Ethical Leadership, Motivation and Outcomes in Policing

29th September 2015

College of Policing, Ryton-on-Dunsmore

Dr Les Graham (Durham University)
Gillian Routledge, née Porter (Durham Constabulary)
CC Mike Barton (Durham Constabulary)
CC Jaqui Cheer (Cleveland Police)
Professor Tom Redman (Durham University)
Marisa Plater (Durham University)
Yuyan Zheng (Durham University)
Background to the Studies
The Journey So far

Policing as an evidence based profession

So how do we get the evidence?
Extensive prior research has shown that how people are managed and their attitudes to their jobs has a large impact on behaviour and performance.
The Code of Ethics (2014) identifies the criticality of police personnel in leadership positions to act as role models and suggests:

“right leadership will encourage ethical behaviour” (2014: 2)
The HMIC report on the state of policing (HMIC, 2014) identifies the need for fair treatment of employees as an important factor that affects police officer and staff attitudes which will in turn influence their behaviours.

Knowledge of ethical behaviour in organisations is growing rapidly but is still a fragmented area of knowledge (Avery et al., 2011)

For a review see Trevino et al. (2006)
Purpose – Research Questions

Research questions examined by this collaborative research between two forces and a university:

1. Is there a direct effect of ethical leadership on police officer and police staff ethical behaviour?

2. Is there a direct effect of ethical leadership on police officer and police staff extra-mile behaviours?

3. How does supervisor ethical leadership influence behaviour?
Methodology
Staff Survey – Study 1

Police Officers

Circulated to 1,208 (Returns = 512, response rate = 42.4%)

Police Staff

Circulated to 833 (Returns = 411, response rate = 49.3%)
Police Officers

Circulated to 1378 (Returns = 575, response rate = 42%)
Ethical Leaders

Traits, Characteristics and Altruistic Motivation

Honest

Trustworthy

Fair and principled decisions makers

Care about people and society

Behave ethically in their professional and personal lives

(Brown et al., 2005; Brown & Trevino, 2006)
Ethical leadership can be considered as the demonstration of **appropriate conduct** both in an individual’s personal actions and their inter-personal relationships.

Ethical leaders **promote ethical conduct** to their employees through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making.

Ethical leadership can be conceptualised as having **three** building blocks: **being an ethical example, treating people fairly and actively managing morality**.

(Brown et al., 2005: 120; Brown & Trevino, 2006)
Measures Used

We used measures for each variable from relevant academic literature

e.g. Ethical Leadership (Brown et al., 2005)

10 item measure (Cronbach Alpha study 1 = .95)
Advantages of the Measures Used

The variables have breadth. Multiple questions allow for fuller measurement especially when there are sub-dimensions to the variables

Measurement error is reduced

The measure achieved can be statistically tested for reliability of responses
Results
The direct effect of ethical leadership on police officer and police staff ethical behaviour
A total of 34,863 police complaints were recorded during 2013/14.

This is a 15% increase compared to 2012/13 and represents a 52% increase since 2004/05.

15% of these relate to incivility.
The Impact of Ethical Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Officers (S1)</th>
<th>Officers (S2)</th>
<th>Staff (S1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incivility (Public)</td>
<td>– ve</td>
<td>– ve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incivility (Co-workers)</td>
<td>– ve</td>
<td>– ve</td>
<td>– ve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter Productive Work Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td>– ve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regression analysis controlling for Gender, Tenure Policing, Gender Supervisor, Tenure Supervisor.

Evidence that ethical leadership is negatively related to incivility and CPWB

i.e. at higher levels of ethical leadership, incivility and CPWB in policing will be lower, when compared to lower levels of ethical leadership
The direct effect of ethical leadership on police officer and police staff *extra-mile* behaviour
Well-functioning organisations not only need people who are reliable in the way they carry out their specific roles and job requirements

But, who also engage in innovative and spontaneous activity that go beyond their role requirements (Katz, 1964)
**Discretionary Work Behaviours**

Refer to this second category of behaviours as:

behaviours that go beyond the individual’s job description, are discretionary, and are useful to the organisation (Organ, 1988)

"Going the extra-mile" (EMB)

These can be considered as being directed to different targets such as: the public, disrupting criminal activity, the organisation, co-workers etc.
The extent that employees communicate their ideas, suggestions and information about issues or concerns can have a large impact on an organisation and the service it provides (Morrison, 2011).

Discretionary communication of ideas and suggestions on work-related issues with the intent to make improvements (Detert & Burris, 2007).

In these studies, we measure voice behaviour directed towards improving services to the public.
Ethical leaders are trustworthy and practice what they preach.

They treat their followers fairly and with care and concern.

Followers then will feel personal obligation and gratitude to their ethical leader due to the fair and caring treatment they receive.

**Hypothesis:**

As a result followers will go above and beyond the call of duty and will engage in *extra-mile* behaviours.

(Brown & Trevino, 2006)
The Impact of Ethical Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Officers (S1)</th>
<th>Officers (S2)</th>
<th>Staff (S1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-mile (Public)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-mile (Organisation)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-mile (Disruption)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-mile (Co-workers)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-mile (Supervisor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice Behaviour (Public)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The performance and extra-mile behaviour measures were rated by supervisors.
Regression analysis controlling for Gender, Tenure Policing, Gender Supervisor, Tenure Supervisor.
Effect Size: + small, ++ medium, +++ large.
How does supervisor ethical leadership influence police officer and police staff *extra-mile* behaviour?
Work engagement can be thought of as a positive motivational work-related state (Bakker et al. 2004)

Characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2006)

Prior research has found engagement to be linked to important outcomes for individuals and organisations

These include health and well-being, ‘extra-mile’ behaviours, in-role performance, reduce turnover intentions and innovation
Dimensions of Empowerment

**Meaning** - the value of a work goal or purpose judged in relation to an individual’s own ideals or standards

**Competence (or self-efficacy)** - an individual belief in his or her capability to perform work activities with skill

**Self-determination** – an individual sense of having choice in initiating and regulating work actions. It reflects *autonomy* in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes

**Impact** - the degree to which an employee can influence work outcomes

(Spreitzer, 1995)
Ethical leadership behaviour helps followers see their jobs as more meaningful (Piccolo et al., 2010).

Ethical leaders are more likely to provide followers with higher levels of discretion in decision making (Zhu et al., 2004).

Ethical leaders are more likely to provide followers with opportunities to understand the impact that a follower can have in their role (Zhu et al., 2004).
Empowerment provides individuals with positive resources (autonomy, competence) needed to cope in their daily work experiences (Conger & Kanungo, 1988)

The provision of meaning and purpose in their role satisfies individuals’ basic psychological needs that enhance job satisfaction (Carless, 2004)

... and the experience of work engagement (Crawford et al., 2014)
Moreover, empowered individuals will feel more engaged in their work due to empowerment activating motivational systems responsible for approach (vs avoidance) behaviours that enable greater exertion of effort towards goals and priorities (Christian et al., 2011)
The Impact of Ethical Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Officers (S1)</th>
<th>Officers (S2)</th>
<th>Staff (S1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment (Public)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment (Supervisor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Energy</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regression analysis controlling for Gender, Tenure Policing, Gender Supervisor, Tenure Supervisor. Effect Size: + small, ++ medium, +++ large.
Ethical Leadership (Police Officers)

(Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) and while controlling for Age, Sex, Rank, Tenure Policing, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor. n = 136)
Ethical Leadership (Police Officers)

(Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) and while controlling for Age, Sex, Rank, Tenure Policing, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor. \( n = 136 \))
Ethical Leadership (Police Officers)

Ethical Leadership → Empowerment → Engagement

(Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) and while controlling for Age, Sex, Rank, Tenure Policing, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor, Communication Frequency, Moral Identity. \( n = 136 \))
Ethical Leadership (Study 1 Police Officers)

Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) \((n = 154)\)
Controlling for Gender, Tenure Policing, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor, Communication Frequency, Moral Identity, Public Service Motivation.
Non-significant paths shown in broken lines.
Ethical Leadership (Study 2 Police Officers)

Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) \((n = 129)\)
Controlling for Gender, Tenure Policing, Rank, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor, Communication Frequency, Moral Identity, Public Service Motivation.
Non-significant paths shown in broken lines.
Ethical Leadership and Emotions

Emotions are central to individuals’ experience of work and are very relevant predictors of performance (Rajah et al., 2011)

We can think of leader behaviour as an affective event (Dasborough, 2006)

Leadership has the potential to influence organisational outcomes through its impact on follower affect (Johnson, 2008)

In difficult situations the ability to reduce negative emotions may be particularly important (Johnson, 2008)
Emotions - Positive and Negative Affect

Individuals with high negative affect (NA) tend to experience feelings such as anger, contempt, disgust, nervousness, fear and guilt.

Individuals with low NA tend to experience calmness.

Positive affect (PA) relates to the extent an individual feels enthusiastic, active and alert.

Individuals with high PA have high levels of energy and concentration and a level of pleasurable engagement.

(Watson et al., 1988)
## The Impact of Ethical Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Officers (S1)</th>
<th>Officers (S2)</th>
<th>Staff (S1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment (Public)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment (Supervisor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Energy</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Emotions</strong></td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive Emotions</strong></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regression analysis controlling for Gender, Tenure Policing, Gender Supervisor, Tenure Supervisor.
Effect Size: + small, ++ medium, +++ large.
Ethical Leadership (Police Staff)

(Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) and while controlling for Age, Sex, Rank, Tenure Policing, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor, Communication Frequency, Moral Identity, Public Service Motivation.  \( n = 324 \) )
Ethical Leadership (Police Officers)

(Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) and while controlling for Age, Sex, Rank, Tenure Policing, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor, Communication Frequency, Moral Identity, Public Service Motivation. $n = 324$)
Emotional energy, as measured in this study, is central to employee well-being.

It can be considered as the amount of emotional and mental energy the employee has available to them to meet their daily job demands and challenges.

Low levels of emotional energy are manifested by both physical fatigue and a sense of feeling psychologically and emotionally ‘drained’ at work.
Ethical Leadership (Police Officers)

(Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) and while controlling for Age, Sex, Rank, Tenure Policing, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor, Moral Identity, Public Service Motivation. $n = 396$)
Ethical Leadership (Police Officers)

Ethical Leadership + Job Sat + Performance

(Regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2014) and while controlling for Age, Sex, Rank, Tenure Policing, Tenure Supervisor, Gender of Supervisor n = 134)
Conclusions
Conclusions

Ethical leadership is positively related to ethical behaviour in policing.

It also has a positive impact on police officer and staff extra-mile behaviour.

Ethical leadership is positively related to follower empowerment and so their level of engagement.

It also positively affects follower emotions, well-being and job satisfaction.
Performance Conversations

People are an integral part
Fair processes and procedures
Code of Ethics training
Police complaints
Growing concerns over well-being of police officers
Next steps...

Research into boundary conditions...

Investigation of targeted intervention effectiveness
Questions, Feedback, Comments and Discussion