

Book Reviews

Jenny Fleming (2015). *POLICE LEADERSHIP: RISING TO THE TOP*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780198728627 Paperback, £44.99. 312 pages.

Jenny Fleming's *Police Leadership: Rising to the Top* (Oxford University Press) offers a comprehensive guide to understanding the structures, research methods, and challenges of police leadership. This edited book is a welcome contribution to this topic as it is the only published book to present a tailored discussion around strategic and extensive police leadership issues by taking into consideration and presenting both academic knowledge and views- 'local knowledge' as presented by senior police practitioners.

This book provides authoritative surveys of related fields such as leadership, community engagement, change management, utilizing policing research, and multi-agency working. A very positive and interesting point that is made clear throughout the book by encouraging shared observations between contributors is that anyone interested in police leadership should consider the importance of both theoretical and practical issues for future leaders.

The main themes of this book cover topics, such as Leadership in Austerity, Fractured Societies, Women in Leadership, Partnerships, Politics, Investigation, Managing in Leadership, Organizational Change, Research in Leadership, Community Engagement, Leadership and Ethics, and Training and Education.

The book aims to shape the way(s) that both researchers and practitioners should approach the future challenges in police leadership. Although each of the above chapters presents past and present theories and ideas regarding these topics with the aid of references-additional resources for the reader, no clear open questions in the form of thinking exercises are present, thus making its use difficult for young inexperienced university students. A future version of this book could aim at researchers at all levels—students, practitioners, novice, and experienced researchers by adding separate sections with questions, and not only conclusions, for further discussion in and out of class. Thus, the researchers in different scientific domains could use the different points-questions of the discussion in the book to improve their studies and research at different stages (concept, methodology, realization, and data processing), while police practitioners could use these points-questions to keep up with the latest research and to remember them in their everyday practice.

Unfortunately, two vital facets of police leadership are not examined and are totally missing from this book: 1) hubris and 2) the cross-cultural perspective of the presented topics.

Hubris is becoming a famous concept in leadership theory, research, and practice regardless of the organization or the cultural context (Owen, 2006). It refers to the exaggerated pride, overwhelming self-confidence, and contempt exhibited to others by a person assuming power (becoming leader in a group of people) (Owen, 2006). More specifically, researchers have pointed to the importance of examining leaders' hubristic behaviour (Owen and Davidson, 2009; Giannouli,

2017) as this has been associated with implications primarily for people working as subordinates and secondarily for all the 'clients' of the organization and therefore the society (Schütz, 1998). It is of interest that when leaders demonstrate high levels of hubris, there is a high probability to have a negative impact on the strategic decision-making process, the strategic choices made, and ultimately on the performance and offered services of the organization (Hiller and Hambrick, 2005).

Although research regarding leaders' hubristic effects is still limited, there are calls to examine contextual factors in leaders' hubris-related traits and behaviour in business, healthcare, and other settings (Rodgers, 2011; Giannouli, 2017).

Cultural influences in organizations are numerous (Pasa, 2000; Hofstede, 2001; Taras *et al.*, 2010) and it seems that positive effects of certain desirable leadership traits change in different cultural contexts (Mccord *et al.*, 2014). Although this book mainly aims at the 'British police reality', the authors could enrich the analyses of the topics with contributions from other cultural realities and within countries sharing the European culture.

Based on the above, several questions on police leadership should be added and explored, such as: If and how does hubris and culture influence the examined topics-thematic chapters of this book? What do we know and what do we need to learn about hubris when leaders and their subordinates come from police professions? Does hubristic leadership have differential cognitive and/or emotional effects on subordinates' work outcomes depending on the cultural context? What do academic researchers and practitioners from different cultural environments believe about the influence of hubris in police?

References

- Giannouli, V. (2017). What do we really know about hubris, culture and health professionals in leadership positions? A methodological recommendation. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, **26**: 150–151.
- Hiller, N. J. and Hambrick, D. C. (2005). Conceptualizing executive hubris: the role of (hyper-) core self-evaluations in strategic decision making. *Strategic Management Journal*, **26**: 297–319.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviours, Institutions and Organizations across Nations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mccord, M. A., Joseph, D. L., and Grijalva, E. (2014). Blinded by the light: the dark side of traditionally desirable personality traits. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, **7**: 130–137.
- Owen, D. (2006). Hubris and nemesis in heads of government. *Journal of Research in Social Medicine*, **99**: 548–551.
- Owen, D. and Davidson, J. (2009). Hubris syndrome: an acquired personality disorder? A study of US Presidents and UK Prime Ministers over the last 100 years. *Brain*, **132**: 1396–1406.
- Pasa, S. F. (2000). Leadership influence in a high power distance and collectivist culture. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, **21**(8): 414–426.
- Rodgers, C. (2011). *Hubris Syndrome: An Emergent Outcome of the Complex Social Process of Everyday Interaction*. The Daedalus Trust.
- Schütz, A. (1998). Assertive, offensive, protective, and defensive styles of self-presentation: a taxonomy. *Journal of Psychology*, **132**: 611–628.
- Taras, V., Kirkman, B. L., and Steel, P. (2010). Examining the impact of culture's consequences: a three-decade, multilevel, meta-analytic review of Hofstede's Cultural Value Dimensions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, **95**: 405–439.

Vaitsa Giannouli

Institute of Neurobiology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Acad. G. Bonchev str., bl. 23, 1113 Sofia, Bulgaria

E-mail: giannouliv@hotmail.com

© 2020 Oxford University Press. Copyright of Policing: A Journal of Policy & Practice is the property of Oxford University Press / USA and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.