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Research Article

Extent of Implementation on the Use of Body Worn Camera in Police Operations: Basis for Enhanced Action Plan

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to evaluate the implementation on the use of body worn camera in police operations among police officers in Cebu City. It utilized descriptive comparative analysis, employing survey methods. However, it was confined to only 11 Police Stations in Cebu City. The participants consisted of 50 police officers who were selected to utilize body worn cameras, as well as 50 community people in the study area. The selection process for both groups involved purposive sample technique. The research instrument in this study was a survey questionnaire adopted from the operational guidelines and policies on the use of body worn camera during police operations of the Philippine National Police (2018). All the strands of the implementation on the use of body worn camera in police operations were rated by the respondents based on a 5-point scale. Data were analyzed using mean, and One Way Analysis of Variance. The community and law enforcement have overwhelmingly praised body-worn cameras for their major contribution to the development of good ties between the two groups. Cameras enhance accountability and transparency, thereby boosting public trust in the police force. Nevertheless, questions regarding the implications for privacy and safety persist. The presence of cameras has a beneficial effect on both workers and the community, strengthening public trust, enhancing accountability, and decreasing the use of force. In addition, they furnish substantiation to bolster law enforcement endeavors and settle conflicts. Effective community policing depends on establishing trust, which body-worn cameras help to do.

Keywords: *Body worn camera, Cebu City, Descriptive survey, Police operations*

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Introduction

Body-worn cameras (BWCs) have garnered significant attention in recent years. Equipping law enforcement officers with body cameras is a highly effective method for ensuring accountability in police activities. Transparency and accountability are commonly used concepts in the context of body cams (Wright and Headley, 2021).

The study explores the factors influencing public support for body-worn cameras in law enforcement, based on a mid-sized urban survey. Ordinal logistic regression analyses are used to examine the effects of neighborhood and demographic factors, beliefs about who BWCs protect, positive and negative experiences with police, and trust in the police on support for the cameras. The results indicate that support for the cameras is increased when people are aware of negative experiences with the police, while support is decreased when people believe that the police are protected by the cameras. The results can help communities and law enforcement have educated conversations about when body cams are acceptable for police, especially when dealing with important matters. (Williams, 2021).

According to Allen (2019), modern technologies are being rapidly integrated into law enforcement to enhance services, including community engagement, surveillance, and data analysis for crime prediction.

Regulating the discretionary actions of police officers during public encounters has been a significant concern in the field of U.S. policing, particularly in response to a number of well-known incidents involving the deaths of ethnic minorities at the hands of the police. Body-worn cameras (BWCs) were implemented to enhance police accountability. They allow police supervisors to watch interactions between police and the public. The study explores the influence of Body-Worn Camera (BWC) programs on the behavior of police officers during arrests. A difference-in-differences analysis of 142 US police departments found that BWCs have a minor, negative impact on arrest rates. Additionally, BWCs have no significant effect on the racial discrepancy in arrest statistics between Black and White individuals. The study indicates that

officers can use Black and White-Water Closures (BWCs) cautiously, but their treatment of Black and White suspects does not significantly change. This implies that BWC programs have varying effects depending on the specific features of the communities they serve. (Pyo, 2021).

A police department using body-worn cameras is saying that it believes the actions of its officers are public information. A department establishes a body-worn camera system, implements procedures, and trains officers, ensuring public and media scrutiny of their actions. And, with certain limited exceptions that will be discussed in this publication, body-worn camera video footage should be made available to the public upon request, not only because the videos are public records, but also because doing so allows police departments to demonstrate transparency and openness in their interactions with community members (Veerman, 2019).

Seeger's research (2020) suggests that body-worn cameras enhance police officers' performance and community behavior, promoting justice and trust in law enforcement, a significant development in the field. Body-worn cameras can create a public record that enables the entire community to observe the truth when law enforcement officers or members of the public break the law or behave inappropriately.

Police-community relations are deteriorating due to increased recording of interactions, as the profession has grown too much, limiting formal and legalistic public contacts. Body-worn cameras can promote accountability, but police departments also must find a way to preserve the informal and unique ties between police officers and community members (Groff et al., 2020).

Body-worn cameras, claim Snyder et al. (2019), can have a number of advantages, but they also bring up serious questions about how technology is changing how the public and police interact. Body-worn cameras could alter public perception of police, expectations, and privacy rights, necessitating agencies to address these concerns before investing significant resources in their installation.

The Philippine National Police Memorandum Circular No. 009 series of 2018 sets the operational rules and procedures on the use of body worn camera during police operations and other relevant law enforcement actions, or as considered essential by the Commander on the ground. This is to ensure the preservation of human rights including privacy of both the police personnel and the community as it ensures openness of all police operations and other associated law enforcement activities (Tad-awan et al., 2022).

Moreso, the research paper of Corpuz et. al., (2023) investigates public and law enforcement officers' perceptions of the implementation of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) in Angeles City, Pampanga. A study involving 219 police officers and 384 public members found that both groups support the use of Building Wise Communities (BWCs) for enhancing transparency, accountability, and security without affecting officer morale. BWCs can improve law enforcement practices and community relationships, leading to increased cooperation, reduced aggression, and fewer complaints. However, perceptions differ, with the public viewing BWCs as tools for oversight and police officers as intrusive. The study highlights the need for robust privacy policies and further research.

As a result, this study aimed to evaluate the implementation of body-worn cameras in police operations among police officers in Cebu City.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do police officers and community evaluate the implementation on the use of body worn camera in police operations in terms of:
 - 1.1. Pre-operations phase;
 - 1.2. Operations phase; and
 - 1.3. Post-operations phase?
2. Is there significant difference on the evaluation of police officers and community on the implementation on the use of body worn camera in police operations?
3. What are the problems and challenges on the implementation on the use of body worn camera in police operations as

perceived by the police officers and community in terms of:

- 3.1. Cost and Resource Allocation;
- 3.2. Data Privacy and Management;
- 3.3. Training and Compliance; and
- 3.4. Community Relations?

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Substantive Due Process Theory (2010) and PNP Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Standards (COPCES) as legal basis of the study.

It is a legal theory that relates to the interpretation and application of the Due Process Clause guarantees that no individual can lose their life, liberty, or property without following the legal process. The theory of substantive due process asserts that these constitutional clauses not only protect procedural rights (procedural due process) but also safeguard certain fundamental rights and liberties that are considered implicit in the concept of ordered liberty. Put simply, substantive due process guarantees that the government refrains from enacting laws or initiating actions that violate individuals' fundamental rights and freedoms, irrespective of the adherence to proper legal procedures. The courts, through substantive due process, scrutinize the substance and content of laws and government actions to determine if they violate individuals' fundamental rights. Courts use various levels of scrutiny to assess whether a law or government action is constitutional, depending on the right involved and the circumstances of the case. The correlation and cooperation of juridical tendencies, such as evidence preservation and presentation, and prosecutorial witnesses, are crucial in achieving governmental purposes and delivering an equitable justice determination.

Various landmark Supreme Court cases have applied the idea of substantive due process theory, shaping the interpretation of constitutional rights. Some notable examples include cases involving issues such as privacy rights, marriage equality, and individual autonomy. It's important to note that the concept of substantive due process has been the subject of much debate and criticism throughout its application in constitutional law. Critics argue that it

allows unelected judges to make subjective decisions based on their own moral values rather than relying solely on the text and original intent of the Constitution. Nevertheless, substantive due process remains a significant and influential legal theory in American jurisprudence, shaping the protection of individual rights and liberties.

The PNP Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Standards (COPCES) provides guidelines and pertinent provisions stating that all members of the Philippine National Police shall abide by, adhere to, and internalize the provisions of this ethical doctrine. Towards this end, a truly professionalized and dedicated law enforcer shall be developed to promote peace and order, ensure public safety, and enhance community participation, guided by the principle that a public office is a public trust and that all public servants must, at all times, be accountable to the people. They shall serve with utmost responsibility, integrity, morality, loyalty, and efficiency, with due respect to human rights and dignity, as hallmarks of a democratic society. They shall, at all times, support and uphold the Constitution, bear faithful allegiance to the Constitution, bear faithful allegiance to the legitimate government, respect the duly constituted authority, and be loyal to the police service.

Methods

This study employed the use of descriptive comparative utilizing survey methodology. Research locale was limited 11 Police Stations in Cebu City.

The respondents were the 50 police officers who were chosen to use body worn camera and 50 community residents in the locale of the study and were selected using purposive sampling technique.

The Philippine National Police's (2018) operational guidelines and policies on the use of body-worn cameras during police operations served as the study's research instrument, a survey questionnaire. The respondents rated every aspect of implementing body-worn cameras in police operations using a 5-point rating system. We submitted the survey questionnaire to experts, including senior officers in the Philippine National Police, for review, scheme development, and validation to ensure its validity.

We used the mean and one-way analysis of variance to analyze the data.

Results

This section includes a presentation of results based on the data collected from the respondents of the study.

Table 1. Implementation on the use of body worn camera in police operations as assessed by police officers and community

Implementation of BWC	Police Officers		Community	
	Mean	Int	Mean	Int
Pre-Operations Phase	3.34	VHI	3.39	VHI
1. Establishment of command/operations center	3.38	VHI	3.18	HI
2. Training	3.39	VHI	3.38	VHI
3. Issuance and operational Check	3.25	VHI	3.60	VHI
Operations Phase	3.75	VHI	3.67	VHI
4. Use of BWC in checkpoints and vehicle searches	3.82	VHI	3.65	VHI
5. Use of BWC in force situations	3.50	VHI	3.62	VHI
6. Use of BWC in police assistance	3.65	VHI	3.75	VHI
7. Use of BWC in work-related transport of evidence	3.95	VHI	3.60	VHI
8. Use of BWC in crimes in progress	3.81	VHI	3.72	VHI
Post-operations phase	3.66	VHI	3.56	VHI
9. Turn-over	3.75	VHI	3.50	VHI
10. Downloading and storage of recorded data	3.60	VHI	3.58	VHI
11. Review and disclosure	3.65	VHI	3.54	VHI

Implementation of BWC	Police Officers		Community	
	Mean	Int	Mean	Int
12. Maintenance of BWC	3.48	VHI	3.55	VHI
13. Retention and Destruction and Digital Multimedia Evidence	3.88	VHI	3.58	VHI
14. Monitoring and audit Recorded Data	3.33	VHI	3.62	VHI
Overall	3.58	VHI	3.54	VHI
3.25-4.00	Very High Implementation			
2.50-3.24	High Implementation			
1.75-2.49	Moderate Implementation			
1.0 – 1.74	Low Implementation			

The assessment of police officers revealed that the use of body worn cameras during police operations had the highest mean score of 3.75, indicating a very high level of implementation. In contrast, the pre-operations phase had the lowest mean score of 3.34, also indicating a very high level of implementation.

Based on the community assessment, the data indicates that the use of body worn cameras in police operations during the operations phase had the highest mean score of 3.67, which was interpreted as a very high level of implementation. On the other hand, during the pre-operations phase, the mean score was the lowest at 3.56, also indicating a very high level of implementation.

Overall, the implementation of body worn cameras in police operations was evaluated by police officers and resulted in an average score

of 3.33, indicating a very high level of implementation. Similarly, the community's assessment of the implementation yielded an average score of 3.54, also indicating a very high level of implementation.

These assessments' findings show both the public and law enforcement have both unanimously accepted and appreciated the use of body cameras in police operations. This is proof positive that the program improves the relationship between the community and law enforcement. This implies that the communities and law enforcement agencies both think that body worn cameras are a very effective way to improve police operations. This might be because body-worn cameras improve accountability and openness in law enforcement, which builds trust between the public and police officers.

Table 2. Problems and challenges on the implementation on the use of body worn camera in police operations as perceived by the police officers and community

Implementation of BWC	Police Officers		Community	
	Mean	Int	Mean	Int
Cost and Resource Allocation	3.91	HS	3.74	HS
1. Initial cost	3.98	HS	3.72	HS
2. Maintenance and Storage Costs	3.85	HS	3.75	HS
3. Data Storage Capacity	3.90	HS	3.75	HS
Data Privacy and Management	3.52	HS	3.58	HS
4. Data Management and Retrieval	3.55	HS	3.48	HS
5. Legal and Privacy Concerns	3.40	HS	3.45	HS
6. Technical Support	3.60	HS	3.80	HS
Training and Compliance	3.72	HS	3.74	HS
7. Training and Policies	3.52	HS	3.70	HS
8. Replacement and Upgrade	3.80	HS	3.82	HS
9. Technical Competence	3.85	HS	3.70	HS

Implementation of BWC	Police Officers		Community	
	Mean	Int	Mean	Int
Community Relations	3.83	HS	3.54	HS
10. Community and Officer Acceptance	3.82	HS	3.48	HS
11. Feedback Mechanisms	3.80	HS	3.55	HS
12. Community Expectations	3.88	HS	3.60	HS
Overall	3.75	HS	3.65	HS
3.25-4.00	Highly Serious			
2.50-3.24	Very Serious			
1.75-2.49	Serious			
1.0 - 1.74	Less Serious			

The assessment of police officers reveals that the use of body worn cameras in police operations resulted in the highest mean score of 3.91, indicating a highly serious outcome. On the other hand, data privacy and management received the lowest mean score of 3.52, also indicating a highly serious outcome.

Based on the assessment of the community, the data indicates that the cost and allocation of resources, as well as training and compliance regarding the use of body worn cameras in

police operations, received the highest mean score of 3.74, which is interpreted as highly serious. On the other hand, community relations received the lowest mean score of 3.54, also interpreted as highly serious.

The implementation of body worn cameras in police operations is perceived by police officers as highly serious, with an overall mean of 3.75. Similarly, the community's assessment of this implementation also indicates a high level of seriousness, with an overall mean of 3.65.

Table 3. Significant difference on the evaluation of police officers and community on the implementation on the use of body worn camera in police operations

Variables	P-Value	Int
Pre-operations phase	.000	With Significance
Operations phase	.000	With Significance
Post-operations phase	.000	With Significance
Overall	.000	With Significance

Data shows that the police officers and community's implementation of the use of body-worn cameras in police operations in terms of pre-operations, operations phase, and post-operations phase yielded a significant value of .000. The results showed a significant difference in how police officers and the community evaluate the implementation of body-worn cameras in police operations.

The study revealed that body-worn cameras positively impacted police officers and the community, fostering trust, increasing transparency, and enhancing accountability. Additionally, it contributed to a decrease in the use of force during police operations. This could be attributed to the police officers' perception of the cameras as providing extra protection and

accountability, and the community's increased trust in the police. The cameras also provided evidence that could be used to resolve disputes and support law enforcement actions.

This suggests that both police officers and the community perceive the implementation and use of body-worn cameras in police operations as serious issues. They both have concerns about the potential implications of the cameras for their privacy and safety.

Furthermore, this shows that both the police and the community have similar perceptions of the challenges of implementing body-worn cameras in police operations. This suggests that we need to take proper measures to mitigate the challenges and ensure successful implementation.

Discussions

The results indicate that the implementation of body-worn cameras during police operations has garnered substantial support and approval from both police officers and community members. This exemplifies the program's efficacy in fostering a more positive rapport between law enforcement and the community. Body-worn cameras are viewed positively by communities and law enforcement personnel as a means to improve police operations, potentially fostering accountability and openness.

The community and law enforcement authorities view the implementation and use of body-worn cameras during police operations as a significant issue. Both parties are concerned about the possible negative effects on privacy and safety that the cameras may have. Moreover, this implies that both the community and law enforcement have similar viewpoints regarding the challenges related to the implementation of body-worn cameras in police operations. This implies that we must adopt suitable actions to address the difficulties and guarantee a successful execution.

According to the report, body-worn cameras had a positive effect on both the personnel and the community. It strengthened the public's trust in the police and enhanced their responsibility and transparency. Moreover, it resulted in a reduction in the exertion of force during law enforcement operations. This may be attributed to the community's opinion that the cameras boost their confidence in the police, as well as the officers' perception that the cameras provide accountability and protection. Moreover, the cameras generated proof that may bolster law enforcement endeavors and resolve disputes.

The correlation between the utilization of body-worn cameras and the establishment of trust between the community and police officers implies that adopting this technology may be a crucial step in fostering positive relationships. Increased trust is crucial for promoting effective community policing by enabling better collaboration, conversation, and mutual understanding.

Moreover, the study's findings suggest that the use of body-worn cameras improves the degree of transparency and accountability regarding law enforcement activities. This implies that the use of such technologies could lead to scrutiny of police actions, promoting accountability and deterring unethical conduct.

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