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Changing Policing: The Impact of Body-Worn Cameras on Law Enforcement Officers

Michelle Theresa Allen
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Michelle Theresa Allen

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

Changing Policing: The Impact of Body-Worn Cameras on Law Enforcement Officers

by

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MSCJ, Saint Leo University, 2014

BA, Saint Leo University, 2012

Dissertation Submitted in Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Criminal Justice

Walden University

2021

Abstract

The research problem that this study addressed was how police officers perceive policing has been impacted by the implementation of body-worn cameras. The research was purposed to allow police officers to articulate how law enforcement has been altered due to the implementation of the devices. This qualitative study was guided by Lipsky's street-level bureaucratic theory in which police officers have the autonomy to use discretion when enforcing the law. The methodology used was a qualitative research approach to retrieve data of 34 participants from four different police departments who responded to 10 open-ended survey questions on the SurveyMonkey website. The identities of the participants were anonymous. For inclusion in the study participants were required to be currently employed as police officers, have been employed as officers 2-10 years prior to the implementation of body-worn cameras, and have had experience wearing the devices. Data was analyzed by using NVivo 12 computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. Four major themes emerged that revealed body-worn cameras have inhibited the officers use of discretion. Although, body-worn cameras are ever-present, issues between police officers and citizens still persist. A key result was that often minor infractions that ordinarily would have warranted a verbal response are now receiving a more substantial response due to the presence of body-worn cameras. Positive social change would manifest by bridging the gap between the community and the police department as well as fostering a renewed trust and respect for the profession.

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Dedication

Thank you to the Most High for the moments of clarity when everything seemed hopeless. Thank you for choosing me for this esteemed honor. When all was dim your luminosity shattered the end of the tunnel. Completion was your blessing to me; therefore, I am humbled by your grace. I dedicate this Dissertation to my family who has always been the center of my life. The sacrifices you made in order for me to chase my dream has manifested itself in completion for I represent the less than 2%.

To my husband Miles N. Allen, there simply are no words that can express how much I love you! I thank you for your unwavering love and support, especially when I felt defeated, the times you made me refocus, and for the personal sacrifices you made to ensure that our family continued to thrive. You have always come to the rescue, my personal IT man right before the waterworks began. I am eternally grateful. I return the same gift to you as you navigate your doctoral journey as well. Get ready for the level 5! We are Team Allen!

Love, Always and Forever!

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We’re Raising Scholars!

To my parents Burchette “Jr.” and Mildred Bivens, thank you for a lifetime of beautiful memories. Without you instilling a sense of purpose in me, and reinforcing that the sky is just the beginning, I would not have thought this task were possible. I love you with all that I have, and I am proud to be your daughter. I miss your presence everyday Daddy. Rest In Power.

I hope I make you both proud.

To my big brother Bertram Lamar Bivens who I miss dearly, I can hear you saying, “I’m proud of you man!” If only you were still here. Rest in Power. To Lois Jackson, affectionately known as “Auntie” thank you for always being here. You are truly my second Mom. Please know that our talks, laughs, and advice are cherished. Love you Auntie!

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I am my ancestor’s wildest dreams!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The occupation of law enforcement is continuously changing. Police officers experience dangerous encounters that far exceed those of the general public. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, in 2016 there were roughly 468,000 sworn, fulltime police officers in the United States, and 3% of those officers served a populace of 100,000 or more (Hyland & Davis, 2019). To meet the demands of the public, police departments globally are resorting to the use of modern equipment. In 1987, the Bureau of Justice Statistics began keeping statistical information relative to personnel for over 12,300 local police departments in the United States (Hyland & Davis, 2019). A series of violent events occurred in American policing that demanded that law enforcement exhibit more transparency and accountability; and new technologies emerged.

According to Gaub et al. (2016), a three-agency study with officers who wore body-worn cameras (BWCs) revealed that officers felt as though their discretion was limited, and although they appeared more professional, they engaged citizens much less, indicating that the BWC impacts the officers' decision of whether or not to use force. It has been suggested that officer's under-police because there is a fear of disciplinary action due to recordings made while wearing BWCs. The BWCs may affect the behavior of officers but do not seem to interfere with their work ethic according to Headley et al. (2017). It has not been determined if the officers alter their performance intentionally due to the BWC monitoring. Ready and Young (2015) posited that when engaging with

citizens, officers are more conscious of their activities because they are aware of the BWC.

Ariel (2016a) stated that in some larger departments, there are various views of the use of BWCs. As revealed by Ready and Young (2015), individuals modify their behavior when they are cognizant of a camera in the vicinity. Ariel (2016a) claimed that it is assumed that BWC recordings equally effect both the officer and the citizen.

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study and background of the current problem. In this Chapter I identify the gap in the literature regarding whether BWCs have changed policing from the perspective of the police officer. I discuss the purpose and nature of the study anchored by the theoretical framework.

Background

The implementation of BWCs by police has preceded the research conducted by scholars (Chapman, 2018). Tanner and Meyer (2015) believed that the installation of in-car digital devices has created change in policing by allowing officers to view crime in real time. According to Smykla et al., (2016), the contradictory and inconsistent accounts of the deadly shootings of Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, and other reports of deadly use of force has the nation curious about BWCs. Due to the recent killings of unarmed black males in the United States, the law enforcement community may be suffering from the Ferguson Effect. Scholars argue that the event in Ferguson, MO, led to depolicing in many police departments. According to Wolfe and Nix (2016) the “Ferguson Effect” hypothesizes that police officers are aware of the unfavorable opinions relative to their line of work, understand that their actions may be taped at any moment by citizens, and

as a result, they become unwilling to perform their duties to avoid allegations of excessive use of force or racial profiling. An increase of crime is the outcome of the depolicing.

Central to this issue is the vulnerable state that police and minority communities are in (Wood & Groff, 2019). Sometimes, the interaction between citizens and the police will result in a use of force. Willits and Makin (2018) agreed that BWC footage can be analyzed to determine what occurred. According to Chapman (2018), supporters of BWCs allege that the footage may be useful by improving transparency, increasing accountability, and making the police more trustworthy. Other benefits are increasing civility and compliance, decreasing complaints, and corroborating evidence in arrests and prosecution (Chapman, 2018).

Public perception of law enforcement is dependent upon their ability to effectually address crime (Chapman, 2018). BWCs have been celebrated for their ability to counter criminal activity. BWCs can be mounted in eyeglasses or on the uniform to monitor the encounters between law enforcement and citizens (Chapman, 2018). According to Zwart (2018) the Department of Justice distributed in excess \$40 million to law enforcement agencies to facilitate the adoption of BWC programs. As indicated by Turner et al. (2019), video from body cameras and dashboard cameras are used by police departments to increase accountability, though not much is known about the opinions of the observer. Some may argue the appropriate policy is to record every action of the officer (Sandhu & Haggerty, 2017). Citizens believe that the law enforcement actions

appear to be more legitimate with the use of BWCs as the officers have increased accountability due to the presence of cameras (Ready & Young, 2015).

Problem Statement

There is a problem in Metropolitan Atlanta police departments. In spite of the presence of BWCs, clashes between citizens and police are still occurring. This problem has negatively impacted both citizens and police because the nature of altercations are being disputed by both parties. A possible cause of this problem are the recorded accounts of violent police interactions that seem suspicious. A study that investigates BWCs through qualitative research study could possibly help to remedy the situation. BWC use is becoming an increasingly significant issue in academic research as agencies are forced to adjust to an ever-changing media environment that highlights departmental image, social control, and police conformity (Crosby, 2018). To address officer behavior and implementation of BWCs, it is necessary to know more about how officers perceive the use of BWCs. A study with a pedagogical view of BWCs and their impact on officers may help officers do their jobs more effectively.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to gain a deeper understanding of how officers perceive that the use of BWCs has changed the way law enforcement officers conduct policing. In this study I further sought to ascertain if law enforcement officers have consciously altered their behavior permanently or situationally due to the presence of a BWC. Encounters captured on BWCs are forcing agencies to review and revise departmental policies and operations while responding to the behavior of their officers.

The objective of this study was to retrieve a humanistic narrative from the officer and identify how the experience of BWC use has impacted law enforcement.

Research Question

The research question for this qualitative study was as follows:

RQ. How do officers perceive that policing has been impacted by the implementation of BWCs in their profession?

The research question was designed to gain an understanding of how officers perceive that BWCs have changed policing. The question further allows officers to explain how their performance differs pre- and postimplementation of the devices. The narratives of the officers will provide insight into the lived experiences of the officers when trying to balance discretion and compliance while adhering to policy and law.

Theoretical Framework

The framework for this qualitative study will be based upon Lipsky's (1969) street-level bureaucratic (SLBT). The theory received renewed interest in 2010 relative to public servants. Lipsky (2010) described police officers as street level bureaucrats (SLBs) to account for their ability to use discretion in the application of law, often forgoing adherence to policy. SLBT is also used to describe various state employees who work in public service who closely interact with the public (Buvik, 2016). Police officers who actively work in the realm of effective policy making are functioning under the SLBT (Cooper et al., 2015). Lipsky's theory was applicable for this research as it emphasizes the use of discretion. Officers exercise discretion when addressing minor offenses and determine if the breach of law requires a written or verbal warning or more

aggressive actions such as fine or arrest. According to Kosar and Schachter (2011) police officers more than other governmental officers impact the lives of citizens as they have autonomy to decide whether an arrest is necessary. The behavior of police is guided by rules that officers depend upon to determine the appropriate application of law (Lipsky, 2010). This self-governance is of central importance to police officers in performing law enforcement functions.

Lipsky (2010) believed that agents who commonly exchange with citizens as a requirement of their duties and have autonomy to make decisions while working are identified as SLBs (p.3). Discretion is central to law enforcement as officers exercise discretion when deciding to address a criminal action. Police officers are selective in their policing as they are unable to make arrests for all notable infractions during their shifts (Lipsky, 2010). The behavior of police officers is greatly determined by the rules, policies, and guidelines that the officer relies upon in the application of the law (Lipsky, 2010). There were two claims made by Lipsky in regard to police officers: (a) the ability to exercise discretion is crucial to those that ordinarily interact with citizens; and (b) although there is a demand for compliance to public policy, the law can be applied loosely in specific cases. Police must apply certain techniques in response to conflicts that pose a threat to their authority or place them in imminent danger (Lipsky, 2010).

In this study I attempted to introduce a connection between how an officer's duties are impacted by BWCs correlates with their perception of BWCs. BWCs may affect their ability to exercise discretion as SLBs, which is an inherent element of police work. Some scholars argue that the use of BWCs alters the officers' behavior; however,

this assertion is not based on the officer's perception. The presence of BWCs is a catalyst to regulating behavior through self-awareness of its presence (Braga et al., 2018). Ready and Young (2015) stated that officers become risk-averse when making decisions while wearing BWCs. Officers who wear BWCs make more arrests than those who do not wear the devices (Braga, et.al., 2018).

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was qualitative and used a web-based survey to obtain information from law enforcement officers. According to Jaqueth et al. (2019), web-based surveys yield a higher completion rate and attract more participants. This inquiry used open-ended survey questions that derived from the scholarly research to discover the unknowns. To prevent involving participants who have not experienced the phenomenon, I used purposeful sampling to vet the participants. In qualitative research, the participants must be knowledgeable of the topic, whereas the researcher is tasked with selecting participants who have lived the experiences (Paul, 2017). I recruited officers who had been employed for 2 to 10 years prior to the adoption and implementation of BWCs and had experienced using the devices.

The global outbreak of Coronavirus COVID-19 created a unique situation for qualitative researchers. This inquiry was conducted solely by a web-based survey because the COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be deadly. As a researcher, it was my expressed responsibility to protect the participants from harm. Although the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2020) changed according to reported infection outbreaks and deaths, I was compliant with the existing CDC

recommendations. Because there was no vaccine to prevent coronavirus at the time of this study, the CDC recommended maintaining six feet between persons to avoid exposure (CDC, 2020). Web-based surveys are a safe and effective option to retrieve information to curtail the spread COVID-19.

The researcher exercises autonomy to ask follow-up questions to learn more about the topic or gain clarity (Rubin & Rubin, 2016). Sutton and Austin (2015) suggested that the researcher attempt to view the world through the lens of the interviewee to understand their perspective and properly interpret the data. Data analysis and management require that the researcher listens closely to the interviewees in order to accurately interpret and share the newfound knowledge with readers (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Qualitative research does not attempt to prove or disprove a theory; however, a theory may emerge as data collection is completed (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). In effect, qualitative research creates a narrative that explains the subject of inquiry. Qualitative data analysis, unlike quantitative data analysis, uses nonstatistical information. Qualitative research relies on conversation and interpretation (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Therefore, it is important that the researcher accurately relays information as dictated by the participant.

Definitions

A majority of the terms used in this dissertation were common. However, there are some words that are commonly used in law enforcement. These terms have varied definitions, but the manner in which I used them in the study are defined below.

Accountability: A leaders' acknowledgment of the duties and obligations of public servants to assist in the welfare of citizens during which it is expressed that they

will be bound by constraints on their verbiage, behavior, and reactions (Godwin, et al., 2019).

Body worn camera (BWC): A small wearable audio and video recording device commonly mounted on the front of a police officer's clothing to record interactions or to deter negative encounters (Ariel et al., 2019).

Body worn camera footage: The video recording from a BWC that is frequently used to evaluate interactions of citizens with police (Boivin et al., 2017).

Closed-circuit television (CCTV): A system that commonly uses a network of cameras to systematically monitor and protect particular areas against violence, terrorism, theft, or various other issues in a private or public setting (Kumar & Svensson, 2015).

Dash camera: A digital device commonly used by law enforcement officers to obtain images from a third person perspective than contain more depth unlike that of a body camera (Turner et al., 2019).

De-policing: The decline of work efforts by a law enforcement officer to be proactive in their duties (Wallace et al., 2018).

Ferguson Effect: A proposed theory that negative publicity for the law enforcement profession has caused law enforcement officers to be unwilling to fulfil daily duties, which in turn causes an increase in crime rates (Wolfe & Nix, 2016).

Front-line worker: Crucial public servants charged with implementing and executing public policy and exercising autonomy in their daily tasks (Hoflund et al., 2018).

Officer discretion: An officers' ability to freely exercise choice or make judgements while working in the field (Taylor, 2016).

Qualitative research: A repetitive process that creates an improved understanding of a phenomena for the scholarly community (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

Social media: A small percentage of increasing web-based services that allow the user to exchange information and ideas, create bonds, and represent themselves on a digital platform (Obar & Wildman, 2015).

Street level bureaucrats (SLB): Civil service workers who provide welfare services in occupations such as police officers, public school teachers, or social workers. These civil servants interact with the public and have broad autonomy to use discretion in the application of law and sanctions (Buvik, 2016).

Street-level bureaucracy theory (STBT): A sociological theory that aims to illustrate the habitual manner and work modalities front-line workers use to establish public policy in the course of their everyday work (Cooper et al., 2015).

Transparency: An agency's willingness to impart dependable, current, and factual information to the public (Bruce, 2016).

Use of force: The act of applying physical constraint exceeding the force continuums' use of handcuffs to ensure the security of a suspect or incident (Ariel et al., 2016).

Assumptions

I assumed the participants chosen for the research study would be truthful in their written narratives and they would be forthcoming with valuable information to answer

the research question. Also, I assumed that the participants had truly experienced the phenomena and had a true interest in the study barring other motives for inclusion. Equally important, I assumed the participants would answer the survey questions in an honest and sincere manner that is helpful in addressing the research question. The participants are sworn police officers who are required to maintain integrity and credibility, hence there I did not anticipate that misleading or otherwise untruthful information would be supplied.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study I attempted to acquire rich narratives from police officers who are currently using BWCs to learn from their experiences and perceptions if they feel as though BWCs have changed policing. However, the narrative could only be relayed by an officer who has worked in law enforcement pre- and postadoption of BWCs to determine what changes may have occurred. Officers' perceptions of BWCs are minimally represented in the literature. However, BWC implementation is ongoing throughout the United States. The adoption and implementation of BWC programs is being explored by thousands of agencies (Stoughton, 2018).

Body-worn video, known in the United States as BWCs, was first used in 2005 in Plymouth Basic Command Unit, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary in the United Kingdom (Marsh, 2014). The Body-worn video was initially mobilized in the Police Standards Unit for the Domestic Violence Enforcement Campaign in 2006 (Marsh, 2014). At this time, officers recognized the value of the technology's capacity to produce exceptional visual evidence (Marsh, 2014). BWC technology was not implemented in the

United States until 2013 when Judge Shira Scheindlin determined that the New York Police Department's use of stop-and-frisks violated the Constitutional rights of citizens (Stoughton, 2018). According to Stoughton (2018), the New York Police Department was instructed to adopt a pilot BWC program for the term of 1 year for patrol officers. The order was purposed to record the interactions between citizens and officers.

Protest or civil unrest is common when encounters with the police become violent. According to Cobbina et al. (2020), if there is a suspicion of the police withholding accurate information, citizens may accuse the police of misconduct, and social unrest can ensue. Ives and Lewis (2020) argued that the probability of violence increases when the price of violence diminishes, and peaceful protests become riotous. Also, when protests are disorganized, violence is more likely (Ives & Lewis, 2020). However, Ryckman (2020) believed that individuals lose faith in the government when they refuse to grant meaningful compromises that may curtail nonviolent assembly.

To add more depth to the research, I inquired about mitigating factors that may have impacted policing relative to BWCs such as external forces: public out-cry for more accountability, call for increased transparency, and legislation. I sought to understand what personal changes the officers had made, if any, since the implementation of the BWCs. Additionally, I sought to find out if the officers found true benefit in the BWC devices.

Limitations

The officers may have been reluctant to speak to someone who is not law enforcement. The officers may have assumed that their participation in the research study

could possibly have adverse effects on them because the recruitment of participants was internal. Although the surveys were anonymous, officers may feel as though their responses could be relayed back to them causing harm to their employment. The officers may have had difficulty being candid because they know the survey will be capturing their responses. Some officers may have had negative experiences with the BWC devices in the past and did not wish to relive those moments, that is, internal investigations, complaints, or civil or criminal charges (resolved or pending). I was further limited or barred by reliance on departmental heads to grant permission to have access to employees to create a recruitment pool. I did understand how the participants may have had reservations. However, I anticipated that the participants would be relieved by the promise of anonymity of the study that was supplied in the informed consent.

Furthermore, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, there could have been a slow response to the survey. Many employees have been affected by altered work schedules, school closures for children, assumption of the role of parent/teacher for digital learning, and other challenges associated with COVID-19 that disrupted regular schedules. These adjustments could have delayed survey responses. COVID 19 is spread person-to-person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks; the respiratory droplets can be inhaled into the lungs or enter through the mouths or noses of those in close proximity (CDC, 2020). The disease could have prevented agencies from availing their officers to participate in face-to-face interviews, but the alternative of participating in a web-based survey might have been agreeable.

Significance

The study is significant because it addresses the gap in the literature by focusing on the officers' perceptions of how BWCs have impacted policing. It has been revealed that individuals modify their behavior when they are cognizant of a camera in the vicinity, and they are aware of the monitoring (Ready & Young, 2015). Although BWCs have equally served as both beneficial and damaging for law enforcement, the digital images can drive policy, practice, and how officers are viewed by the public. The results of this study could promote positive social change by creating an avenue for law enforcement transparency, officer acceptance of BWC technology, and decreased negative encounters between law enforcement and citizens. An additional anticipated goal of the research was to further promote positive social change by aiding in restoring the integrity of and trust in law enforcement officers.

Implications for Social Change

In recent years law enforcement has been plagued with allegations of decreased accountability and transparency. Some citizens have limited trust and confidence in the officers that are charged with protecting their personal safety. The mistrust is often prevalent after excessive use of force incidents or deaths that garner mass media attention and numerous shares on social media platforms. However, the allegations of excessive use of force and the use of BWCs is intertwined. There are sometimes demands to see BWC footage to verify police accounts of citizen encounters because use of force incidents are questioned, and the footage may contradict the narratives of the police reports.

The days when the word of a police officer was to a certain extent believed because they occupied the status of an authority figure who encompassed trust, character, and honor are receding. Now the written and verbal accounts of police officers are often challenged due to mistrust and require accompanying video evidence to be believable. Society has shifted in this regard, but little research that focuses on the officer's internal thoughts exists as more reliance is placed on technological devices such as BWCs. This research obtained the perspectives of police officers who have experience pre- and postadoption of BWCs to determine how the devices have changed policing. By gaining the perspective of police officers about BWCs, social change may be effectuated by bridging the gap between police and citizens. In turn this may restore trust and decrease use of force through reliance on BWCs.

Summary

As demonstrated in Chapter 1, existing research of the does not detail whether officers perceive that BWCs have changed policing. Chapman (2018) spoke of the benefits of BWCs as increased civility and the ability to make citizens more compliant. This statement appeared in much of the literature. However, the research has not obtained the effects of BWCs from the perspective of the officer who has worked in law enforcement pre- and post-departmental adoption and implementation of the devices.

The research does detail that officer behavior changes and they seem to be more docile when conducting their duties with the presence of BWCs; however, this does not explain if the officer appears to be calmer because of the BWCs presence or because the civilian with whom they are interacting displays an equal calm.

Chapter 2 provides an extensive literature review relative to the topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

BWCs have revolutionized the law enforcement community throughout the United States and the world. As mentioned by Headley et al. (2017), though BWCs have been implemented in the United Kingdom for over a decade, the technological benefits are still evolving in the United States. The usefulness of BWCs have been shown to be useful internationally and nationally to aid with law enforcement issues (Laming, 2019). The devices are thought to bring a civilizing effect to citizens while aiding in evaluating the officers' conduct (Headley et.al., 2017; Laming, 2019). Although there had been uncertainty of the device's potential, the killing of Michael Brown in 2014 and of Freddie Gray in 2015 launched the rapid adoption of BWCs in the United States (Lawrence, 2015; Megan, et al., 2019).

Furthermore, it is believed by Lawrence (2015) that the deaths of Michael Brown and Freddie Gray have resulted in increased civil unrest and clashes between citizens and law enforcement. Lawrence (2015) deemed that a pivotal consequence of the civil unrest was the further urging for all law enforcement agencies to adopt and implement BWCs. The expectation was that police violence would be quelled by the BWCs, as well as supply accurate accounts of what occurred between citizens and police (Lawrence, 2015). Collectively, officers and citizens anticipate that using BWCs will promote accountability in policing (Megan et al., 2019).

Video footage is an avenue to guaranteeing reform of practices and policy, upholding the Constitutional rights of citizens and accountability of law enforcement

officers (Wasserman, 2018). In the opinion of, Goetschel and Peha (2017), over the last few years there has been vigorous debate amongst United States. law makers as to whether they should arm law enforcement agencies with BWCs. In order to ensure transparency and enhance community relations, many law enforcement agencies are promptly deploying BWCs (Sacca, 2017). Echoing the same sentiment, Wexler (2018), revealed that more than 9 out of 10 law enforcement agencies elected to adopt BWCs to bridge the gap with the community by promoting transparency, accountability, and legitimacy.

On the other hand, the use of BWCs has expanded globally under the supposition that police accountability, conduct, and discharge of duty publicly would improve due to the presence of this equipment (Ariel, 2016a). The BWC has served as the third party in police matters that record the actions of the law enforcement officer and involved parties. In addition to using the camera for the prevention of exaggerated accounts, it should successfully shield officers by acting as an impartial witness (Timan, 2016). The recording of police tactics has served as both beneficial and detrimental to the law enforcement community.

Timan (2016) stated that it is perceived during these encounters that BWCs occupy space as an unbiased witness documenting the interaction between law enforcement officers and citizens. Support has been gained through the urgency to curtail incidents of use of force in the United States (Palmer, 2016). Early examination identified a reduction in complaints and civil liability, as well as increased cooperation between citizens and police as benefits to using BWC technology (Sacca, 2017). Before the

adoption BWCs to record police misconduct or fatal shootings, CCTV surveillance, citizen cell phone, and police dashboard cameras were used to capture the footage (Mateescu et al., 2016).

Unfortunately, closed CCTV has not been found to decrease the negative behavior in citizens (Palmer, 2016). Nonetheless, the BWC has received national attention as a recording device purposed to aid in the promotion of accountability and forge police-community relations (Mateescu, et al, 2016). Technology's use is becoming an increasingly significant issue in law enforcement as agencies are forced to adjust to an ever-changing media environment that highlights departmental image, social control, and police conformity (Crosby, 2018).

BWC may be beneficial in increasing the rates of conviction and prosecution of offenders (Palmer, 2016). However, the benefits of BWCs are not without cost. In some cases, the cost may be exorbitant for departmental budgets. BWC costs can be excessive as they are a long-term investment and funding such programs has proven problematic for some agencies in the United States (Laming, 2019). Initially the cost of supplying the department with BWCs may be manageable as it is a one-time purchase; however, the expense associated with management and storage of the device's information is the real expense (Lawrence, 2015). Even more costs may be incurred, such as hiring vendors that supply cloud-based databases or additional equipment for storage and maintenance of data, perhaps hiring personnel to manage the process, and creating policies to guide the new technology (Wexler, 2018).

There is future savings in BWCs that offset the initial expense of starting the program. According to Wexler (2018), noteworthy outcomes include improved citizen relationships, fewer use of force and citizen complaints, which results in avoiding litigation and civil remedies. For instance, Wexler (2018) reported that researchers estimate citizen complaints cost departments upwards of \$20,000 combined, but with the implementation of BWCs there is a savings associated with fewer complaints. BWCs save the departments revenue in manhours for investigations or costly litigation, as the video footage captures a different account of the incident that dispels the allegations.

Wexler (2018) believed that there was a \$4 savings for every \$1 spent resolving complaints. Unfortunately, these savings are unpredictable and may occur many months to years after the BWC program has been implemented. For instance, officers shared that BWC could impede police work by interfering with their ability to use discretion and that the officers will be criticized for their actions or nonactions frame by frame when viewing the recording (Ariel, 2016a). More research is needed to determine if there is a shared perception of BWC altering officers' behavior or diminishing authority across varied jurisdictions.

There may be a justifiable action taken by the officer based on their perception of an encounter. As mentioned by Gramagila and Scott (2017), the officer's perception during an event may have warranted an action. However, their statements may be questionable if the events directly coincide with the incident rather than their comprehension of the incident (Gramagila & Scott, 2017). In effect, there is a

responsibility placed on the officer to recall information as opposed to relying solely on BWC footage.

The problem that this study addressed was the violent encounters between police and citizens despite the presence of BWCs. Although agencies are embracing the usage of the digital devices, the research is limited on the effect that the BWCs have had on police behavior. For instance, law enforcement agencies benefit from the BWC's ability to make them appear more transparent, and they may reduce citizen complaints because it offers an additional view of what occurred in citizen interactions. Citizens may feel as though the BWCs may curtail police officers from engaging in violent altercations with civilians as they capture the event as it unfolded. However, the research is limited in gaining the perspective from police officers of how the implementation of BWCs has altered policing. Therefore, this study was aimed at filling the gap in the research by adding to the knowledge of police officer's perception of BWCs.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore, identify, and understand the changes in behavior and practice that occur when police wear BWCs. Identifying the underlying concerns will assist officers in personal/community safety, decision making, and procedural compliance. I further intended the study to add to the current BWC literature by inserting the officers' personal thoughts and feelings that they have experienced while wearing the BWCs. Few studies have analyzed the impact of BWCs on officer duties relative to their eagerness to be proactive in solving problems or exercising discretion in making arrests or issuing warnings (Braga et al., 2018).

The question this study delved into was how officers perceive that policing has been impacted by the implementation of BWCs in their profession. In this study I obtained the perceptions of officers who have worked in law enforcement prior to BWCs inception and thereafter. Much research has been dedicated to the use of lack of use of BWC technology and its ability to curtail use of force altercations, but research has rarely obtained the officer's opinion of the device's impact on their duties.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search was focused on retrieving information regarding the use of BWCs. However, the exhaustive search revealed contributing factors that must be mentioned to understand the totality of how BWCs are pivotal in police work.

List of Research Databases

I used the following online databases and search engines to construct the literature review: EBSCO-THOREAU, ProQuest, Google Scholar, ProQuest-Criminal Justice, EBSCOhost- SocINDEX with Full Text, Taylor & Francis, JSTOR and Sage Journals. Also, I accessed the City Council of Atlanta government site to view the audit for BWCs.

List of Key Search Terms

The key search terms in addition to those that were revealed on several databases are as follows: *Lipsky's street level bureaucracy, body-worn cameras, body-worn cameras and police behavior, officer perception of body-worn cameras, police wearable devices, body-worn cameras and law enforcement perception, shootings of unarmed African Americans, Rodney King, closed circuit television (CCTV), dash cameras, citizen perception of BWCs, use of force, media impact to BWCs, and BWC policy and training.*

These key terms were used to retrieve studies that correspond with the previous research in the preceding and current chapter, and to address the respective research question. Lastly, the terms *law enforcement officer* and *police officer* were used synonymously as were *agency* and *department* throughout the scholarly articles and shall be used as such throughout the literature review.

The literature review is composed of current articles that was published with the last five years, from 2015-2020, relative to departmental and police officer use of BWCs. In order to properly address the problem and research question it is important to review the historical evolution of technological devices that were and are still used to record police encounters. Likewise, it is important to ascertain how police officers feel that BWCs have been impactful in their profession.

The limited research relative to the perspective of police officers when using BWCs was addressed by examining officer buy-in and compliance/noncompliance of using BWCs. Much of the research revealed overt and covert push back of the implementation of BWC devices by officers and by some police unions. However, minimal research exists that addresses the pre- and post-effects of BWC adoption and implementation, as explained by the officers that have experienced the phenomena. Because of this void, the presence of the gap worthy of inquiry was reinforced by revealing that there was little research reflecting the officers' perception of BWCs.

Theoretical Foundation

Lipsky's' (2010) SLBT has driven the research. Lipsky coined the theory in 1969 but the most recent version was renewed in 2010 (Lipsky, 2010). As clarified by Lipsky

(2010), the SLBT is relevant to welfare agencies, law enforcement, school system, or lower courts that have a level of discretion to determine the dispensing of public penalty or benefits. Møller and Stensöta (2019) explained that frontline workers operate in a citizen agency by bending rules and repelling the stance of supervisor's pressure to blame the poor by adopting personal moral beliefs as a dominate view to guide their decisions.

Likewise, Lipsky (2010) described the actors in SLBT encounters as public servants who regularly engage with citizens within the course of their tasks and have considerable autonomy to exercise discretion in the scope of their work are identified as SLBs (Lipsky, 2010, p.3). The theory asserts that police officers are the agents that drive policy and its implementation in the field. The use of discretion is intertwined in police work as there are many opportunities to exercise it (Burvick, 2016). The theory is relevant because law enforcement officers exercise varying degrees of discretion during the course of their work activities.

Baviskar and Winter (2017) asserted that due to discretion, SLBs are significant policy makers, whereas their coping skills are evidenced by their ability to work with minimal resources and unwilling clientele. SLBs experience immense stress in their chosen roles as there are high expectations and commitment to their careers (Lipsky, 2010). For this reason, Lipsky (2010) proclaimed that SLBs experience burnout early during employment. Therefore, often there is evidence of under-enforcement whereas small incidents are ignored to easily resolve the issue (Burvick, 2016).

The street level bureaucracy theory is appropriate for this study as the basis of the theory is discretion. Appropriately, police officers have the freedom to exercise discretion

when engaged in their duties. Relative to BWC usage, police officers have the authority to decide whether to activate the devices to capture specific incidents. Equally, they possess the ability to deactivate the devices to avoid recording incriminating evidence that may question their behavior or challenge their account of the encounter.

Rowe (2012) claimed Street level bureaucracy is applicable to police officers, as with great efficiency they can analyze and compartmentalize people and determine the most proficient way to employ time. Keulemans and Van de Walle (2020) believes that decisions are made based upon the attitude of the SLB. Buvik (2016) felt that SLBs can make decisions at a moment's notice as they are the enforcers of policy through personal interactions. Buvik (2016) further relayed that Lipsky commonly identifies SLBs as state welfare workers, police officers and employees from various other agencies that exercise discretion when reprimanding those that are in violation of the law or procedure.

Moreover, it is noted that Lipsky (2010), believed there is a challenging relationship between the community and the SLB. According to Rowe (2012) SLBs often operate in a manner that rules are open to interpretation when serving the public as there are many instances of noncompliance or subversion to policy. More specifically, law enforcement officers are highly surveilled in observation of their public interactions, decisions, or actions (Lipsky, 2010). Complexity best characterizes street level bureaucracy, the theory is engrossed with contradictions and various sentiments or vantage points (Møller & Stensöta, 2019).

Notwithstanding, there is no surprise that citizens are doubtful that BWC will produce change in officers; having the ability to turn the camera on or off, control of

camera positioning or deciding what footage to use as evidence, citizens feel as though there is an imbalance of power (Taylor & Lee, 2019). In fact, officer discretion of whether to use force has been questioned in cases involving African American males. The shootings and subsequent deaths of Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, and Eric Garner by police officers have sparked national attention, evoked riots, and protests (Gaub, et al., 2016; Rembert, et al., 2016; Smykla, et al., 2016; Suss, et al., 2018). Despite the implementation of BWCs in other countries for years, in 2014 its potential was realized by citizens and politicians after the incidents in Ferguson, MO (Lippert & Newell, 2016).

These actions birthed the nation's public outcry for more transparency and accountability for law enforcement officers. In retrospect, perhaps the autonomy bestowed upon the street level bureaucrat is causal in the adherence to the deployment of BWC's and the policy, or lack that of, that governs its usage. Public scrutiny has not been more prevalent than in the last decade while reviewing the use of force cases that resulted in the deaths of unarmed African American men. Lipsky expands on the notion that policy and its failures can better be examined from a street level view rather than relying on the perspective of the policy makers or government (Rowe, 2012). In absence of the frontline work, it is almost impossible to determine what measures may be effective.

Literature Review

It is important to understand what issues are prevalent to spark the need for law enforcement to adopt BWC technology. Allegations of law enforcements excessive use of force are not new to policing. In fact, it has become commonplace in some communities. However, many violent encounters have shown that the relationship between law

enforcement and some communities has been tempestuous at best. None were more impactful than the media reach created by the deaths of Mike Brown, Freddie Gray and Alton Sterling by police officers (Robinson, 2017). These deaths eclipsed other homicides such as Gregory Gunn, Keith Childress, Jamar Clark, Eric Harris, and Keith Harrison McLeod at the hands of police officers (Robinson, 2017).

Albeit the deaths of Mike Brown, Freddie Gray and Alton Sterling prompted a public uproar for law enforcement agencies to adopt BWC programs. Notwithstanding, video footage of such acts has been exposed by the news media and various social media platforms and is now urging for an overhaul of a seemingly broken system. Since then, numerous accounts of deadly shootings have highlighted the tactics of law enforcement officers. As recent as the summer of 2014, there has been a national outcry from legislators, community liaisons and police administrators for increased accountability of its police forces, and improved community relations (Stoughton, 2018).

Robinsons (2017) research highlighted the contentious relationships between law enforcement and African American communities, as he unveils that historically, incidents of civil unrest have risen from the perception of unjust treatment by police. As stated by Watkins, Patton, and Miller (2016), in comparison to those of other races, awareness has been raised about the injustices of black men and boys by social media and magnifies the disparities therein. For example, the beating of Rodney King revealed the polarized relationship between law enforcement and citizens.

In more recent times highly publicized shooting deaths, sparked the birth of local movements “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot”; “No Justice No Peace”; and “I Can’t Breathe”

(Farbman, 2016; Robinson, 2017). The shootings further caused “Black Lives Matter” (BLM) to become an international movement set in motion by the suspicious manner that the shootings occurred. On November 14, 2014, social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and Instagram forced more life into the movement by trending the simple tag #Blacklivesmatter (Watkins, et al., 2016). After George Zimmerman shot and killed African American teenager Trayvon Martin, and the shooting death of Michael Brown occurred, the BLM movement erupted with numerous protests and in some instance’s riots throughout the United States (Bejan, et al., 2018).

As indicated by Bejan, Hickman, Parkin and Pozo (2018), BLM and any other minority groups that may be affiliated with the movement may be viewed as an exogamous group, that pose a threat to how the majority views the world through the conventional lens within the criminal justice system. Change may often be difficult to achieve when it goes against the status quo. Robinson (2017) offered a grim recommendation to African American parents to have “the talk” with their children of how to interact with law enforcement in a respectful and safe way. However, the research is reliant upon relationships rather than the value of video recordings of law enforcement encounters.

Still in its infancy, BWCs have become an integral part of law enforcement equipment. According to Lawshe, Burruss, Giblin and Schafer (2019), BWCs are a promising development in policing and have been associated with decreased use of force and complaints, but it has equally caused issues in attempting to create a successful BWC program. Citizens have demanded intense accountability and transparency of its law

enforcement officers. Public discussion of police brutality, excessive use of force and citizen deaths have been prominent topics since 2014 (Gaub, et al. 2016; Wallace et al., 2018).

Law enforcement agencies were inundated with complaints, cities protested or rioted which spurred the need for unbiased recording devices that could serve as safeguards to monitor officer activity while simultaneously curtailing fictitious reports and frivolous lawsuits. In December 2014, President Barack Obama signed an Executive Order to empower the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing to address the depreciating perceptions of law enforcement legitimacy (Birck, 2018; Freund, 2015; Lawshe, et al., 2019; Taylor, et al., 2019; Todak & Gaub, 2019; White, et. al al., 2017). There was a concerted effort between the White House and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) in President Obama's Task Force to forge change in the criminal justice system, which included the adoption of BWCs.

Over 150 participants discussed strategies to implement and develop ideas for communities and law enforcement to build public trust and enhance public safety nationwide. This initiative would serve as a blueprint for best practices amongst law enforcement professionals, community leaders and elected officials (Davis, 2017). Aligned with the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, within the last decade, the BWC has become a staple in police work to promote transparency in the community. Additionally, BWCs have been used to condemn or exonerate officers or citizens, and the footage has been essential in court proceedings.

In fact, numerous police unions have contested the implementation of BWCs as they contend it should be discussed in collective bargaining because it is a change in work conditions (Wallace, et al, 2018). The research seeks to reveal the various ways the BWC has materialized from public out-cry rather than an organic progression. This section will provide insight into how law enforcement transitioned to include BWCs as an integral part of the police arsenal. Additionally, the section will review the usage of video cameras, CCTV, dashboard cameras and cellular phones in police work. Lastly, the research will integrate what scholars believe that the impact of using BWC technology has had on law enforcement officers and citizens. Although a great deal of the research touts the benefits of BWCs, there is a gap in the research of the officers' perspective of BWCs.

Historical Evolution

As dictated by Katz, (2016) the crime rate rose equally in Los Angeles, California and in the United States; in response to the problem during the 1980's and 1990's, leaders in the African American community of South Central in conjunction with the mayor supported the police chief in instituting gang sweeps. The operation called "Operation Hammer" was Los Angeles Police Departments' form of zero tolerance which would disproportionately impact area black youth (Katz, 2016). The operation targeted those suspected of gang affiliation as identified by police officers; whereas gang sweeps in the form of roadblocks, military style checkpoints, blocking streets and interrogation of automotive drivers netted thousands of arrests, many charges were dismissed due to insufficient evidence (Katz, 2016).

The premise was to curtail potential offenders (Katz, 2016). This operation served as a pre-phrase to the arrest of Rodney King. As asserted by Jacobs (1996) after a brief motor vehicle chase Rodney King was stopped by (21) police officers from the California Highway Patrol and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). Mr. King was brutally beaten by (3) LAPD officers as a sergeant and 17 other officers looked on (Jacobs, 1996). In result, Mr. King suffered multiple injuries at the hands of the officers. Unbeknownst to the officers, amateur cameraman, George Holliday recorded the incident and sold it to a local television station that was broadcasted throughout the United States on numerous television and radio news outlets Jacobs (1996).

The accidental recording of the beating of Rodney King by the Los Angeles Police Department revealed to many the atrocities of its police force, as consequently until that time was unknown (Brucato, 2015). This video gave insight into the brutality and allegations of racism in Los Angeles, California. In result, Police Chief Daryl Gates resigned, Mayor Tom Brady did not seek reelection; and once the involved parties were arrested and found not guilty the city erupted in the costliest civil disturbance in the history of the US (Jacobs, 1996). There upon, the city of Los Angeles settled a barrage of lawsuits from 1986-1990, for over 300 lawsuits relative to the use of force, resulting in the sum of twenty million dollars Jacobs (1996).

As explained by Lasley (1994) citizens' attitudes towards police had changed significantly as the images produced a negative view of law enforcement after watching the video of Rodney King being beaten by the officers. As relayed by Rothman (2016) the notorious tape capturing the infamous beating of Rodney King has positioned him in

a series that continues of citizens creating videos, officer BWC and dash camera footage that transforms the relationships between the police and the public that they serve. The Rodney King case changed the trajectory of law enforcement and served as a segue of how citizens became the overseers of police activities

Video Cameras

Since the video beating of Rodney King emerged in 1991, video images have been essential in use of force incidents (Culhane, Boman & Schweitzer, 2016). The 1990's ushered in an evolution of handheld devices that are designed to effortlessly record video footage from various technological devices (Farmer, Sun & Starks, 2015). It has been demonstrated that people who are the subject of police video recordings are viewed as being treated unfairly; these videos are highly publicized by the media and evoke strong reactions from the viewers (Boivin, Gendron, Faubert, & Poulin, 2017).

According to Sandhu and Haggerty (2017), officers are concerned that citizen videos fail to capture valuable details that occur prior to the confrontation, and they do not accurately reflect what occurred in its entirety. Officers relayed that when citizens are persistent about recording encounters the act of recording makes social interactions much harder to accomplish. As explained by Parry, Moule and Dario (2019), civil unrest has been prevalent throughout the United States as video recordings depicting police and citizen encounters undermine police authority. Citizens that watch the encounters between citizens and police share equal levels of approval and strong feelings that officers excised excessive force (Boivin, et al, 2017).

Local news programs broadcast police use of force on case-by-case basis within their broadcasting area; whereas national networks such as CNN ceaselessly broadcast police altercations continuously (Boivin, et al., 2017). Likewise, often videos depicting contentious interactions receive widespread attention through numerous social media platforms (Boivin, et al., 2017). The unintended impact of citizens watching video of police intervention, still produces negative feelings whether the interaction is good or bad (Boivin, et al., 2017).

Cellular Phones

Similarly, to video cameras, they too are citizen owned, operated and the footage is quickly broadcasted to the public via various internet or social media platforms. To create video and other media, citizens are in possession of reasonably priced cell phones and cameras (Brucato, 2015). Different from many professions, police officers are public servants which might decrease their expectation of privacy (Freund, 2015). A burden is inflicted upon police departments when video of their actions is circulated by citizens (Culhane, et al. 2016). As expressed by Freund (2015) law enforcement has had to adapt to the fact that citizens and officers had an increased ability to easily record events due to technological development.

To further agitate the situation, Officers became irritated with citizens that were in their faces recording who acted as if their interpretation of the law was more extensive than that of the officer (Sandhu, et al, 2017). In order preserve the rights of citizens to record law enforcement, pressure has been applied to local and state government (Johnson, 2018). Although this causes concern for some, if law enforcement officers fail

to record their own actions, undoubtedly citizens will record police interactions as the recordings are constitutionally protected act (Culhane, et al., 2016).

As the recording of Rodney King called into question police legitimacy in which protest and riots ensued (Koslicki, (2019; Schneider, 2018) purported that cell phone video has captured footage of inappropriate behavior by officers; therefore, in excess of 8 out of 10 African Americans support the usage of BWCs. Edwards, Lee, and Esposito (2019) revealed that succumbing police violence is the primary cause of death for young men, more specifically African American males. The individuals' race, age and gender are indicators of whether they may be at increased risk to be victims of police violence (Edwards, et al., 2019).

As alleged by, Birk (2018), confronting implicit bias within the criminal justice system can benefit those that have experienced explicit biases as well. To guard against ill treatment by law enforcement, a great deal of minority youths use smartphones to capture interactions with officers that occur between themselves or others (Farmer, et al., 2015). Footage from BWCs may be the initial step to improve racial inequities in use of force encounters in police departments (Birck,2018). It is believed, by Farmer, Sun and Starks (2015), in the application of Bentham's utilitarian principle, citizens are more apt to record incidents with police if their perception of the interaction is deemed insensitive to a moral or cultural stance; or can stimulate social justice, equity or impartiality.

In response, some officers imply that the cameras do not accurately convey the working conditions that they are subjected to (Sandhu, 2017). Garnering national interest, the state of law enforcement has been plagued by issues of legitimacy; in result of the

numerous officer-citizen encounters throughout the United States, cell phone videos produced by citizens captured the deaths of Walter Scott and James Boyd, while police BWC captured the death of James Boyd simultaneously (Parry, et al., 2019). There are a number of ways that officers' images are captured during the course of their shifts which is not limited to private or public surveillance cameras; this includes various law enforcement monitored cameras in addition to store front, media outlets or community leaders creating recordings (Sandhu & Haggerty, 2017).

An additional issue of concern is the Ferguson Effect. Law enforcement agencies are presently dealing with the "Ferguson Effect" whereas agencies are mindful that their behavior may be recorded by BWC or citizens' cellular phone; these images may be uploaded to social media, this caution leads to de-policing (Culhane, et al., 2016).

Closed Circuit Television

Was purposed as a crime deterrent in more secluded locations, however the technology has evolved for usage to prevent crime in public locations as well (Lim & Wilcox, 2017). Furthermore, Whichard and Felson (2016) expounded that the results from the installation of CCTVs in public, places of employment or various locations within police view have either failed to produce favorable or substantial results. Unlike the BWC, CCTV is incapable of recording audio (Freund, 2015). Globally, CCTV has been hailed for being a great surveillance system for crime prevention in the last few decades (Piza, Thomas, Welsh & Farrington, 2019).

Similarly, the United States has regarded CCTV a worthy investment within the last decade (Piza, et al, 2019). The placement of police officers or security guards is aided

by the presence of CCTV (Lim & Wilcox, 2017). Investigators highly value the footage from CCTV (Dowling, et.al., 2019). Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the effectiveness of CCTV (Lim & Wilcox, 2017). Nine out of 10 investigators were able to successfully use CCTV in their investigations; and another two-thirds found it useful in their investigations for other work-related uses (Dowling, et al., 2019).

As indicated by Lim and Wilcox (2017) CCTV can potentially deter a criminal from engaging in criminal activity by knowing that their actions are being recorded. CCTV is herald for having both modest and extreme effects on crime (Piza, et al, 2019). Also, the effectiveness of CCTV was most impactful in residential areas and car parks for crime reduction (Piza, et al., 2019). Nonetheless, the image quality seemed to be an issue with the footage; often the suspect committing the crime was not visible on camera. Although the CCTV footage was not the first item collected at the beginning of an investigation; it was often requested shortly after an investigation began (Dowling, et al., 2019). CCTV footage is often used to determine if incidents occurred or to corroborate statements in sexual assaults (Dowling, et al., 2019).

The future of CCTV is realized in proactivity as they are connected to license plate readers, drone cameras, autonomous cameras, and traffic control cameras (Skogan, 2019). Skogan (2019) further asserted that the most transformative feature to CCTV will be facial recognition. To better guide investigations or intercede, facial recognition promises to put names to faces with better accuracy (Skogan, 2019). This technology will have the capacity to connect to “known person” databases that are used in body won

camera and dash cam video, as well as driver's license, passport and mug shot photo's (Skogan, 2019).

Dashboard Cameras

Dash cameras seize images from a third person point of view more extensive than a BWC because the subjects are more distinguishable (Turner, Caruso, Dilich & Roesse, 2019). Surveillance technologies usage in American law enforcement has increased over the last 30 years; agencies commonly include a wide variety of electronic equipment such as fixed, mobile, in-car, light, speed, and red cameras in addition to (GPS), plate readers and facial recognition technologies (Schuck, 2017). Dashboard cameras differ from BWCS as they are limited to their mounted locations such a patrol car or outside apparatus, however BWCs are mobile and can record within a person's home (Freund, 2015).

Tanner and Meyer (2015) declared that police work has undergone a major change through the implementation of mobile technologies. Taylor (2016) suggested that in order to address racially motivated traffic stops and restore public trust, an initiative was forged to install dash cameras in patrol cars during the late 1980s; these devices became a mainstay in many departments well into the 2000s throughout the United States. Turner, Caruso, Dilich and Roesse (2019) defined dash camera as a device that captures images from a third person perspective with increase depth and more body visibility in comparison to a body camera. Turner, et al., (2019) conveyed that officer activity is monitored in the field using body cameras and dash cameras.

The images produced by these devices are intended to determine the officers' intent and review their conduct when involved in incidents that are highly contested (Turner, et al., 2019). As mentioned by Taylor (2016) the induction of audio and video technologies has taken an effectual role in police work; recently there has been astonishing capabilities of this equipment realized and integrated into everyday policing. Although CCTV and dash cameras have been accessible for a while, BWCs possess the ability to capture and store evidence (Ariel, (2016b). Serving a dual purpose, (Sandhu and Haggerty, 2017), conveyed that officers often make the citizens aware of the dash camera to advise them that they are being recorded during traffic stops. As more police departments institute the BWC protocols, challenges arise to dispute the videos from cellular phone recordings, and dash camera footage retrieved from police (Bufford, 2015).

Body-Worn Cameras

BWCs are the newest technology used to capture citizen and police encounters. BWCs are unparalleled to various other recording devices such as CCTV, dash cameras or cell phones as they carry heighten legal ramifications (Freund, 2015).The BWC devices are hailed for capturing the behavior of the officer as well as the citizen, its footage is highly sought after to determine exactly what occurred in highly contested incidents. Distinct in comparison to other monitoring devices, BWCs are portable and can easily direct their attention to specific targets, for this reason BWCs require policies that manage these capabilities (Freund, 2015).

The appeal of BWCs is in the mobility of the devices and the potential to coerce accountability, unlike the technology that preceded it, the mobility raises a multitude of questions (Lippert & Newell, 2016). Researchers are anticipating BWCs to evolve again and acquire more extensive features. Frankly, much different from CCTV, BWCs may possibly acquire the ability to contain Face Recognition Technology (FRT) that will magnify its ability to monitor the actions of citizens (Freund, 2015).

Headley, Guerette and Shariati (2017) implied that many governmental officials have depended upon the usage of BWCs in the United States due to the tumultuous protest created by police encounters in the past few years. Drover and Ariel (2015) declared that the BWC is an innovative device in policing that can aid with the demands for increased transparency and improved behavior of officers. Many police agencies and legislators think that BWCs may bolster transparency by making officers more accountable while working in the neighborhoods they service (Wooditch, et al., 2020). There is powerful evidence that indicates officer behavior is improved by BWCs and leads to active policing, with a decline in complaints and use of force allegations (Laming, 2019).

The introduction of the BWCs merged audiovisual capabilities and mobility with police technology (Taylor, 2016). The BWC is purposed to seize images and preserve the evidence of law enforcement incidents (Boivin, et al., 2017). Society is hopeful that BWCs will facilitate police accountability as more agencies are adopting the usage of the devices (Ramirez, 2018). The device designed to give a first-person account of officer/citizen interactions can be affixed to the shoulder, uniform shirt or mounted in

specialized glasses (Boivin, et al., 2017). By using BWCs, officials are hopeful that the devices will positively impact police and citizen behavior when interacting, which will gauge the justifiability of actions that transpired during the encounter (Headley, 2017).

However, society must be careful in deeming BWCs as the solution to all the problems engrained in the criminal justice system (Birck, 2018). The benefits of BWCs have excited a considerable number of people (Smykla, et al., 2016). As explained by Crow and Smykla (2019), there is a long history of technology implementation in policing from 911 systems, two-way radios, updated patrol cars to crime mapping technology. Despite these notable changes many argue that policing remained unchanged since the 1920's (Crow & Smykla, 2019). It is not farfetched that that BWC technology would be relied upon considering video surveillance has become commonplace in modern society (Headly, et al., 2017).

The adoption of BWCs is transpiring throughout the United States and globally; most questions have been raised about the devices ability to bring about an unpleasant consequence (Wood & Groff, 2019). In accordance with, Pelfrey and Keener (2016), the importance of focusing the attention on law enforcements need to implement BWCs has been illuminated by the current accounts of police use of force. As stated by Huff, Katz, and Webb (2018) to make police more accountable and transparent agencies have adopted BWCs throughout the United States. As indicated by Braga, Sousa, Coldren, James & Rodriguez (2018), a clef has been created between law enforcement and the community due to the fatal officer involved shootings in the United States as reported in the cities of Baltimore, Charlotte, Chicago, and Ferguson.

These series of questionable police shootings that resulted in deaths has propelled the topic of BWCs into the mainstream. As of 2016 the appeal for BWC legislation was considered in excess of 15 states, this regulation called for law enforcement officers to wear the devices during their shifts (Ariel, 2016b). After police deaths of Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Laquan McDonald, and Tamir Rice, citizens and policymakers have advocated for the usage of BWCs (Birck, 2018; Huff, et al., 2018). As agreed by, (Turner, Caruso, Dilich and Roese, 2019), the shooting death of Michael Brown equally summoned activists and protestors in Ferguson, MO to make the appeal for better police accountability by pleading with the police department adopt and implement BWCs.

Notwithstanding being a new tool in law enforcement, BWCs have received substantial consideration recently. Societies requisition for greater transparency involving police shootings was answered by financial investments from the federal government (Lawrence, et al., 2019). For many, the implementation would serve as the stimuli that changes police officers by holding them accountable for the violent acts they commit (Birck, 2018). In result, emergent efforts are underway to combat the policing issue plaguing the United States through the implementation of BWCs (Wood, et al., 2019).

As a tool of police reform and accountability, the body worn camera has been embraced in American policing (Joh, 2016). However, it is believed that agencies that have larger budgets and the backing of collective bargaining agreements are less probable to cleave to societal demands for BWC implementation (Nowacki & Willits, 2018). Considering the numerous accounts of excessive use of force by law enforcement officers, public outcry has demanded better accountability and transparency of law

enforcement agencies. It is argued that BWC allow the officers to produce biased recordings of specific interactions that are subjective and at the discretion of the operator (Taylor & Lee, 2019). Though preliminary opinions of BWCs have been favorable, finally conclusions of its effectiveness are still undetermined (Headley, 2017).

Use of Force

Garner, Hickman, Malega and Maxwell (2018) felt that one distinct and arguable aspect American policing is the authority to use force. Use of force encounters are by far the most requested footage from BWCs. BWCs are equipped with audio and visual capabilities that will assist in determining if the use of force was warranted and if the degree of force was reasonable. The decision to use make an arrest may be modified when BWCs are used (Ariel, 2016a). As noted by, Nemeth (2019), officers are shielded by the Qualified Immunity Doctrine that protects officers from their actions of when using excessive force against citizens. When excessive force is used against citizens and others known to them in their communities, they are more libel to be unyielding and resistant to police (Roithmayr, 2016). These citizens are unlikely to conform to police authority. When officers witness other others use excessive use of force against civilians that appear to be defiant, it is likely that the officer will use excessive force in the same manner in subsequent engagements, if the force achieves the desired results (Roithmayr, 2016).The Qualified Immunity plea has been used for decades by officers after the death of unarmed citizens, or if they felt their life was in danger, or they deemed that their actions were justified.

In result, many agencies were slow to address the behavior of their officers or apply discipline, the legal doctrine leaves the families incapable of seeking justice for their loved ones (Nemeth, 2019). The belief that police officers have the propensity to kill African Americans and are immune from prosecution, undermines the argument that officers are being held accountable (Bejan,et.al., 2018).Until recently, many officers could have numerous complaints of excessive use of force waged against them leaving the family without redress. Many jurisdictions are abandoning this thought process and demanding more of its law enforcement officers, mainly accountability for their actions beyond civil remedies.

According to Roithmayr (2016) African Americans are perceived by police officers as more rebellious or resistant, therefore they are often the target of abuse even if they do not exhibit the combative behavior. Perhaps this in turns causes the citizens to become noncompliant. Also, the ratio of African Americans that are inclined to killed is incommensurate with that of any other race (Edwards, 2019). These use of force incidents highlighted the long-standing lack of national data that tracked the occurrences which often resulted in national demonstrations (Bejan, et al., 2018; Garner,et.al., 2018).

The incidents forced Congress to inquire how often the deadly encounters occurred, more often than the not, the response was “We don’t know,” (Garner,et.al., 2018). To increase confidence and legitimacy in police departments, former President Barack Obama created the Task Force on 21st Century Policing (Garner,et.al., 2018). Although the ability to use force by law enforcement has captivated society and scholars alike, the interest was thrust forward and re-energized after the deaths of Michael Brown

and Eric Garner in 2014, as well as other notable fatal police shootings that followed (Bejan, et. al.,2018; Edwards, et.al, 2018: Garner, et al., 2018).

To account for the deviant behavior or conduct exhibited by officers that use excessive force, criminology and sociology research focuses on individual officer traits (Roithmayr, 2016). Similarly, to a virus, if the excessive use of force is celebrated by officers, reduces contact with the offender and the potential for injury the behavior will be accepted and duplicated throughout the agency (Roithmayr, 2016). Once the excessive use of force has become a learned behavior and practice; it supersedes policy and becomes the preferred method of compliance.

As presented by, Roithmayr (2016), there are three possible causes of excessive use of force as: 1) personal traits of the officer 2) administrative structure of police agencies 3) dynamics relative to sex and race of officers' interactions and the victims of excessive use of force. If agencies are battling with excessive use of force incidents perhaps, they should look at the influences therein. On the contrary, Phillips (2015), believes that new officers, before hiring embrace a code of secrecy which was cultivated prior to experiencing any criminal incidents; the officers' reluctance to change their mindset towards use of force issues should be addressed early on (Phillips, 2015).

Implementation

Departments may feel increased pressure to implement BWCs. To strengthen the efficacy and performance of their officers, a great deal of police agencies adopted and implement modern technology (Drover & Ariel, 2015). Regardless of the reasoning to adopt BWCs, global research serves agencies by supplying information to make an

informed decision before implementation (Laming, 2019). The implementation of BWC has been highly publicized by law enforcement agencies to carefully examine officer-citizen interactions (Schneider, 2018). There are multiple issues inherent to the demand for this for the emerging technology (Wooditch, et.al., 2020). Strained relationships between law enforcement and the community have been accentuated over the last few years due to numerous events. Despite the implementation of BWCs in other countries for years, in 2014 its potential was realized by citizens and politicians after the incident in Ferguson, MO (Lippert & Newell, 2016).

BWCs have been favored as a tool to increase transparency, accountability, and community relations (Gaub, et al., 2016.). As communicated by, Joh (2016), the reform of BWCs will not be achieved without the public being in favor of the change. Pelfrey and Keener (2016) believed that the significance of BWC usage in law enforcement cannot be exaggerated as the violent accounts in Ferguson and Baltimore in connection with subsequent rioting is impactful on community relations which substantiates the necessity BWC information. Although little is known about the impact of BWCs to officers and citizens, they are being implemented at an extreme pace in law enforcement (Wood & Groff, 2019).

BWCs are being adopted in police departments throughout the United States although scholars caution against it (Smykla, et al., 2016). It is believed that the implementation of BWCs raises the apprehension for noncompliance to the law, and due to monitoring officers are less likely to engage in excessive or unnecessary use of force incidents (Ariel, et al., 2016a). Albeit the launch of a BWC program may appear

ineffective if the program is not implemented properly or officers fail to activate the devices (Lawrence., et al., 2019). Mainly because of their highly publicized benefits to heighten police accountability, the studying and implementation of BWCs has occurred at a novel pace since their inception in the 2000's (Koslicki, 2019). Strengthening community relations can be achieved through masterly accomplishing the implementation of BWCs which decreases improper behavior and improves the way officers conduct themselves (Maskaly, et al, 2017). However, Koslicki (2019), stated that contrary to popular belief it is improbable that BWCs will not alter policing, but rather allow the profession to advance with increased powers and virtues. As alleged by Adams and Mastracci (2019), the implementation of BWCs in American law enforcement agencies has grown from a marketed few to a multi-billion-dollar industry, although there are no distinct guidelines nationally for BWC usage.

Implementing BWCs into an agency can be costly in purchasing the equipment, training the officers on the usage of the technology, storage of the data, and the time necessary to retrieve and view stored footage (Smykla, et al., 2016). Agencies must weigh the additional cost of data storage, redaction, sacrificing privacy, expansive public access laws or consider disbanding the program in its entirety (Pagliarella, 2016). According to Barkardiiev (2015) departments should carefully consider exactly what their departments require before they decide to implement a BWC program. As one would imagine, BWC needs are not a one size fit all decision. For instance, consideration should be given to the type of BWCs needed, such as: the desire to record a field-of-view

visual detail or high-quality zoom features, these are decisions that must be made in addition to price (Barkardiiev, 2015).

Equally important would be the usability and sustainability of the devices. External pressures are the caveat that drives BWC programs in numerous agencies to increase transparency, accountability and to reap the benefits of hefty federal monetary incentives to implement the programs in a quick succession (Huff, et al., 2018). The financial impact of retention and distribution breadth of a BWC program is crucial considering the cost of storing BWC footage can be exorbitant; ideally the program would maintain the data for months or perhaps years (Pagliarella, 2016).

It was suggested that Congress provide the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) with \$75 million to finance the purchase of and provide technical support for BWC by President Barack Obama (Braga, et al., 2018; Huff, et al., 2018; Taylor, 2016). In excess of one-third of the 18,000 US police agencies have embraced BWC technology in 2013, and has climbed since, as estimated by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (Braga, et al., 2018). As implied by, Boivin, Gendron, Faubert and Poulin (2017), BWCs have been accepted by law enforcement agencies globally at an accelerated pace, as a tool that would contribute to increasing accountability, transparency; and the protection of officers from assault or frivolous complaints (Boivin, et al., 2017). It has been considered that BWCs has stimulated individual consciousness and created acceptable behavior in police officers (Ariel, et al., 2018).

Policy

It is counterproductive to launch a BWC program without creating an enforceable policy that mandates the usage of the devices and the retention of the evidence. Policy should include a maintenance schedule to ensure that the BWCs are not obsolete (Barkardiev, 2015). To make sure the BWCs are in proper working order technology updates should be performed to ensure optimal functioning of the devices (Barkardiev, 2015). It is imperative that a BWC policy is created to govern the activation and the usage of the devices over the course of the shift. To chronicle use of force allegations and occurrences, the President's Task Force recommended that police departments use of force policy amass data of officer involved shootings and report them to the Federal government (Garner, et al., 2018; Jones-Webb, et al., 2018).

Additionally, data collection for deadly use of force encounters from state and local law enforcement agencies is being complied by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (Garner, et al., 2018). By obtaining the perception of the officers that will use the BWCs, it helps the agency create and implement a plan for best practices in the planning stages of considering the adoption of the devices (Wooditch, et al., 2020). Additionally, it is noted that Graham, McManus, Cullen, Burton, and Jonson (2019) felt that in order to establish successful BWC programs, agencies are creating new policies and procedures to ensure a rewarding launch. As declared by Maskaly, Donner, Jennings, and Ariel (2017), to gain ultimate benefit from BWC implementation, administrator's policy consideration must be marked by prudence.

Most of the policies deem the importance of retaining video footage for criminal offenses but fail to preserve video for possible civil litigation (Fan, 2018). While reforming inadequate practices and policies, video footage can support governmental sanctions against offending law enforcement officers and agencies, promote compliance to constitutionally protected rights, and apply disciplinary sanctions against offenders (Wasserman, 2018). Departmental policies must include a manner of surveillance with data control (Joh, 2016).

A lack of distinctness will occur for the officer and the citizen when policies that omit clear data control measures that defines who have accessibility to view share or delete information from BWCs (Joh, 2016). To effectively guard against civil liabilities, some agencies have failed to create a policy for BWC footage; in addition to admittance for evidence, much of the content is used for officer discipline and evaluations (Fan, 2018). Transparency and accountability can be forged with the community by including in the policy a process for the public to obtain copies of the footage with pertinent information redacted (Freund, 2015).

Pelfrey and Keener (2016) shared that Supervisors emphasized the intricacy that is present when using BWCs relative to privacy protection; but they support distinct policies and training that encompass initiation and deactivation of recordings. Maskaly, Donner, Jennings, Ariel and Sutherland (2017) proclaimed that the decision to activate BWCs is not as simple as one may think, as privacy issues relative to officers and citizens should be evaluated and driven by policy when electing to deploy the devices. Lawrence, McClure, Malm, Lynch and La Vigne (2019) implied that if officers have autonomy to

elect when to activate or deactivate their BWC in certain situations, they may fail to remember to begin recording although there are policies in place to guide such actions.

Lippert and Newell (2016) insisted that officer discretion to activate and deactivate devices is concerning for the adoption of BWCs. According to Wexler (2018) PERF further advises fulltime activation to capture potentially controversial situations, however, the decision to deactivate the devices should be situational as in addressing sensitive situations involving crime victims that are involved in traumatic events. The position that an officer is assigned to is instrumental in the officer welcoming the technology, especially if they are assigned to community enrichment positions (Todak & Gaub, 2019). More so, those assigned to enforcement positions may view BWCs negatively (Todak & Gaub, 2019).

However, negative outcomes may be the result of the officer failing to activate their BWC, explanations for this non-activation compliance may be one of three reasons: 1) the officer forgot to activate the camera 2) intentionally deciding not to activate the device 3) the officer did not have time to activate the device (Lawrence, et al., 2019). Although some agencies allow officers to use discretion of when to activate their BWC, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) recommends that agencies include in their policies that officers have their devices activated during the entire course of their shifts (Wexler, 2018).

Many have presumed that disparity results in agencies adoption of BWCs is relative to the officers' level of adherence with BWC policies (Huff, et al., 2018). It may be counterintuitive to have a policy that the officers refuse to follow or does not fit the

model of the department. To ensure compliance to the rule of law rather than socialization into police culture, there must be a reevaluation of police practices and policies (Koslicki, 2019). Policy reform may be key in the reduction of deaths within police departments (Edwards et al., 2019).

In comparison to officers that are resistant to wearing BWCs, those that embrace the technology may be more compliant with BWC policies, more inclined to adapt more favorable behavior, or exhibit other behavioral traits that distinguishes them from those oppose wearing BWCs (Huff, et al., 2018). The video aids in demonstrating that their behavior was proper and within constitutional guidelines, this avoids costly litigation for the officer and the agency (Wasserman, 2018). It is important to obtain the narrative of officers to understand their experiences of being surveilled while using BWCs as a precursor to policy evolution (Adams, et al., 2019).

Video Retention

The storage and retention of police BWC footage is of great importance to its department (Laming, 2019). From a custodial point of view, law enforcement agencies should ensure that resources are accessible for the preparation and usage of formatted and edited video to be used as evidence (Wood, et al., 2019). Chain of custody is paramount in implementing and maintaining a BWC program. The adoption of BWCs should be examined for inclusion in policy creation as camera activation, redaction and the release of footage will be a matter of importance (Lippert & Newell, 2016).

Various measures of data control policies are the central authority in American policing (Ariel, et al., 2018; Joh, 2016). BWC storage options included internal databases

that are used and preserved by the police department, or a cloud-based storage system that is operated by an external sources secure website (Laming, 2019). Multiple international police departments have consented to lengthy contracts that provide cloud-based storage because it is cost effective (Laming, 2019). There are pros and cons for using third-party external cloud-based services. Namely, cloud-based external storage may initially be more affordable but, the price is determined by the usage of the agency, in turn prices may fluctuate as there are additional costs for software and hardware (Laming, 2019).

As shared by Freund (2015) the ACLU suggested that footage is only viewed in investigative circumstances since the data contains elements of criminal acts. The ACLU further suggested that comprehensive records are kept, access to footage is limited and footage is deleted routinely after a limited time has elapsed (Freund, 2015). Government officials and law enforcement supervisors appreciate the accessibility and quick accessibility to recorded images that BWCs provide (Headly, et al., 2017). PERF advised that police departments store BWC footage in a secure location such as a cloud-based storage system which alleviates them of the encumbrance of managing massive data themselves (Wexler,2018).

An additional suggestion by the ACLU is that data is deleted within weeks rather than months unless it is flagged to be kept for an extended time to address critical incidents (Freund, 2015). Legal issues can occur if there are undetected opportunities for BWC footage to be manipulated through tampering, loss, or mismanagement (Barkardiev, 2015). Howbeit, determining when and what to record varies across

jurisdictions; there are two rational issues to consider, 1) the technology considered by some agencies battery life was unable to record the shift in its entirety and hence, discretion was impacted; and 2) ample data acquired from a completed shift complicates processing and safekeeping which impacts the ability to easily retrieve information (Taylor, 2016). Benefits are not without risks; perceptions of police legitimacy are at risk when BWCs are intentionally turned off or they malfunction during a police encounter; this action relinquishes the power of the police agency and leaves the encounter to be interpreted by others of particularly deadly or brutal interactions (Graham, et al., 2019).

Community and police relationships could remain intact and avoid civil unrest and brutality with the accessibility to BWC footage (Pelfrey et al., 2016). Once unfavorable acts have been captured law enforcement has tried to avoid disclosing the information to the public to conceal the audio or video of the officer's violent encounters with citizens (Grabiner, 2016). On the contrary, less than truthful or inaccurate accounts of citizen encounters would prevail in the absence of videos as a (Graham et al., 2019). Perchance it may be more beneficial to release the video than not. In marginalized communities, BWCs have received mixed reviews of their effectiveness (St Louis, et al., 2019).

As indicated by, Willits and Makin (2018), in addition to determining what happened, BWC data can be used to study and give insight into offender opposition race or gender. Pelfrey and Keener (2016) alleged concerns have been voiced by officers relative to BWC footage being used in their work appraisals and departmental internal

investigations. Adversely, some agencies are divided on using the footage for officer evaluations or monitoring the actions of the officer (Fan, 2018; Graham, et al., 2019).

Training

Implementation of new equipment requires training, testing and demonstrated proficiency in the equipment's usage. Police officers are required to participate in many forms of training to affect their jobs, this should be no different when using BWC devices. Barkardiev (2015) advised that training should also include officers learning to use the BWCs and manage the information. There is an expectation that officers will remember to deploy and deactivate BWCs for every incident, upload, and place identifiers on videos, include evidence in the written narrative, and maintain the charge of the battery and equipment, which includes trouble shooting the devices (Todak & Gaub, 2019).

Despite that, it is rather vague what further training officers will be required to partake in as departments have autonomy to determine their own training requirements and schedules for their sworn officers (Barkardiev, 2015). Also, the training type varies between departments and jurisdictions. Furthermore, it is important to incorporate the proper mounting location relevant to the type of BWC used, as each BWC has recommendations for certain positions to ensure proper video recording (Barkardiev, 2015). As claimed by, Todak and Gaub (2019), officers have a limited amount of time to recall training in adherence to the policy.

Maskaly, Donner, Jennings, Ariel, and Sutherland (2017) believed the information obtained for BWCs can be used for officer counseling, briefing training or

inner-departmental training. To magnify the benefits of BWCs, Lawrence (2015), argued that training officers could take advantage of passing on previously learned lessons about BWCs to help officers avoid costly fallacies. In turn this training will be beneficial to the officer, department, and the citizens. Koslicki (2019) suggested that perhaps departments should focus on rudimentary functions such as hiring, selection and training of officers rather than immersing themselves in the popularity of BWCs to improve public relations.

Although these methods may seem subdued, the effectiveness of such functions should not be ignored amid the 21st century technological advancements (Koslicki, 2019). In order to publicly illustrate the complexity BWCs create Pelfrey and Keener (2016), revealed one must understand the extraordinary opportunity for training that exists, as scenarios can be used in in-service training, with cadets, community leaders and citizen academies to discuss the appropriate responses to incidents.

Lawrence (2015) touted that in return, the public will be the recipients of enforcement that is proactive rather than reactive because officers have received realistic training that equipped them to make less mistakes while providing quality service in their communities. Maskaly, Donner, Jennings, Ariel & Sutherland (2017) believed that officers that act inappropriately should be held accountable for their actions, failure to use BWC footage creates a missed opportunity to use the visuals as a training tool.

Officer Behavior and Perception

Maskaly, Donner, Jennings, Ariel, and Sutherland (2017) claimed that the behavior of officers is modified by BWCs. Gaub, Choate, Todak, Katz and White (2016) stated that evidence revealed in lieu of their own behavior being affected, officers believe

BWCs would have a greater effect on the behavior of other officers. As relayed by Culhane, Boman and Schweitzer (2016), many officers oppose the use of BWCs; officers fear that their actions are being micromanaged through the lens of the camera. Drover and Ariel (2015) refuted that trust between the officer and supervisor may be diminished due to the officer's behavior captured on the BWC footage, in turn resulting in disciplinary actions.

Officers may fear micromanagement of their activities by their supervisors through the usage of BWCs (Freund, 2015). Officers may be resistant to accepting the new recording devices, viewing it as unfair to consider for disciplinary actions (Wooditch, et.al, 2020). In opposition, according to Freund (2015), to increase trust within the community, police departments should create BWC policy that would trigger discipline of officers that exhibit behavior that is unbecoming, in lieu of evidence compilation. Conducting research of officer perception prior to the implementation of BWC programs may assist the conversion into using the devices therefore removing the uncertainty of the foreign process (Wooditch, et al, 2020).

Adversely, Maskaly, Donner, Jennings, Ariel, and Sutherland (2017) argued that law enforcement officers are advocates of implementing BWCs as they are beneficial and provide valuable evidence exhibiting police and citizen confrontations. However, the unintended effect of the BWC is the complexity of prosecution in the absence of BWC footage (Ariel, et al., 2015).

As police departments integrate BWC footage into their police culture, the footage is being compiled to use in criminal proceedings (Bakardjiev, 2015). This may be a plus for law enforcement to have a live video of the encounter.

Barkardjiev (2015) expressed that BWC footage may garner more of the jury's time by displaying video rather than the common graphs, charts or other documents that are commonly used in court. Also, Bakardjiev (2015) felt that due to the lack of departmental policy guiding the usage of BWCs, the data captured on the devices is in jeopardy of not being accepted for use in the court as evidence. If jurors or prosecutors are dependent upon BWC footage and there is none due to failure to deploy the devices or malfunctions, the character of the officer may be questioned. Ariel (2016a) felt that recording may result in the officer becoming more reluctant to effect an arrest because of the tangible proof of the incident being captured on the BWC is not present. Maskaly, Donner, Jennings, Ariel, and Sutherland (2017) proclaimed it is evidenced that officers are open to the adoption of BWCs as they can favorably affect officers and citizens.

Laming (2019) thought that BWCs may improve community relations because of its civilizing effects and enhance citizen engagement. On the other hand, Huff, Katz & Webb (2018), categorized officers as volunteers and resisters; the authors believe that officers identified as volunteers had achieved a higher level of education and found it conceivable that BWCs would enhance the behavior of citizens, more so than the officers that were identified as resisters. In effect, officers that volunteer to wear BWCs behavior may be different than those that do not wear them (Huff, et al., 2018).

Koslicki (2019) discovered that there was a huge difference between attitudes of acceptance after the implementation of the BWCs, but virtually no significant difference between officers and supervisor's pre-implementation. Though presumptuous, Maskaly, Donner, Jennings, Ariel, and Sutherland (2017) affirmed that BWCs directly affects officers' technical or administrative aspect of their jobs; through improved report writing and evidence collection. Agreeing with that stance, in the Sunnyvale Police Department study, researchers determined that officer reports were more clear, concise, and complete with the aid of BWCs (Koen, et al., 2019).

Additionally, officers were more compliant to policy and laws. Emphasizing little success, Koen, Willis & Mastrofski (2019) felt that BWCs were unsuccessful in altering training and supervision of officers. There are in excess 1 million American citizens serving in law enforcement, it is imperative that the perception of these officers is understood pertaining to BWC'S; we must acknowledge their experience and listen to their narratives (Adams & Mastracci, 2019).

Buy-In

Gaub, Choate, Todak, Katz and White (2016) thought that officer buy-in of technology is necessary and beneficial to improved citizen and officer relations, and departmental transparency; however, it can only be achieved if the technology is activated and utilized. As presumed by Bishopp, Worrall and Piquero (2016), law enforcement officers operate similarly in a paramilitary fashion, where behavior is governed by their adherence to local, state, and federal laws in additional to the laws of the respective jurisdiction. Perhaps, therefore officer buy-in is so important. Mateescu,

Rosenblat and Boyd (2015) speculated that departments need to resolve the issues related to BWCs before making the devices mandatory.

To assess the police perception of BWCs, there are an increasing number of agencies that use surveys (Wooditch, et al, 2020). The surveys are purposed to grant understanding of the officers buy-in of the technology (Wooditch, et al, 2020). Perhaps agencies are considering the thoughts of their officers in the planning stages of deciding to adopt BWCs. A number of people may question the importance of officer buy-in as officers must comply with carrying tools that are deemed important to improve officer/citizen engagement; simply put, like most professions officers too have some input on how they conduct their work tasks (Wood & Groff, 2019).

At a time when police departments may lack transparency, BWCs may help the agency appear more accountable by introducing the new technology (Nowacki & Willits, 2018). Agencies must guard against inadvertently undermining the BWC devices with its officers (Wooditch, et al, 2020). Officer's acceptance of BWCs is decreased if the technology is forced upon them from non-departmental entities such as political leaders (Wallace, et al., 2018). Essentially, the perception and buy-in of officers is key for law enforcement agencies to successfully implement and maintain their BWC programs (Wooditch, et al., 2020).

The implementation of BWC technology has caused opposition from officers over the last few years (Goetschel & Peha, 2017). Some senior police officers have communicated hesitation and opposition about BWC usage but, to no avail were nullified by governmental acceptance (Palmer, 2016). Contrasting, Todak and Gaub (2019) stated

that supervisors and officers are more amenable to work because they feel that BWCs are helpful in the execution of their daily tasks if they are accustomed to the devices. Wood and Groff (2019) highlighting benefits of BWCs such as the security or favorable features of the technology, in conjunction with positive messaging that is goal driven is effective in gaining officer buy-in. Officers that are aware of the BWCs potential to absolve them of wrongdoing when citizens file false complaints may be more accepting of the devices rather than see them as an avenue to use against them for disciplinary action (Wooditch, et al., 2020).

Officer Safety

Palmer (2016) questioned whether BWCs would reduce assaults on police and improve citizen misconduct. He resolved that a large portion of misconduct was fueled by the offenders' influence of drugs or alcohol further impacting their ability to think clearly. Ariel (2016a) suggested that aggression is increased in the suspect and officer when the BWC is activated during tense encounters. When wearing the BWC, it appeared that more assaults occur against officers as they are more reluctant to execute a use of force (Ariel, et al, 2018).

However, officers were more likely to use force when there was physical resisting of arrest or if altercations were instigated by the offender (Ariel, et al., 2015). The officers are impacted by concerns of using force inappropriately that may result in disciplinary action due to the use of force being deemed inappropriate when taming belligerent suspects (Ariel, et al, 2018). Also, being assigned to highly active or dangerous areas may

make officers leery of having themselves recorded by BWC because they fear the potential of disciplinary action due to their combative techniques (Todak, et al.,2019)

Ariel(2016a) reported that by some accounts, BWCs were found to worsen use of force, the anticipation is that minimal force would be used due to inhibition of criminal acts by encouraging conformity. BWCs are not silver bullets as noted by Gaub, Choate, Todak, Katz and White (2016), it will not eliminate officer violence or behavior but is merely an instrument to assist officers to effectually and successfully do what is required of them within their employ. Officers are unlikely to exhibit provoking behavior to avoid invoking an unprofessional response (Ariel, et al., 2018). This reservation is present due to the availability of officer BWC devices. In response, officers that wore the BWCs were likely to be assaulted while working their shifts, in comparison to those that did not wear them (Ariel, 2016b). Officers are doubtful that BWCs will permanently modify law enforcement and societal relations over an extended period (Wood & Groff, 2019).

Research suggested that officers are more assailable and exhibit less aggression because they are aware that the BWC is recording (Ariel, 2016a). There are two actions that are prevalent when officers wear BWCs as identified by (Ariel, et al., 2018):

Politeness as Weakness – As officers are following the strict protocol they are viewed as weak or vulnerable. This perception by criminal's results in officers appearing inept, and is likely to cause physical and verbal assault, or induce combative behavior because the officer does not use the force required to subdue criminals which gives them a false approval to assault officers.

Skipping stages on the force continuum – It is asserted that the reluctance to use aggressive voice commands allows the officers to appear more socially acceptable. Officers create a more violent encounter due to deviating from de-escalation with verbal commands and advancing to a physical response. Since the officers are fearful of supervisors hearing foul language used against suspects, they have placed themselves in the position of being assaulted by skipping necessary steps.

Police officers are also leery of participants of different protests or demonstrations while wearing BWC devices, such as the BLM Movement. As disclosed by Bejan, Hickman, Parkin and Pozo (2018), police official's narratives accuse the movement of creating an environment where police are under attack and waging a war on cops. Although there is diminutive evidence of the BLM movement supporting retaliation against police, police officials have openly made claim that the movement supports the violent actions (Bejan, 2018). In a different view, the usage of BWC has been suggested to stimulate individual consciousness and acceptable behavior in police officers (Ariel, et al., 2018). It is assumed that the citizen and officer are aware of the monitoring and both parties self-regulate to avoid incidents that conclude in a use of force (Ariel, et al., 2018).

Citizen Perception.

Due to latter occurrences, citizens and community activists have devoted time to addressing police transparency (Freund, 2015). The ability of officers to act in a lawful manner is of great concern to citizens as they suggest that the placement of BWCs on officers may influence them to treat people more justly during citizen interactions that involve search and frisk, or arrest (Braga, et al., 2018). BWCs may serve a dual purpose

of shielding police against fraudulent claims, while guarding citizens against police transgressions. Bromberg, et.al., (2018) citizens who are victimized or witness criminal acts view the officer as more professional and perceive their actions as purposeful when they wear a BWC (Ariel, et al., 2016c). Adversely, Bromberg, Charbonneau, and Smith (2018), felt that BWCs can equally diminish citizens trust in police departments while enhancing accountability.

Supporters explain that BWCs can cause a civilizing effect, whereas officers and civilians exhibit better behavior (Gaub, et al., 2016). When citizens are aware that officers are being recorded, it is perceived that the officer's behavior is more lawful or their actions are more justifiable (Maskaly, et al., 2017). As indicated by, Freund (2015), law enforcement has had to adapt to the fact that citizens and officers had an increased ability to easily record events due to technological development. Ariel, Sutherland, Henstock, Young, Dover, Sykes, Megicks and Henderson (2016c) considered if citizens believe that BWCs are recording officers the perception is that those officers are more professional than the officers that are not wearing the device. In actuality, the citizen may be more willing to cooperate with the officer.

However, if it is revealed to the public that the officer failed to activate the BWC, the impact could be negative causing distrust and nonbelief of transparency (Lawrence, et al, 2019). One area of intrigue is the effect BWCs would have on citizen complaints; an abuse of their right to complain occurs when citizens file complaints that they know are inconsequential with the aim of complicating the officers' life (Ariel, et al., 2017). It is suggested by PERF that law enforcement agencies frequently evaluate the citizens

opinions of its police forces proficiency when serving in their communities (Wexler, 2018). Nonetheless, BWC benefits are recognized as reducing citizen complaints against officers.

Privacy

Privacy issues will remain a constant concern for officers and citizens although there has been substantial growth in BWCs usage (Laming, 2019). Issues of privacy are plaguing officers and the public; questions have risen as to the proper time for officers to activate cameras, and when it is necessary to obtain consent from citizens to record (Pelfrey & Keener, 2016). One huge issue is the officer having the ability to activate the BWC, then forgetting to do so when potentially controversial incidents occur such as a use of force altercation (Laming, 2019). BWCs have created numerous issues since its induction; according to (Zwart, 2018). BWCs were not governed by national policy, the technology was governed solely by departmental policies.

Joh (2016) disclosed that civil liberties groups and scholars are concerned with the appearance of increased governmental surveillance that is affected through the ability of the BWC to accumulate massive video data. Officers state that citizens are oblivious to the presence of BWCs during high stress encounters and are not concerned with their behavior being captured on video due to elevated emotions (Wood & Groff, 2019). In stark contrast, when citizens were aware that they were being recorded, their behavior changed to a more positive demeanor (Wood, et al., (2019).

However, there are many that are unaware of the BWC because of the officers many items that are included on their person (Wood, et al., 2019). Although BWCs have

many implied benefits, likewise there are privacy concerns of officers and citizens are more prevalent than they were with in-car cameras (Gaub, et al., 2016). The extensive surveillance and storage capabilities of BWCs are not routinely discussed as they are highly mobile and create audio and video recordings of every area they enter including private dwellings (Lippert & Newell, 2016).

Two random studies in Florida revealed that officers and citizens felt little invasion of privacy concerns when BWCs are used (Crow, et al., 2017). In all fairness, the authors shared that the survey was distributed at a time when the media broadcasted in 2015 that BWCs would reduce police violence (Crow et al., 2017). Also, at the time there were no reported BWCs utilized in either county. In opposing views, Wallace, White, Gaub and Todak (2018) declared that BWCs have created policy, price, and privacy questions as some believe the technology is designed to publicly scrutinize law enforcement.

For instance, when Tucson, Mesa and Phoenix Arizona police departments decided to adopt the usage of BWCs it was recommended that they integrate a privacy conscience policy measure rather than speedy expansion that will force the agencies have to revamp their BWC program (Zwart, 2018). As explained by Pelfrey and Keener (2016), policy and specialty training is a must when dealing with cases that involve victims of sexual assault, mental illness, and youth offenders.

Police commonly engage with victims and juveniles who may not be displayed appropriately at the time of the encounter, and the footage could prove to be embarrassing to them if revealed publicly (Freund, 2015). Furthermore, officers that wear

BWCs must be mindful of individuals that share information with them that requires security, similarly to those in medical, teaching or retail positions (Whichard & Felson, 2016). Citizens who are participating in activities that are personal in nature may wish not to be recorded by BWCs to remain anonymous (Freund, 2015). Citizens should have the right to submit or decline to being recorded by police BWCs as the recording creates a visual and audible account of what transpired between the officer and the victim in its entirety (Miller, 2019).

Media/ Social Media

In the dawn of highly publicized violent police encounters, the media and society are demanding better oversight of the police (Nowacki & Willits, 2018). The common method suggested is for police departments to embrace the wearing of BWCs. With the increased number of social media platforms, and the speed and way citizens can access, and share video has become abundantly simple (Culhane, et al., 2016). Police officers are negatively represented in the footage from BWCs (Bromberg, et al., 2018). The media and policy makers dedicate an excessive amount of attention to BWCs recorded images and little time to the surveillance capabilities of the devices (Lippert & Newell, 2016). Social media sites create the opportunity for videos to be watched and shared as often as desired (Boivin, et al., 2017).

For example, the death of Michael Brown was instrumental in starting a national civil rights movement on social media, twitter and various mainstream media outlets focused on numerous cases including Ferguson, MO. that gave accounts of wrongful deaths of African Americans by police (Culhane, et al., 2016). A great deal of the

recordings was viewed globally from social media sites such as YouTube or Facebook (Parry, et al., 2019). This media feed was compounded by news outlets in every market in the United States consistently broadcasting a combination of stories reference the tensions deriving from BLM or various spins of the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO (Lawrence, 2015).

As a result of citizen's access to cellular phones, social media, the law enforcement community, policy makers and criminal justice scholars continue to battle with the massive information supplied to the public about cases like Michael Brown, Walter Scott, Eric Garner, and others (Parry, et al., 2019). Citizens will constantly see the images broadcasted on the news and online media feeds, consequently forming an opinion that the report is symbolic of the officer's dereliction (Bromberg, et al., 2018). Although it is apparent that high profile cases garner attention from various groups, what remains unclear is how all police departments will respond to such proposals for BWCs (Nowacki & Willits, 2018).

Traditionally, law enforcement officers were in constant control of departmental information and determined what and when the details of incidents were released. To counteract the diversion of law enforcement, the public's access to social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter have altered communal interactions and hindered law enforcement's ability to control the narratives of criminal incidents (Crosby, 2018). Media coverage of BWCs has far exceeded that of researcher's written works on the subject (Ramirez, 2018). In fact, BWC footage commonly broadcasted on local and

national news outlets exposing law enforcements use of force, is simply not forgotten (Adams & Mastracci, 2019).

The perspective of law enforcement officers has been met with mixed reviews of adopting BWCs, as their altercations with citizens is questionable once the footage has been released (Crosby, 2018). Despite that, to advocate for support and explain the effectiveness of BWCs, police can deliver these claims through the news media (Schneider, 2018). Used as an aid, officers felt as though BWC footage would impede citizens from posting footage on social media whereas the video would be in direct conflict with what actually occurred, and it would identify the actual aggressor (Wood & Groff, 2019). Officers and citizens often have competing videos.

Bejan, Hickman, Parkin and Pozo (2018) believed that social media coverage of lethal police/citizen encounters may be a catalyst for increasing the possibility of future incidents of violence, even though the relationships between lethal police encounters and social media has not been researched. Adversely, Adams and Mastracci (2019) contended that although BWC video has become more publicly accessible researchers are mum on the repercussions experienced by officers whose indiscretions are widely known through social media platforms or television. Further reinforcing the ideal of impact Bejan, Hickman, Parkin and Pozo, (2018), compared the social media influence on an emotional contagion that disseminates anger, fear and various negative sentiments while delivering an account of what occurred. Many that partake in social media have been consumed by its content and are emotionally vested.

Benefits

As explained by, Braga, Sousa, Coldren, James and Rodriguez (2018), supporters purported that placing BWCs on police officers carries numerous benefits. According to Freund (2015) although advantageous to the community, BWCs worry citizens by the possible 1) release of humiliating footage to society 2) hindrance of protected free speech 3) identifying other offender of criminal activity 4) surveillance of police and 5) affecting police encounters within the community. Additionally, more lawful encounters between citizens and police occur with the presence of a BWC which contributes to the perceived legitimacy of policing (Braga, et al., 2018).

Those in favor of BWCs propose that the quality of police activities will be enhanced through its usage (St. Louis, et al., 2019). Implementing BWCs is intended to promote police legitimacy by providing a video account of what occurred (Maskaly, et al., 2017). According to Palmer (2016) the benefits of BWCs are justifiable by all agencies as they increase officer accountability, improve crime prevention and law enforcement consequences, apart from reduced criminality, greater admissions of guilt and prosecution in court. Currently global efforts are underway to equip officers with BWCs in the hopes of diminishing violent encounters and encouraging compliance (Ariel, et al., 2016a).

Internationally, BWC footage has been heralded for its ability to reduce complaints, curtail use of force, and assist in prosecutions (Drover & Ariel, 2015). The presence of a BWC may possibly serve as a deterrent to potential crime as the offender may be apprehensive of being captured on video, and the video being used as evidence in

court proceedings (Braga, et al., 2018). Street level views that were previously hidden from the public are now visible through the lens of the BWC (Fan, 2018). The ability to review footage captured from various incidents exposes patterns and practices for departmental correction (Fan, 2018).

As claimed by, Wood and Groff (2019), wearing a BWC is beneficial to officers as it is portable, can be aimed intentionally to capture specific events, and can be adjusted manually or automatically. Pelfrey and Keener (2016) affirmed that BWC footage can show actions that occurred prior to an incident rather than the result of violence, thereby conquering the split-second syndrome where unreasonable focus is placed. Other Advocates of BWCs asserted that the ability to record all audio and visual incidents between citizens and police officers would be beneficial in assuring that officers use the amount of force necessary during encounters (Stanley, 2015).

BWCs are equally beneficial to citizens and police as they reduce use of force and reduce citizen complaints as exclaimed by (Ariel, et al., 2016c; Suss, et al., 2018). Similar benefits of BWCs were echoed by, Palmer (2016), which is a combination of greater accountability, decline in complaints (notably false reports), use of force, assault against officers, and achieved results for prosecutions and convictions. Ariel (2016a) shared that some studies claim that use of force complaints are reduced due to the usage of BWCs, in contrast with other studies that suggest the statistics are unchanged. Studies have not been consistent on the proficiency of BWCs when it measures use of force and citizens' complaints against officers.

For instance, the outcome as measured by Laming (2019), denotes that studies demonstrate that BWCs effect on use of force complaints is unchanged as well, however, they reveal that there is a positive impact of reducing complaints against officers. Proponents of BWCs proclaim that there are distinct benefits of the devices such as, the production of indisputable evidence that projects future confrontation, provides deterrence benefits that encourages citizens to act civilly due to the monitoring; and less complaints and civil liability because of access to the footage (Wasserman, 2018).

As claimed by Taylor (2016) reports indicated that when BWCs are recording, it curtails the perpetrators willfulness to resist or commit violent acts against officers. Wood and Groff (2019) claimed that evidence has shown in cases where use of force is possible, BWCs are pivotal in changing behavior that may result in unfavorable outcomes. Laming (2019) shared that the most appraised items for BWCs are the complaints and use of force allegations against officers. Huff, Katz, and Webb (2018) found that the lone presence of BWCs decreased the possibility of a complaint by 38%; however, if officers were in full compliance of departmental policy, it is estimated that complaints would decrease by 98%.

Adversely, as thought by Ariel, et al., (2018), the presence of the BWC may be decisive in influencing citizens to be more compliant and alter their demeanor while interacting with officers; however self-regulation is unproven. Police interactions seem to be less cumbersome, due to the civilizing effects of BWCs (Ariel, et al., 2018; Braga, et al., 2018). According to Culhane, Boman and Schweitzer (2016) additional benefits of

BWCs, include that they also can be used to manage police power in absentia of others, and it forges transparency when officers are interacting with African Americans.

Literature Based Analysis of Previous Studies

Legislators and citizens alike have called for the implementation of BWCs in its police departments (Jennings, 2015). Many departments are actively seeking ways to integrate BWC devices into their departments' arsenal. In fact, several agencies have already implemented the technology and are in evaluating the efficacy after the adoption of the devices through departmental studies. This assumption led to the Rialto Police Department in California to participate in an experiment with its BWC devices. The experiment focused on use of force complaints but realized that arrest incidents should be observed as well.

BWC usage is expanding globally, it is assumed that it will improve police accountability, functions, and performance (Ariel, 2016a). Additionally, the behavior of offenders while interacting with police may be impacted due to the recording devices (Ariel, 2016a). According to Ready and Young (2015) officers that wore BWCs were more likely to write more citations in comparison to their colleagues who did not wear the devices. Although many arrests were observed, it was determined that arrests were vague in measuring how BWCs played a role (Ariel, 2016a).

However, it was determined that BWCs may result in a reduced number of arrests. What seems to be apparent is that transparency and police accountability is associated with use of force reporting (Ariel, 2016a). A notable consequence of the BWCs was the 50% reduction of the use of force allegations (Ariel, 2016a). A sequential

post experimental study was conducted in 2017, of the Rialto experiment three years post the original study of the BWCs. It was noted that citizen complaints and the use of force during arrests rates maintained their levels consecutively over the next four years after the BWCs had been adopted in the agency (Sutherland, Ariel, Farrar, & De Anda, 2017).

Researchers speculated that that officers and citizens may be more conscious of the BWC devices being present and recording their behavior to account for the consistency in maintaining the declined rates of reported citizen complaints and use of force (Sutherland, et al., 2017). Likewise, other agencies followed suite to improve or evaluate their BWC programs as well. Surveys were conducted with two divisions of the LAPD about the deployment of BWCs. As stated by, Wooditch, Uchida, Solomon, Revier, Connor, Shutinya, McCluskey and Swatt (2020), the surveys were given to the Newton and Mission police divisions during August and September of 2015 identified as Wave I, then Wave II Summer of 2016.

The study was purposed to gauge the police officers' perceptions of BWCs (Wooditch, et.al., 2020). The 52-question survey resulted in a difference of opinion identified by the division officers were assigned to. Whereas the Mission officers became more critical overtime, the Newton officers became more supportive of BWCs (Wooditch, et al., 2020). Many law enforcement agencies and politicians believe there will be more police accountability and transparency in communities due to the usage of BWCs (Ariel, 2016a; Gramagila & Phillips, 2018; Wooditch, et al., 2020).

In result, at the rate of 50.30% pre-activation v/s 82.42% post activation, general perceptions were that both divisions felt the BWCs were user friendly after activating the

camera (Wooditch, et al., 2020). At the rate of 74.58% v/s 59.32%, Newton's officers viewed the BWCs as a distraction in daily operations, compared to the Mission officers; however, 19.81% of the officers felt that the public should have access to the footage (Wooditch, et.al., 2020). In comparing these two agencies, the results are mixed rather than a shared a consensus of the value of the devices throughout the profession.

Although these results are reflective of two different divisions, it not uncommon for officers to differ in opinion. Other studies included that of the Rochester and Buffalo, New York BWC study. According to Gramagila and Phillips (2018) BWCs are touted as the progressive solution to address officer/citizens interactions by diverse entities, such as community leaders, police, society, and politicians alike. In this respect, a study was conducted which included survey responses from Rochester and Buffalo Police Departments opinion of BWCs to see if their attitudes were aligned or differed from that of agencies geographically located in the western locale of the United States (Gramagila & Phillips,2018).

In addition to answering other questions, the survey attempted to obtain opinions about viewing BWC footage prior to completing reports, which the access of the data has remained controversial amongst governing bodies (Gramagila & Phillips,2018). As inferred by, Gramagila and Phillips (2018), technological devices are often accessed to improve efficiency in policing. In the study officers perceived that they should be allowed to view the BWC video prior to writing reports and testifying in court as it may improve their ability to recall factual events more accurately. Additionally, officers felt

that since the video footage is considered evidence, they should equally have access to the data (Gramagila & Phillips, 2018).

However, there is some opposition to this position as it is believed by the police chiefs that if officers had access to the video footage, they would fashion their reports to match the videos (Gramagila & Phillips, 2018). This opinion is mainly highlighted as it gives an overview of what was predominantly important to the officers in the study. Other results revealed that the Rochester and Buffalo officers did not have significant differences answers. However, it is worth noting that the limitations were race and gender in both agencies. Also, awareness of the BWC devices being adopted between the two agencies differed as only the Buffalo police officers were aware of the devices prior to implementation (Gramagila & Phillips, 2018).

In result, it was determined that the Rochester and Buffalo officer's perception of BWCs mirrored those of the Los Angeles Police Department relative to safety, following procedure, use of force decisions and officer safety (Gramagila & Phillips, 2018). Existing literature has revealed various benefits of positive impacts of BWC devices. Much of the research on BWCs focuses on the officer's use of force and citizen complaints. Although all the surveys occurred in different departments, there was no overall acceptance or disapproval of the BWC devices.

Studies were being conducted in various parts of the United States to evaluate the effectiveness of BWCs. A test pilot study was conducted with the Hallandale Beach Police Department in Florida, the study was designed the gain the officer perspective of BWCs and to establish if the devices affect behavior (Headley,2017). The study

determined that 1) officers utilized minimally intrusive approaches 2) continued to engage citizens in the community 3) maintained a cynical view of BWCs (Headley, 2017). Some agencies changed their standard operating procedures while BWC studies were being conducted as in the case of the Mesa, Arizona Police Department.

Midway through the study, the Arizona Police Department altered their BWC policy to allow officers to use their discretion in activating the BWC rather than mandatory activation. This may prove to be problematic as very calm encounters can change drastically and become violent in a moment's notice. However, the study revealed that officers that wore a BWC in comparison to their colleagues that did not wear a BWC, effected fewer arrests, and initiated less stop and frisk encounters (Ready & Young, 2015).

Summary and Conclusions

In chapter 2, the literature review was composed. The literature review contained an exhaustive search of scholarly articles relative to the BWC adoption and implementation. Said articles revealed other technological devices that were utilized in law enforcement that preceded the adoption of BWC devices. Also, the literature review revealed a shared need and demand for BWC technology by citizens and law enforcement agencies alike. The research strategy contains a list of key search terms that were used to find articles pertaining to BWCs that displayed the level of complexity involved in police work.

Also, mitigating factors that would impact the user of BWCs was included to show the difficulty entwining the devices with policy, training, and officer discretion.

Police officers can use discretion and exercise autonomy, which was appropriate for the theoretical framework of SLBT. However, the theory may conflict with what officers are entrusted to do versus what they are now required to do through constant monitoring from BWCs. Also, the actual benefits of BWCs should be acknowledged by those that support the adopting of the technology (Wasserman, 2018). The expectations of the devices should be sensible, providing leeway for a reasonable belief of the device's proficiencies.

The qualitative research approach is meaningful because the constant in the literature was the minimal research that exclusively entails the officers' perception of how BWCs impact their behavior or daily tasks. In agreeance with, Sutton and Austin (2015), qualitative research can make the thoughts and emotions of participants accessible to the researcher so they may gain insight into why people relate to their experiences. Qualitative research facilitates conversations to retrieve rich narratives. It is paramount that the officer's experiences are explored to understand how BWCs are changing law enforcement.

The Gap in the Literature

As discussed in chapter 2, the search yielded an inconsiderable amount of research that details the officers' perception of how BWCs have impacted policing pre and post implementation of the devices. This missing element of policing requires further inquiry to discern if BWCs has changed policing from the perspective of the officer that has experience before and after the adoption of the technology. In fact, a great deal of the literature speaks of departmental adoption and implementation of BWC technology as a

remedy to satisfy the public by giving an appearance of transparency and accountability. The literature is limited and mixed relative to the officers' behavior and warns that the usage of BWCs may produce a robotic culture as relationships between supervisors and subordinates are deteriorate (Megan, et al., 2014).

As advised by, Demir (2019), scholars should concentrate their research on the effects of BWCs on the officer and officer's perception in the future. This study seeks to fill the gap in the literature by including scholarly research that is focused on the officer's perception(s) of how BWCs has changed policing. Pelfrey and Keener (2016) suggested that future research should involve a post-test that assess the officers' perception of use of force and citizen complaints after BWC implementation. Furthermore, it expands on the available scholarly knowledge by exploring the officers' point of view.

This information would be best retrieved from the officer who has worked in law enforcement prior to and after implementation of BWCs to understand if BWCs are impactful. There is much to learn from the officers' experience of how using this technology has possibly altered the way they perform their duties and behavioral modification, hereby changing policing. However, agencies are missing some key elements of implementation such as: officer perception, policy, and consideration of police culture.

Limited in the research was the steps that departments took to ensure officers knew how to effectively use the devices through training. Also, research defining the importance of policy adherence was limited. Perhaps these voids will influence the

officers' perception of BWCs. Unfortunately, there is extraordinarily little of this key information in the current literature.

Chapter 3 will describe the research method of how the study will be conducted.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate, explore and document police officer's perception of how the use of BWC devices has altered the profession of law enforcement. BWCs are purposed to enhance transparency for citizens and the officers that serve them (Suss et al, 2018). BWCs are highly supported due to their ability to surveil officer behavior and document interactions in cases that warrant heightened police inquiry (Wallace et al., 2018). A review of the literature revealed three results of monitoring by BWCs: (a) discretion is reduced by the BWC monitoring, (b) there is a considerable risk of public criticism, and (c) BWC footage is widely circulated to the public (Adams & Mastracci, 2019). According to Sandhu and Haggerty (2017), officers articulated that there is fear of their reputations being impacted by how they are depicted on BWCs which causes anxiety and changes the way they conduct their duties. However, in instances in which citizens may make false accusations or complaints, officers have a perceived sense of protection due to the presence of the camera (Wood & Groff, 2019).

In Chapter 3, I provide an explanation of the research design and rationale for the study. I define the role of the researcher, which includes an explanation of the chosen methodology. Subsequent sections detail a description of participants selection logic, recruitment, data collection instruments, and analysis plan. Lastly, I discuss trustworthiness as well as describe the ethical procedures that guide the importance of protection and security of information and the treatment of human subjects.

Research Question

This research study was guided by a single question:

RQ. How do officers perceive that policing has been impacted by the implementation of BWCs in their profession?

Research Design and Rationale

The core concept of this study was to obtain the perceived impact of BWCs on policing as dictated by police officers in the Metropolitan Atlanta area. There have been extensive studies that address BWC implementation in law enforcement agencies, with presumptions of benefits to the officer and citizens. However, research does not address the law enforcement officer's perception of how BWCs has impacted their duties, consequently changing policing. I used a qualitative research method to gain the perspective of law enforcement officers,.

For this study I used a qualitative research method to better understand the perspective of the officers. I employed a web-based survey that contained open-ended questions to document officers' perceptions of BWCs. Patton (2015) compared a survey to a photograph in that it suspends the responses rendered by the participants in a specific moment in time, much like a photograph freezes an image (p. 60). According to Aspers and Corte (2019) qualitative research is defined as a repetitive process that creates an improved understanding of the phenomena for the scholarly community. Law enforcement is ever changing, and this research can be useful in future scholarly works for comparison or to identify trends in the field. Qualitative research allowed me to answer the research question by retrieving rich narratives of how officers perceive

BWCs. Officers who have had experience before the adoption of BWCs are better equipped to identify what changes may be impactful in law enforcement since the implementation of BWCs.

Furthermore, qualitative research allowed officers who wear BWCs to relay in detail how the technology has affected them and their profession. Qualitative research is appropriate to obtain knowledge from the perspective of the participant to resolve questions about their experiences (Hammarberg et al., 2016). Researchers are empowered to hear how officers perceive BWCs. Qualitative research is appropriate to obtain the perspective of officers (Rubin & Rubin, 2016), which was appropriate for this study. In qualitative research, the researcher views themselves through the lens of the participant to gain a better understanding from the participants' point of view (Hammarberg et al., 2016). Qualitative research is used to answer questions about specific procedures from the point of view of a person who has experience in a particular field (Hammarberg et al., 2016). Using a qualitative research method allows the researcher to be deliberate in their thinking, conduct analysis, and evaluate challenges in a meticulous manner (Jamshed, 2014). Ultimately, I wanted to provide a platform for bountiful exchanges with the participants.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher's role involves attempting to gain entry to the internal thoughts and emotions of the study participant (Sutton & Austin, 2015). The researcher should (a) be courteous and sensitive to the needs of the participants, and (b) remain open-minded and unbiased with participants (Karagiozis, 2018). The researcher

must be keenly aware that the information shared by the participant could be traumatic, strike an emotional chord, or cause discomfort. One key aspect of the researcher role is the responsibility of governing diverse ethical matters when considering the design and implementation of qualitative research studies (Given, 2015, p.32). The researcher further has the responsibility to protect the participant's identity and their data. It is mandatory that these processes are approved through the research ethics review board prior to the beginning of the research and later expressed to the participants (Sutton & Austin, 2015).

Additionally, the role of the researcher is to establish rapport with the participants so that they may feel comfortable at every stage of the study. As explained by, Karagiozis, (2018), there are three roles of the researcher: (a) the researchers' partiality formulates the methodology and examination of information, (b) the researcher must regard the rights of the participants and demonstrate sensitivity, and (c) the researcher must develop a voice that allows them to accept the authenticity of the findings. Another responsibility is to ensure that the participant's identity remains anonymous. Fink (2000) stated that the integrity of the participants' data must be safeguarded by removing identifiers or altering names in the archival information.

I have over 20 years of law enforcement experience and have worked in the same capacity as the officers who participated in the study. I served in both subordinate and supervisory positions. However, BWCs were not adopted by my agency during the time of service, nor have they been implemented since. The agency of prior employment was a sheriff's office that was responsible for serving criminal warrants, civil papers, the courts, and jail division. BWCs were not essential to the duties at that time. Due to my

professional background and tenure, many contacts and partnerships remain intact with colleagues from various law enforcement agencies. However, I can confidently say that the study provided the opportunity to investigate and document the use of BWCs from a researcher point of view.

Having a law enforcement background may have allowed me to build rapport easily and encourage participation. Another caveat worth mentioning is that although I do not have experience conducting qualitative research, I am an experienced investigator who has conducted numerous internal affairs and criminal interviews with officers, civilians, and inmates via face-to-face and telephone. This experience may have aided in creating quality open ended questions that provided rich and meaningful narratives. It was important that I maintained the role of a researcher rather than a colleague to curtail the introduction of personal biases. I managed my biases by allowing the research and results to speak for themselves rather than interjecting my personal beliefs. The participants were tasked with sharing their story; therefore, I relayed the information as it was supplied by survey, free of conjecture.

Methodology

I selected qualitative research approach to explore the topic of the perspective of police officers regarding how BWCs have impacted the profession of law enforcement . In the state of Georgia, many police departments rather than sheriffs' offices have adopted and implemented BWC devices. That being so, the study was focused on the use of BWCs by police departments. Employing a sampling size of 34 participants, I retrieved data from 4 police departments in the Metropolitan Atlanta area by using a

researcher generated web-based survey. The survey did not require that the participants reveal identifying information to ensure anonymity. Participation in the study did expose identifiers to link the participants or departments to the study. Qualitative research provides an opportunity for the researcher to ask detailed questions of the participants to gain an understanding of how they feel. The previous qualitative research on BWCs captures little of the sentiment of the officers who wear devices in their profession.

Qualitative research provides a view into the minds and emotions of others, possibly creating an opportunity for future independent study or the ability to chart assessment instruments in quantitative studies (Sutton & Austin, 2015). According to Roger et al. (2018), qualitative researchers are obligated to carry out their research in a manner that is thorough, while documenting what is relayed to them in a methodical manner. Qualitative research demands social connections and bonds that can only exist with solid social and communal ties (Roger et al., 2018).

The qualitative research method is key in answering the research question. Unlike quantitative research there is no usage of numeral value to define experiences. The data will be checked to verify reliability and validity to ensure the process is not flawed and free of personal bias. The data will be documented in a cohesive manner to effectively relay the narrative of the participants and explain what was learned from the research study by drawing a conclusion and explaining the findings. This qualitative research study focusses on exploring the research question by learning from law enforcement officers that have experienced a specific phenomenon. As explained by, Rutberg and

Bouikidis (2018), qualitative research focuses on perception whereas quantitative research uses measurement.

Albeit there is limited research that presents the thoughts and feelings of police officers relative to the implementation of the devices in the law enforcement profession. The research study is designed to address the gap by gaining opinions of those that police in Metropolitan Atlanta police departments.

Participants Selections Logic

Population

The population consisted of 34 Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training certified police officers that are employed at four agencies in the Metropolitan Atlanta Area. Furthermore, these officers are required to meet specific parameters to participate in the research study through purposeful sampling.

Participants. The study will include 25 officers each from 4 different law enforcement agencies within the Metropolitan Atlanta area to meet the sample size of 34 officers. The sample size is appropriate because it allows the study to obtain a better representation of the targeted population. Additionally, applying purposeful sampling addresses the research question by using a group of participants that meet a distinct criterion.

Participants must meet or exceed the following criteria to participate in the study:

- Participants must currently be employed in the position of a police officer.
- Police Officers must have worked in law enforcement for at least 2-10 years prior to departmental implementation of BWCs.

- Police Officers must have experience using a BWC.
- Police Officers must be willing to complete a web-based survey.

These officers can supply a richer account of their experiences before and after the implementation of the technology and can articulate if any changes have occurred in the profession. Using officers from several jurisdictions will give the researcher a better understanding of the phenomenon and the ability to identify if the BWCs impact is confined to a singular jurisdiction or is a shared experience throughout the profession. Police officers commonly work in shifts. Often the shifts vary between 8-12 hours. For this reason, it is imperative that the researcher is flexible and respectful of days off, shift changes, training and court requirements when anticipating the completion and return of the surveys.

Late 2019 ushered in infections and deaths due to the global Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Many employers and schools implemented infection control protocols to curtail the spread of COVID-19. Law enforcement agencies also instituted procedures in compliance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations to keep their employees safe. To maintain the safety of myself and the participants, the research study will be conducted digitally rather than face to face as I still have an obligation to ensure the safety and security of the participants and cause no undue harm. The CDC recommendations change frequently, but some constants have been the wearing of face coverings, social distancing by maintaining a 6-foot distance from those that do not share a familial space, practice good handwashing, avoid those that may be sick, and to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (CDC.gov, 2020).

Incompliance with the CDC recommendations and to slow the spread of COVID-19, the study will be conducted in its entirety digitally.

Sampling. Purposeful sampling will be used to ensure that the officers in the research study have met the requirements for inclusion. As explained by, Suri (2011), purposeful sampling requires experienced participants that are familiar with the research topic to assist in obtaining and deciphering opulent data. Therefore, purposeful sampling will be used to capture the perspective of the officer that has experience wearing BWCs. This enables the researcher to extricate the necessary information relative to the topic. Eligibility will be established by completing the qualifier questions that precede the web-based survey. Furthermore, based on the officer's responses to the qualifier questions, they will either gain access or be denied accessibility to the web-based survey.

Babbie (2017) explained it is often suitable for researchers to choose a populace based on their knowledge of specific subject (p.196). Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan and Hoagwood; (2015), explained that in qualitative research purposeful sampling is commonly used to identify and retrieve liberal data pertaining to the phenomenon. It is important to exclude those that do not meet the requirements through proper vetting to maintain the integrity of the study by selecting those whose familiarity is relative to the research inquiry. Paul (2017) shared that the researcher is obligated to select participants that have experienced the phenomenon, are willing to impart the information and can eloquently relay the narrative in an intelligible manner. To give insight and add value to the study, it is imperative that the interested parties have experience using BWCs to articulate the pre and post effects of using the devices.

The police departments located in the Metropolitan Atlanta area will be selected due to their integration of BWC technology into their agencies. A research study announcement will clearly explain that to participate in the study the officer must have been employed as a law enforcement officer for at least 2-10 years prior to the adoption of BWCs. Furthermore, the announcement will state that the participant must have experience deploying BWCs. Additionally, the announcement will contain the researchers email address if they wish to discuss the study further.

The researcher will attempt to gain information to help address the research question. By using a web-based survey, the possibility of groupthink is removed as participants are free to answer questions in a more personal manner. However, receiving like responses is not removed entirely. According to Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) saturation is achieved when the inclusion of more participants will not produce any new data to add to the research. The sample size should be large enough to effectively answer the research question and describe the phenomenon. Malterud, Siersma and Guassora (2016) state that reaching saturation is the dominate goal in qualitative research. A smaller sample is required with members that share the same experiences for a specific study's aim (Malterud, et al.,2016). Although qualitative research is shaped by the type of inquiry, the insight gained from a single sample is still worthy disclosure (Boddy, 2016). Hence the research will yield valuable insight into the phenomenon and answer the research question because of the quality of the information, rather than the number of surveys.

My goal was to acquire 100 completed surveys of police officers, 25 each from 4 police departments. However, the final study yielded 34 participants. The study will benefit from quality information rather than quantity. The web-based survey will include qualifier questions to further ensure that the police officers' contribution is appropriate for inclusion in the study. I will recruit the officers through a disseminated flyer in the department after I have received permission to use the agency for the study. The participants will be unknown to me as their participation is anonymous by submission of a web-based survey on SurveyMonkey. To maintain the anonymity of the respondents, this information cannot and will not be cross-referenced with the agency. I am merely reliant upon the honesty of the respondent.

Instrumentation

The primary data collection instrument in qualitative research is the researcher (Teherani, et al., 2015). However, in this study, open-ended survey questions to illicit responses from the participants will be utilized. A web-based survey on SurveyMonkey, inclusive of the scholarly research from Chapter 2 will be created to guide the research questions. The survey questions will consist of 10 open-ended questions that are intended to gain insight into the officer's perceptions of BWCs. The open-ended survey questions will allow the participant to explain in their own words how BWCs have impacted the law enforcement profession, rather than choose from a set of predetermined responses. The survey is purposed to capture the perception of the officer of BWCs which is minimally represented in the current literature.

Furthermore, I feel as though my 20 years of law enforcement will be effective in gaining participation. This common bond may influence the participants to contribute to the research. The relationship could gain a rich narrative that will provide the researcher with previously unknown information. Rubin and Rubin (2016) believed that if people feel a connection to you, they are more eager to speak with you (p.77). However, some critics feel as though distance may be created by researcher self-disclosure because the participant views the researcher as more knowledgeable (Pezalla, et al., 2012).

Researcher Developed Instruments

The researcher will develop an anonymous open-ended question web-based survey for the research study on SurveyMonkey. The current and past scholarly research guides the development of the survey to ensure that the questions asked of the participants will increase knowledge of the topic. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), as a key instrument, an open-ended survey designed by the researcher may be used (p.43). This enables the researcher to develop questions that can address the gap in the literature by allowing the officers to expand on the unknowns.

The survey will be designed to ascertain the quality of the responses rather than the quantity of responses. Although qualitative research does not mandate a specific sample size, it is important to have a sample that is representative of the population to gain meaningful information, and perhaps achieve saturation. In turn the officer's responses will explain the phenomenon. Although the experiences of BWCs are unique to each officer, the survey will ensure that all participants are asked the same questions to acquire information. The open-ended questions will allow the officer to provide

information that they feel sufficiently answers the questions unrestrained by boxes or prefabricated responses like that of a questionnaire. The aim of the survey is to gain knowledge of the unknown, from those that have lived experience with BWCs.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Recruitment

Initially the researcher will complete the appropriate application for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and await approval from the university. After receiving the necessary approval, the solicitation process will begin by contacting the chief or designee of each of the 4 selected law enforcement agencies to request permission to use their organization for the study. The researcher will render a copy of the IRB recruitment document for dissemination throughout the department to procure participants.

Additionally, the researcher will request that the recruitment efforts include solicitation of participants through every modality for internal communications to optimize participation amongst their officers.

Participation

Participation in the study will be limited to police officers only. The researcher will supply the four selected agencies with a recruitment flyer requesting participation in a web-based survey for the study on SurveyMonkey. The participants will exclusively provide their responses via digital web-based survey. The flyer will have a description of the study, and the criteria that must be met by the officers for inclusion. Prospective candidates will have instructions contained within the flyer advising them to contact the researcher via email if they have any questions. Participation in the web-based survey is

anonymous and does not require that the participants enter any personal identifying information. However, specific information is required to vet the officer and determine if they are eligible to participate in the study. Officers are not required to contact the researcher to express interest in the study, they can merely click the link to begin the survey after they have signed “Informed Consent”. However, if the participants need to speak with the researcher they can contact the researcher via email to make arrangements for a phone conversation.

The participants will have access to the link for one month to complete the survey. Since their input will be submitted digitally and at their leisure, the study will allow the participants the opportunity to comfortably share their experiences of using BWCs in an unbiased setting free from prying eyes and distraction. Hopefully, the knowledge gained from the study will positively impact the law enforcement profession by gaining a better understanding of how officers perceive BWC devices. Participants can end the survey upon completions by closing the browser or exiting. Participants will be asked to check their responses prior to submission of the web-based survey as their responses will be recorded upon completion. Complete responses to the survey questions will be used for analysis.

Data Collection

A web-based survey will be the primary mode of data collection for data analysis. Open-ended survey questions will be administered to allow an opportunity for participants to provide detailed responses. The survey will supply a qualifier section to determine the accessibility of the user in addition to ten open-ended survey questions.

The web-based survey will be accessed and submitted in a secure digital format accessible solely by the researcher on SurveyMonkey. According to Connor-Desai and Reimers (2019) the advantage to collecting data by web-based surveys is the accelerated pace that it can be accomplished and the access to a larger recruitment pool.

The participants will have access to the link for 2 weeks to complete the survey, however the timeframe can be extended to a month if the study has not gathered sufficient responses. Since their input will be submitted digitally and at their leisure, the study will allow the participants the opportunity to comfortably share their experiences of using BWCs in an unbiased setting free from prying eyes and distraction. Hopefully, the knowledge gained from the study will positively impact the law enforcement profession by gaining a better understanding of how officers perceive BWC devices. Participants can end the survey upon completion by closing the browser or exiting the survey. Participants will be asked to check their responses prior to submission of the web-based survey as their responses will be recorded upon completion. SurveyMonkey has the ability to gather incomplete responses for the researcher's consideration. The incomplete responses will not be considered for the final study. Only complete responses to the survey questions will be used for analysis.

In the event participants wish to speak further about their responses they can contact the researcher by email to schedule a date and time for a follow-up. The follow-up will occur by phone and a detail review of the participants responses will be conducted to ensure the responses truly reflect the sentiment of the participant. The

participant will remain anonymous as their identity will coincide with a number, all additional contact beyond the survey will be documented by the researcher.

Open-Ended Web-Based Surveys. SurveyMonkey (2020) suggests that the researcher avoids asking excessive questions if they are non-essential and to keep the survey simple as there is 89% completion rate when the initial questions are multiple choice. This is equated to a conversation to prepare the participant for the survey. Keeping this in mind, the survey will include qualifier questions for vetting prior to the open-ended questions. Open-ended digital surveys allow the participant to answer questions in an unrestricted manner. Connor-Desai and Reimers (2019) identified two benefits open-ended questions as 1) questions avoid the introduction of biases due to the construction of the questions 2) the questions enable participants to provide more detailed responses. The participant is not restricted by options that may not be applicable to their experience or fails to answer the question in its entirety. Being absent of the constraints of predetermined categories, open-ended questions are significant in research by allowing participants to respond to questions by creating individualized narratives (Holland & Christian, 2008).

Additionally, web-based survey adds to the anonymity of the user as they do not require the participant to enter identifiers. It is believed by Fairweather, Rinne and Steele (2012), that the scope of the research study will be increased by using web-based surveys. Fairweather, Rinne and Steele (2012) indicated that web-based surveys grant participants authority of the interview process in comparison to face-to-face interviews.

Data Analysis Plan

The current research study is purposed to answer the research question. The survey will be created by the researcher and provided on SurveyMonkey. The platform will allow the officers to provide a detailed account of their experiences using BWCs by explaining if in fact there an impact to the profession. Ravitch and Carl (2016, p.237) identify data analysis as a three-prong approach: (a) data organization and management, (b) immersive engagement, and (c) writing representation. In adherence to this approach, I will begin the analysis process by reviewing data from the web-based surveys to convert into themes. The participants will access the survey through the digital research study flyer. A link will be provided on the flyer that will go to the Informed Consent and the qualifier questions. The participants will not have access to the survey if they do not answer the qualifier questions appropriately or agree to the “Informed Consent”.

SurveyMonkey offers advanced survey analysis. This feature is significant because it provides the ability to gain more context for the data by categorizing open-ended responses and identifying how frequently words or phrases are used (SurveyMonkey,2020). The platform also provides summary analysis which determines how many participants answered or failed to answer questions. Additionally, the platform provides the ability to review insights and data trends to reveal the number of respondents, which can be used to identify trends displayed in a color-coded graph. The data will be reviewed to categorize, identify themes and code by utilizing the statistical significance feature. In qualitative data analysis it is important to pay attention to what is revealed by the participants to establish themes.

SurveyMonkey is also compatible with other qualitative data analysis (QDA) software packages such as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) which can be used as a secondary coding platform and NVivo qualitative data analysis software program. Both software packages allow qualitative researchers to import online surveys and transcribe files in a usable format. Data can be reviewed by the researcher and analyzed by using the NVivo qualitative data analysis (QDA) software Babbie (2015, p.408). As shared by, Swygart-Hobaugh (2019), the NVivo coding stripes feature enables the researcher to advance more freely through data and recognize common and differing concepts within various files which may be more cumbersome for someone that chooses to conduct manual coding. The data will be reviewed, and codes assigned to pertinent words or phrases to organize the massive data. To properly code the researcher must classify or categorize excerpts of data and create a system from the retrieved materials which may interest the researcher in the future. QDA programs are commonly used to prepare interviews and documents for analysis (Babbie, 2017, p. 408). The researcher will cross reference the information by using the features included in SurveyMonkey, which has several analysis features to assist in coding.

Trustworthiness

The information generated by qualitative research studies should be vigorous and contain a detail description of the study, procedures, data retrieval and control as well as transparency (Hammarberg et al, 2016). According to, Amin, Nørgaard, Cavaco, Witry, Hillman, ...and Desselle (2020) trustworthiness can be established and the findings believable when there is well documented proof. The researcher will distinctly identify

the type of data collection to demonstrate trustworthiness (Peterson, 2019). In qualitative research it is imperative that the researchers' results are true and accurate as relayed to them to maintain credibility.

Credibility

Credibility is achieved once the researcher cross references the results with people who share the same or like experiences or characteristics, and can validate the results (Hammarberg et.al, 2016). Credibility will further be established through collecting multiple web-based surveys and clarifying the responses with the participant to ensure that we both have the same understanding. Credibility is relative to the researcher's instruments, data, and design in qualitative research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 188). Belief in the accuracy of the results substantiates credibility (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Credibility is confirmed in research when it provides an avenue for researchers to validate if the proper data collection and, analysis methods were employed; in addition to the persuasiveness of the data (Haven & Van Grootel, 2019).

Transferability

Transferability demonstrates that results would be pertinent in a separate environment (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Researchers must determine if under the same circumstances would the outcome of the research remain unchanged. In fact, a frivolous inquiry of the research focus can impede transferability (Amin, et al., 2020). Researchers may broaden the scope of their research by including or supplying data for analysis which permits greater transferability (Given, 2015, p. 25). While preserving the lavish narrative,

qualitative studies can be transferable by influencing a wider scope (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p.189).

Dependability

The strength of the data is essential to dependability (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p.189). Transferability, credibility, confirmability, and dependability are all associated with rigor in qualitative studies (Hagood & Skinner, 2015). Dependability can be substantiated by reviewing the procedure that was used to conduct the research (Amin, et al., 2020). The study should have the ability to be replicated if conducted by other researchers given the same or similar circumstances; and yield comparable results.

Confirmability

To achieve conformability, others that review the study must agree with the data and have a similar understanding of the research (Amin, et al., 2020). Results should have the ability to be confirmed to support confirmability rather than the pursuit of impartiality (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 189). Confirmability is interested in establishing whether a research study can be confirmed by other researchers based on the data rather than an unproven assumption by the researcher. Confirmability is weighed by the degree of awareness the researcher exercises to make certain that they oversee the study to prevent biases from affecting the results (Urban & van Eeden-Moorefield, 2018).

Ethical Procedures

It is the expressed responsibility of the researcher to protect the human participants from harm while they are participating in the research study. An extended responsibility is the protection and security of data that serves as identifiers obtained

during the study which extends to after the study has concluded. The goal is to protect the participant from being identified. The regard of the concepts of rigor and trustworthiness by qualitative researchers is suitable to avoid bias in qualitative research studies (Galdas, 2017). The researcher acknowledges that biases are present in all facets of research; however, the researcher understands that the personal judgements should be curtailed (Peterson, 2019). In the event officers are reluctant to participate, the researcher will ensure that the participants can speak with her to quell any uneasiness they may have.

University Institutional Review Board Approval. As explained by Given (2015, p. 30), a university IRB review must commence and be concluded before the researcher can begin recruitment of participants for the study. I strictly adhered to the process outlined in the IRB review and likewise did not begin any research until the approval had been obtained Walden University IRB approval number 11-25-20-0599306. Additionally, after approval has been granted the researcher will be compliant to the regulations set forth in the in the research.

Human Participants Treatment. According to Patton (2015, p.314) in the United States, the IRB is tasked with ensuring the protection of human subjects in research, however the board is not necessarily comprised of those versed in qualitative studies. Given, (2015, p. 28) asserted that qualitative researchers are charged with a fundamental ethical duty to concern themselves with the care of the participants in the research study. There are ethical responsibilities associated with people that participate in face-to-face interviews, group sessions, or community-based investigations that researchers are charged with (Given, 2015, p. 28). Although there is minimal to no

contact face-to-face contact, web-based surveys would carry the same responsibility of seeking IRB approval and ensuring the protection of the participants in qualitative research studies.

Permissions. Permission will be requested to recruit participants from the select four police departments by approval of the chief or designee. Each agency will be provided with an IRB approved invitation to request inclusion of their agency in the study. The invitation will contain a brief explanation and purpose of the research study, consent form, survey link as well as the name and academic email address of the researcher. The letter will also give the agency instructions to contact the researcher directly if they would like a copy of the study upon completion. Once permission has been received from the agency to conduct research therein, the researcher will begin the recruitment process by supplying the agency with the recruitment flyer.

Informed Consent. The Informed Consent form will contain a brief description of the purpose of the research study, the criteria for inclusion, and the name and contact information for the researcher. Participants will be advised that their participation is voluntary, and they can terminate their participation at any time without reprisal. Furthermore, the participants will be informed that the researcher is functioning merely as a student researcher and will ensure that their rights are protected which ensures anonymity. It is incumbent upon the researcher to honor the assurances made as discussed as a process in the informed consent (Given, 2015, p. 51). The informed consent form will explain that the data will be maintained on SurveyMonkey by a secured

password protected account. Lastly, the participants will be advised that the researcher can be reached via email should any additional questions arise (Appendix A).

Confidentiality Measures. The identities of the participants will be kept anonymous, as they will engage in an anonymous web-based survey. Researchers can achieve anonymity by ensuring that the findings of the research cannot be traced back to a specific person by de-identifying the participant information (Given, 2015, p.33). However, the researcher will develop an anonymous web-based survey that is maintained and accessed exclusively by the researcher on SurveyMonkey. This alleviates the necessity of de-identifying information. The personal identifiers will be unknown and inaccessible to the researcher as the participants will not be required to enter any personal information to take the survey. The data from the web-based survey will be maintained on a secure password protected account on SurveyMonkey.

Survey. The web-based surveys will include a qualifier section in addition to 10 open-ended survey questions deriving from Chapter 2 (Appendix A). The qualifier section will request consent to participate in the survey and include questions that determine if the respondent is eligible to participate in the survey in compliance with purposeful sampling requirements. The survey questions will be designed to allow the participant to give a personal narrated response to each question rather than check off a response to predetermined questions. The survey should illicit rich responses relative the participants experiences. The survey will not have a time limit. The survey will be web-based on SurveyMonkey; therefore, the participant can access it from any secure location at their convenience that has WIFI technology.

Destruction of Data. The data will be destroyed in the following manner after five years of retention. The Web-based survey is time sensitive and will only be accessible for a limited time, then deactivated. The secure password to SurveyMonkey will be deactivated. The data retrieved from the study will be destroyed.

Summary

The researcher will conduct a qualitative research study to address the research question and to gain further insight in the participant's experiences. This qualitative research study plans to collect web-based surveys from 100 officers between four different police departments. The participants will be employed as Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training certified police officers at agencies geographically located in the Metropolitan Atlanta Area.

The researcher will address Ethical Issues by being compliant to the restrictions and allowances set forth by the university IRB. The researcher will gain permissions before beginning the recruitment process and going forward with the research study. Once approved, the researcher will ensure that each participant is abreast of the research study purpose, the allotted time for the study, given Informed Consent Forms, and advised of the right to participant or terminate at any time, and their privacy protections.

Participants will be asked to participate by submitting a completed web-based survey. The researcher will prepare a list of open-ended survey questions based on the literature review from chapter 2 for the web-based survey. The participants will be asked the same questions in the survey and allowed to create a personal narrative rather than have preselected responses provided to them. Participants will be asked to review their

responses prior to submission to ensure accuracy in their submissions. By conducting web-based surveys, the participants can be deliberate in their responses by supplying rich narrative

The data will be analyzed and transcribed by using features included on the SurveyMonkey platform and the assistance of NVivo qualitative data analysis (QDA) software as a secondary coding software package, if needed. The participants will be unknown to the researcher as they will be participating in an anonymous survey. The participants' personal identifiers will be unknown to the researcher as their identities will be anonymous. Upon completion of the research study the data relative to the study shall be maintained for five years. After the five years has elapsed, all digital media will be destroyed by deletion and/or deactivation of accounts.

The next chapter, Chapter 4, will describe the data collected and the results of the data analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how law enforcement officers perceive that the implementation of BWCs has altered the way they perform their duties. The research study is guided by a single research question:

RQ: How do officers perceive that policing has been impacted by the implementation of BWCs in their profession?

The following sections of this chapter include a description of the research setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, and results. I also present the execution of the planned data collection and data analysis procedures as described in Chapter 3 using open-ended survey questions that were designed to allow the officers to give a rich narrative of their experiences. Because the participation and survey were anonymous, it allowed for the officers to respond unrestricted, without fear of reprisal or of their identities being revealed.

This chapter provides an in-depth explanation and discussion of the evidence of trustworthiness and a presentation of the results of the study. The survey responses were meticulously reviewed and coded to determine if the officers shared similar views about BWCs. This chapter concludes with a summary and an introduction to Chapter 5.

Setting

I collected data through an anonymous online survey administered through SurveyMonkey.com. The link to the survey was distributed to the target population in a digital flyer distributed by the participating agencies. Eligible individuals interested in

participating in the study were able to complete the survey from a place and at a time of their choosing. No unexpected organizational conditions occurred that would influence the interpretation of the findings. There were no deviations from the online data collection setting described in Chapter 3.

Demographics

A purposeful sample included 34 Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training certified police officers employed at four agencies in the Metropolitan Atlanta Area in Georgia. All participants confirmed on the four qualifier closed-ended survey questions that they consented to the survey, were currently employed in the position of a police officer, had worked for 2-10 years in law enforcement prior to departmental implementation of BWCs, and had experience using a BWC. Because the survey was anonymous, no demographic information was collected from the participants.

Data Collection

To address the research question, invitations, informed consent, and the recruitment flyer, which contained the link to the SurveyMonkey website, was sent December 8, 2020, to the four targeted police departments to elicit participation. A survey containing 10 open-ended survey questions was scheduled to be available for 2 weeks, ending December 23, 2020. During the span of December 11-22, 2020, the platform had yielded 28 results. Because the platform had so few responses, I extended the access to January 6, 2021, in an attempt to garner more responses. Initially, December 23-27, 2020 yielded zero results. Consecutively, December 28-December 29, 2020, yielded nine responses, followed by three responses January 3, 2021. The survey was

closed January 6, 2021, after there was no further activity. At that time, the data analysis process began. A combination of 40 participants accessed the link for the survey on the SurveyMonkey website (Appendix C).

There was an unusual circumstance that occurred in which two potential participants accessed the SurveyMonkey link although they did not completely meet the criteria as outlined in the recruitment flyer. The survey included four qualifier questions prior to granting access to the secure survey that the user must answer appropriately. If the respondent did not answer all four of the questions appropriately, they were not granted access to the survey and were sent to the final page which thanked the user for their time. Of the 40 respondents, four were cleared to participate but did not answer the consecutive questions; this reduced the number of completed responses for the survey.

In the end, the survey yielded 34 completed responses for data analysis. Each of the 34 participants completed the online survey through the SurveyMonkey website by accessing the link in the digital flyer. Responses were recorded and compiled into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet by the SurveyMonkey platform exactly as participants entered them. The typical time the participants spent completing the survey was 15 minutes and 58 seconds (Appendix C). However, there were no deviations from the planned data collection procedure as described in Chapter 3.

Data Analysis

The data was downloaded from the SurveyMonkey website as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and imported into NVivo 12 computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. I analyzed the data from the 10-question open-ended survey thematically, using

the inductive, six-step procedure described by Terry et al. (2017). In the first step of the analysis, I read and reread the data to become familiar with it. The second step of the analysis consisted of coding the data. Phrases or groups of phrases that expressed meanings potentially relevant to answering the research question were highlighted and labeled by assigning them to NVivo nodes. Different blocks of text that expressed similar meanings were assigned to the same node. The nodes represented the initial codes, and they were labeled with brief, descriptive phrases. A total of 265 responses were assigned to 21 codes. Table 1 is a list of the initial codes formed for each survey question during the first step of the analysis.

The third analysis step consisted of grouping related codes into themes. Different codes were considered related when the data assigned to them expressed similar meanings or converged on the same overarching idea. The 19 codes identified in Step 2 were grouped into four major themes during this step. In the fourth step, the themes were reviewed by comparing them to the original data to verify that they accurately represented patterns of meaning in participants' responses. The fifth step of the analysis involved naming and defining the themes. The themes were named and defined to indicate their relevance to answering the research question. The sixth step of the analysis involved presenting the results by writing this chapter, which includes tabular and narrative presentations of the findings. Discrepant data is presented and discussed in the Results section of this chapter under the theme from which it diverged. Table 2 is a list of the finalized themes used to address the research question and of the codes grouped to form each theme.

Table 1*Initial Codes and Their Frequencies*

Initial code (alphabetical list)	<i>n</i> of responses assigned
BWCs can enhance law enforcement if they are not over-relied upon	9
BWCs exert a positive influence on officer accountability	18
BWCs limit officer discretion and flexibility	41
BWCs reassure citizens of fair treatment	4
BWCs reduce negative citizen behaviors	17
Citizens complain about BWCs	6
Colleagues exhibit greater professionalism	10
Consciousness of being recorded can be excessively inhibiting	19
Discrepant data - No changes in personal discretion	16
Discrepant data - No concern about being monitored	21
Dislike potential for footage to be misused	4
Feeling that BWCs are an unwarranted imposition	13
Footage should be released on public demand	5
Footage should be reviewed and then released	9
Increased awareness of speech and actions	8
Like that objective evidence can vindicate officers	17
Like the encouragement of transparency and accountability for officers	8
No change in citizen behavior	5
Officers may struggle with fear of unfair censure and retribution	13
Perception of public bias in evaluating BWC footage	12
Some citizens perform for the camera	7

Table 2*Finalized Themes as Groupings of Initial Codes*

Theme	<i>n</i> of responses assigned
Initial code grouped into theme	
Theme 1: Awareness of being on camera can inhibit officers' use of discretion	118
BWCs limit officer discretion and flexibility	
Consciousness of being recorded can be excessively inhibiting	
Discrepant data - No changes in personal discretion	
Discrepant data - No concern about being monitored	
Feeling that BWCs are an unwarranted imposition	
Increased awareness of speech and actions	
Theme 2: BWCs can enhance professionalism and accountability in law enforcement	48
BWCs can enhance law enforcement if they are not over-relied upon	
BWCs exert a positive influence on officer accountability	
Colleagues exhibit greater professionalism	
Like the encouragement of transparency and accountability for officers	
Theme 3: Appropriate use of BWCs can reduce conflict between the police and community members	56
BWCs reassure citizens of fair treatment	
BWCs reduce negative citizen behaviors	
Discrepant data – Citizens complain about BWCs	
Discrepant data – No change in citizen behavior	
Discrepant data – Some citizens perform for the camera	
Footage should be released on public demand	
Like that objective evidence can vindicate officers	
Theme 4: Public release of BWC footage can result in severe negative repercussions for officers	44
Discrepant data - Footage should be released on public demand	
Dislike potential for footage to be misused	
Footage should be reviewed and then released	
Officers may struggle with fear of unfair censure and retribution	
Perception of public bias in evaluating BWC footage	

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Credibility refers to how accurately the findings represent what they were intended to describe (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The aim of credibility is to determine that the results are believable and credible. Credibility was enhanced in this study through the use of a secure anonymous web-based survey. This encouraged participants to be candid in their responses by removing the threat of identity exposure, which also included their identities being unknown to me as well. The use of the SurveyMonkey website also enhanced credibility by ensuring that responses were preserved and compiled exactly as participants entered them. Additionally, I was unable to alter the responses of the participants. Also, the SurveyMonkey platform was designed with qualifier questions to vet the participants prior to granting access to the survey to determine if they were suitable for the research topic (Appendix B). Credibility was further strengthened through a thematic analysis procedure to identify themes that incorporated the responses of multiple participants, thereby minimizing the potential for individual participants' biases or inadvertent inaccuracies to distort the findings.

Transferability

Transferability is relative to the ability of a study being transferable in other context and settings. As stated by Sutton and Austin (2015) findings are transferable when they hold true of other populations and contexts. The small sample size and limited geographic scope in this study are common in qualitative research, but they are likely to limit transferability to other contexts and populations. Descriptions of the inclusion

criteria for the purposeful sample and the organizational setting of the study will also assist the reader in assessing transferability.

Dependability

Dependability establishes that the research findings are consistent and repeatable. Findings are dependable when a reader would be able to reproduce them in the same research setting at a different time (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I used the same research data collection instrument for each participant without deviation to ensure replicability. Coding was used to establish dependability that should allow future researchers to achieve the same or similar results when reproducing a like study. I examined what was known in present research in conjunction with what was revealed in the current data analysis initial codes to establish dependability (Table 1).

Confirmability

Findings are confirmable when they reflect participants' views and not researcher bias (Amin et al., 2020). Throughout the research study a journal was maintained to quell researcher bias' to allow the research to tell the story as shared by the participants void interference of my opinions. The journal served equally as an outlet and checks and balances of ensuring the accurate transfer of data. Additionally, confirmability was enhanced in this study through the presentation of direct quotes from the data as evidence for the findings. This form of presentation will allow the reader to compare my interpretations to the original data to evaluate confirmability independently.

Study Results

The study used (10) open-ended survey questions to extract information from the participants relative to their experience and perception of BWCs (Appendix A). The findings to address the research questions are organized under the major, inductive themes formed during data analysis. The four themes were: (1) awareness of being on camera can inhibit officers' use of discretion, (2) BWCs can enhance professionalism and accountability in law enforcement, (3) appropriate use of BWCs can reduce conflict between the police and community members, and (4) public release of BWC footage can result in severe negative repercussions for officers.

Theme 1: Awareness of Being on Camera Can Inhibit Officers' Use of Discretion

All 34 participants agreed that BWC use affected policing by limiting officers' use of discretion under at least some circumstances. Twenty-one participants reported that they did not experience detrimental limitations on their own job performance or job satisfaction, but another, overlapping group of 21 participants perceived BWCs restrictive effects on officers' use of discretion as at least partly detrimental to policing. The detriment to policing was perceived as occurring in two ways. The first detrimental impact was on the interests of citizens, via the enforcement of a by-the-book approach that prevented officers from exercising leniency. The second detrimental impact was through the generally inhibiting effect of being monitored on officers' ability to be flexible and adaptable in the field. Thirteen of the 21 participants who reported that constraints on officers' discretion had at least some negative effects on policing described those effects as predominantly or entirely negative.

The 21 participants who indicated that BWCs could exert at least some negative influence on officers' job performance suggested that awareness of being monitored caused officers to adhere strictly to procedures and guidelines instead of exercising the adaptability they perceived, as necessary. Participant 3 referenced this perspective in stating of BWC use, *"It has changed law enforcement's discretion ability. It places officers in a robotic mode versus just being human."* Participant 3 elaborated on this perspective in a different response, stating, *"My colleagues have become more robotic, less communicative and slightly stand-off (ish). Fear that something they might say (barbershop talk) and their supervisor will instantly and quickly reprimand them."* P32 expressed a perception similar to P3's in stating, *"Before body worn cameras, I used a lot of discretion, now I go strictly by the book!"*

Participant 28 response was one example of a frequently reported perception among participants that BWCs had a negative influence on law enforcement by making it excessively rigorous, to the detriment of citizens whose minor offenses might otherwise have been addressed with a warning or other informal sanction. Participant 11 suggested that officers' sense that BWCs inhibited their use of discretion could cause them to enforce the law more rigidly than they would if allowed to use their discretion in making appropriate exceptions: *"Wearing body worn cameras limits an officer's discretion. There will always be someone who feels as though you should not have let a person go on a warning depending on their agenda and beliefs."* Similar to P11, P14 indicated that BWCs compelled officers to enforce the law more rigidly rather than making appropriate allowances to build relationships in the community: *"Before the cameras I conducted*

myself the same way but in certain situations you could use make decisions that could cultivate cooperation with citizens.”

Participants also expressed that anxiety associated with BWCs could have a more generally paralyzing effect on officers' willingness and ability to exercise discretion to be flexible and adaptive under the dynamic conditions of law enforcement. Participant 19 described BWCs as limiting situational adaptability by requiring officers to split their attention between the requirements of contextually appropriate communication styles and the perspectives of potential viewers of BWC footage who might be more concerned with abstract, general protocols: The officer at times has a unique challenge of using unconventional “legal” methods in order to complete the task at hand. That may include “Street Talk” to where upon the supervisor reviewing the video may not understand and may lead to a write up of possibly conduct unbecoming.

Participant 7 referred to an overall sense of anxiety and constraint associated with BWCs in stating, *“I feel as though I am continuously being watched and that I am not free to use my discretion,”* and adding in a different response that before BWCs were mandated, *“I felt free to use my discretion when interacting with citizens. Now I feel like I must go strictly by the book at all times.”* Participant 15 referred to anxiety associated with uncertainty about whether known or unknown viewers of BWC footage would agree with specific applications of discretion in the field: *“The body cam has decreased my ability to utilize discretion because I worry about the thoughts of my superiors and the general public as they may not agree with my decision.”*

Notable in the responses quoted under this theme so far was the implication that inhibiting officers' use of discretion was against the public interest. Nineteen out of 34 participants also indicated that BWC use was also against the legitimate interests of at least some officers under at least some officers. Participant 5 stated of the experience of using a BWC, *"It is intimidating."* P26 added of BWCs' perceived effects on officers generally, *"It has lowered morale because the public is judge and jury without the experience of any law enforcement training."* Participant 1 wrote, "Some officers feel crippled" when wearing a BWC and added, *"It is not a good feeling at all. It can make you a little paranoid even if you are not wearing your camera."*

As indicated in the introduction to this theme, 21 participants provided data that was at least partly discrepant in stating either that BWC use did not limit their own use of discretion (16 participants), and/or that they personally had no concerns about being monitored through a BWC (21 participants). Some of these participants' responses were consistent with responses to other survey questions in which they indicated that the negative impacts on the use of discretion affected some other officers but not themselves. For example, P30, stated that BWCs imposed an arduous burden of anxiety on officers, *"Imagine having every under your breath comment recorded"*, believing that BWC use had no effect on their own use of discretion: *"I really don't think I make decisions any differently because I'm really firm on the law and civil rights."* This contrast in P30's responses between BWCs' having no effect on behavioral but a significant effect on officers' feelings and experiences was significant because it suggested that BWCs may reduce the job satisfaction even of officers who do not experience being monitored as a

compulsion to change their behavior. P8 provided a partly discrepant response in agreeing with other participants that BWCs limited officers' discretion, but describing the constraint as having a positive effect on law enforcement and on officers' legitimate interests. Participant 8 reported that they performed their duties after the mandating of BWC use, "*Exactly the same way because I am a man of integrity,*" citing personal experience, "*The BWC has not changed the way I perform my job. In fact, it is welcome.*"

Thus, all 34 participants agreed that BWC use limited officers' discretion, and a majority of participants perceived the constraints BWCs placed on discretion as detrimental to policing at least part of the time. More than one third of participants ($n = 13$) described the effect of inhibiting officers' use of discretion on law-enforcement efficacy as predominantly negative. However, an equal number of participants ($n = 13$) provided partly discrepant data in indicating that BWCs' effects on law enforcement were overwhelmingly positive because they only impeded illegitimate uses of discretion. These positive perceptions of BWCs are explored in more detail in the discussion of Theme 2.

Theme 2: Body-Worn Cameras Can Enhance Professionalism and Accountability in Law Enforcement

Almost two thirds of participants ($n = 21$) perceived BWCs as having a positive influence on law-enforcement efficacy at least some of the time, and 13 of those 21 participants described the effects of BWCs as entirely positive. Of the 21 participants who described BWCs as exerting a positive influence on law enforcement at least some of the time, 18 participants stated that BWCs increased officers' accountability, and 10

stated that BWC use enforced a high standard of professionalism for officers. Eight out of 34 participants indicated BWCs' impacts on law enforcement were mixed and that the benefits were contingent on factors such as the quality of the footage and how the footage was viewed and used.

The 18 participants who described BWCs as increasing police officers' accountability to their superiors and to the public perceived this effect as beneficial to policing. P21 said of the effects of BWCs on policing, *"It has been impacted greatly because it makes [us] accountable for our actions."* Participant 15 stated, *"Wearing a body cam has introduced an added level of accountability for officers,"* and P18 used language similar to P15's in stating, "The wearing of the body cam increases accountability among the officers." Participant 16 further indicated that BWCs only inhibited illegitimate uses of discretion, making their use beneficial to policing:

I think one type of officer would say that the impact [of BWC use] has been a minimum because they're continuously doing their job. Another type of officer would say the impact has been great because it affects the way they do their job whether that be by the book or not.

Ten participants indicated that BWC use positively affected policing by influencing officers to be more professional, particularly in communicating with citizens. Participant 24 stated of officers being monitored by BWCs, *"They're more professional. In this job field and in today's society language plays a big part. You say and do things a little more professionally than you would've in the past."* Participant 14 stated that when wearing BWCs, *"Some officers now have to think about their conversation before*

interaction with the public.” P19 referred to BWCs as having a positive impact on officers’ professionalism generally, stating, “*My colleagues present a level of high professionalism knowing that they are being recorded.*” Four out of 34 participants indicated that prior to the mandating of BWCs, they themselves used “abusive language” (P15), “profanity or slang” (P1), “curse words” (P11), or “foul language” (P24) when communicating with citizens, but that using BWCs influenced them to communicate more professionally. In a representative example of one of those participant’s responses, P15 stated,

Prior to the implementation of the body cam, I would meet the offender on their level and use abusive language in response to the abusive language that was being used toward me. However, now with the cameras I try to be more professional, and I allow people to act out a little more to justify my actions.

As indicated in the introduction to this theme, 13 of-the-21 participants who described BWCs as having a positive effect on policing described the effect as entirely positive, and the remaining nine participants described the effect as mixed or the positive effect as contingent on how footage was used. In a representative response indicating that the benefits of BWCs for policing were contingent, P14 suggested that overreliance on footage that documented an incomplete view of an incident could be more harmful than beneficial to everyone involved:

I believe that video cameras are being too widely relied upon in this time.

Sometimes the cameras cannot catch encounters or life and death situation in real time accurately. If for some reason the video does not show the incident or bad

angle it can be problematic for all involved. Officers and department will be accused of not being transparent. The citizen again will be charged to prove their innocence without video.”

Participant 25 stated of BWC use, It can be a blessing and a curse, attributing the “curse” aspect to the potential for footage to be altered or taken out of context by the media, a concern explored in detail under Theme 4 in this chapter. Participant 5 described the effects of BWCs on policing *as* “good and bad” because BWC use “keeps everyone accountable,” as discussed previously in relation to the present theme, but could also be, “intimidating” for the officers wearing them, as discussed in relation to Theme 1.

Theme 3: Appropriate Use of Body-Worn Cameras Can Reduce Conflict Between the Police and Community Members

Twenty-one out of 34 participants indicated that appropriate use of BWCs affected policing by defusing or repairing conflicts between the police and the community. BWCs could defuse conflicts by causing citizens who were conscious of being videoed to moderate their negative behaviors, according to 17 participants. However, the other 17 participants provided discrepant data indicating that BWC use had no effect on citizens’ behavior (five participants), caused citizens to behave more uncooperatively (seven participants), and/or provoked complaints from citizens (six participants). Seventeen participants indicated that an aspect of BWC use that they liked was that it facilitated resolutions of some department-community conflicts by furnishing objective evidence that vindicated officers falsely accused of misconduct. The remaining 17 participants did not reference the documentation of exculpatory evidence of

appropriate officer conduct and did not contradict the positive perceptions of the participants who did reference it.

The 17 participants who expressed positive perceptions of BWCs as furnishing exculpatory evidence in favor of officers falsely accused of misconduct associated their view with the perceived objectivity of BWC footage. P10, for example, stated of BWC use, *“It offers protection from complaints by other people. It shows what really happens.”* Similarly, P8 stated, *“I like the BWC because it shows the facts. It's not subjective.”* Like P10, P8 referred to BWCs as having a protective role for officers: *“Overall I like the use of the cameras because they protect the officer from false claims.”* Participant 30 referenced personal experience in stating, *“I like that it [BWC footage] does show what I'm doing right. I have had citizen complaints disproven by a review of my BWC.”*

Seventeen participants indicated that BWC use could defuse conflicts between the police and citizens when awareness of being videoed caused citizens to moderate their negative behaviors. Participant 3 stated, *“Some citizens behave differently once they realize they are on camera. Once they are aware that the camera is activated they reduce or cease all negative actions.”* Participant 19 provided a similar response to P3's, stating, *“At times, the citizen appears to reduce the level of hostility towards the officer.”* Participant 30 perceived BWCs as exerting a stronger positive influence on the behavior of citizens than that of officers:

I believe that the camera has improved the behavior of the public more so than it has changed our behavior. Our cameras show on the screen what it's recording so

people know that we are recording, and I think that makes most people get on their best behavior.

The 17 participants who did not describe BWCs as causing civilians to moderate negative behaviors provided discrepant data. Participant 7 said of citizens who knew their behavior was being captured by a BWC, *“They appear to be more aggressive in certain circumstances.”* P25 stated that citizens reacted negatively to the perceived violation of their right to privacy: *“They feel that their privacy is being violated.”* Participant 20 said of the effect on citizens of knowing a BWC was activated, *“It enhances their theatrics.”* Two participants offered perspectives that suggested why some officers found citizens who knew they were on camera easier to work with, while other officers found citizens becoming more difficult when they were conscious of being recorded. Participant 11 suggested that several factors influenced citizens’ reactions to BWCs: *“Citizens react in several different ways depending on the situation, level of intoxication, and aggressiveness. Citizens will become loud to ‘create’ their own witnesses, bait you into reacting negatively, or even insult you.”* The responses of the 17 participants who perceived BWC use as aggravating negative citizen behaviors were only partly discrepant from Theme 3, because they were consistent with responses in which participants described BWC footage as facilitating department-community dispute resolution through the recording of objective evidence. Most participants indicated that any positive effects associated with the recording of objective evidence came at a cost, however. Participants described this cost as officers’ anxiety about the significant possibility that events recorded by BWCs would be presented out of context or in an otherwise biased manner,

and that the officers involved might suffer severe repercussions, up to including threats to their families. This concern is discussed in detail under the following theme.

Theme 4: Public Release of Body-Worn Camera Footage Can Result in Severe Negative Repercussions for Officers

There were 29 out-of-34 participants indicated that unconditional release of BWC footage upon public request could negatively impact policing by damaging department-community relations and officers' wellbeing. Thirteen of those participants expressed concern about the potential for the release of BWC footage to be detrimental to policing if decontextualized or otherwise biased presentation in the media damaged department-community relations. A partially overlapping set of 13 participants indicated that fear of unfair censure or retribution as a result of inappropriate public presentations of BWC footage was a significant cause of the officer anxiety discussed under Theme 1. Only five participants provided discrepant data indicating that the release of BWC footage to the public should be made unconditionally upon request.

The 13 participants who expressed concern about bias in the presentation of BWC footage indicated that bias against police could cause public grievances to be deliberately or negligently manufactured. P11 referenced this concern in stating,

If a person wants to find something wrong in an officer handling an incident then that is what they will see. Even after footage is viewed and the suspect is shown acting negatively or not following orders, the public will still make excuses for the wrong behavior.

Participant 17 also expressed concern about biased public interpretations of BWC footage resulting from lack of context: “[Footage release] is unfair to the officer. The public doesn't understand the split-second decisions that are made by officers. The stress of the incident and the mental impact is enough pressure to process.” Participant 25 expressed concern that the media would deliberately bias the presentation of BWC footage in referencing, “The fear that the media will only show what they want the public to see.” Participant 7 also expressed the perception, “Officers feel as though the BWCs are the public's weapon against officers.”

Thirteen participants agreed with P7 that BWC footage was a potential weapon against officers that could inflict real harm, making officers' concerns about biased interpretations of BWC footage more than a matter of principle. The 13 participants expressed the perception that officers exposed to public ire through the release of BWC footage could suffer severe psychological distress, threats to their loved ones, and the alienation of loved ones, even if the footage showed them acting according to policy. P6 expressed the concern that officers associated with the shooting of an incident could face serious threats to themselves and their families if the BWC footage was released, whether or not they had acted appropriately:

What civilians don't realize is that officers identified from a shooting or other controversial video very often receive death threats and threats to their families. People have even gone to officers' kids' schools, shot video of the officers' kids, and posted it to social media and threatened to harm their kids, which is absolutely disgusting.

Participant 11 agreed with P6, stating, *“Televised body-worn camera footage can sometimes place the officer and his/her family in harm’s way.”* Participant 28 suggested expressed explicitly that biased interpretations of BWC footage could result in severe public backlash against the officer involved: *“I know that officers are worried about releasing footage because in today’s culture they know even if they did everything textbook, someone will still find fault with what they did and crucify them publicly.”*

There were 5 out-of-34 participants provided discrepant data in suggesting that the unconditional release of BWC footage upon public request had a wholly positive effect on policing because it vindicated officers who acted appropriately and exposed officers who deviated from their duty. Participant 33 said of the appropriateness of releasing BWC footage, *“Officers disagree, but if everything was done by policy, no worries.”* Participant 4 stated of BWC footage, *“I feel as though it should be released ASAP! [because] I feel as though [BWC use] helps keep officers in their right state of mind professionally.”* Participant 9 stated of BWC footage, *“I think they should release it to show what happened . . . it should be shown so that we all are on the same page.”*

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study is to gain a deeper understanding of how officers perceive that the usage of BWCs has changed the way law enforcement officer’s police. Four major themes emerged during data analysis to address the research question which indicates a shift in policing. The first theme was: awareness of being on camera can inhibit officers’ use of discretion. All 34 participants agreed that BWC use affected policing by limiting officers’ use of discretion under at least some circumstances.

Thirteen of the 21 participants who reported that constraints on officers' discretion had at least some negative effects on policing described those effects as predominantly or entirely negative.

The second theme was: BWCs can enhance professionalism and accountability in law enforcement. Almost two thirds of participants (n=21) perceived BWCs as having a positive influence on law-enforcement efficacy at least some of the time, and 13 of those 21 participants described the effects of BWCs as entirely positive. The third theme was: appropriate use of BWCs can reduce conflict between the police and community members. Twenty-one out of 34 participants indicated that appropriate use of BWCs affected policing by defusing or repairing conflicts between the police and the community. The fourth theme was: public release of BWC footage can result in severe negative repercussions for officers. Twenty-nine out of 34 participants indicated that unconditional release of BWC footage upon public request could negatively impact policing by damaging department-community relations and officers' wellbeing. The themes identify immediate and lasting impacts to policing.

Chapter 5 will include the interpretation of the findings.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to gain a deeper understanding of how police officers perceive the use of BWCs has changed the way they police their communities. I designed the qualitative study to allow the officers to reveal their thoughts and feelings of the impact of BWCs in a nonjudgmental and anonymous environment. Officers who currently police in the Metropolitan Atlanta Area (Georgia) who used BWCs were recruited for this study. In Metropolitan Atlanta police departments, clashes between civilians and police have continued despite the use of BWCs. The altercations have been detrimental to police-community relations because the officers and civilians involved often make contradictory claims about the events.

The wide availability of recorded police interactions captured by BWC footage, or the lack thereof, has contributed to the public outcry for greater departmental accountability and transparency. These circumstances influence the officer's perception of the devices. The manner in which BWC footage is interpreted may exacerbate police-community relationship problems by inflaming public perceptions of law enforcement as adversarial, oppressive, and secretive. Across the United States, BWC use has become an increasingly significant issue as agencies adjust to media coverage that highlights departmental image, social control, and police conformity.

This study was conducted because the phenomena, dependency on BWC devices and their footage, has dominated the focus of law enforcement profession and society alike. However, there was very little literature that obtained the perspective of police

officers who were tasked with deploying the devices. To better understand how BWCs can serve the interests of civilians as well as law enforcement officers, it was necessary to explore how officers perceive the effects of BWC use on policing. The present study was conducted to meet this research need.

This qualitative study involved data collection through a researcher-developed survey consisting of 10 open-ended questions. The survey was administered online through the SurveyMonkey.com website through which responses were provided anonymously. The participants were 34 current police officers from four Metropolitan Atlanta police departments with 2-5 years of law enforcement experience prior to the departmental implementation of BWCs. In their responses to the survey questions, participants candidly expressed their perceptions of how the implementation of BWCs impacted policing.

I analyzed the data thematically in NVivo 12 software. Four major themes emerged to address the research question, including: (a) awareness of being on camera can inhibit officers' use of discretion, (b) BWCs can enhance professionalism and accountability in law enforcement, (c) appropriate use of BWCs can reduce conflict between the police and community members, and (d) public release of BWC footage can result in severe negative repercussions for officers. The following sections of this chapter include an interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, and implications. The chapter also outlines the positive social change implications of the study and ends with a conclusion.

Interpretation of the Findings

The discussion in this section is intended to contextualize the study findings within the conceptual framework and the relevant previous literature. The theoretical framework in this study was Lipsky's (1969) SLBT, which indicated that police officers and other government agents who work closely with the public effectively engage in policymaking through their exercise of discretion. Officers exercise discretion when addressing minor offenses and determine if the breach of law requires a written or verbal warning or more aggressive actions such as fine or arrest. According to Kosar and Schachter (2011), police officers' use of discretion impacts citizens lives significantly more than those of other street-level government officials because officers have the autonomy to interpret the law and decide whether to act.

Lipsky (2010) argued that police officers must exercise discretion and leniency to perform their duties adequately because it is typically unfeasible for them to make arrests for every infraction they observe during a given shift. Furthermore, although there is public demand that officers apply the law, Lipsky (2010) argued that officers' use of discretion to mitigate the rigor of the law in some instances was compatible with this demand. Although Lipsky believed that officers had autonomy to enforce laws, the research data revealed that the officer's ability to exercise discretion was greatly inhibited due to the presence of BWCs.

The remainder of the interpretations in this section will be organized by identifying and explaining the themes revealed in the study.

Theme 1: Awareness of Being on Camera Can Inhibit Officers' Use of Discretion

All participants in this study agreed that BWC use affected policing by limiting officers' use of discretion under at least some circumstances, and a majority of participants perceived the restriction of officers' discretion as detrimental to the effectiveness of policing at least some of the time. The detriment to policing was perceived as occurring in two ways. The first detrimental impact was on the interests of citizens, via the enforcement of a by-the-book approach that prevented officers from exercising leniency. The second detrimental impact was through the generally inhibiting effect of being monitored on officers' ability to be flexible and adaptable in the field.

The finding in Theme 1 was consistent with those of previous researchers who have explored the potential negative effects of deploying BWCs. In relation to the theoretical framework in this study, SLBT indicated that the exercise of discretion, particularly in favor of leniency, is both necessary for and expected of effective law enforcement (Lipsky, 2010). It may be inferred from Lipsky's (2010) conclusion that excessive restriction of police discretion resulting from BWC use would impede policing effectiveness. Most of the participants in this study stated that BWC-associated restrictions on officer discretion impeded policing effectiveness at least some of the time, a view consistent with researchers' characterization of the Ferguson Effect. The Ferguson Effect is defined as the tendency of officers who are conscious of having their actions recorded, either by BWCs or by civilian-operated devices, to become so over-cautious that they may even refrain from engaging in enforcement actions necessary for safeguarding community safety (Culhane et al., 2016). Additionally, officers have been

found to become more risk-averse in their decision-making when using BWCs (Ready & Young, 2015). In general, they oppose to the use of BWCs because of perceptions that the devices lead to micromanagement of their activities (Culhane et al., 2016).

A finding apparently contrary to Culhane et al.'s (2016) account of the Ferguson Effect was advanced by Braga et al. (2018), who concluded that officers wearing BWCs make more arrests than unmonitored officers because they are more willing to relinquish exercising their discretion in favor of compliance. However, Braga et al. (2018) argued that research on the effects of BWC use had not adequately incorporated the perspectives of officers themselves, and that an exploration of officers' perspectives was necessary to resolve apparent contradictions in the literature such as that between the findings of Braga et al. (2018) and Culhane et al. (2016). The present study has contributed to addressing the gap in the literature regarding officers' perceptions of BWC use.

Findings in this study relevant to reconciling those of Braga et al. (2018) and Culhane et al. (2016) indicated that participants perceived BWC use as causing officers to err on both sides, sometimes under-policing and at other times making unnecessary arrests. Participants described the restriction of discretion as the decisive consideration. In instances where policy dictated that an arrest should be made but officer discretion could allow leniency, participants described BWC use as causing officers to follow policy and make the arrest. Similarly, when policy did not require an officer to intervene in a situation even though doing so might be in the public's best interest, participants described officers using BWCs as more likely to adhere to policy but forgo intervening.

In either case, the effect of BWCs on policing was perceived as negative, in that it undermined the public interest in effective law enforcement without excessive rigor.

Theme 2: Body-Worn Cameras Can Enhance Professionalism and Accountability in Law Enforcement

A majority of participants in this study perceived BWCs as having a positive influence on law-enforcement efficacy at least some of the time, and about one third of participants described the effects of BWCs as entirely positive. Participants who described BWCs as exerting a positive influence on law enforcement at least some of the time stated that BWCs increased officers' accountability and enforced a high standard of professionalism. In relation to the theoretical framework in this study, this finding indicated that restricting the discretion of police may have the positive effect of safeguarding citizens' rights. About one third of participants in this study agreed with this supposition, stating that BWC use only restricted illegitimate uses of discretion.

The finding in Theme 2 expanded on the previous research. Researchers concluded that BWC use decreases improper behaviors and encourages appropriate behaviors of officers in their interactions with community members (Drover & Ariel, 2015; Laming, 2019; Maskaly et al., 2017). Previous research affirms that BWC use improves officer behavior and promotes accountability for officers. Participants in this study agreed, with a majority stating that they and/or their colleagues had stopped using abusive or obscene language during confrontations with civilians and instead comported themselves more professionally under BWC surveillance. Gaub et al. (2016) and Wooditch et al. (2020) found that BWC use increased officers' accountability, with the

result that police-community relations were improved. Findings in the present study broadened those of previous researchers by confirming them with the perceptions of a sample of officers with firsthand experience of BWC use.

Theme 3: Appropriate Use of Body-Worn Cameras Can Reduce Conflict Between the Police and Community Relationships

A great many of participants indicated that appropriate use of BWCs affected policing by defusing or repairing conflicts between the police and citizens. BWCs could defuse conflicts by causing citizens who were conscious of being videoed to quell their negative behaviors, and they could furnish evidence that vindicated officers from false accusations of misconduct. These findings indicated that the perceptions of most participants in this study were consistent with those of researchers, although the partly discrepant data provided by half of the participants has expanded on previous researchers' findings.

Researchers' characterizations of the effects of BWCs on police-community relationships have primarily been positive. Researchers have consistently described BWC use as contributing to upholding the constitutional rights of citizens through increased transparency and accountability in law enforcement, indicating that the devices are fulfilling their primary purposes (Drover & Ariel, 2015; Gaub et al., 2016; Laming, 2019; Sacca, 2017; Wasserman, 2018; Wooditch et al., 2020). These outcomes have indicated that officers' control over BWC activation is sufficiently guided by departmental policy to address some citizens' doubts that easily deactivated BWCs would significantly promote the public interest (Taylor & Lee, 2019). Regarding the protection of officers

from frivolous or opportunistic allegations of misconduct, Timan (2016), found that the recording of objective evidence of officer conduct was effective in vindicating officers who acted appropriately. Other researchers have found that BWC use significantly reduces the number of excessive-force and improper-conduct allegations brought against police, with a corresponding decrease in the civil liability of police departments (Laming, 2019; Wexler, 2018; Sacca, 2017). These findings were consistent with the responses of half of the participants in the present study.

The remaining participants in this study provided discrepant data. Most notably, about one third of participants stated that BWC use could aggravate negative civilian behaviors. This negative influence of BWCs on civilian conduct was perceived as occurring either because some citizens strongly objected to having their behavior recorded, or because some citizens might attempt to bait officers into impulsive misconduct to profit from a civil lawsuit. The perspective represented in this discrepant data was not found in the literature and may therefore be regarded as extending the literature. However, the discrepant data in this study was not inconsistent with the literature. Officers described citizens who behaved worse under BWC monitoring as constituting only a small portion of the civilians they encountered. Contextualization of the discrepant data within the previous literature indicated the significant qualifier that even if some citizens react negatively to BWC use, mandating the devices has resulted in an overall decline in allegations of improper conduct against police (Laming, 2019; Wexler, 2018; Sacca, 2017).

Theme 4: Public Release of Body-Worn Camera Footage Can Result in Severe Negative Repercussions for Officers

Almost all participants indicated that unconditional release of BWC footage upon public demand could negatively impact policing by damaging department-community relations and officers' wellbeing. About one third of participants expressed concern about the potential for the release of BWC footage to be detrimental to policing if decontextualized or otherwise biased presentations in the media damaged department-community relations. The same number of participants indicated that that they were fearful of being ridiculed and criticized, which would cause anxiety and fear due to their depiction on BWCs, as discussed under Theme 1. In relation to the theoretical framework in this study, the finding in Theme 4 indicated that BWCs restricted officers' discretion by introducing potentially legitimate fears of formal and informal censure and extralegal reprisals, even in instances when officers acted appropriately.

The finding in this theme also expanded on the research of previous researchers. Ariel (2016a) found that officers feared they would be criticized for their conduct as a result of excessive scrutiny if recordings of their actions and inactions were too readily available. Participants in this study agreed, and the finding in this study added that participants expressed significant anxiety about consequences far more severe than criticism, up to and including viable threats to the safety of themselves and their families even when they had acted in accordance with policy. The finding in this study was also consistent with Maskaly et al.'s (2017) conclusion that circulating footage of police actions raised concerns about officers' privacy. The finding also offered by Maskaly et

al.'s (2017) indicated the threat of extralegal reprisals and ruined relationships that participants associated with violations of their privacy. Freund (2015) indicated that it was reasonable for police officers to have reduced expectations of privacy, but findings in this study and that of Culhane et al. (2016) indicated that burdening officers about potential consequences to their own and their families' safety created a high risk of anxiety and de-policing.

Limitations

One limitation of the study is that future researchers' ability to assess transferability may be limited by the anonymity of data collection in this study. Data was collected on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the topic, and detriment of their livelihoods. This allowed participants to make disclosures in their candid detailed responses that would add value to the literature without reprisal. However, the limitation of assessments of transferability is associated with not collecting demographic data about participants as determined by Denzin and Lincoln (2008) and was weighed against the potential limitations associated with participants' anxiety about the potential for their identities to be disclosed through an unanticipated breach of confidentiality. Therefore, anonymity was selected over confidentiality as a means of obtaining the richest and most accurate data possible.

A second limitation was the inability to triangulate narratives with archival departmental documents, e.g., policy, training, disciplinary actions, or media reports and videos. The data collection procedure of relying on self-report data may potentially limit the credibility and dependability of the data. One procedure used to mitigate this potential

limitation was the anonymity of the data, which was intended to curtail the participants' anxiety about identity disclosure. However, a thematic analysis procedure was used to enhance credibility and dependability by facilitating the identification of themes that incorporated the perceptions of the participants. This action minimized the potential influence for inaccuracies or biases in individual participants' responses from impacting the findings.

The third limitation was the impact of the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic caused me to pivot and conduct a research study that utilized open-ended digital based survey questions rather than a face-to-face interview. Although, surveys offer protection through anonymity, they are inherently under responded as respondents are often unwilling to produce a written account due to various reasons and can skip questions casually. A face-to-face interview would have allowed me to ask follow-up questions or have the participant to expound on their answers.

The last limitation I identified was the availability of participants that met the criteria for inclusion. The number of officers that have policed prior to the implementation of BWCs is decreasing, as a great deal of officers being hired by an agency that has implemented BWCs is becoming more commonplace. These officers are unable to give a rich narrative of the pre-and post-impact of BWC implementation. The targeted sample for the research study was 100 responses, however the survey retrieved usable data from 34 respondents between 4 police departments. To minimize these limitations, thick descriptions of the findings have been provided by including participants' own words as evidence for the findings.

Recommendations

Further research is recommended to address the limitations of this study. A qualitative case study involving researcher observations of officer conduct and a review of archival data in addition to analysis of officers' self-reports is recommended to determine whether the findings in this study are upheld by sources of evidence other than officers' own accounts. Replications of this study in other departments that have mandated BWC use are recommended to assess the transferability of the findings to other settings and populations. To assess the generalizability of the findings in this study, it is recommended that quantitative research be undertaken using a validated questionnaire instrument with a sufficiently large, random sample of officers.

To obtain more robust support for the findings in this study or to further refine them, it is recommended that a similar study be conducted using a sample of civilian respondents who have interacted with Metropolitan Atlanta police agencies both before and after the mandating of BWCs. Participants might be recruited that have been cited by officers for minor infractions (e.g., traffic violations or victimless misdemeanors) by using a snowball sampling method, or a questionnaire that is presented to the public on various social media platforms to garner wider participation. It is recommended that individuals charged with more serious offenses be excluded as potentially belonging to vulnerable populations of defendants in open cases or incarcerated persons.

Implications

Social Change

To impact positive social change, the suggested recommendations would assist in creating a more harmonious relationship between the officer and their agency which would translate into better cohesion with the public. Allowing the officers input when mandating and implementing new policy or the implementation of new equipment would ensure that officers are prepared for the changes, know what is expected of them and receive adequate training to ensure proper operation, adherence to policy, and law while fully assimilating to requirements. In effect the department will produce a more confident, competent, and equipped officer to serve the public.

The positive social change will resonate in the community as citizens would deem the police department as more professional, transparent, and capable of addressing the needs of the public void of excessive force, ill treatment, and undue recourse. In fact, the alterations internally may bridge the gap between the police and the community. Perhaps the public will view the law enforcement community as professionals that promote trust, understanding and fairness rather than division.

Positive social change would affect the police officers by performing their duties in a lawful manner rather than a shroud in secrecy or aversion, because there is no fear of reprisal. According to Lipsky's Street-level Bureaucracy Theory, law enforcement officers routinely interact with the public, and have substantial autonomy to exercise discretion (Lipsky, 2010). However, based on this research, officers feel as though their discretion is being suppressed by the presence of the BWCs. Many officers have shared

in the data a fear for the safety of themselves and their families either physical or verbal attacks once there is an allegation of misconduct relative to BWC footage. The fear can diminish through operating justly and being fair in their assessment of criminal activity or citizen interactions. By being mindful of the recommendations, which includes scholarly research as well as the perspective of the officer, the benefit of social change may be the renewed faith in law enforcement professionals.

Conclusion

The qualitative study was conducted to gain the perspective of a population that is often silent and powerless when policies or practices are implemented in their employ. The police officer that is mandated to wear the BWC recording devices, is often overlooked when the department decides to implement these devices. The literature has indicated that BWCs implementation does not show a sign of slowing down. The acceptance of these technological devices has implanted itself in police departments throughout the United States and equally in the Metropolitan Atlanta Area. Society uses the BWC as a third person view of what occurred in officer-citizen interactions. Furthermore, it is seen as a breach of trust when the BWC footage is unavailable or there is a delay in the release of the images. Equally, there is public outcry when officers fail to activate the devices to record controversial encounters that include a use of force or deadly encounters. This often deteriorates public trust and overshadows the transparency and accountability that many agencies claim to have.

The benefits of this technology are not without a trade-off. As the price for transparency is a lack of discretion by the officer. Findings in this study and in the

previous literature indicated that BWC use limits officer discretion. The consequences of that inhibition for the effectiveness of law enforcement are echoed by many of the officers in this study. Restriction of officer discretion positively impacts policing when improper officer behavior is decreased, and police-community relations are strengthened through enhanced law enforcement accountability and transparency. Limiting officer discretion negatively impacts policing when officers are discouraged from using their discretion in situations where a verbal warning may have been sufficient to address a situation.

The findings in this study expanded the previous literature in part by showing that a consequence of BWC use was unduly increased rigidity of enforcement and under-policing, which resulted in the officer's unwillingness to interact. Officers using BWCs were more likely to act according to policy, thereby adhering to inflexible procedures even when doing so resulted in unnecessary arrests. The study addressed the research question while simultaneously allowing the officers to share their perspective and expertise with a technology that shall garner continued attention and implementation throughout the United States in the future.

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Appendix A. Dissertation Survey

Dissertation Survey Questions

1. Do you consent to participate in this survey?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - i. If yes, the respondent will move on to Question 2.
 - ii. If no, the participant will not be allowed to participate in the survey by being moved to the closing page.

2. Are you currently employed as a police officer?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

3. Have been employed as a law enforcement officer for at least 2-10 years prior to the implementation of body worn cameras?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

4. Do you have experience wearing a body worn camera?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - i. If the response is **No** to any of the above questions the respondent will be moved to the closing page and not allowed to participate in the survey, as they are not eligible to do so.
 - ii. If the responses are **Yes** to all the questions above, the consent form will be the title page to the survey. The final sentence will instruct the participant to answer Question 1 if they consent to participate in the survey

5. How do officers perceive that policing has been impacted by the implementation of body worn cameras in their profession?
 - a. Textual response

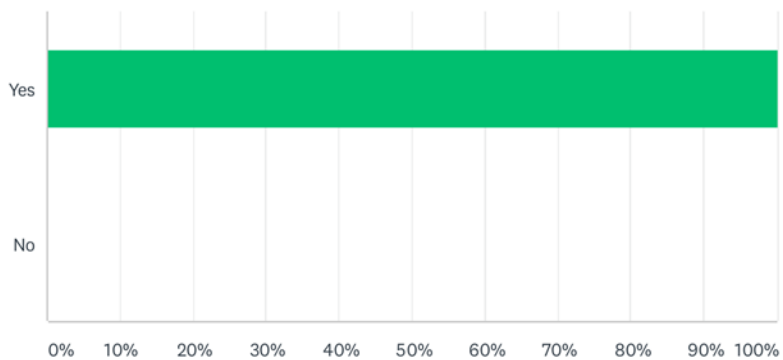
6. How has body worn cameras changed your ability to exercise discretion?

- a. Textual response
7. How do citizens react when they realize they are being recorded by body worn cameras?
 - a. Textual response
 8. What have you noticed that your colleagues do differently because their actions are being monitored by the body worn camera?
 - a. Textual response
 9. Explain what you like and dislike about body worn cameras.
 - a. Textual response
 10. How do officers feel about the public demanding the release of body worn camera footage after a controversial incident has occurred?
 - a. Textual response
 11. Explain how you policed before and after the implementation of body worn cameras.
 - a. Textual response
 12. How do you feel about being constantly monitored while wearing a body worn camera?
 - a. Textual response
 13. How do officers deal with the fear of body worn camera footage being televised or placed on various digital platforms?
 - a. Textual response
 14. What do you predict as the future of body worn cameras in law enforcement?
 - a. Textual response

Appendix B: SurveyMonkey Questions

Q1 Do you consent to participate in this survey?

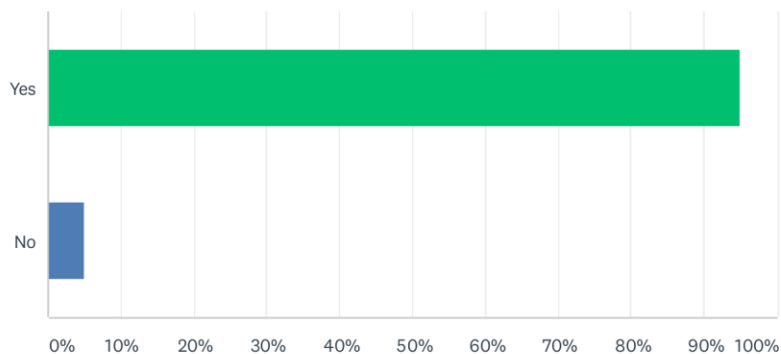
Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	40
No	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 40		

Q2 Are you currently employed as a police officer?

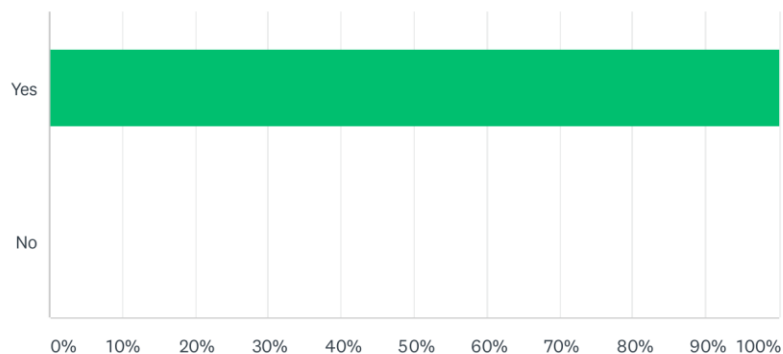
Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	95.00%	38
No	5.00%	2
TOTAL		40

Q3 Have been employed as a law enforcement officer for at least 2-10 years prior to the implementation of body worn cameras?

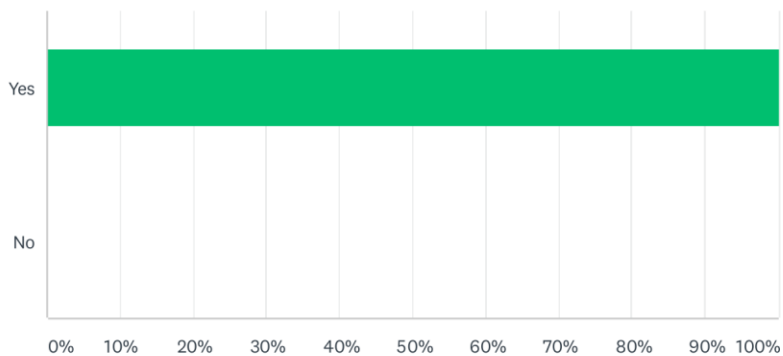
Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	40
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		40

Q4 Do you have experience wearing a body worn camera?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	40
No	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 40		

Appendix C: SurveyMonkey Insights

