural form of organizational integrity, it refers to fitness of everything together (Young, 2011, p. 6)
13	Combativeness	this quality makes organizations able to struggle and it has the following six characteristics: clarity, role modeling, achievability, commitment, transparency, discussability, sanctionability (Kaptein, 2015, pp. 8-9)
14	Community	…we are…members of organized groups, with shared histories and established practices governing everything from eating and working to worshiping (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 146)
15	Compassion	organizational members care about each other through the common acts of compassion and concern (Williams & Waters, 2015, p. 4); kindness, contentment, satisfaction (James, 2010, p. 21); …exists when members of a system collectively notice, feel, and respond to pain experienced by members of that system (Kanov et al., 2004, p. 808)
16	Competence	(Hühn, Meyer & Racelis, 2018)
17	Competition	People act in order to impress and win the respect of their peers, not just in order to "beat" them (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 225)
18	Congruency of management	extent to which the senior management behaves in accordance with ethical expectations (Huhtala et al., 2011, pp. 232-233) as an example for employees to support these ethical expectations in organizations (Riiivari et. al., 2014, p. 3); congruency focuses on management's ability to provide leadership matching expectations with consistent signals (Kaptein, 2008)
19	Congruency of supervisors	the extent to which supervisors act as a good example in terms of ethics (Huhtala et al., 2011, p. 232); as an example for employees to support these ethical expectations in organizations (Riiivari et. al., 2014, p. 3)

	Name of Virtues	Definition
20	Conscientiousness	is associated with organizational values of reliability, hardworking, security, and proudness (Chun, 2005, p. 278); competence, order, dutifulness, achievement, self-discipline, deliberation (Moberg, 1999, p. 250). refers to the extent to which an individual is responsible, hardworking, organized, goal directed, and dependable. Morse & Cohen (2017)
21	Consistency	as one of the virtues of the structural form of organizational integrity, it means reliability (Young, 2011, p. 6); ..providing consistent and unambiguous expectations by, for example, ensuring managers set a good example…(Kaptein, 1999, p. 630)
22	Constancy	the exercise of similar virtues across the time (Moore & Beadle, 2006, p. 383); or perseverance, resistance, resilience, patience, "it is the ability to carry out commitments made and tasks assigned, even if the task is heavy and protracted, and the ability to overcome the difficulties that may arise" (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 168)
23	Courage	is associated with organizational values of ambitions, achievement-orientation, leadership, and competency (Chun, 2005, p. 278); the resistance to corruptions of institutions, and the minimization of environmental damaging effects on its character (Moore & Beadle, 2006, p. 375); it is about taking risk in the issues of investment and the acceptance of possible loses (Moore, 2015, p. 106); "…action involves voluntarily pursuing a socially worthy goal despite the risk that accompanies and the fear produced by a challenging event" (Schilpzand et al., 2015, p . p. 54); or fortitude, bravery, magnanimity, ambition, audacity, initiative, "It is the willingness to set difficult and costly goals that are morally beneficial for the organization, and try to get them to face difficulties with determination" (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 167)
24	Determination	diligence, passion, courage (James, 2010, p. 21)
25	Dignity	the treatment of all people in organizations as individuals regardless of their position (Park & Peterson, 2003, p. 44)
26	Diligence	(Hühn, Meyer & Racelis, 2018)
27	Discussability	building discussable atmosphere among employees themselves and between employees and their managers regarding conflicts/failures in expectations (Kaptein, 1999, p. 630); opportunities to discuss on ethical issues (e.g. ethical dilemmas, unethical behavior) with colleagues by employees (Riivarri et. al., 2014, p. 3; Huhtala et al., 2011, p. 233) in order to receive feedback and support (Riivari & Lämsä 2019)
28	Emotional Stability	refers to the extent to which an individual is moody, anxious, irritable, and emotionally vulnerable (Morse & Cohen, p. 764)

	Name of Virtues	Definition
29	Empathy	might be characterized by "…amiability, attentiveness, caring, compassion, contentment, generosity, graciousness, humility, and (willingness to) trust" (Shanahan & Hyman, 2003, p. 204); is associated with organizational values of concern, reassurance, supportiveness, and sympathy (Chun, 2005, p. 278); it is about amiability, affability, gentleness, meekness, cordiality, ability to serve others, be friendly, perceiving others feelings and emotions, concern for others interest, ensure good relations (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 167)
30	Endurance	one of organizational environmental virtues, "sustained proenvironmental engagement in the face of challenges, setbacks, and temptations…" (Sadler-Smith, 2013, p. 140)
31	Environmental responsibility	or sustainability, stewardship, the willingness to care and properly manage the natural and environmental resources (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 167)
32	Esprit De Corps	links to a friendly climate with shared bond between the internal organization members and the external constituent that is favorable to achieve organizational goals (Akpotu & Dumka, 2013, p. 62)
33	Eutrapelia	…to participate in God's play (Chua, 2017, p. 234)
34	Excellence	…is a word of great significance and indicates a sense of mission, a commitment beyond profit potential and the bottom line. It is a word that suggests not only 'doing well' but also 'doing good'; …emphasis on excellence also presupposes a particular sense of justice, a meritocracy, in which merit-excellence is rewarded in the marketplace (Solomon, 1992, p. 153)
35	Extraversion	refers to the extent to which an individual is outgoing, assertive, energetic, sociable, and talkative. Morse & Cohen (2017)
36	Faith	Faith is acting based on trust. p. 649 Neubert (2017)
37	Fairness	…equitable rules governing reward and punishment and the means for consistently enforcing them (Park & Peterson, 2003, p. 44)
38	Feasibility	…organizational conditions that enable employees to follow normative requirements (Huhtala et al., 2011, p. 233); Feasibility is employees' ability to meet ethical obligations (Kaptein, 2008)
39	Fidelity	…keeping promises and maintaining specific responsibilities in relationship with stakeholders (Kelly, 2017)

	Name of Virtues	Definition
40	Filial piety	helps us to feel and express deference and concern for those who have nurtured and cared for us during the most vulnerable period of our lives (Kim, Mondejar & Chu, 2017, p. 471)
41	Forgiveness	is quick forgiveness of mistakes and a chance for learning (Williams & Waters, 2015, p. 4); …is a specialized form of relational forgiveness in which an organizational system reacts to offensive or harmful human activity (Bright et al., 2011, p. 238); an adaptation of a positive, prosocial, learning oriented response to the violation by organizational members (Cameron, 2007, p. 132); it is both the collective rejection of justified resentment, bitterness, and blame and a positive approach in reply to harm or damage (Cameron & Caza, 2002, p. 39)
42	Fortitude	to have courage to do good (Ketola, 2017, p. 1369)
43	Friendliness	…being a friend than to any superficial feeling or expression of friendship. (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 218)
44	Generosity	is a sacrifice (James, 2010, p. 21); or liberality, sharing material goods with those who need them (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 167)
45	Gratitude	…is a virtue that characterizes people who are well fit to living harmoniously among others; it is central to how people negotiate their moral and interpersonal lives (Emmons, 2003, p. 93); the appreciation of what is received from others and society (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 167)
46	Holism	..the great virtue in the notion of the stakeholder.. (Solomon, 1992, p. 180) that reflects the understanding about the existence of affected and effective groups
47	Honesty	openness, an purity (James, 2010, p. 21); or integrity, truthfulness, transparency, it is to be straight, coherent, and truthful in thoughts, words and actions (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 168)
48	Honor	…a sense of belonging, a sense of membership, a sense of self that is inseparable from one's group identity (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 221)
49	Hope	an optimistic believe and expectation for the best future (Snyder et al., 2002)
50	Humanity	…mutual care and concern (Park & Peterson, 2003, p. 44); or self-assessment, modesty, It is the knowledge of one's own strengths and weaknesses and the continued attitude to be valued appropriately in accordance with those abilities (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 168)

	Name of Virtues	Definition
51	Human being	following the philosopher Aristotle, to identify our human being with the ability to know and to love (Sandelands, 2017, p. 581)
52	Humble virtues	as the virtues of ethical organizational integrity form a new paradigm of leadership – "Leading with Soul", instead of heroic leadership and cover faith, hope, and love/charity (Young, 2011, p. 6)
53	Humility	includes the humility of strategic leaders (in particular the CEO), the humility of individual organizational members, and the development of humility in firms' cultures, systems, procedures, and structures (Vera & Rodrigues-Lopez, 2004, p. 396); as one of the core "organizational virtues" is important in the formulation of the moral basis of organizations (Cameron et al., 2003); modest behavior, selflessness, giving of respect (James, 2010, p. 21); There are three most prevalent dimensions of humility: (1) enables people to evaluate strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats of interpersonal resources, (2) entails to view others in an appreciative, nonthreatened way, (3) reflects openness to new ideas, information, and advice (Owens et. al., 2011, p. 262)
54	Humility-Modesty	openness to learning through the self-acceptance of own strengths and weaknesses and the maintaining of a tempered perspectives of ourselves (Bright at el., 2006, p. 253)
55	Incorruptibility	ncludes such characteristics as honor, honesty, and integrity (Shanahan & Hyman, 2003, p. 205)
56	Inspiration	(Cameron et al., 2004, 2011; Payne et al., 2011)
57	Integrity	organizations are pervaded by honesty, trustworthiness, honor (Williams & Waters, 2015, p. 4); sincerity, and social responsibility (Chun, 2005, p. 278); integrity represents the integration of one's roles and responsibilities and the virtues defined by them (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 328); the exercise of similar virtues across different practices (Moore & Beadle, 2006, p. 383); as a component of relational virtues is important for some measure of discipline and good conduct that work members can rely on as strength for keeping fate with the goals of the organization (Akpotu & Dumka, 2013, pp. 61, 65)
58	Judgment	good judgment means making the best decision available, which means making the decision in the right way (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 179)

	Name of Virtues	Definition
59	Justice	is needed for the appropriate distribution of external goods, the evaluation of own advantages in comparison with the wider community, the fosterage of own excellence, and the creation of internal harmony through the acceptance of the justice workplace (Klein 1988, p. 60 cited in Moore & Beadle, 2006, p. 375); …pursuing stakeholder interests" (Moore, 2015, p. 106); or equity, fairness, it is the permanent attitude of giving to each one what it is due (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 168)
60	Kindness	empathetic concern for others (Solomon, 1998) through compassion (Bright at el., 2006, p. 253)
61	Love	as a virtue moves us to do (aid, voluntary action) good for another person and lives in relationships with others (Argandona, 2011, p. 77, 82). There are diverse forms of love: - need-love, desire-love, or love of concupiscence reflecting the most natural and immediate form of love (i.e. remuneration, recognition, social relations, help, and advice); - gift-love or love of benevolence is about to wish and to do good to the loved other (i. e. affection, sympathy, companionship or comradeship, friendship) (Argandona, 2011, p. 80-81)
62	Love of knowledge	Lovers of knowledge determine beliefs about objects or ends and how to achieve them and whether these beliefs are true (McGhee & Grant, 2017)
63	Loyalty	A manager's disposition to be loyal to her shareholders, employees, or customers can lead this manager to do the right thing for the right reason (Hidalgo, 2017; Solomon 1992, a, b)
64	Magnanimity	(Hühn, Meyer & Racelis, 2018)
65	Magnificence	(Bragues, 2013)
66	Making wok meaningful	(Cameron et al., 2004, 2011; Payne et al., 2011)
67	Membership or roles	covers the development of personal identities inside of business organizations as their members (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 161)
68	Moral intuition	the potential to intuit and habituate virtues and vices of the organizational cultures (Sadler-Smith, 2017)
69	Openness to experience	fantasy and openness to aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, values (Moberg, 1999, p. 250); refers to the extent to which an individual is imaginative, curious, independent, and willing to try new things (Morse & Cohen, 2017, p.764)

	Name of Virtues	**Definition**
70	Optimism	organizational members follow a belief of doing well and doing good even in time of challenges (Williams & Waters, 2015, p. 4); or positive outlook, self-confidence, "it is a positive attitude toward the future, based on confidence in one's own strengths and potential" (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 168)
71	Patience	forbearance, peace, ability to forgive (James, 2010, p. 21)
72	Peaceableness	"…freedom from hostile conflict" (Beck-Dudley & Hanks, 2003, p. 434)
73	Piety	refers to such characteristics as …saintliness, spirituality, and the ability to feel shame (Shanahan & Hyman, 2003, p. 205)
74	Position	one of organizational environmental virtues, a sense of individuals regarding their positions in the biophysical world (Sadler-Smith, 2013, p. 139)
75	Practical wisdom (prudence)	is an intellectual virtue that enables organizations to pursue a good purpose and might be called as prudence or phronesis (Moore, 2015, p. 106); it is also translated as prudence and intelligence and it "…coordinates and harmonizes the other virtues and their appropriateness both in framing situations and making sound moral decisions", it also "…entails the development of goals and virtuous states that are consistent with each other rather than recurrently in conflict" (Bright et al., 2011, p. 240); or prudence, decision making, good sense, the ability to make right decisions oriented on moral good of a person, organization, or society (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 168)
76	Professionalism	(Hühn, Meyer & Racelis, 2018; Neubert, 2017)
77	Protestant work ethic	includes similar virtues: ambitious, autonomous, charismatic, competitive, courageous, creative, determined, entrepreneurial, independent, and passionate (Shanahan & Hyman, 2003, p. 204)
78	Prudence	(Hühn, Meyer & Racelis, 2018; Calkin, 2014)
79	Purpose	a common view on moral goals of organizations formulated by remembrances and celebrations (Park & Peterson, 2003, p. 44)
80	Reciprocity	…the exchange belief reiterates the thinking that reciprocity is a candid and friendly exchange borne out of genuine feeling of satisfaction (Akpotu, C. & Dumka, L. E., 2013, p. 62); one of organizational environmental virtues, …virtuous actions that deviate positively from organizational environmental norms in anticipation of reciprocal actions on the part of others.. (Sadler-Smith, 2013, p. 138)

	Name of Virtues	Definition
81	Reliability	...ability, articulateness, prudence, responsibility, and trustworthiness" (Shanahan & Hyman, 2003, p. 205), an ethically responsible person who is reliable and responsive to others (Lai, 2017)
82	Respect	...characterized by coolheadedness, cooperativeness, humor, and tolerance..." (Shanahan & Hyman, 2003, p. 205)
83	Responsibility	"the readiness to respond to a plurality of normative demands" (Williams, 2008, p. 469); awareness of and accountability of harm of taken actions and decisions (Bright at el., 2006, p. 254); or commitment, an acceptance of one's own responsibility and response with courage to the job requirements and obligations (Morales-Sánchez, R., & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 167)
84	Rightness	(Romar, 2013)
85	Safety	...protection against threat, danger, and exploitation (Park & Peterson, 2003, p. 44)
86	Sanctionability	the degree to which organizations enforce ethical behavior through punishment and rewards (Huhtala et al., 2011, p. 233); rewarding employees who follow/or make an effort to follow expectations, and disciplining those who are against expectations (Kaptein, 1999, p. 630)
87	Science	knowing universal content well (Bosch, 2017, p 707)
88	Secrecy	(Dufresne, & Offstein, 2008)
89	Self-control	(or temperance) "is to do with the control of passions and appetites in the interest of the larger objectives at stake" (Moore, 2015, p. 106); mindfulness of other, and temperance (James, 2010, p. 21); or temperance, moderation, "...the ability to control one's own emotions and dominate the passions" and instincts (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 169)
90	Self-command	(Calkin, 2014)
91	Self-restrain	(Bragues, 2013)

	Name of Virtues	**Definition**
92	Service (to others)	is a virtue manifested through repeated acts of assistance or help for others with willingness based on the exercise of other virtues such as availability (availability of one's talent and competence), professionalism (industriousness with subjective and objective dimension of service), diligence (work with care without unnecessary delays), kindness (the act of assistance with courtesy manners), and courage (the promotion of service despite difficulties) (Guitian, 2015, pp. 62, 65-66); "…is to work for somebody" (Amid, 2010, p. 427 cited in Khajehfard, S., Ansari, M. E. & Valikhani, M., 2014, p. 35); or developing others, willingness to serve, service orientation, be available for others to help them (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 169), Guitián (2017)
93	Shame	… (not quite same as our "being ashamed") is quite literally to fail oneself, but not in context of one's larger self (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 223)
94	Sobriety	(Hühn, Meyer & Racelis, 2018)
95	Social justice	(Manz, Marx, Manz & Dillon, 2017)
96	Sociability	(Bragues, 2013)
97	Solidarity	or teamwork, citizenship, loyalty, "it is the positive attitude to the duties of a group, an organization, a community, or society" (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 169)
98	Supportability	the degree of organizational support in relation to ethical conduct by managers and employees (Huhtala et al., 2011, p. 233); it is also an indication how organizations encourage such behavior (Riivari et. al., 2014, p. 3); creating support for attempts to fulfil the expectations with regard to making a responsible choice…viv-a-vis the organizations, within the organization, and on behalf of the organization (Kaptein, 1999, p. 630); Riivari & Lämsä, 2019)
99	Sustained commitment	(Manz, Marx, Manz & Dillon, 2017)
100	Temperance	as such, it becomes vital to determine when enough knowledge is acquired and it becomes time to act. In other words, temperance is about getting the right balance between minimum and maximum knowledge (Hühn, Meyer & Racelis, 2018)
101	Toughness	…knowing how to buff and when to keep silence, when to be cooperative and when not to be (Solomon, 1992 b, p. 213)

	Name of Virtues	Definition
102	Transcendence	or spirituality, religiousness, religiosity, meaning of life, "it is the belief in something or someone superior who gives meaning to the existence and to the whole life" (Morales-Sánchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015, p. 169)
103	Transparency	a balance of informational openness between two extremes of "full disclosure" and "full opacity" (Vaccaro, A., & Sison, 2011, p. 26); the degree of predictability of consequences in term of managers and employees' conducts (Riivari et al., 2014, p. 3; Huhtala et al., 2011, p. 233)
104	Trust	includes courtesy, consideration, and respect in organizations along with mutual trust between leaders and employees (Williams & Waters, 2015, p. 4); a relational virtue, "…rightly expressed attitude and behaviour that attract confidence of all workplace members" (Akpotu, C. & Dumka, L. E., 2013, pp. 61, 65)
105	Trustfulness	an importance to offer trust to others and to be trustworthy oneself for the conduct of business (Moore & Beadle, 2006, p. 375)
106	Trustworthiness	is about organizational characteristics of trustworthy behaviors of ability, benevolence, integrity, and affirmative responsibility for consideration of stakeholder needs and interests (Greenwood & Van Buren III, 2010, pp. 435-436)
107	Understanding	intuitive reason, intelligence (Bosch 2017, p. 709)
108	Warmth	is associated with organizational values of openness, friendliness, pleasantness, and directness (Chun, 2005, p. 278)
109	Virtuous purpose	a condition when organizational members find their work as personally meaningful, they are in harmony and balance with what they care about (Bright at el., 2006, p. 253)
110	Visibility	providing insight into whether or not employees and the organization as a whole are living up to expectations (Kaptein, 1999, p. 630)
111	Zeal	is associated with organizational values of innovativeness, imaginativeness, excitement, and spiritedness (Chun, 2005, p. 278)
112	Zest	is an orientation to work as a calling, and satisfaction… (Peterson et al., 2009, p. 169)

APPENDIX 3   The predetermined questions of the semi-structured interviews

1. Could you please, recall and share with me one example of employee participation from your experience in this organization? Follow-up questions: how it happened, who was involved, how did you feel, why etc.
2. Do you remember another example of employee participation?
3. What are advantages and disadvantages of employee participation?
4. How do your colleagues (followers) support/improve/develop employee participation?
5. How do managers (leaders) support/improve/develop employee participation?
6. What and how would you like to change or improve about employee participation in your workplace?
7. Would you like to add something about the topic?

APPENDIX 4   Detailed information about the interviews

N	Interview schedule	Duration (h:min:sec)	Length in words	Transcribed text (pages)	Place of the interview
1	22 March 2016	1:11:42	4021	6,2	Skype
2	22 March 2016	1:04:58	4702	6,5	Skype
3	22 March 2016	1:19:44	3357	5	Skype
4	23 March 2016	1:05:16	5375	7,5	Workplace of the interviewee
5	23 March 2016	0:56:51	4704	6,5	Workplace of the interviewee
6	24 March 2016	0:57:53	6393	8,7	Workplace of the interviewee
7	29 March 2016	1:23:11	6522	9	Workplace of the interviewee
8	29 March 2016	0:58:05	4130	5,5	Workplace of the interviewee
9	30 March 2016	1:10:17	4668	7,1	Workplace of the interviewee
10	31 March 2016	1:01:09	5631	7,5	Workplace of the interviewee
11	31 March 2016	0:58:23	3276	4,5	Workplace of the interviewee
12	31 March 2016	0:38:57	2710	3,6	Workplace of the interviewee
13	1 April 2016	1:02:47	4310	5,9	Skype
14	6 April 2016	1:13:28	5127	7,6	Workplace of the interviewee
15	6 April 2016	1:11:02	5570	7,8	Workplace of the interviewee
16	7 April 2016	0:30:11	2556	3,4	Workplace of the interviewee
17	18 April 2016	1:16:46	2687	3,5	University of Jyväskylä
18	20 April 2016	1:00:18	3495	5,1	Skype
19	21 April 2016	0:55:39	3328	5	Skype
20	25 April 2016	0:37:41	3486	4,8	Workplace of the interviewee
21	25 April 2016	0:47:31	4669	6	Workplace of the interviewee
22	25 April 2016	0:51:53	5335	7,1	Workplace of the interviewee
23	25 April 2016	0:44:23	3763	4,8	Workplace of the interviewee
24	26 April	0:31:54	2190	2,9	Workplace of

	2016				the interviewee
25	26 April 2016	0:33:51	2797	3,6	Workplace of the interviewee
26	26 April 2016	0:35:56	4103	5,1	Workplace of the interviewee
27	27 April 2016	0:55:29	5956	8	Workplace of the interviewee
28	27 April 2016	0:36:53	4959	6,2	Workplace of the interviewee
29	27 April 2016	0:48:00	2773	3,8	Workplace of the interviewee
30	28 April 2016	0:51:18	4141	5,5	Workplace of the interviewee
31	28 April 2016	0:50:22	3928	5,1	Workplace of the interviewee
32	9 May 2016	0:50:09	5223	6,6	Workplace of the interviewee
33	9 May 2016	0:39:10	3246	4,1	Workplace of the interviewee
34	9 May 2016	0:32:34	2007	2,5	Workplace of the interviewee
35	9 May 2016	0:35:37	3004	3,9	Workplace of the interviewee
36	9 May 2016	0:43:51	3892	4,9	Workplace of the interviewee
37	9 May 2016	0:30:00	1452	2	Workplace of the interviewee
38	10 May 2016	0:33:52	3104	3,9	Workplace of the interviewee
39	11 May 2016	1:09:55	5161	6,6	Workplace of the interviewee
40	18 May 2016	0:47:23	4873	6,1	Workplace of the interviewee
41	20 May 2016	1:03:20	3943	5,5	Skype
In total:		**36:41:40**		**224,9**	