



Research Paper

Explaining the Consequences of Virtue as a Source of Happiness in Public Organizations Using a Qualitative Meta-Synthesis Approach



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Received: 2024/05/10

Revised: 2024/10/15

Accepted: 2024/10/30

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Keywords:

Virtue, Organization,
Consequences, Organizational
Virtue, Meta-Synthesis

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explain the consequences of virtue in public organizations using a qualitative meta-synthesis approach. This study was conducted within a qualitative research framework using the meta-synthesis method based on the seven-stage approach proposed by Sandelowski and Barroso (2007). The research population consisted of all Persian and English studies and research articles published in the field of organizational virtue consequences between 2000 and 2024. Accordingly, keywords related to the research objective were searched, and the retrieved articles and documents were examined using purposive sampling based on the inclusion criteria. Ultimately, 38 studies that met the eligibility criteria were analyzed through a three-stage coding process (open, axial, and selective coding) using MAXQDA 2020 software. The reliability of the coding process was confirmed using Cohen's kappa coefficient in SPSS, with a value of 0.78. To assess the validity of the research findings, the results were reviewed and confirmed by two experts in qualitative research. Based on the data analysis results, 146 open codes were identified and categorized into 49 subcategories and four main categories, including individual consequences, organizational consequences, social consequences, and occupational consequences. The findings indicated that the presence of virtue in organizations can lead to enhanced positive human interactions and greater employee efficiency, resulting in favorable internal and external outcomes for organizations.

Citation: Kazemi, S., Javidpour, M., Divaband, A., & Mehravar Giglou, Sh. (2025). Explaining the Consequences of Virtue as a Source of Happiness in Public Organizations Using a Qualitative Meta-Synthesis Approach. *A Review of Theorizing of Behavioral Sciences*, 2(1), 45-66. doi: [10.22098/j9032.2025.16990.1042](https://doi.org/10.22098/j9032.2025.16990.1042)

Introduction

In recent years, organizational scholars have repeatedly emphasized that unconventional and illegitimate behaviors among employees and managers have become increasingly prevalent, causing significant and costly damages to organizations. Furthermore, in the current context, the failure to adhere to ethical standards from various perspectives has created numerous concerns in the public sector. The decline of behavioral standards in the public sector has encouraged researchers to seek theoretical foundations in this regard in order to develop appropriate implementation pathways. Ethical misconducts, including administrative corruption, distrust, embezzlement, the misuse of public resources for personal purposes, bribery, and similar issues, have frequently been observed in public organizations of developing countries, particularly Iran (*Najaf Beigi et al., 2014*). These challenges have encouraged researchers to reconsider and re-examine the concept of virtue in organizations (*Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, 2016*). In fact, recent ethical scandals in organizations have led to increasing interest in issues such as organizational ethics and corporate social responsibility. Accordingly, special attention has been devoted to the concept of virtue in organizations (*Bright et al., 2006*).

While most psychological research over the past decades has focused on negative phenomena such as stress, anxiety, and depression, the emergence of positive psychology has introduced new perspectives

into organizational studies. Since organizations are social institutions and their human resources are regarded as their most valuable assets and most important sources of competitive advantage, positive-oriented research has gradually entered the field of organizational studies (*ZeinAbadi et al., 2019*). One of the central topics in this field is the concept of organizational virtue and the creation of virtuous organizations. Although the modern business world has rapidly progressed in many competitive aspects, unfortunately, limited attention has been paid to concepts such as virtue orientation. Terms such as virtue, hope, and integrity are not typically associated with the competitive environment of modern businesses (*Caza et al., 2004*). Therefore, in this modern era, the development of virtuous behaviors accompanied by characteristics such as optimism, trust, compassion, integrity, and forgiveness in organizations can significantly enhance the retention and sustainability of human capital (*Rego et al., 2011*).

Indeed, one of the higher-order dimensions of organizations is organizational virtue. Organizational virtue refers to the creation, promotion, support, and cultivation of elevated and transcendent behaviors, habits, practices, and tendencies (such as humanity, honesty, forgiveness, trust, and loyalty) at both individual and collective levels within an organization (*K. S. Cameron et al., 2004*). Organizational virtue is among the important and emerging organizational concepts derived from positive psychology (*K. S. Cameron et al., 2004*). The Latin term *virtus* refers to strength or excellence. In fact, virtues

represent actions that lead to both individual and social benefits (*Rego et al., 2011*).

The concept of virtue refers to inherent moral competencies that, through human actions, contribute to the improvement of social ethics (*Hessel, 2013*). Virtue is defined as a superior and admirable characteristic, and virtuous organizations are considered ethical communities whose members are expected to remain committed to moral principles and ethical boundaries (*Dawson, 2014*). In fact, virtue is a personality characteristic that is socially valued (*Ferreira et al., 2018*). From another perspective, organizational virtue implies that an organization has a positive orientation toward virtue. Organizational virtue represents the primary motivation of these positive-oriented organizations, which, in turn, leads to increased employee well-being and health and subsequently facilitates organizational improvement. The term "virtue orientation at work and in organizations" describes employees' experiences of being passionate and energetic in their work and understanding the meaning and purpose of their jobs (*Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, 2016*). Therefore, any individual actions, collective activities, cultural characteristics, or processes that promote and sustain virtue within an organization may contribute to the development of organizational virtue (*K. Cameron & Dutton, 2003*). Accordingly, creating a virtue-based organization requires managers and employees to respect one another, treat employees appropriately, and ensure justice. These factors collectively enhance employees' commitment,

responsibility, and adaptability (*Lawler, 2004*).

Existing evidence indicates that virtue is associated with richer and broader social relationships, higher job satisfaction, a greater sense of empowerment, fewer physical complaints, faster recovery from illness, and lower levels of anxiety and stress (*Abadi koshki et al., 2017*). Virtue, along with ethical behaviors, generates abundant and reinforcing effects within organizations. Employees in such organizations work in an environment characterized by honesty, understanding, and tolerance, which enables them to experience greater respect and appreciation (*Tsachouridi & Nikandrou, 2016*). Ultimately, organizational virtue can serve as a source of resilience and sustainable success for organizations (*Meyer, 2018*). Moreover, organizations with higher levels of virtue are more successful and better able to cope with challenges. Virtuous behaviors demonstrated by organizational managers toward employees enhance their performance and encourage them to generate new ideas, while also helping them utilize their abilities more effectively to achieve organizational goals (*Neubert et al., 2009*). virtuous behaviors based on trust and kindness enhance organizational communication and consequently influence organizational flourishing (*Zeng, 2018*).

Accordingly, the main issue addressed in this study is the identification of indicators and factors influencing organizational virtue. Given the aforementioned considerations, addressing the issue of organizational virtue is not only a contemporary concern but also a

future-oriented challenge requiring greater attention and consideration. Numerous fundamental and empirical studies have been conducted on virtue in recent years. These studies have examined the concept from various perspectives, both directly and indirectly, and have explored its relationships with other variables and influencing factors. The dispersion of studies in this field, on the one hand, and the prevalence of multiple approaches, on the other hand, have resulted in the absence of a coherent and integrated perspective regarding scientific data and findings related to organizational virtue. Therefore, conducting a systematic review of existing scientific research and previous findings can be considered an effective step toward developing a more comprehensive understanding of studies conducted in this area. The present study attempts to categorize and integrate previous research on organizational virtue and seeks to answer the following question: What are the consequences of organizational virtue?

Research Method

The present study is descriptive in terms of its purpose and applied in terms of its nature. A meta-synthesis approach was employed for data and information collection. Similar to meta-analysis, meta-synthesis is conducted to integrate multiple studies and generate comprehensive and interpretive findings.

Unlike quantitative meta-analysis, which relies on quantitative data extracted from the literature and statistical approaches, meta-synthesis focuses on qualitative studies and is based on the quality of interpreting qualitative research findings and the researcher's deep understanding of the studies. In other words, meta-synthesis refers to the synthesis and interpretation of interpretations derived from the original data of selected studies.

The statistical population of this study consisted of research articles focusing on the consequences of organizational virtue. This population included 122 domestic and international articles published in relevant journals between 2000 and 2024. After excluding irrelevant studies, 38 articles were selected for final analysis. The articles were identified using the keywords virtue, organizational virtue, and their English equivalents, including Virtue and Organizational Virtue. In addition, various criteria, such as title, abstract, content, accessibility, and methodological quality of the studies, were considered for evaluating and selecting the articles.

To achieve the research objective, the meta-synthesis method was applied based on the model proposed by Sandelowski and Barroso. A summary of these stages is presented in Figure 1.

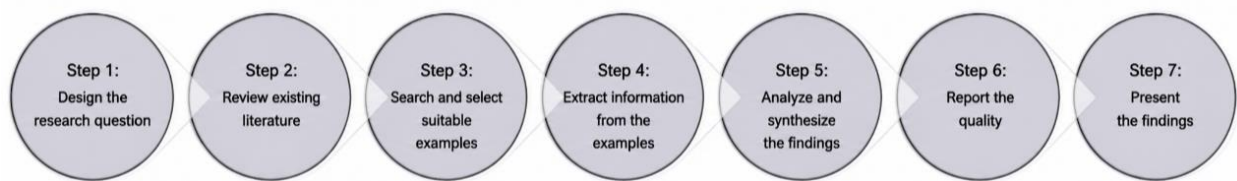


Figure 1: The Seven-Stage Process of Meta-Synthesis Based on the *Sandelowski and Barroso (2007)* Method

Results

Step 1: Formulating the Research Question

In formulating the research question, various factors, including the study population, research focus, time period, and methodological approach, are considered. In the present study, the following question was investigated: What are the consequences of organizational virtue?

Step 2: Systematic Review of the Literature

To collect research data, secondary data sources, including previous documents and research studies, were used. These documents comprised all studies conducted in the field of organizational virtue. In meta-synthesis research, the texts of previous studies are considered as the primary data source. The research population consisted of all studies related to organizational virtue, which were obtained from universities, research institutes, conferences, academic journals, online databases, and other relevant sources.

The identification and review of studies were conducted through the National Library

search system, other libraries, research centers, and databases such as the Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research (ACECR), Noor Specialized Journals Database, Magiran, the National Conference Proceedings Database, the National Publications Database, IranDoc, Civilica, Elmnet, as well as reputable international scientific and citation databases, including ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, Scopus, Springer, IEEE, and several other academic databases. The search was conducted using keywords related to "organizational virtue" for studies published between 2000 and 2024. From the reviewed studies, 38 final articles that met the relevance criteria were selected for analysis.

Step 3: Searching for and Selecting Appropriate Texts

At the beginning of the search process, it is necessary to determine whether the retrieved articles are consistent with the research question. To achieve this objective, the selected studies were reviewed several times. At each stage of the review process, the articles were evaluated based on various criteria, including their relevance to the

research topic, study language, publication period, research methods, research conditions, and type of study. Studies with insufficient relevance were excluded from the meta-synthesis process. Ultimately, 38

articles were selected as the final studies included in the analysis. The sources used for extracting the study identifiers are presented in Table 2.

Table 1: A Simplified Overview of the Search and Selection Process of Final Articles Related to the Research Topic

No.	Authors	Year	Title	Journal
1	(<i>Mosleh Garmi et al.</i>)	1399	Investigating the Effect of Organizational Virtue on Teachers' Job Engagement with the Mediating Role of Organizational Ethical Climate in Primary Schools of Parsabad County	Journal of Psychology and Educational Sciences Studies
2	(<i>Mohamadi et al.</i>)	1398	Determining and Designing a Structural Model of the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Organizational Justice with the Mediating Role of Unprofessional Ethics among Faculty Members and Employees of Payame Noor Universities in Khuzestan Province	Journal of Organizational Career Counseling
3	(<i>Vahdati et al.</i>)	1398	The Effect of Organizational Virtue on Organizational Spontaneity: Testing the Mediating Role of Organizational Identity (Case Study: Employees of Lorestan University)	Journal of Applied Sociology
4	(<i>Marzoughi et al.</i>)	1397	Explaining the Role of Organizational Virtue in Enhancing Organizational Trust in Ethical-Oriented Public Organizations	Journal of Ethics in Science and Technology
5	(<i>Delavari</i>)	1397	Investigating the Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Virtue and Spontaneous Behaviors Through the Mediating Role of Organizational Identity among Employees of the Welfare Organization of Guilan Province	Thesis
6	(<i>Hamafar</i>)	1397	Investigating the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Employees' Self-Efficacy at Islamic Azad University, Nurabad Mamasani Branch	Thesis
7	(<i>Aghache Kandi</i>)	1397	Investigating the Mediating Role of Job Engagement in the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and	Thesis

			Emotional Well-Being at the Central Headquarters of Ardabil University of Medical Sciences	
8	(Akbari)	1397	Investigating the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Employees' Self-Efficacy at Islamic Azad University, Nurabad Mamasani Branch	Thesis
9	(ZeinAbadi et al.)	1397	Designing and Explaining the Antecedents and Consequences Model of University as a Virtuous Organization in Public Universities Affiliated with the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology in Yazd Province	Journal of Yazd Center for Studies and Development of Medical Education
10	(Abedi Koushki et al.)	1396	Investigating the Role of School Organizational Virtue in Teachers' Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Findings from a Quantitative Study in Secondary Schools of Karaj City	A New Approach in Educational Management Journal
11	(Tabli et al.)	2017	Analysis of the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue as an Ethical Component with Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, and Organizational Commitment	Journal of Ethics in Science and Technology
12	(Ghobadi Yeganeh et al.)	2017	Investigating the Effect of Organizational Virtue Dimensions on the Reputation of Sports Organizations	Journal of Organizational Behavior Management Studies in Sport
13	(Alijanpour)	2017	Investigating the Effect of School Organizational Virtue on Teachers' Performance in Secondary Schools of Mazandaran Province	Thesis
14	(Nouri)	2017	The Effect of Organizational Virtue Components on Human Resource Performance: A Study of Centers and Affiliated Units of Payame Noor University in Isfahan Province	Thesis
15	(Rezaei)	2017	The Effect of Organizational Virtue on Service Delivery Quality	Thesis
16	(Rabiei)	2016	Investigating the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Organizational Commitment with the Mediating Role of Happiness among Employees of Agricultural Bank	Thesis

17	(<i>Nikpey et al.</i>)	2016	Investigating the Effect of Managers' Ethical Leadership Style on Teachers' Social Capital with the Mediating Role of School Organizational Virtue in Primary Schools of Khorramabad City	Journal of Management on Educational Organizations
18	(<i>Hafezi et al.</i>)	2016	The Effect of Organizational Virtue on Organizational Productivity with the Mediating Role of Organizational Trust	Conference Paper
19	(<i>Zarepour</i>)	2016	Analyzing the Effect of Organizational Virtue on Social Responsibility and Work Engagement	Thesis
20	(<i>Pabarja et al.</i>)	2016	Investigating the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Organizational Happiness: A Case Study of Vali-e-Asr University (Rafsanjan)	Journal of Human Resource Development and Support
21	(<i>Abedikooshki, 2015</i>)	2015	Investigating the Role of School Organizational Virtue in Teachers' Job Attitudes and Organizational Citizenship Behavior in High Schools of Karaj	Thesis
22	(<i>Mostafavi</i>)	2015	Investigating the Effect of Organizational Virtue on Employees' Work Engagement in Bank-e-Qavanin of Semnan Province	Thesis
23	(<i>Moshabaki Esfahani & Rezaee</i>)	2014	Investigating the Effect of Organizational Virtue and Work Engagement on Organizational Commitment	Journal of Management Improvement and Transformation Studies
24	(<i>Behzadi</i>)	2013	Investigating Some Antecedents and Consequences of Organizational Virtue among Employees of Karoun Oil and Gas Exploitation Company	Thesis
25	(<i>Behzadi et al.</i>)	2013	Investigating the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Organizational Loyalty, and Spiritual Well-being	Journal of Psychological Achievements
26	(<i>Mahdieh Sadat Khoshouei & Nouri</i>)	2013	Factor Structure of Organizational Virtue and the Role of Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Journal of Knowledge and Research in Applied Psychology
27	(<i>Mousavian</i>)	2013	Studying the Relationship Between Developing Organizational Virtues and Improving the Organizational Ethical	Journal of Social Psychology Research

			Climate (Case Study: Tehran Municipality Cultural and Art Organization)	
28	(<i>Shekari</i>)	2012	Designing and Explaining a Conceptual Model of a Virtue-Oriented Organization: A Case Study of Universities in Yazd Province (Payame Noor University, Islamic Azad University, and Yazd University)	Thesis
29	(<i>Doosti</i>)	2012	Explaining a Causal Model of Organizational Virtue Orientation with Psychological Capital Emphasizing the Mediating Role of Resilience among Nurses of Namazi and Shahid Faghihi Hospitals in Shiraz	Thesis
30	(<i>Mahdieh Sadat Khoshouei</i>)	2010	The Role of Organizational Virtue and Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Employees' Professional Moral Courage at Telecommunication Company of Isfahan City	Journal of Development Management Process
31	(<i>Dawson</i>)	2018	The Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Virtue and Organizational Members' Job Performance with the Mediating Role of Psychological Capital	Journal of Management and Leadership
32	(<i>Ozen, 2018</i>)	2018	The Effect of Perceived Organizational Virtue on Organizational Happiness	Journal of Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research
33	(<i>Riivari & Lämsä</i>)	2017	Investigating the Relationship Between Organizational Moral Virtue and Organizational Innovation	Journal of Business Ethics
34	(<i>Hosseini tabaghdehi & Faghani Makrani</i>)	2022	The Mediating Role of Professional Ethics in the Relationship between Organizational Virtue and Psychological Well-Being	Industrial and Organizational Psychology Studies
35	(<i>Chun, 2017</i>)	2017	The Effect of Organizational Virtue on Organizational Performance	Journal of Business Ethics
36	(<i>Vallett</i>)	2010	Investigating the Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Organizational Culture	Thesis
37	(<i>Rego et al.</i>)	2009	The Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Journal of Business Ethics

38	(K. S. Cameron et al.)	2004	The Relationship Between Organizational Virtue and Organizational Performance	Behavioral Science Journal
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Step 4: Extracting Research Information

At this stage, the content of the articles was carefully reviewed, and the codes related to the key terms were identified. Based on these codes, concepts and categories were developed. A total of 178 codes were extracted from the selected articles. Due to the repetition of some codes across the reviewed studies, duplicate codes were removed, and 146 codes were retained for analysis. After refinement and detailed examination by the researchers, and considering the similarities and commonalities among some categories, the final categorization was performed. Accordingly, the extracted concepts were classified into 49 categories and four main components.

Step 5: Analysis and Synthesis of Qualitative Findings

During the analysis process, the researcher searches for themes that have emerged across the studies included in the meta-synthesis. This process is referred to as thematic analysis (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007). In this approach, the researcher initially considers all factors extracted from the studies as codes and then categorizes them into similar concepts by considering the meaning of each code. In this way, the concepts (themes) of the study are developed.

In the present study, all factors extracted from the reviewed studies were initially considered as codes. Then, by examining the meaning of each code, similar codes were grouped into related concepts. Subsequently, similar concepts were organized into explanatory categories. Through this process, the consequences of organizational virtue were identified in the form of the main components of the research model.

Table 2: Consequences of Organizational Virtue

Selective Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Individual Consequences	Promotion of Ethical Virtues	Going beyond ethical behaviors in the organization; institutionalization of ethics in individuals' personality traits; expansion of justice, fairness, and forgiveness among individuals; penetration of virtues into personal goals
	Behavioral Well-being	Establishing positive relationships among employees; beneficial interactions among employees within the organization; adherence to behavioral patterns
	Order and Discipline	Having plans for all aspects of life; internal commitment to complying with organizational rules and regulations; putting everything in its proper place; preventing chaos and disorder in tasks

	Individual Performance	Performing tasks correctly by employees; participation in organizational successes; employees' hard work and commitment toward responsibilities
	Individual Self-efficacy	Increasing individual capabilities in performing duties; individuals' understanding of their abilities and competencies within the organization; positive perceptions of their own abilities; coping with organizational challenges
	Job Satisfaction	Satisfaction with job conditions; satisfaction with managers and colleagues; availability of career advancement opportunities; existence of job security
	Enhancement of Spiritual Intelligence	Understanding the presence of God in life and existence; possessing transcendent awareness of this world and the hereafter; having commitment, sacrifice, and faith; individuals' self-awareness regarding their Creator
	Affective Commitment	Expressing affection and kindness among employees; maintaining equality and fairness among individuals; creating emotional relationships with others; using gentle communication
	Work Engagement	Having positive and satisfying mental states among employees; possessing energy and mental resilience during work; experiencing meaning, enthusiasm, and challenge in work
	Emotional Health	Employees' ability not to become discouraged after failures; having a vision and perspective regarding the organization's future; possessing effective communication skills; confidence in personal abilities
	Spiritual Well-being	Having positive feelings toward relationships with others; understanding one's existential philosophy and the meaning of life; positive attitudes toward the existence of God
	Work Success	Employees' achievement of personal goals; success and progress in performing work activities
	Reduction of Deviant Behaviors	Reducing personal jealousy among employees; creating positive attitudes among employees; reducing conflicts among employees; decreasing financial, ethical, and political deviations
Organizational Consequences	Organizational Justice	Maintaining justice and equality among employees; fairness in the distribution of organizational positions; observing justice in organizational interactions
	Flexible Organizational Structure	Absence of a rigid and mechanistic organizational structure; avoiding excessive emphasis on restrictive administrative hierarchies
	Organizational Trust	Trust among organizational employees; employees' trust in managers; trust in the work environment

	Organizational Happiness	Existence of a positive organizational climate among employees; internal and external satisfaction among employees; presence of vitality among employees
	Organizational Health	Having a healthy and dynamic organization; possessing administrative and technical health
	Organizational Performance	Achievement of organizational duties and missions; attainment of social and organizational goals; satisfaction among individuals; increased organizational productivity
	Organizational Spontaneity	Increasing employees' extra-role activities in the organization; providing constructive suggestions for achieving organizational goals; developing and expanding goodwill among employees
	Spiritual Leadership	Creating altruism among employees and managers; existence of a desirable organizational vision; expansion of faith among organizational members
	Organizational Commitment	Employees' and managers' commitment to duties and responsibilities; increasing individuals' sense of responsibility toward the organization; increasing readiness to internalize organizational values
	Organizational Effectiveness	Achievement of individual and organizational goals; reduction of organizational costs; enhancement of organizational productivity
	Improvement of Professional Ethics	Increasing responsibility among employees and managers; respect for organizational values by managers and employees; increasing loyalty among organizational members; observing justice and fairness
	Organizational Flourishing	Positive perception of the work environment; realization of individuals' potential abilities; positive emotions toward organizational goals; increased group participation
	Reduction of Organizational Silence	Employees' expression of ideas and opinions; cooperation and collaboration among employees
	Adjustment of Organizational Cynicism	Employees' trust in each other; positive feelings toward colleagues; absence of disappointment in achieving goals
	Improvement of Organizational Ethical Climate	Mutual trust among individuals in the workplace; increasing employees' ability for change and learning; reducing psychological pressure among employees; decreasing uncertainty about the future
	Reduction of Organizational Indifference	Having emotional attachment and internal feelings toward the organization; strong interest in the organizational environment and goals

	Organizational Loyalty	Employees' loyalty toward organizational goals; enthusiastic performance of tasks; utilizing employees' full potential to achieve organizational objectives
	Organizational Culture	Shared values and beliefs among employees and managers; acceptance of the organization's vision by society
	Organizational Integrity	Increasing honesty among employees and managers; consistency between words and actions of organizational members toward clients; fulfilling all organizational promises
	Organizational Reputation	Differentiation of the organization from others in service delivery; positive perceptions of customers toward the organization; individuals' understanding of organizational capabilities
	Organizational Forgiveness	Forgiving employees' mistakes and errors; providing opportunities for employees to compensate for their mistakes
Social Consequences	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Individuals' willingness to help and support the community; asking about others' conditions to address their problems
	Social Competence	Possessing positive social behaviors among employees; influencing others' behaviors and actions
	Enhancement of Social Capital	Increasing participation and cooperation among community members; increasing social groups; membership in non-governmental organizations; strengthening governmental and public relationships
	Social Health	Reducing social harms in society; increasing individuals' socialization; enhancing social cohesion; increasing social participation
	Social Responsibility	Making extensive efforts to improve community welfare; commitment to improving society through activities
Job-related Consequences	Work Ethics	Increasing honesty and professionalism at work; enhancing responsibility and cooperation; having planning and discipline in the workplace
	Workplace Spirituality	Experiencing meaningfulness of work; feeling solidarity and alignment with occupational values; increasing excellence and integration in the workplace
	Psychological Capital	Increasing hope and optimism in the workplace; feeling competence and capability at work; enhancing individuals' capacity for growth and flourishing
	Job Engagement	Ability to perform job duties; willingness to improve success levels; continuous effort to learn occupational skills
	Reduction of Job Stress	Existence of desirable physical conditions; reduction of employees' job expectations; existence of job security and advancement opportunities; supportive work environment

	Improvement of Job Performance	Increasing employees' occupational abilities and skills; awareness of assigned roles; increasing teamwork and professional ethics
	Reduction of Job Burnout	Decreasing physical and psychological disorders in the workplace; reducing general and emotional exhaustion; decreasing psychological depletion among employees; reducing feelings of inefficacy among employees
	Professional Moral Courage	Increasing willingness to perform ethical behaviors in the organization; tolerating risks in the workplace; having additional motivation to perform organizational tasks; commitment to accepted organizational beliefs
	Occupational Optimism	Belief in a positive occupational future; positive expectations regarding work outcomes; increasing confidence in organizational decision-making; enhancing individual and social adaptability
	Positive Job Attitude	Positive mental image of the work environment; increasing individuals' emotional and affective readiness

Finally, the main consequences of organizational virtue are presented in Figure 2.

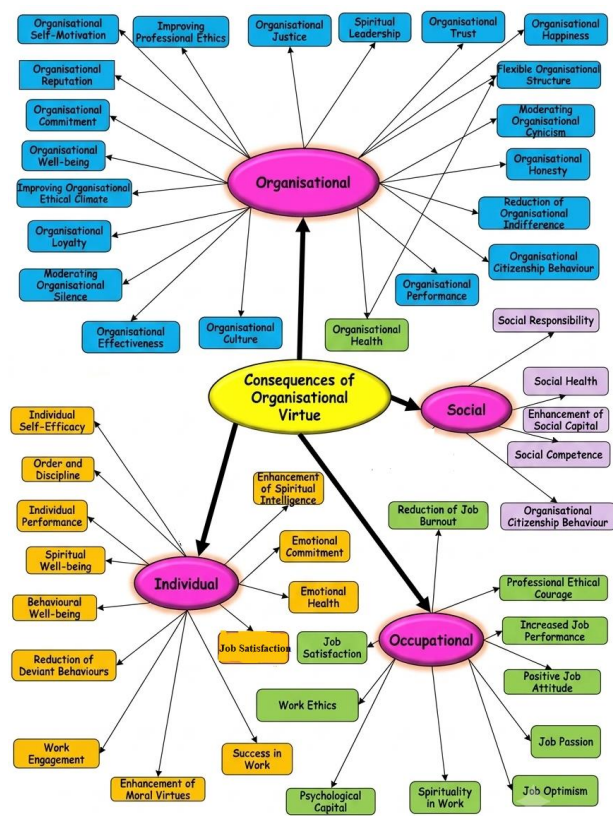


Figure 2: The Final Model of Organizational Virtue Consequence

Step 6: Quality Control

In the meta-synthesis method, the researcher considers the following procedures to maintain and control the quality of the study:

Throughout the research process, the researcher attempts to provide clear and precise explanations for the available options in the study and to make decisions based on these explanations.

The researcher employs both electronic and manual search methods to identify relevant studies.

The researcher applies the quality control methods used in the original studies.

In the present study, almost all of the aforementioned methods were used to evaluate the quality of the research. According to Sandelowski and Barroso, in qualitative meta-synthesis studies, descriptive validity refers to identifying all research reports related to the topic and recognizing and describing the information contained in each available report. Interpretive validity in qualitative meta-synthesis research concerns secondary researchers who synthesize and interpret the reports included in the study. Theoretical validity in meta-synthesis primarily relates to the validity of the methods employed to integrate the findings and, subsequently, to the consistency of the results themselves; in other words, it concerns the researcher's interpretation of previous researchers' findings (*Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007*).

In this study, to ensure descriptive validity, efforts were made to identify and collect the largest possible number of relevant articles. For interpretive validity, two researchers were employed as coders and interpreters, and through coordination meetings, final agreement was reached regarding the codes used. Finally, to ensure theoretical validity, studies with high scientific credibility, particularly in terms of academic citations and research quality, were selected and included.

Step Seven: Presentation of Findings

Based on the systematic review of 122 domestic and international articles and the final selection and analysis of 38 studies, 146 codes were extracted. The outcome of this process was the identification and classification of these codes into 49 subcategories and their placement within four main categories of organizational virtue consequences.

According to the findings of this study, the most important consequences of organizational virtue include individual consequences, organizational consequences, job-related consequences, and social consequences.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the era of the decline of modernity and the emergence of postmodernism, the phenomenon of organizational virtue requires scientific attention and clarification more than ever before. A meaningful life, respect and elevation of human beings, the value of human flourishing, and ultimately the phenomenon that shapes health, happiness,

and transcendence are among the central concerns of this concept. Organizational virtue is one of the important and emerging organizational concepts derived from positive psychology and has been recognized as a challenge in the 21st century. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim of explaining the consequences of virtue in public organizations using a qualitative meta-synthesis approach.

This study is one of the first studies that has comprehensively and extensively identified and explained the consequences of organizational virtue through the synthesis of previous research. It provides new insights and perspectives in the field of positive organizational behavior, which can be effective in managing the behaviors of employees and managers within organizations. The findings of the present study indicate that the consequences of organizational virtue consist of four general categories: individual, organizational, job-related, and social consequences. Each of these consequences of organizational virtue is discussed and examined below.

- Individual Consequences

The findings of the study showed that some consequences of organizational virtue are related to individual and personal aspects. According to the literature and previous studies conducted on the consequences of organizational virtue, the findings of the present study are consistent with and supported by the studies of *Mosleh Garmi et al. (2020)*, *Vahdati et al. (2019)*, *Delavari (2018)*, *Hamafar (2018)*, *Akbari (2018)*,

ZeinAbadi et al. (2019), *Tabli et al. (2017)*, *Rabiei (2016)*, and *Shekari (2012)*.

Regarding the explanation of the individual consequences of virtue, it can be stated that the more employees and managers support virtuous and transcendental behaviors within the organization, the more ethical values become internalized in individuals' personalities. This, in turn, leads to the development of order, enhancement of ethical virtues, increased affective commitment, and greater job satisfaction within the organization.

Furthermore, the existence of virtue in an organization enables employees and managers to perceive that they are living and working in a happier and more effective environment. Consequently, they can utilize their full potential and demonstrate a high level of conscientiousness to contribute to organizational effectiveness and productivity.

- Organizational Consequences

The findings of the study showed that some of the consequences of organizational virtue are related to organizational issues. According to the literature and previous studies conducted in the field of organizational virtue consequences, it can be acknowledged that the findings of the present study are consistent and in line with the studies of *Mohamadi et al. (2019)*, *Marzoughi et al. (2018)*, *ZeinAbadi et al. (2019)*, *Abadi koshki et al. (2017)*, *Tabli et al. (2017)*, *Ghobadi Yeganeh et al. (2017)*, *Rabiei (2016)*, *Hafezi et al. (2016)*, *Pabarja et al. (2017)*, *Behzadi (2013)*, *Mahdieh Sadat Khoshouei and Nouri (2013)*, *Ozen (2018)*,

Chun (2017), Vallett (2010), Riivari and Lämsä (2019), and K. S. Cameron et al. (2004).

In explaining the organizational consequences of virtue, it can be stated that managers and leaders play an important role in transforming organizations into virtue-oriented organizations. Managers and leaders who are committed to ethical behaviors within the organization can effectively contribute to promoting higher ethical behaviors and creating a healthy ethical environment in the organization. The more virtue-oriented an organization is, the greater the levels of organizational health, trust, justice, commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and happiness among organizational members will be, while employee cynicism and employee silence will decrease.

- Social Consequences

The findings of the study showed that some of the consequences of organizational virtue are related to social issues. According to the literature and previous studies conducted in the field of organizational virtue consequences, it can be acknowledged that the findings of the present study are consistent with the studies of *ZeinAbadi et al. (2019), Vahdati et al. (2019), Abadi koshki et al. (2017), Tabli et al. (2017), Nikpey et al. (2016), Zarepour (2016), Abadi koshki et al. (2017), Behzadi (2013), Mahdieh Sadat Khoshouei and Nouri (2013), Ozen (2018), K. Cameron and Dutton (2003) and Shekari (2012).*

In explaining the social consequences of virtue, it can be stated that the attention of managers, officials of governmental organizations, and regulatory institutions toward organizations plays a very important role in shaping transcendent and virtue-oriented behaviors within organizations. Just as a healthy and supportive environment provides the foundation for the emergence of ethical behaviors in organizations, stressful environmental factors also have a direct impact on non-compliance with accepted organizational ethical standards. This may lead to prioritizing personal interests over collective interests within the organization, and the organization may achieve its goals through political behaviors. Overall, the existence of virtue in organizations is also beneficial for society because it reduces social harms and increases participation and cooperation among members of society.

- Occupational Consequences

The findings of the study also showed that some of the consequences of organizational virtue are related to occupational issues. According to the literature and previous studies conducted in the field of organizational virtue consequences, it can be acknowledged that the findings of the present study are consistent with the studies of *Mosleh Garmi et al. (2020), Delavari (2018), Hamafar (2018), Aghache Kandi (2018), Tabli et al. (2017), Alijanpour (2017), Nouri (2017), Zarepour (2016) and Mostafavi (2015).*

In explaining the occupational consequences of virtue, it can be stated that

the more widespread virtue becomes within an organization, the more hope, optimism, growth, and flourishing in the workplace will increase. Therefore, the existence of virtue in the workplace leads to a greater tendency among individuals to engage in ethical behaviors within the organization.

- Suggestions

Accordingly, it is suggested that organizational managers pay special attention to transcendent behaviors such as virtue in their planning and decision-making processes and demonstrate responsibility and conscientiousness in carrying out their duties. Furthermore, employees should show courage and confidence in performing their tasks, not fear potential changes, and make greater efforts in the organization based on intrinsic and spiritual rewards. On the other hand, it is recommended that managers identify the ethical standards of the organization and strive to strengthen moral virtues such as honesty, trust, and optimism, while paying special attention to virtue orientation within the organization. Although various sources and documents were examined to conduct this study, considering the limitations in accessing all original resources and documents, there may still be consequences that have not been identified or examined. Therefore, it is suggested that future studies employ other qualitative methods, such as the grounded theory approach and thematic analysis method.

- Limitations

This study faced limitations, including the lack of access to all articles from other

countries and the non-utilization of specialized software in the field of text mining.

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