Book Reviews

Managing Selection in Changing Organizations: Human Resource Strategies, edited by Jerard F. Kehoe. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA, 2000, 486 pp. Hardcover $46.95, ISBN 0-7879-4474-2.

Reviewed by *Chet Robie*, College of Business Administration, Niagara University, NY, USA

Many books on personnel selection tend to deal primarily with issues centering on the validity and reliability of predictors and criteria used in the selection process. This book takes a decidedly different approach to viewing personnel selection in the new millennium. Specifically, the authors of this book attempt to help us to approach personnel selection issues and practices from the complex organizational, societal, legal, and cultural contexts in which we find ourselves operating. Thus, this book is a must for anyone interested in cutting edge issues in personnel selection either from research or practice perspectives. The contributors are primarily practitioners or academics with real-world experience and thus each chapter leaves the reader with the feeling that the authors really have their fingers on the pulse of what is actually going on in organizations today in regard to selection practices and concerns.

The book contains 11 chapters that are subdivided into three Parts: Organizational Context, Regulatory Context, and Professional Context. Part One contains seven chapters on various issues that are intended to be organized around the theme of how organizational factors can affect the overall effectiveness of selection programs. Chapter 1 (Pearlman and Barney) discusses the degree to which the changing nature of jobs will necessitate our rethinking the way in which we select individuals for jobs. The authors included an interesting case study and a discussion of an internet-integrated job analysis tool based on fuzzy logic principles that they have developed and implemented in their organization to affect such change. Chapter 2 (Higgs, Papper and Carr) discusses issues related to how one should attempt to integrate selection with other organizational systems and processes, ending with a potentially fecund list of research opportunities and helpful practical advice. Jayne and Rauschenberger in Chapter 3 contribute an eminently readable account of different ways of demonstrating selection value (e.g., benchmarking, quality of new hires, etc.); their primary messages are: (1) talk the language of the managers, and (2) use many different ways to demonstrate value. In Chapter 4 Gilliland and Cherry detail how one should go about identifying 'customers' of selection processes and how they can best be managed to affect needed change. In Chapter 5 Bownas briefly deals with issues related to negotiating selection processes in a union environment. Bownas's basic message for I/O psychologists interested in successful negotiation of a selection system is to develop and maintain professional credibility and to do this through: holding to professional principles, recruiting trusted and knowledgeable staff, avoiding association with ill-perceived corporate functions, spending time listening to union members, ensuring confidentiality, preferring measures that are close to work behavior, gaining support from local union officials, and explaining the test development process. Jones, Stevens and Fischer in Chapter 6 deal with the unique issues that arise when selecting in various types of team contexts (start-up teams, transitional teams, intact teams). The seventh and final chapter in this Part by Nyfield and Baron discusses how selection practices typically vary quite substantially from culture to culture, what dimensions of culture tend to drive these differences, and how one might adapt selection procedures to work more effectively across cultures.

Part Two contains two chapters that deal with American legal issues and the impact they have on selection practices. Both chapters are extremely well researched and easy to read for those without legal training – this is probably because both chapters were written by authors with legal and psychological training. Chapter 9 by Sharf and Jones focuses heavily on post-Civil Rights Act of 1991 developments in employment law. The basic purpose of this chapter is to illustrate what employment practices to avoid if you want to stay out of court – the appendix to the chapter is the 'list of shame' of corporations who lost huge employment law-related suits due to various disregard of the issues discussed in the chapter. Chapter 10 by Campbell and Reilly should be considered the 'gold standard' reference for accommodating individuals for disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The chapter is part cliff notes for those who hate reading legal source documents and part a review of little known but important research on how accommodations to testing instruments may affect the psychometrics of said instruments.

Part Three contains two chapters that attempt to provide direction on how we can take research in personnel selection and apply it both to organizational and societal problems. Chapter 11 by Zedeck and Goldstein advocates a role for I/O psychologists in public policy. Basically, they suggest that I/O

psychologists should be more assertive in helping to shape public policy but only insofar as we rely on scientific evidence to do so. I was expecting a standard (i.e., boring and redundant) overview chapter for the final chapter of the book by Kehoe; however, I was pleasantly surprised by a chapter that could stand alone and contributed unique insights. In this chapter, Kehoe provides his view of what a practice-oriented research agenda for personnel selection in the new millennium might look like. Some of the key research questions that I found most interesting revolved around the organizational level of analysis such as: (1) 'How much can or do selection practices affect organizational-level results?'; (2) 'Do organizational characteristics affect choice or tolerance of selection?'; and (3) 'How do selection systems "fit" with other HR systems?' Other research questions that Kehoe noted were of importance were focused either on the individual, the selection procedure, or the selection system. This chapter should be on every graduate student's 'first-read' list when thinking about ideas for research proposals.

I was surprised about how even the quality the chapters were for this book. Edited books of this type usually have one or two chapters that were seemingly written on a bar napkin the night before the chapter was due but this was not the case with this book. Each chapter was extremely readable and contained very important information on a unique aspect of the 'soft sides' (i.e., nonstatistical) aspects of personnel selection. One issue that was not dealt with but is extremely important to present-day organizations is guidance on how to develop recruitment and selection strategies to increase workforce diversity. Nevertheless, selection practitioners will find this book useful for making immediate and profound changes to their selection systems. Researchers in the area of personnel selection will find this book useful in providing direction for mapping new research agendas that ask questions that are more interesting to both selection practitioners and also to organizational and societal policy makers.

Human Resource Management: The New Agenda, edited by Paul Sparrow and Mick Marchington, Financial Times Management/Pitman: London, 1998, 346 pp. Paperback £24.99, ISBN 0 273 62823 2.

Reviewed by *Paul Jackson*, School of Business and Management, Brunel University, Uxbridge, UK

Is HRM in crisis? Whether it is or not, what is the new HRM agenda? These are important questions and not easily answered. In a world where technologies, economic structures, organizations and work are changing rapidly and often dramatically, managers,

especially senior managers and HR practitioners, need an informed response to them, though.

This is the challenge Sparrow and Marchington have set themselves. But in addressing it, *Human Resource Management: The New Agenda* is only part of a broader project. The book is in fact one outcome of a series of workshops, sponsored by the UK Economic and Social Research Council and Institute of Personnel and Development, which sought a thoroughgoing review of issues facing HRM. The workshops series, entitled *HRM in Crisis*, brought together key academics, practitioners and policy-makers in the field. The breadth and experience of the participants have produced a series of events, as well as a final publication, which are both timely and highly credible.

The book discusses the New Agenda under three key headings: (1) changing organizational forms, processes and contracts; (2) developing partnership and employee voice; and (3) and the pursuit of multiple and parallel flexibilities. As such, the book weaves together a set of interlinked issues and contexts that challenge many HRM orthodoxies. Following the breakdown of traditional employment relationships and the rise of new organizational forms and methods of work, the book explores the need to rethink psychological contracts. One recurring theme here, and throughout the book, is the importance of trust and commitment – how to build it, manage for it and design jobs and management structures that respect its importance.

The need to rethink traditional approaches to employee-employer relationships is addressed in Part II. While a particularly pressing political theme in the UK, the emphasis on partnership has a broader applicability given global developments in employment relations. Part III addresses the need to respond to the multiple forms of flexibility given today's markets, technologies, processes and social values.

So, is HRM in crisis? Probably not, conclude the authors. However, Sparrow and Marchington do contend that it is at a 'significant juncture'. It is one, they say, at which key decisions have to be made on the way in which human resources are understood and managed within organizations, as well as the way they are involved in the decisions that affect them. The need to build partnerships, foster trust and commitment, and respect the importance of an employee voice are matters that go beyond the preserve of HRM practitioners and departments. In a world of delayering and team-based working, they are particularly pertinent to senior managers. As such, the lessons from the book need crucially to be learned across management levels and functions.

The book's analyses and conclusions are convincing and noteworthy. Despite the slightly disparate contributors, the piece hangs together coherently. Sparrow and Marchington have marshalled the material

and expertise available to them well. For UK readers especially, the book has much to offer; but given the general applicability of the key themes – technological and organizational change; global restructuring; the rethinking of work, psychological contracts and employee-employer partnerships – there is a much broader audience, too.

A final point to reflect on is whether the 'New Agenda' still holds given recent developments surrounding the Internet and e-commerce. The book's origins lie in the days before the 'e-revolution' started itself to refocus management agendas. However, the book's analysis cuts sufficiently deep into broader structural changes in organizations and the economy that while little explicit mention is made of e-business, virtual working, and so on, the conclusions still hold. Indeed, there are many HRM issues raised by recent developments that organizations can ill-afford to ignore. As the book shows, the real crisis in HRM is likely to concern those businesses in either the old or new economy – which fail to respond to the new orthodoxies and demands of a deep-seated change to the human resource issues.

Deception in Selection, by Liz Walley and Mike Smith. Wiley: Chichester, 1998, 272 pp. Paperback £18.99, ISBN 0-471-97498-6.

Reviewed by *Eva Derous*, Open University, Valkenburgerweg 177, 6401 DL Heerlen, The Netherlands

The book *Deception in Selection* is part of a series entitled 'Strategic Human Resource Management'. The editor of this series, Neil Anderson, stated that his main objective was to bring together cutting edge texts which examine and interpret some of the most pressing concerns for HRM practice in industry while challenging assumptions and traditional practices in HRM. This book has achieved this objective as it tries to increase awareness of deception by providing information about the nature, reasons, and consequences of deception. *Deception in Selection* is mainly written for practitioners involved in staff selection.

The book is divided into 12 chapters. Although not indicated by the authors, in my opinion the book is built around four major themes: the nature of deception (Chapters 1–3); the 'deceitful' nature and use of selection and recruitment tools (Chapters 4–8), the consequences of deceiving (Chapter 9), and strategies to combat deceiving (Chapters 10–12).

The first three chapters cover the nature and reasons of deception. One can consider 'deception' an interesting topic, which has not been extensively covered in the academic literature. Although Walley and Smith refer to

different cases throughout the book, not much is said about the *real* extent and consequences of the deceitful practices in recruitment and selection settings. This may be partly due to the defensive attitudes, which inhibit a truthful study of 'dishonesty' in the workplace. Deception is also more a relative concept than an absolute concept because the authors situate deception on a continuum of intention: Deceptive activities may be more or less deliberately prepared and/or initiated. Walley and Smith further explore the different motives initiating both deception that is not deliberate (e.g., self-deception, unwitting deception) and deliberate deception (e.g., self-interest, political reasons, social pressures, and commercial interests). Chapter 3 focuses on the different ways in which employers/recruiters/selectors may deceive candidates.

Chapters 4 to 8 discuss the deceitful nature and use of selection and recruitment tools. The authors explore the deceitful nature of a wide range of testing tools including application forms, references, interviews, psychometric tests (mental ability tests, physical ability tests, personality questionnaires, and interest tests), work samples, assessment centres, biodata, graphology, and reference checks. The selectors' as well as the applicants' points of view are considered. Although the authors tend to be exhaustive about the deceptive characteristics of the different tools, this part was rather boring because only slight variations on the same theme are discussed. Surprisingly, new forms of recruitment and selection (e.g., on-line recruitment and assessment of candidates) are not mentioned. The authors are also rather sketchy about the psychometric quality of tests. Finally, it struck me that this part was mainly written from a British point of view. Although the reasons for deception, the consequences of deception, and the deception mechanisms could be universal, cultural differences (e.g., laws, practices, etc.) may nuance the process and were worthy of consideration in the book.

Chapter 9 describes the consequences of deceit during selection. An extensive and wide array of internal organizational consequences of the candidate's deception as well as individual consequences due to the organization's deception are discussed. Organizational consequences include discovery of deception, poor quality/quantity of production and service, theft, sabotage, and industrial espionage. Candidates' consequences consist of practical, emotional, and psychological effects as well as economical effects (e.g., breach of contract).

The final chapters (10 to 12) conclude with both pro-active and reactive strategies to combat deception, which should result in better evaluations and decision-making. Although reactive strategies are sometimes inevitable, the authors strongly suggest that both employers and candidates employ pro-active strategies. Candidates' pro-active strategies include gathering information about

themselves (e.g., career counselling), the job, the selection procedure, and the organization. Surprisingly, the authors do not mention training/coaching sessions, which are often offered to job applicants in order to increase their skills. Issues such as how much information and training can be given to job applicants or whether it is ethically sound to train job applicants in impression management, on the one hand, while selecting job applicants, on the other, are not addressed in the book. Organizations' pro-active strategies consist of reviewing and strengthening the selection procedure through investigation of company policies, training of recruiters/selectors, using psychometrically sound tests in a professional way, and treating candidates in a transparent and ethical way. Judgmental biases when rating people are only briefly mentioned. The final chapter provides background information on supplementary checks of candidates (e.g., criminal records, medical examinations, drug testing, lie detector, and integrity tests). It is a pity that the authors end the book in this way as I would have discussed these supplementary checks together with other testing tools.

In sum, this book concentrates on a practical description of deceitful activities in selection. Despite some weaknesses, which I mentioned above, it attracts attention for different reasons. First, deceiving and impression management seem to be irrevocably woven into selection practices and decisions. A book covering the whole range of different facets of deception in selection practices fills a gap in the literature because previously most texts dealt with deception in a piecemeal way (e.g., social desirability, test fairness, integrity tests, etc.). The authors successfully put into context the different 'potential' reasons for deceit, as well as the 'deceiving' characteristics of selection tools and the possible consequences of deceitful practices. Second, throughout the book the authors systematically hold a two-way communication pattern stressing the deceitful intentions and practices of job applicants as well as the deceitful activities of selectors. Third, especially appealing to me in the book is the underlying *social process* perspective, which the authors have on selection. Quality in selection encompasses both sound test performance as well as acceptance of selection practices. The way both recruiters and candidates perceive and (do not) accept selection practices should be of increasing concern to HRM practitioners as it has been found to influence their attitudes and test performance. Fourth, the book is written from a multi-party perspective, stressing the complex interactive nature of selection (and deceit) between different parties. Therefore, *Deception in Selection* is a worthy recommendation for (potential) selection specialists and human resource managers who want to discuss and review selection practices from an alternative point of view.

The Employment Interview Handbook, Edited by Robert W. Eder and Michael M. Harris. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1999, 419 pp. Hardback £33.00, ISBN 0-7619-0648-7; Paperback £15.99, ISBN 0-7619-0649-5.

Reviewed by *Allen I. Huffcutt*, Bradley University, Department of Psychology, Peoria, IL, USA

There have been surprisingly few books on the employment interview. In fact, the only existing books are the earlier version of this one, which is now over a decade old (Eder and Ferris 1989), and an excellent exploration of the interview process by Dipboye (1992). So, it would appear that there is plenty of room for another book on the employment interview.

More than that, it is definitely time for another book as there have been some major developments during the 1990s in interview research itself and in several related areas such as personality. In particular, several large-scale meta-analyses have provided a much more thorough understanding of interview reliability and validity and the effects of moderator variables such as the level of structure (Conway, Jako and Goodman 1995; Huffcutt and Arthur 1994; McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt and Maurer 1994). Moreover, the use of nontraditional interview technologies such as phone (Schmidt and Rader 1999) and video-conference (DeGroot 1997) formats is being explored with increasing frequency. In terms of related areas, the big-five personality framework has gained wide-spread acceptance including applications in selection (Mount and Barrick 1995), and may provide a means to better determine the extent of personality assessment in interviews. There has been heightened awareness of organizational-fit issues (Cable and Judge 1997), and assessing the role that interviews can and should play in assessing organizational compatibility is an important topic. Finally, there has been greater recognition of other aspects of performance such as organizational citizenship behaviors (Borman and Motowidlo 1993), which brings up the question of how well interviews predict these behaviors.

Overall, there is much to commend in this book by Eder and Harris (1999). For one thing the range of topics is exceptional. It begins with what is perhaps the single best summary of the history of interview research that is available to date (Chapter 1) and ends with two excellent commentaries on the current and future state of interview research (Chapters 20 and 21). Between these endpoints is a wealth of information on the interview. There is the traditional review of validity (Chapter 2) and associated issues such as discrimination (Chapter 3) and structured interview methodology (Chapters 9 and 10). There is extensive coverage of process issues such as contextual effects, interviewer expectations, unfavorable information, individual differences among interviewers,

communication, training, and use of new technology to conduct panel interviews (Chapters 11–17 and 19). There is also text related to applicant issues, including reactions, impression management tactics, and perceptions of the organization (Chapters 4, 18, and 5 respectively). Finally, there is excellent coverage of what may be the next big thrust in interview research – identification of the constructs assessed – including personality, organizational fit, and tacit knowledge (Chapters 6–8). In short, there is something for everyone in this book.

In addition to the range of topics, another plus is that theoretical frameworks are used to integrate the material throughout many of the chapters in the book. Incorporation of theories is important because doing so advances scientific understanding and keeps the text from becoming a laundry list of previous research and ideas. For example, organizational justice (both procedural and interactional) is used as a conceptual framework for studying applicant reactions to structured interviews in Chapter 4 and the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) is used as a theoretical foundation for studying use of the interview to enhance organizational reputation in Chapter 5. Relatedly, an interesting and relevant distinction is made between surface and source traits in the material on personality assessment in Chapter 6.

In terms of short-comings, there are no major weaknesses in this book although there are a couple of developmental areas which the authors should consider for the next version. In particular, the summary of validity research in Chapter 2 could be more fully developed in terms of actual findings and implications for practice with a little less emphasis on the shortcomings of meta-analysis. Here it would be useful to discuss what specific practices (e.g., allowing interviewers to probe responses, use of an interview panel, type of job analysis) are supported by research and which are not. And, it would be beneficial to include a chapter dedicated to summary of the behavior description interview and related issues. The chapter on the situation interview (Chapter 9) is perhaps the best summary of the situational interview available to date, as it contains information on validity, reliability, legality, practicality, constructs, utility, question development, and response scoring, and it would be beneficial to have a companion chapter for the behavior description interview. Again, these are not major weaknesses and in no way detract from the overall contribution of the book.

In summary, this is a first-class book and the authors and contributors should be commended for their efforts. Anyone who is involved with or even just interested in the employment interview should own a copy, including practitioners, academic researchers, and graduate students. There truly is something for everybody here, and there is no better source available for information on the employment interview. It can serve as a reference for technical questions, a source for locating citations and studies for a given topic, and even as an inspiration for new ideas and new lines of research.

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***Handbook of Gender and Work**, Edited by Gary N. Powell*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1999, 656 pp. Hardback £50.00, ISBN 0-7619-1355-6.

Reviewed by *Sue Gill*, Manchester School of Management, UMIST, Manchester, UK

This book aims, as the editor states in his Introduction, to 'increase our understanding of the intersection of gender and work'. It is a weighty collection (over 600 pages) and presents reviews of theory and research on a wide range of topics. Its contributors are an expert group, and the handbook takes an international view.

The handbook addresses a subject that is becoming increasingly relevant as women's representation in the

paid workforce has increased world-wide over the past decade. However, the economic status of women in the workplace remains lower than that of men, and the international workforce remains segregated on the basis of gender. These are issues that the handbook proceeds to explore from a variety of perspectives.

The handbook is divided into six Parts. Part I, 'Gender and other Identities' sets the subject in context. It traces the development of models of gender and argues for a more rigorous theoretical basis for research. It also explores the issues of race and ethnicity as key variables in the study of gender in organizations, criticizing much previous research in the field for its colour and culture blind approach. Indeed, a recurrent theme running through a number of contributions within the handbook is the need to consider race and culture in any analysis of gender in relation to work. This first section comprises a useful attempt to provide a cohesive overview of a broad subject area, where succeeding contributions vary widely in their focus and specificity.

Part II deals with the economic and societal context, and includes contributions describing the way in which changes in the nature of work have affected job security, working hours and the concept of career, suggesting that these represent an opportunity of particular benefit to women. It also charts the rise in service sector employment and explores how gender affects the service delivery process, a subject receiving little attention in previous research. Other contributions in this part of the handbook include an analysis of the gendered substructure of organizations, maintaining that this continues to be overwhelmingly masculine, an exploration of the gender gap in earnings and a chapter on the sex segregation of occupations, which examines causal factors and pessimistically predicts that such segregation will persist into the foreseeable future.

This is a useful Part, which summarizes current research evidence concerning these broad issues, and provides context for the more specific topics which are included in Part III of the handbook: 'Organisational, Group and Interpersonal Processes'. This presents contributions that include gender bias in interviewers' evaluations, gender influences on performance evaluations and the effects of gender composition on organizational groups. It also includes three chapters on gender and leadership that, while exploring different aspect of the subject, usefully summarize research findings to date and set a direction for further study. Chapters also address sexual harassment and the issue of romantic relationships in organizations.

Part IV, 'Careers and the Quality of Life', contains chapters describing gender differences in careers, gender and mentoring relationships, women entrepreneurs, work, family and gender and a comprehensive review of stress and the working woman.

This is an excellent Part with contributions incorporating a wealth of information, presented in a way that is both interesting and accessible. It is surprising, however, that contributions on work/family issues still implicitly view 'the family' as comprising a traditional two parent family – a supposition that is becoming increasingly anachronistic, given the steep rise in single parent and reconstituted families.

Part V, 'Organisational Initiatives', describes the efforts made by organizations to manage diversity. It overviews the impact of affirmative action and work/life initiatives, arguing for more and better research to demonstrate the costs and benefits of such action to individuals and organizations. This is one of the shortest chapters in the book, comprising only two contributions. Although this may reflect the paucity of research data evaluating the real effect of such interventions, a longer chapter, incorporating more examples of specific organizational initiatives, would have more adequately represented activity in this area.

The final Part, 'Conducting Future Research', highlights the variety of disciplines: sociology, anthropology, economics, psychology and management involved in research into gender and organizations, and the consequent multiplicity of paradigms used. This is an interesting section, analyzing the current and future nature of research in the field, and welcoming the trend towards studies that give greater consideration to context, i.e., the environment in which gender operates.

My only real criticism of the handbook is that deals predominantly with managerial and professional work; areas where women are still under-represented. The reality of work, for the majority of women, is that it is low status, low paid, often unskilled and part-time, with little training, job security or opportunities for advancement.

This is acknowledged by Cooper and Boscoe in the book's final Part, which points out that much of the work to date has been weighted towards white, middle-class professionals. They call for more studies which include non-managerial women and women of different cultures and colours.

Overall, however, this is an extremely good book. It is an impressive collection of articles that together provide a comprehensive review of current theory and research on gender and work. It provides both breadth and depth, in that although its contributions span a wide range of topics, they are not superficial in their analyses. It is an academic book, comprising a valuable and well-referenced resource to students and researchers, but it does not set out to be a guidebook of practical solutions. As such, it will be of less interest to human resource professionals seeking clear strategies for implementing equal opportunities in organizations.

Participation and Empowerment in Organizations: Modeling, Effectiveness and Applications, by Abraham Sagie and Meni Koslowsky, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2000, 144 pp. Hardback £35.00, ISBN 0-7619-0734-3; Paperback £15.99, ISBN 0-7619-0735-1.

Reviewed by *Chris Rees*, School of Human Resource Management, Kingston Business School, Kingston University, UK

This slim volume packs a lot into a small space. In a clearly and carefully written account, the authors adopt a broad definition of participation and empowerment, and provide a detailed and knowledgeable coverage of an extensive range of literature. The style is somewhat dense in places, and students will find it a challenging book rather than an 'easy read'. However, those looking for an analysis which goes beyond many of the textbook platitudes about empowerment and organizational performance will find the effort worthwhile.

The authors state up-front the key questions to be examined in the book to be as follows: '(a) how are participative decision making (PDM) and employee empowerment expressed in organizations around the globe?; (b) what are the underlying dynamics of the process?; and (c) to what extent are participative decision making and empowerment effective?' (p. xiv)

The book has eight chapters. After tracing the origins and diverse meanings of participation and empowerment in Chapter 1, Chapters 2–5 consider the impact of participative decision-making on a range of work outcomes, with particular focus on performance and attitudes. An extremely wide range of literature is summarized here, covering group-oriented research, as well as research on leadership and on goal-setting and participation. Chapters 6 and 7 then move on to look more specifically at employee empowerment and at a range of practices commonly thought to provide for it, such as quality circles and TQM. Finally, in Chapter 8 a brief summary is provided of the main arguments, and some measured and cautious answers are suggested to the opening questions.

While much of the book is descriptive in nature, summarizing literature on a wide range of meanings and applications of participation and empowerment, it makes a clear contribution by addressing the question of *why* participation and empowerment are seen as effective; that is, consideration is given to the factors which facilitate the positive impact of participation and empowerment, as well the factors which inhibit success.

In discussing quality circles, for example, the authors argue that 'the correct question is not whether or not [the quality circle] is effective, but rather *when* (i.e. under what conditions) is it effective' (p. 110). They conclude from their critical examination of a range of empowerment programs that 'they all suffer from common drawbacks' (p. 120), and based on these they summarize the characteristics of so-called 'successful' programs: 'A program that does work has a clear and focused aim related to real work needs. Also, top management's continued commitment indicates to all concerned that the organization's senior executives … really care about it … Furthermore, a successful program is regarded as long ranged and handles multiple issues. Finally, adequate training, planning, and sufficient means are provided to employees' (p. 120). Research involving this reviewer has come to similar conclusions as to the conditions promoting the successful implementation of TQM, although other important factors would be added to the above: notably a sense of job security on the part of employees, training linked to quality and teamwork, and appropriate forms of employee representation (Edwards, Collinson and Rees 1998).

The emphasis on these latter factors perhaps reflects the slightly different approach of some of the UK and European research in terms of what is meant by 'successful' or 'effective' employee empowerment. While the book's authors point out early on that the US approach is rooted in organizational behaviour and the European approach grounded more in the labour relations literature, their subsequent analysis focuses largely on the former approach, and thus leads to a relative neglect of the employee relations implications of participation and empowerment initiatives.

For example, the authors claim to review 'the most meaningful trends in the research on employee participation' (p. 52), but many would argue that the most meaningful questions to ask concern issues of power and control, which remain somewhat under-represented here. The definition of 'success' is very much centred on work outcomes such as job performance and job satisfaction, and the book tends to focus on normative accounts of empowerment, where certain key elements are likely to be present – such as a sense of personal efficacy and worth, a sense of individual power, and the freedom to use that power in the achievement of valued goals. However, although empowerment is frequently used as a short-hand for discretion, autonomy and responsibility, more precision is desirable, and it is arguably more fruitful to see empowerment as a 'constrained process', and as essentially referring to the use of employee's abilities within goals defined by management.

As Wilkinson (1998) has observed in this regard, empowerment tends to be strongly managerially-led and to reflect business considerations such as quality and productivity. Similarly, Lashley (1997) refers to the development in the UK of 'empowerment through involvement', which – he says – is 'largely concerned with task level issues, and limited to an agenda of items which is restricted to work organization, productivity and quality improvement, and problem-solving customer

satisfaction issues. They allow employees limited power, because in all cases managers make the final decisions. Employees have opportunities to make suggestions and identify issues for improvement, but decisions remain the domain of managers' (1997, p. 57). Likewise Robbins has argued that empowerment 'has the effect of increasing management control while creating the impression of reducing it' (1983, p. 67).

Leaving aside the relative neglect of these arguments, the book remains a thorough and extremely informative overview of a wide range of key issues in current debates around employee participation and empowerment. Its arguments are measured and considered, and it avoids the overly zealous and simplistic tone of much of the literature in this area.

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Women and Men in Organizations: Sex and Gender Issues at Work, by Jeanette N. Cleveland, Margaret Stockdale, and Kevin R. Murphy. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Mahwah: New Jersey, 2000, 463 pp. Hardback $99.95, ISBN 0-8058-1267-9, Paperback $42.50, ISBN 0-8058-1268-7.

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This book is unique in that it is a text, complete with pedagogical components and not a compilation of readings. Because of this, it can serve as the central text for a class on gender issues in the organization. It could be used both in business and non-business courses at the upper-undergraduate level or at the graduate level. As many texts, each chapter starts with an outline and ends with a summary and glossary. There are also 'Sidelights' throughout the chapters, presenting interesting insights to specific topics. The inclusion of this material will assist students in reading and understanding the text.

The book is composed of 13 chapters divided into four sections. The introduction (Chapters 1 and 2) introduces students to the differing experiences of women and men. Part II (Chapters 3 through 6) centers on attitudes and

behaviors. Part III (Chapters 7 through 12) moves to individual and organizational outcomes. Part IV (Chapter 13) concludes the book with a discussion on managing in a diverse workplace. I found this book to be very well written. As a rule, the transitions from section to section and chapter to chapter are smooth and make sense. Research is an integral part of the book and the authors liberally cite relevant material. While I found some of this work to be outdated, the overall emphasis is on objectivity (within boundaries, see comment below) and the reporting of research results.

Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the issues and meaning of 'work' and the history of male and female participation in the workforce. The authors put forth a model for understanding the book. Processes and Outcomes, both individual and organizational, will be discussed within the various contexts of Culture, Society, and the Organization. Chapter 2 continues with the introductory component of the text with a general discussion of models of understanding. The Biological, Socialization, and Structural/Cultural models are discussed followed by the differences between 'sex' and 'gender'. There is also an impressive discussion of research paradigms, alerting students to the potential 'biases' in research. This sets up an excellent platform from which students can now move into specific research and have a better understanding of the differing results and viewpoints present in this field of research. I applaud the authors for including this material in the front of the book and not at the end. It is better to know up front how the research is done.

Part II deals with the processes involved in learning about women and men at work. Chapter 3 focuses on perceptions and stereotypes. The authors do a good job in the discussion of stereotypes, which also includes race, age, appearance, and disability. The importance of these stereotypes is then discussed in how they impact on the individual in the work setting. Chapter 4 deals with romance at work. I was surprised to see this chapter at this point but the transition is smooth as the discussion begins with the stereotypes of attractiveness. The broader view of this chapter deals with expectations, social acceptance, and non-romantic friendship.

Chapter 5 deals with issues in communication, verbal and non-verbal. The focus of this material is the perception of differences in communication rather than any real differences. The authors note that the belief in differences can be more of a barrier to communication than actual differences. Again, the role of stereotypes is emphasized concluding that there may be more perceived differences than real ones. However, the final chapter in this section discusses how these differences in communication affect power. In this chapter, the differences appear to be real. The authors cannot have it both ways. The bulk of this chapter is a discussion on power, sources of power, and power as a male

stereotype. They conclude women have less access to the traditional sources of power and so rely on other non-traditional sources of power. There is no discussion, however, of women who are in traditional positions of power and what sources of power they use. The question then becomes whether women do not use different sources of power, but whether people in non-traditional power roles use non-traditional sources of power as compared to those in traditional power roles. I did not find Chapters 5 and 6 to be particularly strong. The research in Chapter 5 is dated and very little discussion on women and power is included in Chapter 6.

The third Part of the book is the largest and is comprised of six chapters. I found the first three chapters to be particularly strong. Chapter 7 deals with the issues of discrimination at work focusing on occupational segregation. The discussion of the antecedents and continuing existence of this form of discrimination gives the reader a better understanding of the situation of women in the workplace. I was impressed by the discussion of Human Capital Theory and that, while many rely on this theory to place the onus of occupational segregation on women, the authors point out that it does not and cannot explain it.

Chapter 8 moves the reader into an excellent review and discussion of the legal environment. The laws and how they work are clearly explained. Sidelight 8.1 presents the issue of comparable worth in a clear understandable manner, positing that it is as much a function of occupational segregation as it is a function of unequal pay. I was also impressed with the discussion on Affirmative Action. It was a pleasure to see a text discuss Affirmative Action in a way as to truly explain the program and not try to make excuses or apologize for it. The discussion of the backlash from Affirmative Action is wonderful.

The issue of sexual harassment has its own chapter (Chapter 9). Separating this material out on its own highlights the importance of sexual harassment and the impact it has on the workplace. Along with the history, definitions, and consequences, I am particularly impressed with the section on both the macro and micro theories on Sexual Harassment. Is this a function of biology or societal factors? Or is it a function of personality or situations?

A change in tone occurs at this point in the book. The previous three chapters have dealt heavily with discrimination and now we are back to discussing gender differences in work situations/outcomes. I also believe Leadership (Chapter 11) should precede Careers (Chapter 10) as differences in leadership may lead to differences in careers. The authors do a well-balanced job of presenting the information on career development: from the fact that most research on careers is 'male-based' to the issues of mentoring, dual careers and a disrupted work history (i.e., childbearing).

The transition to Leadership (Chapter 11) is not as strong as other transitions and similar to the chapter on power, about half the chapter is on Leadership regardless of gender. Once the topic returns to gender, the issue of stereotype once again takes center-stage. This presentation of both sides of the issue is in keeping with the tenor of the book, to present information so the reader can make her/his own conclusions. The concluding section on the glass ceiling would have made a good transition into a discussion of careers.

Chapter 12 deals with stress in general and the issues associated with women in particular. While this is a well-written chapter, I am not convinced that this material is worthy of this much space.

The book concludes with Part IV, 'Managing Diversity'. This chapter serves to integrate and summarize the many issues previously discussed. A realistic view of diversity, complete with conflict, is presented. The reader is led to understand that the creation of a gender-inclusive organization requires a great deal of work as well as a great deal of time. However, it is not an impossible mission, and approaches to integration and conclusion are reviewed. Overall, this is a book I would use. It is well grounded in research and provides good solutions for long-standing problems. The focus of the book is on perceptions and expectations, the solutions expressed are on how to change these. I definitely recommend this book.

The Handbook of Multisource Feedback, edited by David W. Bracken, Carol T. Timmreck, and Allan H. Church. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2001, 557 pp. Hardback $49.95, ISBN 0-7879-5286-9.

Reviewed by *Clive Fletcher*, Department of Psychology, Goldsmiths' College, London, UK

Given that multisource feedback has been one of the fastest-spreading assessment and development methods of the last decade, and shows all the signs of being applied even more widely in the future, publication of this Handbook is timely. It is a comprehensive text, containing in its 30 chapters a wealth of practical advice, usually based as far as possible on the extensive experience of the contributors and on solid research evidence. It covers almost every imaginable aspect of multisource feedback (they prefer this term to '360 degree feedback' as they assert that the latter was trademarked by another organization over a decade ago), from assessing organizational readiness for such interventions, through choice or development of instruments, to application to specific groups and to evaluation. Consideration is given to the issue of whether it should be used for development or for administrative purposes

(i.e., appraisal) or both. About the only thing I could find missing was any advice on how to carry out the statistical analysis necessary to assess item value and whether the multisource feedback questionnaire does indeed measure what it claims to.

Though the editors state in their Preface that the primary audience is practitioners, my guess is that this book my be a little hard going for a general HR readership, and that the practitioners it is aimed at are those within work and organizational psychology. As far as I could tell, nearly all the contributors fall within that category, and those that do not are in management faculties. Many of the contributors have had some link with the Centre for Creative Leadership, and PDI is also well represented amongst them. More than a few of the contributors will be familiar to anyone who has followed the academic literature on multisource feedback over recent years. The foreword is written by David Campbell, who begins by outlining the history of psychological assessment, mainly in terms of psychometrics. I find it a little strange to place the development of multisource feedback within this historical context, as it would seem to me to have much more in common with performance appraisal – and indeed the editors position it as interfacing between performance management, employee surveys and assessment. It is also in Campbell's Foreword that one first encounters what is, from a European perspective anyway, a slightly irritating aspect of the book. This is the tendency to see the USA as the origin of just about everything. Thus, his assertion that the first time assessment was done for the benefit of the person assessed was by the Peace Corps in the 1960s may raise some eyebrows in Europe. However, this is a book whose contributors are all North Americans and who focus (with one exception; see below) on that continent, so perhaps this bias is understandable.

Because of its focus on the US experience, one of the chapters I was most pleased to see included was on 'Cross-Cultural Issues in Multisource Feedback'. This was written by Brutus, Leslie and McDonald-Mann. It gets off to a bad start by stating 'make no mistake about it, multisource feedback is an American product', which is a doubtful claim given examples of its use in Europe for the past 30 years. But the chapter improves markedly and touches on a number of interesting issues relating to this largely ignored but potentially crucial aspect of the feedback process when used in international business. The authors rightly identify Hofstede's Power Distance and Individualism-Collectivism as relevant constructs for interpreting the possible varying impact of multisource feedback in different cultures, though the short length of the chapter precludes them doing much more than touch on this; for a fuller treatment in relation to appraisal and feedback, see Fletcher and Perry (2001). They do also make the interesting point that self-awareness – the enhancement of which is often cited as a goal of multisource feedback – may be viewed in some cultures

as an attribute which is self developed and where external perspectives (as in ratings from others) are not valued input.

Another valuable chapter is that by Bernadin and Tyler, on 'Legal and Ethical Issues in Multisource Feedback'. Now, in truth, there is not a lot for them to go on, as they admit they cannot find any cases dealing specifically with the use of multisource feedback! Their perspective is, reasonably enough, rooted in the US legal framework, but they range over a number of themes that have wider relevance. Their general case is that any decision based on multisource feedback data is likely to be more defensible than one based on data provided by a single rater. They produce various cases to support this view, though as noted none are directly concerned with multisource feedback as such. The authors raise the possibility of an argument being put forward for multisource feedback producing incremental validity over the single-rater appraisal system. Exactly how the courts or a tribunal would interpret the typically differing ratings that come from the various rater constituencies in multisource feedback is something to ponder; a cynic might suggest we have swapped a single source of bias as found in conventional appraisal for several sources of bias (in self, peer and subordinate ratings)! Certainly, the incremental validity case is not proven as yet.

A review of this kind cannot do full justice to such a large book, and the couple of chapters picked out here reflect the reviewer's interests. Despite some minor criticisms, this is a very useful book and a worthwhile contribution to the literature. In addition to the 30 chapters, it offers 'Guidelines for Multisource Feedback when Used in Decision Making' as an appendix. Readers may be interested to know that there are other best practice guidelines available, put together by various parties in the UK, which can be found on the web: (http://www/dti/gov.uk/mbp/360feedback/default.htm).

After I wrote an article on multisource feedback a couple of years ago, somebody sent a letter in response to the HR journal concerned to say that multisource feedback was not 'rocket science' and that the whole thing could best be put in the hands of line managers for them to run with. *The Handbook of Multisource Feedback* is a good antidote to such simple-minded views of the subject.

Reference

Fletcher, C. and Perry, E. (2001) Performance appraisal and feedback: A consideration of national culture and a review of contemporary research and future trends. In N. Anderson, D. Ones, H. Sinangil and C. Viswesvaran (eds.), *Handbook of Industrial, Work and Organizational Psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.