

“Digital virtues”? Aristotelian leadership in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

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Abstract

Aristotelian leadership in corporations and organizations and the virtues associated with it has been extensively studied. Today, due to the pandemic but mainly because of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, there is an increase in online communication within corporate organizations (via emails, teleconferencing, etc.). In this new context, managers, CEOs and company leaders are developing digital behaviors. Online and electronic communication has largely replaced in person and a leader or e-leader should cultivate and use her virtues within a new digital environment. In this context, can we refer to emerging “digital virtues” or is the technological factor too “weak” to disturb the nature of these character traits? In order to address this question, this paper investigates four Aristotelian virtues that lie at the heart of an ethical corporate leader, i.e. “prudence/practical wisdom”, “fortitude” (courage), “temperance”, and “justice”. The findings will determine whether changing the means of communication affects the way in which a leader should develop these virtues.

Keywords: virtues, Aristotle, corporate leadership, e-leadership, ICT