Short Evaluation of Nordic Journal of Studies in Policing

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Since the Nordic Journal of Studies in Policing started in 2014, a lot has happened. The journal intended to fill the gap between theory and practice by publishing scientific reports. Questions about the work of the police from various scientific disciplines have been studied, reflected on and published. Since 2014, a number of goals have been formulated for the journal:

a. To present and publish new knowledge and research in the field of police research, police science and policing in the Nordic countries.
b. To contribute to the development in the field of police research, as well as the spread of relevant research within academia, among practitioners, managers, the education system, the authorities, and the media.
c. To play an independent critical role in the subject development.
d. To strengthen the academic quality of the police research field, as well as to publish articles by practitioners who conduct research in their own field.

To highlight Nordic police science research, the journal has played an important role. To get a good effect from the journal’s message and publicity, a Nordic editorial team was chosen, where the assignments of editor in chief and associate editor are alternated between Nordic countries, mainly Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Finland joined in recent years, but Iceland has not yet participated in the editorial group. Over the years, the editorial staff has strived to follow the above-mentioned goals. In this regard, Liv Finstad, Professor of Criminology at the Department of Criminology and Sociology of Law at the University of Oslo and Professor Henrik Stevnsborg from the University of Copenhagen at the Faculty of Law, were asked to carry out a brief evaluation of the journal in relation to the set goals.

In a short report to the editors, they write that the journal has succeeded in delivering police science research of good quality. They believe that the journal has lived up to the four set goals. Their result is based on a review of all 12 issues published so far, i.e. 47 articles between the years 2014–2019. In their assessment, they report that the number of Norwegian and Swedish publications is highest among Nordic countries, with Denmark in third place.
I believe that it is a good critique directed at the editorial staff, who have tried in recent years to promote police science research in the Nordic countries in a fair way. The Finstad and Stevnsborg report also contains some constructive criticism and reflections. They draw the attention of the editorial staff to, among other things, publishing articles from a gender perspective, where the proportion of male authors is almost twice as much as female authors. They also point out that the journal should be even broader in its choice of scientific disciplines. Another point of view was that book reviews should be done more systematically based on carefully selected topics with Nordic perspectives.

Finstad and Stevnsborg’s review of the journal has brought to the editorial staff a number of valuable insights that should be taken into account in future work. For example, the journal should be shown more in Nordic countries’ various police science events so that more researchers and practitioners know about it. In this context, Finnish and Icelandic police researchers should be encouraged to be more visible in the journal. It should be pointed out, that in 2019 discussions started as to whether the journal should only be published in English so that several Nordic countries can benefit from the content of the journal. From 1st of January 2020, the journal has become English, and the editorial staff has received more manuscripts from Finland compared to previous years. Another work that the editors will consider is the gender perspective when it comes to publications.

On behalf of the editorial team, I would like to thank Finstad and Stevnsborg who took the time and effort to review the journal. We have received good reviews and views that we should work with. Now it is a matter of finding meaningful functional strategies to partly maintain the quality that the journal has, but also trying to take a few steps forward and elevate the journal even more in the Nordic police science contexts. Of course, in this way we need all help and support from the police research community.