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Walden University

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Rosalind Williams

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Walden University
2019

Abstract

Citizens' Perceptions of Body-Worn Camera Usage by Law Enforcement

by

Rosalind Williams

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

Walden University

June 2019

Abstract

A need for more transparency and accountability of police misconduct was obvious from citizens' complaints and media coverage of inhumane actions of law enforcement officers unequipped with body-worn cameras (BWCs). With the fatalities of citizens by law enforcement on the rise, it was incumbent upon the officials in two communities to deliver measures to improve citizens' perceptions of police officers' use of BWCs and how much trust the citizens have in the use of these instruments, as a whole. The purpose of this study was to explore citizens' confidence levels, sense of safety, and perception of civility when police officers use body cameras. The two research questions asked how has being made aware of the usage of BWCs by law enforcement impacted the perception of rural area citizens, and what is the perception of law enforcement officers' usage of BWCs among rural area citizens? The theoretical framework for this study was the self-awareness theory. Data were collected via interviews. The data were collected and coded for analysis. Coded data were generated from responses in face to face interviews of participants. Themes were developed from key words in the context and word repetition. Seven main themes were created. The findings of the research show that the usage of body-worn cameras is wanted by citizens in small rural cities and the citizens have a positive perception of officers who utilize body-worn cameras. The results of the study have substantial implication for social change and suggest the people are calling for the use of BWC's by law enforcement officers to aid in increased transparency and trust in police officers on patrol. By carrying out this research, I was able to validate the perception of the citizens.

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Dedication

To everyone who has supported, encouraged, and inspired me to continue my academic journey. For those who answered my many emails and phone calls at all hours of the day and helped me accomplish this personal goal. I dedicate this to my husband, James, my children, Necole, Keyanna, and Quantico, and my grandchildren, Logan, Anthony, and Christian.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Body-worn cameras (BWC), a norm in law-enforcement, is a response to public outcry for a reduction in police brutality and improper law enforcement procedures within the normal routine of policing in the United States. Increasing news coverage of high-profile cases reporting incidences of police misbehavior in handling routine arrests among unarmed citizens is resulting in police departments across the nation either adopting or planning to adopt BWCs as a part of their routine improvement in law enforcement. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF, 2014) indicated that high numbers of police departments in most metropolitan areas use BWCs to reduce negative perceptions of police offices conducting routine duty.

Though police department decision makers are adopting the use of BWCs at a rapid rate, research relative to the effectiveness of this technology is rare. One randomized controlled trial conducted by the PERF (2014) assessed changes in citizens' perceptions of BWCs usage by law enforcement officers. Result of the study was a comprehensive guide for the use of BWCs in law enforcement. This study of citizens' perceptions of BWC usage by law enforcement added to the available research. This chapter includes the problem statement; purpose of the study; significance of the study; background of the study; conceptual framework; research questions; nature of the study; assumptions, limitations, scope, and delimitations; and summary.

Problem Statement

Public perception of police officers continues to worsen because of negative attention of the media in daily coverage of the news (Ray, Marsh, & Powelson, 2017).

These events highlighting police brutality, for example, have an influence on citizens' willingness to trust law enforcement officers who are charged with their safety. Aial, Farrar, and Sutherland (2015) stated, "Police misconduct can translate into complaints against the police force, and these complaints carry large economic and social cost" (p. 2). Reduced public trust in law enforcement may result in police officers' inability to carry out their duty of serving the local community effectively.

A need for a higher level of transparency and accountability of law enforcement officers exists through the United States (Ready & Young, 2015). These researchers examined the impact that BWCs have on officers' use of force and on citizens' complaints. However, these researchers did not examine how citizens perceived the usage of BWCs on their levels of trust of law enforcement. The results of this study may inspire other researchers who have an interest in the effectiveness of BWCs to develop questions for future examination of this phenomenon. In addition, others who can benefit from the results of this study could include the local police department, other police departments from areas similar to the setting of this study, and citizens from the general population who are calling for increased transparency among police officers on patrol.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, exploratory study was to explore South Georgia citizens' perceptions of police officers' use of BWCs and how much trust the citizens have in the use of these instruments, as a whole. The study included the citizens in two communities in Georgia. Researchers who use qualitative methods are concerned with how human behavior can be explained within the framework of the social structures and

natural environment in which the behavior takes place (Austin & Sutton, 2014; Castellán, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Sutton & Austin, 2015). I explored the perceptions that citizens have of police officers' use of BWCs and how much trust the citizens have in the use of these instruments, as a whole.

Significance of the Study

This study added to existing literature on citizens' the perception of the usage of BWCs. The rise of police misconduct is becoming an issue across the United States. People tend to adhere to social norms and change their conduct once they are aware that their behavior is under observation (Morin, 2011). Becoming aware of public perceptions of police officers' use of BWCs and how much trust the citizens have in the use of these instruments, as a whole, may improve the relationships, bring about trust, increase confidence levels, promote transparency, and a create a better sense of safety among the citizens and officers. The self-awareness caused by the neutral third eye of a camera affects the psyches of officers and suspects alike, prompting suspects to cool down aggressive actions and deterring officers from reacting with excessive or unnecessary force (Harris, 2010). The results of this study could aid in regaining trust in police officers and increasing the implementation of BWCs in law enforcement agencies.

Background of the Study

Police misconduct is rising in numerous areas. Then usage of cellphones to capture incidents of police misconduct, posting the captured incidents on social media, and new media reports may contribute to the negative perception that citizens have about law enforcement officers. There is a shortage in the confidence levels of law

enforcement, trust, sense of safety, and transparency by the citizens. Lyle and Esmail (2016) stated, “Approximately 50% of the 14,800 police agencies do not report police involved homicide statistics to the FBI – UCR” (p. 1). Introducing BWCs into the daily operations of officers who work in the communities may be a resolution to improving perceptions of police officers among citizens.

Conceptual Framework

Self-awareness theory was the conceptual framework of the study. The focus of this theory is the belief that knowingly being watched positively influences an action that is deemed appropriate. According to Morin (2011), self-awareness also entails knowing that a person remains the same over time and that person is separate from the environment. Self-awareness is the capacity to take oneself as the object of thought; people can think, act, and experience, and they can also think about what they are thinking, doing, and experiencing.

The study of self-awareness is traced to Duvall and Wicklund’s (1972) theory of self-awareness. Duvall and Wicklund proposed that at a given moment, an individual can focus attention on self or focus attention on the external environment. Focusing on self enables the individual to conduct self-evaluation. When self-focused, people compare the self with standards of correctness that specify how people ought to think, feel, and behave. The process of comparing self with standards allows people to change their behavior and to experience pride and dissatisfaction with the self. Self-awareness is a focus of self-control. Since the 1970s, researchers have supported the self-awareness theory (Silvia & Duval, 2001). When people focus attention on the self, they compare the

self with standards, try harder to meet standards, and show stronger emotional response to meeting or failing to meet a standard. An individual's attempt to change self to match a standard depends on other factors, such as the perceptions other people have of the individual. When people are not self-focused, their actions rarely relate to their personal standard. Self-awareness is necessary for people to reduce disparities between their actions and their ideals (Silvia & Duvall, 2001).

Self-awareness theory remains a controversial theory. The self-awareness theory applies to clinical disorders, involving negative self-evaluation such as depression and excessive self-consciousness as well as social anxiety. One controversy in the application was whether self-awareness enables accurate judgment of the self. Self-awareness could create clearer perceptions of internal states (Silvia & Duval, 2001). Self-awareness theory was used to understand the behaviors of police officers and perceptions of citizens relative to the promotion of police officers' use of BWCs.

Research Questions

For this qualitative exploratory study, I sought to gain an understanding of the perception of the citizens relative to law enforcement officers' use of BWCs. The research questions for this study were as follows:

RQ1: How has being made aware of usage of body-worn cameras by law enforcement impacted the perception of rural area citizens?

RQ2: What is the perception of law enforcement officers' usage of **BWCs** among rural area citizens?

Nature of the Study

I used a phenomenological technique. The purpose of this qualitative, phenomenological study was to understand the perception of the citizens on the usage of body worn cameras by police officers. Prior researchers utilized a qualitative approach to measure perception relative to BWCs and police officers (Harris, 2010; Jennings, Fridell, & Lynch, 2014). The phenomenological design approach was used in the study to understand the citizens' perception on police officers' usage of BWCs. I provided an understanding on the citizens' confidence level, sense of safety, and perception on law enforcement using BWCs through a phenomenological qualitative research design.

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

1. An assumption was that access to the citizens in the two counties used in the study would be easy to acquire. Another assumption was that the identification of citizens who lived in the community for more than 5 years could be conducted through a demographic questionnaire.
2. The scope of the study included citizens who lived in the county for at least 5 years and were not challenging to access once residency was established.
3. A delimitation was that respondents were expected to respond forthrightly and genuinely to the interview questions.
4. The results of the study were limited to inhabitants of two counties in Georgia. Other neighborhoods were not within the scope of this study.

Summary

This chapter began with an introduction of the study, which included a discussion of citizens' perceptions of BWCs usage by law enforcement officers. Topics discussed in the chapter included the problem statement; purpose of the study; significance of the study; background of the study; conceptual framework; research questions; nature of the study; assumptions, limitations, scope, and delimitations; and summary. Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

A vast amount of research on police officers' usage of BWCs are available. Scholars focused on the views of the police officer and their perceptions of BWCs in conducting routine law enforcement duties (Harris, 2010; Hedberg, Kats, & Choate, 2017; Ready & Young, 2015). Though previous researchers offered insights about law enforcement officers' perceptions of BWCs in conducting routine law enforcement duties, little information is available on the perception of citizens who are policed by law enforcement officers who are wearing BWCs (Police Executive Research Forum (2014). A limited body of knowledge exists regarding citizens' perceptions of police officers' use of BWCs in small rural Southeast regions of Georgia.

There is a need for research on citizens' perceptions of officers' use of BWCs. Scholars have examined law enforcements' perceptions of BWCs. However, minimal research has focused on the citizens' perception of police officers' use of BWCs in conducting law enforcement duties.

To find sources for the literature review, research was conducted using various data sources on information. A search of literature was conducted via electronic journals and databases such as EBSCO Host, ProQuest, and Criminal Justice Quarterly. Sources for the literature were obtained and reviewed through written versions of material and peer-reviewed journal articles. I used the following search terms: *body-worn cameras*, *law enforcement*, *perceptions*, and *transparency*. This literature review includes a review

of the self-awareness theory, the deterrence theory, and insight on perceptions of the citizens on BWCs used by police officers in their law enforcement duties.

Self-Awareness Theory

Scholars have documented the behavioral effects of the theory of self-awareness. In the 20th century. Duval and Wicklund (1972) proposed that concentrating on awareness of self and its behavior enables individuals to present themselves according to their perceived notions of the expected standards they are to meet. According to the theory, people have two behavioral options when dealing with self-awareness. Duval and Wicklund stated, "People could either actively change their actions, attitudes, or traits to be more congruent with the representations of the standard or could avoid the self-focusing stimuli and circumstances" (p. 231).

Although the self-awareness theory has undergone some changes, its original concept remains consistent with the central presumption of the theory. According to the original self-awareness theory, people tend to reduce discrepancies by changing their behavior to match standards they think society has set for them to meet (Gibbons, 1990).

In the theory of self-awareness, Duval and Wicklund (1972) claimed that self-awareness affects an individual response to public to situations by making the person conscientiously aware of the him or herself. Change occur when there is steady improvement in a person's attitude and behavior, consistent behavior or mannerism, and reaction to the social standards presented through self-regulation and conduct. The effect of being under observation on intrinsic motivation depend on the observer's purpose rather than the act of observation itself (Enzle & Anderson, 1993, p. 261).

According to the self-awareness theory, people pay attention to themselves, through introspection or some other way (such as being recorded by cameras), and they judge themselves according to their values. According to Morin (2011), self-awareness also entails staying the same person across time and separate from the environment. Morin 's study showed that the expected behaviors are most often achieved when a person is aware or becomes aware of being viewed on camera.

Individuals tend to behave in a positive manner when they know that they are being observed or when they realize that they are on camera (Ready & Young, 2015). People adhere to the expected societal norm in the presence of viewers. Ready and Young (2015) stated that knowledge of a video camera reflects the behavior; in addition, officers reported higher levels of productivity and acceptance of BWCs technology. Participating officers had a heightened sense of self-awareness and presented acceptable behavior to the citizens (Ready & Young, 2015, p. 464).

Increased self-awareness, growth in the accountability of officers, and increased civility towards citizens was a result of body worn cameras usage by law enforcement (Ready & Young, 2015). Video technology can help departments achieve their goals of reducing police brutality and other unlawful behaviors. Video technology could also reduce the time needed for BWC technology to gain legitimacy (Ready & Young, 2015).

Scholars have applied self-awareness theory to explain why BWCs affect encounters between the public and police (Barak, 2016). People change their behaviors when they are being observed. It appears that having knowledge of being observed produces an expected behavior. Farrar, Barak, and Sutherland (2013) suggested that when

people realize that BWCs are present, they become cautious of their own personal behavior and tend to use socially-acceptable-behavior and a need to cooperate with rules, or laws (p. 56).

A heightened sense of self arises with the implementation of BWC that causes people to demonstrate behaviors that are lawful and socially acceptable in society. The presence of BWC can deter behaviors that are unwarranted. Generally, people tend to make an effort avoid being negatively labeled or viewed. People generally try to avoid the stigma of violating a societal norm. Knowingly being watched, people tend to comply with policies and procedures as well as abide by laws that govern public behavior. Self-awareness is a form of self-management. According to self-awareness theory,

Zaborowski and Slaski (2003) offered an explanation on the self-awareness theory and the impact it has on behavior through laboratory, clinic, and field research. These researchers claimed that situations that are relative to life events and scenarios increase self-awareness. Zaborowski and Slaski suggested that self-focusing tends to occur when an individual is trying to defend self against a real or an imaginary opponent (p. 113). An individual modifies personal behavior to minimize difference between actual behavior and that which is deemed acceptable or expected by society (Zaborowski & Slaski, 2003).

Scholars have used the self-awareness theory to predict behaviors or show the effect on a behavior. According to the self-awareness theory, focusing attention on the self-initiates an automatic comparison of self to standards (Silvia & Phillips, 2013). Silvia

and Phillips claimed that the theory enhances an understanding acceptable societal norm and how behavior can be altered.

Prashyanusorn, Fuji, Kaviya, Mitatha, and Yupapin (2010) showed that when humans become self-conscious about being watched, they often alter their conduct. Prashyanusorn al. suggested that individuals who are aware that they are being observed often embrace submissive or accepted behavior, particularly when the observer is a rule-enforcing entity. Prashyanusorn et al. provided information on why not much known about body cameras having effect on behavior, aggression and violence.

Agenda Setting Theory

Kleinnijenhuis and Rietberg (1995) reviewed the agenda setting theory and explained how the media influence thoughts by persuasion. There is a focus on information that the media wants the public to deem as important (whether it is or not). The media focuses on an issue repetitively, making those watching believe that it is an important matter. Kleinnijenhuis and Rietberg stated that highly promoted news reports tend to receive high importance from readers (p. 98). These researchers agreed that the media has the ability to influence what the viewers think and how to think. Kleinnijenhuis and Rietberg showed that publicizing recent misconduct has an effect on the perception of the citizens perception.

General Deterrence Theory

General deterrence theory relates to using coercion tactics to achieve a desired behavior. Quakensbush's (2012) explanation of deterrence theory is that deterrence is a prevention tactic to keep people from committing criminal activity for fear of the

consequences. Although, it is not the theory used as supporting information for the research study, deterrence theory provides support for the research topic. As mentioned, deterrence theory is based on the idea of coercion to achieve a desired behavior by way of using the fear of punishment to discourage people from breaking rules or laws.

Quackenbush (2010) stated that deterrence is the use of a threat (explicit or not) by one party in an attempt to convince another party not to upset the status quo.

Deterrence theory suggests that the use of punishment is designed to deter unruly or unlawful behavior. Generally, deterrence happens when people see that the outcome is undesirable. According to Quackenbush (2010) deterrence is the use of a threat (explicit or not) by one party in an attempt to convince another party not to upset the status quo. Deterrence theory leads to the prediction that punishing those individuals who have done wrong could reduce their likelihood of doing wrong again.

Ariel (2016) performed research on the Denver Police Department. Ariel's findings suggest that the behavior of individuals change when they become aware of the fact that they are being observed. The author used the theoretical concepts of the deterrence and self-awareness theories to show that people abide by social correctness when they know that they are being observed. When people know that they are being observed or recorded, they tend to change their conduct or behavior. Being observed or knowingly being recorded causes a change in people's conduct/behavior. The study shows that compliance is a factor of becoming aware of your actions being watched or recorded. Combining theories revealed arrest rate were greater in areas in which police officers did not use body cameras or recording.

Body-Worn Camera

Lucianetti (2011) defined a BWC as the primary portion of the digital camera which contains the controls, the liquid crystal display (LCD), the internal image processor, and the associated circuitry. The camera body, usually in the shape of a rectangle, sometimes contains a built-in lens (such as with beginner-level, point and shoot cameras). With an advanced camera body (such as with a digital single-lens reflex [SLR] camera), the lenses possibly can be removed from the camera body and referred to as interchangeable lenses. Numerous factors might impact upon policy divergence or convergence at different times. Local discourses and practices strongly were influenced by the different national and local politics on crime prevention and security, as well as by different normative framework and governance patterns.

Widely publicized fatalities in the United States gained the attention of many citizens and political figures. Throughout the nation, calls for the usage of BWCs by law enforcement officers represent efforts to promote accountability, transparency, and fairness among law enforcement officers on duty. The BWC technology must be used properly, consistently, and uniformly. According to Taylor (2016),

Cameras could be considered the equivalent of the police notebook, but only if it is accepted that pages of the notebook can be rewritten, edited, modified; even torn out entirely. That is why redaction, or more specifically, limiting the discretion of police officers to select when to record, is critical to ensuring they bring greater transparency, fairness and accountability. (p. 131)

BWCs are a tool that can be used to improve conduct and behavior. Officers and citizens put forth their best behavior and follow the rules when it is known that a BWC is present (White, 2014). In addition, White pointed out, there is gap in literature and

additional studies are warranted to show the view of the citizens on BWC technology used by the police and views and perception of the citizens regarding BWCs.

Research conducted by White (2014) provided supporting evidence that citizens are more trusting of police officers who are equipped with BWCs. Data transmitted via BWCs offer an accurate timeline of events as they occur. One of the studies used to gather data in this research is the Mesa study. The Mesa study showed that there was a decline in complaints against officers who used BWCs versus those who did not use the BWC technology. Finding from the Mesa study also showed that there was an improvement in the behaviors of officers who used BWC.

Boivin, Gendron, Faubert, and Poulin (2017) conducted two experiments with students, employees from a university, and officers to determine whether or not the presence of BWCs posed an avenue for bias. In these experiments the participants were presented the same visual instruments but used different visual aid. The outcome of the experiment recorded different perspectives from the participants. This experiment showed e that people perceived things differently.

BWCs are tools that allow law enforcement interaction with the public to be viewed in accordance to the occurrence. The presence of a BWC is a way to promote accountability and transparency. According to Boivin et al., (2017) in this study, the explanation of BWC is as follows:

A BWC is a device intended to capture and record police encounters. Usually located on the front of an officer's shirt, on his/her shoulder, or mounted on his/her glasses, it is designed to provide a first-person perspective on interventions and create a potentially permanent digital video recording of police encounters. BWCs are often presented as an invaluable tool for police organizations and are expected to increase accountability and transparency (p. 126).

BWCs are presented as a general deterrence stimulus that is likely to affect the behavior of those involved in a filmed police intervention because “they encourage both self-awareness as well as some evaluation of the social desirability of the actions being carried out” (p. 127).

As recently pointed out by Ariel, Sutherland, Henstock, Young, Drover, Sykes, and Henderson (2018), scholars have applied self-awareness theory to explain why BWCs affect encounters between the public and police, with its most immediate manifestation being a reduction in the use of force by and complaints against police. Like most studies and Wicklund’s explanation of the Self-Awareness theory; the authors believe that a person becomes cognitively aware of their mannerisms and conform to the expected when knowingly being monitored.

One of the areas the study seeks to understand is at what point self-awareness takes control when using body-worn cameras. Self-awareness becomes apparent at the moment all parties become or are made aware of a video recording is in progress. Self-awareness is not only a phenomenological concept but is also susceptible to manipulation to the point that society can utilize this body of knowledge in the regulation of behavior (Ariel, Sutherland, Henstock, Young, Drover, Sykes, & Henderson, 2018, p. 21). The researchers also found that the number of assaults on officers was significantly reduced by 61%, with a reliable downward trend in eight out of ten departments (Ariel, Sutherland, Henstock, Young, Drover, Sykes, & Henderson, 2018, p. 36).

There is meta-analysis of the evidence from 44 studies on the use of body cameras have shown that the mechanism works in principle. Body cameras caused a modest (16%) decrease in crime in experimental areas compared with control areas. However, this overall result was largely driven by the effectiveness of body cameras being worn in many venues, which caused a 51% decrease in crime but not in more serious or violence crimes. According to Braga, and Weisburd (2012), in a similar camera experiment, speed cameras were found to reduce the incidence of speeding, road traffic crashes, injuries and deaths. A meta-analysis of 35 rigorous studies has found that, compared with controls, the relative reduction in proportion of vehicles speeding was up to 65% and up to 44% for fatal and serious injury crashes.

The information that the Harvard Law Review presents offers insight to the issue of body worn cameras and the usage of them by law enforcement and interactions with civilians. Evaluating the misconduct through the lens of a BWC through the study promotes a method of deterrence for the use of certain unacceptable behaviors that negatively influence the perception of the people in the communities. In Harvard's article it evaluates body cameras as measures to evaluate excessive use of force and deter misconduct of law enforcement officers. The incident, which occurred in Staten Island, New York, was used to show the necessity of equipping officers with BWCs. The notoriety of the incident brought forth support and awareness to some stakeholders and federal funding from President Barack Obama to assist law enforcement agencies in the purchase of BWCs. This technology is likely to reveal instances of police misconduct,

reform police (and civilian) behavior, and build trust between the police and the community, all of which provide strong justifications for adoption (HLR, 2015).

Perceptions

Publicity on the fatal encounters between officers and citizens has contributed to people disconnect and lack of trust of law enforcement. Although incidents among law enforcement officers and the public have been occurring continuously, it seems to be a new era because of the widely publicized visuals by various media streams. The documented circulation of vicious photos and/or video “incidents of police violence gained enough momentum and attention to receive coverage by traditional media, to greatly magnifying effect” (Stalcup & Hahn, 2016, p. 492). The effect has dimmed the views of the people on the morals, ethics, professionalism, conduct, and increased their skepticism on law enforcement. BWCs pilot programs are being implemented into some law enforcement agencies in order to acquire data to shed light on problem areas and insight on avenues to restore what has been broken. Some findings support the citizen’s concern of misconduct.

One study revealed police misconduct and unethical practices. Half of the car antennas in one Los Angeles patrol division were found to have been sabotaged by officers in 2014, while in Chicago a full 80% of the dash-cam videos lacked audio due to what the department itself described in late 2015 as officer error and intentional destruction (Balko, 2016). According to Kindy and Tate (2015) investigations by the Department of Justice produced findings of intentional damage to equipment, officers

would simply not turn on the cameras, manually block the lens, or have mysterious malfunctions.

Authors Coudert, Butin, and Le Métayer performed a study in 5 countries to research the impact that occurs from body worn cameras on society. Research for this was inspired from the shooting which occurred in 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri. The study mentions that the advancement of technology is becoming more prevalent and a necessity in society. The analysis shows that there are positive findings for using and/or implementing the use of body worn cameras. The use of body cameras can promote transparency, accountability, and protection. They also pose a question to the invasion of privacy.

The author's research is viable to this type of research. The research produces outcomes that support the reasoning for the study and concerns. The theoretical approach to the study promotes deterrence and shows how the theory is relevant to the use of body worn cameras. A research study can be implemented and measured based upon the findings of the researchers.

Some of the literature from Hedberg, Katz, and Choate suggests that, there is a need for body worn cameras but there needs to be more research directed towards efficiency in its ability to reduce difficult situations that occur between police and citizens. In a replication of a research study, Culhane, Boman, and Schweitzer; noted that the perception of the citizens can be influenced by video evidence and that the citizens in that community of the study were in favor of the use if body worn cameras by law enforcement. In body-worn cameras for police accountability, opportunities and risk,

Coudert, Butin, and Le Metayer elaborate on their position that body worn cameras can be related to enforcing expected behaviors.

Coleman (2012) study offers insight to the science in our specialization by offering information, literature and statistics that will show there is a need for different forms of surveillance, while showing that there will be growth economically, politically and culturally. The honesty of the officers, the actual operation of the cameras and the citizens prior experience with police are not known.

In this article it is suggested that technology is important in the area of law enforcement by giving details on the value of body cameras, how it gives the public a better sense of security and assurance that their concerns are being addressed. The article written by Coleman deepens my understanding of the topic by offering statistics from studies that have been completed. This article brings to light and makes the reader aware of some of the concerns of the citizens and law enforcement. The article provides evidence that the usage of body worn cameras are worth examining in order to create an increase in civility and offering transparency to the citizens from law enforcement.

The study on my topic would advance the science in our specialization by offering information, literature and statistics that will show there is a need for different forms of surveillance, showing that there will be growth economically, politically and culturally. The research was done over the course of 12 months or more, the study sought the input from the citizens in various communities and the study was done on many different agencies.

The findings of the research raised new questions to Coleman. Coleman (2012) pondered how is this expansive culture of surveillance reconfiguring concepts of self, other, deviant and normal? How are power relations misrecognized and misrepresented in an era of mass looking? It is suggested that further research may be needed new forms of surveillance and how to prevent those in a position of power from impeding feedback from the body cameras in order to present transparency.

The implications of these findings for psycho-social theories and particularly for our understanding of self-awareness are meaningful but perhaps not unexpected. Timan and Oudshoorn (2012) anticipated that the videotaped interactions will experience fewer incidents of use of force, because of the fundamental tendency of rational beings to exhibit more desirable behaviors when they know under surveillance, particularly in scenarios that require them to follow rules. What is surprising, however, is that as far as we can tell this is the first field experiment that has tested this paradigm in real-life settings - at least under these conditions. Mobile cameras are "everywhere" but at the same time nowhere in social science research, insofar as studying their effect on compliance is concerned.

The promotion of accountability and transparency is on the rise. Recent events that involve police officers and local citizens and the need to instill/ or increase citizens' trust have been the cause of implementing body-worn cameras. No matter the length of time of an interaction between law enforcement and citizens, there will be an impression made. Citizen perception of law enforcement officers is shaped by the interaction between the two. Mazerolle, Antrobus, Bennett, and Tyler's (2013) review revealed that

the extant literature has demonstrated a direct link between procedurally just encounters and citizen perceptions of the police specific to the encounter and results clearly show, under field trial conditions, that even a single, short, positive encounter with police directly shapes citizen views about the actual encounter as well as their general orientations toward the police (p. 57).

Wu and Sun (2010) examined college students and their perception of police officers. In this study the individuals being studied are comprised of college students from two of the Chinese universities. The researchers also examine the perception of the public. The studied benefits include the recognition of perception and contributing factors. Surveys were used to obtain data in this research.

Ultimately, it was revealed that the younger college students and the publics' trust in the police was low. Neither social class, income, nor educational demographics proved to be a factor on the outcome of perception. According to Wu and Sun (2010), Chinese citizens were less positive about the competence and integrity of the government, more worried about public safety, crime, and corruption, and less satisfied with their quality of life, they were more likely to have low trust in the police (p. 96).

Researchers, Culhane, Boman, and Schweitzer describe the results of a prior research study and its outcomes as well as the outcome of a replicated study which they performed. Two studies were conducted on the use of body worn cameras and the incident in Ferguson, Missouri. In one study it was shown that participants who read the transcript were more inclined to view the shooting as unjustified. Those who were given

access to video and/or audio footage viewed the shooting as being justified. In the replication of the first study, the results of the researcher's study were different.

Based on the findings the citizens were aiding to be in favor of the use of body worn cameras. In regard to behavior, it is deemed that it is less volatile and there is a reduction in aggression by both parties. The research model is one that is supportive to the necessity of research and implementation of body worn cameras. According to the researchers in this study: The results of presentation mode after the Ferguson incident, however, were distinctly different from the first study. Although the video condition resulted in more justifiable homicide certainty in Study 1, the viewing of the video in Study 2 had a starkly different and detrimental effect on participants' justifiable homicide certainty ($M = -1.71$) when compared with the audio ($M = -0.42$) and transcript ($M = -0.83$) conditions. In addition, despite the fact that video evidence was harmful to the officer's case of a justifiable homicide, participants' agreement with the idea that police should be required to wear BWCs. It appears that citizens are more supportive or understanding of the outcome of an incident when there is video recorded footage from the use of a BAC by a police officer.

Many encounters occur between law enforcement and citizens for several reasons each year. Given the pivotal role that body-worn cameras play on the accuracy and accountability during an interaction, it is important to establish transparency. While much of the research in the area of BACs focus on the perception of the officer, few focused on the perception of the citizens.

One study performed in Florida examined perception from the aspect of the citizen. It was founded that that positive perceptions of police performance and more police interaction were associated with greater perceived benefits of BWCs (Crow, Snyder, Crichlow, 2017, p. 589). This area has been somewhat neglected or overlooked, as more literature is beginning to focus on the perceptions of the citizen. Awareness is being brought to the forefront because of the publicity that several sources of media is presenting to the public.

This study uses surveys to obtain data from a focus group. The outcome of the data was constructed using software to analyze exploratory factors. Crow, Snider, and Crichlow (2017) suggested that given the dearth of information on community perceptions of BWCs, coupled with politicians, activists, and media claims that equipping police officers will reap enormous benefits (p. 600), positive change should be evident in a reduction of police brutality. Police behavior, police legitimacy, and data collection were proven to be benefits of using BWCs. The above study provided valuable information regarding the perception of citizens. The software used by the researcher proved to be useful in gaining an improved understanding of citizens' perception and some of issues that were factors that contribute to them.

Since 2014, there has been a noticeable shift in literature, emphasizing the responsibility of law enforcement to address the barriers to transparency and accountability. Self-awareness theory assists in providing insight into the behavior and manners of people when they become aware of being watched. Researchers have focused on the perception from the standpoint of law enforcement.

It was the goal of this study to describe how the perception of citizens in a small rural area is affected by the usage of BWCs by law enforcement. The next chapter will offer details on how the study was conducted, how participants were pooled, the questions asked, and how the results were analyzed.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

In this chapter, I provide an explanation on the study design for this research, as well as procedure, participants, data collection, data recording, data analysis, and ethical considerations. A synopsis of the research study design includes an explanation for why this research design was chosen for this study. The process and analysis for the collection of data are be discussed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, exploratory study was to explore South Georgia citizens' perceptions of police officers' use of body cameras. The study included the citizens in the Pike and Spalding communities. Qualitative methods are concerned with how human behavior can be explained within the framework of the social structures and natural environment in which that behavior takes place (Austin & Sutton, 2014; Castellan, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Sutton & Austin, 2015). I explored the perceptions that citizens have of police officers' use of body-worn cameras and how much trust the citizens have in the use of these instruments, as a whole.

Research Methodology

I selected the qualitative methodology because I wanted to examine the perspectives of the participants relative to their understanding of citizens' experience with police officers. The study was conducted because more research was needed on this topic. Scholars use qualitative methodology to strengthen an understanding and clarification of human connections. Sutton and Austin (2015) asserted that qualitative

researchers can access the thoughts and feelings of research participants, which can enable the development of an understanding of the meaning that people ascribe to their experiences (p. 1). Qualitative researchers develop a representation of the experience of participants from their environments.

Research Design and Approach

The nature of this study was a qualitative research method. An exploratory design was used to conduct this study. I used the qualitative exploratory approach to understand the perception of the citizens in a small South Georgia rural area on police officers' usage of body-worn camera. Qualitative data, with a focus on people's perceptions, are useful for discovering the context placed on events and processes. Perceptions are connected to the social world. The data collected through open-ended interview questions were used to reveal perceptions of police officers.

I used an interview method for collecting data. The purpose of the interview method is to obtain reliable compromise of contribution. The feedback from the questions asked were used describe how the participants perceived police offices and their conduct when they are using BWCs and when they are not. With the consent of the participants, the interviews were recorded. The interview questions will provide the data needed to answer the research questions.

The targeted sample size for the research was at least 10 but no more than 20 participants. The final sample size included 20 participants, 6 males and 14 females. The target sample was determined by the purpose of the study and the time needed to conduct and transcribe interviews. Lutz (1982) stated that "the validity, meaningfulness and

insights generated from such studies have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected, and the analytical qualities of the researcher than with the sample size” (p. 64).

Participants

Purposeful sampling was used to obtain participants for the study. Researchers using purposeful sampling to obtain participants who can provide information to answer the research questions and help the researcher to discover, understand, and gain answers to the research questions. Therefore, a sample should include participants who have the most beneficial knowledge. Scholars use purposeful sampling to select information-rich cases who can inform researchers about issues that are key elements of the purpose of the research (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2015).

The participants in this study were selected by purposeful sampling. I selected male and female citizens in two small rural counties. Agreement received from the law enforcement agency in both of the counties in Georgia to conduct the study. Participants were selected for this study for the following reasons: (a) they were accessible in the targeted counties, (b) they were of consenting age to participate, (c) their years of residence, and (d) they were assumed to have had some form of interaction or experience either positive or negative with law enforcement in their county. Palinkas et al. (2015) stated, “A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study” (p. 536).

Participants were recruited through flyers in the two counties in Georgia. Participants were of any gender, or ethnicity, or any race. Residents who reported that they have lived

in the county fewer than 5 years and were under the age of 18 were excluded. There were no other exclusion conditions. Demographic survey questions were used to show how participants met the criteria for the research. The purpose of the research was provided to the participants. Each participant was verbally notified, as well as in writing, that the option to withdraw can be used at any time without consequence during the process. Participants gave permission for all information obtained.

Procedures

The data were collected using an interview technique that involved structure and verbal communication to obtain information for the research. I used a formal written instrument, which is referred to as an interview schedule. Some interviews were conducted with a smartphone present to record the interview, and other were conducted using a survey application.

The data collected for this research were obtained in two rural counties in Georgia. The participants were informed that the duration of the interview would be approximately 60 minutes. The debriefing was a statement that I prepared that was read to the participants at the end of the interview with further instructions if necessary. Transcribed interviews and recordings were filed in a locked safe in my home office. I began to analyze the data once the data were transcribed. Creswell (1998) suggested that researchers “create and organize files as the main step in analysis” (p. 148).

I sought to understand the perception of citizens’ perspectives of police officers’ use of body-worn cameras. To clarify this understanding, the research approach was a qualitative research inquiry, using an exploratory approach. Qualitative methods are

concerned with how human behavior can be explained within the framework of the social structures and natural environment in which that behavior takes place (Castellan, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Sutton & Austin, 2015).

I explored the perceptions citizens have of police officers' use of body-worn cameras and how much trust the citizens have in the use of these instruments, as a whole. The participants included citizens in the areas in two counties in Georgia.

Research Question #1. How has being made aware of usage of body-worn cameras by law enforcement impacted the perception of rural area citizens?

Research Question #2. What is the specific perception of the usage of body-worn cameras among rural area citizens?

Ethical Considerations

Critical ethical consideration was given to the nature of this study and the effects it could have on the participants. Informed consent forms were created and provided to all volunteers who participated in this research study. In the informed consent, the participation method, the voluntary nature of participation, withdrawal options, confidentiality of information, anonymity of participants, the very minimal risk, and contact information for the researcher and instructor were detailed.

Informed consent assured that the information obtain from participants was confidential and access to the information could be obtained only by the researcher. Possible participants were advised that copies of their interview recording, and transcript were available from the author upon request and participation was one of voluntary nature. Notice was given to possible participants that transcripts with identifiers redacted

would be shared with my university faculty along with my analysis. The interview recording, and transcript are to be destroyed after a period of 5 years.

Possible participants were notified that the interview was voluntary; they could decide to take part, and still possess the option to change their mind at a later time. Notice was given that being in this interview would not pose any risks beyond those of typical daily life and that there were no benefits for participation. The researcher gained informed consent when signature confirmation was provided by the participant showing acknowledgment and understanding of the conditions of the research study.

The data s provided the participants were analyzed and coded for interpretation of data results. The information obtained from the participants in this study remain confidential and separate from informed consent to increase confidentiality and to serve as another level of protection for participants. A copy of the informed consent form can be found in the Appendix Section of the research.

Validity

The readers were afforded details to enable them to interpret the presentation of the findings. Transparency was ensured through the collection of data and the process of analysis. The deliberation of data collection in this chapter wad in safekeeping with the indication of ensuring validity during the research process. Using the accounts of the participants to analyze and interpret data was a measure being used to adhere to transparency and trustworthiness.

Summary

Chapter 3 includes a description the methodology of the research and illuminated the procedure used to select participants, to collect data , and present the approach. The aim of the study was to understand the perception of the citizens in a small South Georgia rural area, understand what the citizens deemed as a sense of safety, and understand what citizens in a small South, Georgia rural area viewed as an increase civility when police officers used BWC. Chapter 4 includes details the findings relevant to the research questions and the analysis process.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to qualitatively gain an understanding of citizens' perceptions of BWCs by law enforcement in two rural counties in Georgia. The results were obtained from data attained through interviews. Interviews served to generate perception of participants from citizens in the two rural counties selected for this study. To determine the residency of the participants, they were asked to show proof of at least a 5-year residency. In this chapter, I present the results of the data and provide a description of the participants in this study.

Recruitment

Over a 3-day period in the Winter of 2019, flyers were posted throughout public locations in two counties in Georgia. Of the 62 individuals who responded to the request for participants, only the first eligible 20 individuals who were deemed eligible and signed their informed consent forms were invited to contribute. Of the initial 20 participants, all willingly and successfully completed the interview. Each participant resided in their county for at least 5 years and was older than 18 years of age. The opinion of researchers varies for determining sample size. The goal was to attain saturation. Creswell (1998) suggested that a sample size between 20 to 30 be used when conducting interviews and between five and 25 participants should be included in a phenomenological study.

Participants

Each participant was recruited for the study via a recruitment flyer placed at one of the public establishments. All participants willingly volunteered to take part in the

interviews for this study. The interviews were used to reflect the citizens' perception of law enforcement usage of BWCs. Purposive sampling was used to select participants.

Participation in the study was of a voluntary nature, and the participants reserved the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The participants were required to have lived in the specified communities for at least 23 months. Flyers were placed in local consenting establishments to request participants. Those who were interested made contact with me to express interest to participate. The names and addresses of the participants will remain confidential. To conduct the study, approval was gained through Walden University's institutional review board. Twenty participants were interviewed for this research. The sample was composed of six males and 14 females from the age range of 18 to 67-years-old. Eleven participants were from one county in Georgia, and nine participants were from another county in Georgia.

Data Collection and Storage

Interview results were coded manually, and theme were created from the codes. Analysis for the interviews were conducted in sets of four and coded. At the completion of all 20 interviews and coding, the data were analyzed to produce themes. The coding results presented 23 codes and seven themes. Each line of the transcripts was coded manually. I then analyzed again to find similarities in the within the codes. I used Microsoft Word to produce visual images of the themes. I used word count in Microsoft as another source of finding codes and similarities. After analyzing the codes, themes were created. More than 10 open codes were assigned to each developed theme. Every participant verbalized the descriptive used to create the themes.

To conduct a reliable research, I complied with all legal and ethical processes that are instructed, required, and outlined by the IRB at Walden University. With the proper support from the dissertation chair and member, I submitted the proper paperwork and received consent forms from participants to ensure the highest level of integrity for this qualitative study. Upon gaining approval from IRB, data collection began.

A councilwoman at the city hall provided permission for me to use the space in the facility as the research site for interviews. The site used is not an educational establishment and does not have IRB; therefore, site permission was obtained via written format from the councilwoman and submitted to Walden's IRB for approval. After receiving approval and all written permissions, interviews were conducted.

Each participant was interviewed and recorded. Consent forms were provided prior to the interview. Consent forms were reviewed, discussed, agreed upon, and signed at the beginning of each interview. Informed consent, an explanation of the study, and implications of the study were used as measures to protect the participants. Interviews were recorded on a password-protected private computer that was stored and locked in a file cabinet in my home office. All interviews were transcribed by me and stored in a locked file cabinet in my home office. No identifying marks or information were left on the transcripts nor associable content prior to data collection. The collected interviews and transcripts did not contain names or identify the participants.

Data Analysis

Completed interviews were the only data analyzed within the study. Each interview was transcribed and typed. Each interview was listened to several times to

process and fully gain an understanding of the data before being typed. The typed copy was used to highlight mark-ups and notations for relevance prior to being transferred to a protected computer copy. Remarks that were descriptive and explanatory to understanding perception were notated. Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules (2017) stated, “During coding, researchers identify important sections of text and attach labels to index them” (p. 6). Themes were developed from the codes, and the paper copies were shredded and destroyed via burning. A word count was conducted in Microsoft on the interviews of each of the 20 participants’ interviews after manual codes were done and themes were created.

Data Verification

Transcripts were verified through a peer debriefing process. Peer debriefing ensures validity and helps eliminate any presence of researcher bias. An impartial peer was provided with a copy of the interview with no transcribing and a transcription copy of the interviews from the research. The peer notated areas that were agreed upon and those that were disagreed upon.

To eliminate the presence of the possibility of researcher bias, I divulged that I hold a peace officer certification and work in a high max correctional facility where the officers are equipped with body-worn cameras. My employment experiences did not produce any expectations prior to or during the interviews. Each interviewee’s experience was listened to objectively.

Results

I found that the majority of the participants were more comfortable having interactions with law enforcement officers who wore body-worn cameras. I also found that the majority of the participants believed that the usage of body-worn cameras promoted transparency and civility and increased trust between the citizens and law enforcement. Most of the responses from citizens relative to police officers using BWC were positive. Only a few participants expressed negative perceptions on interactions with law enforcement.

Identified Themes

The data collected through the interview process were analyzed by a coding and theme method. The analysis process led to the creation of codes and themes linked with the interview data collected from the interview questions asked to the citizens in selected counties. The coded data were then used to create themes. There were seven main themes identified from the collected responses of the citizens from the interviews:

- Wearing body-worn cameras
- Body-worn camera usage
- Experience
- Not wearing body-worn-cameras
- Law enforcement officers
- Negative interaction
- Positive interaction

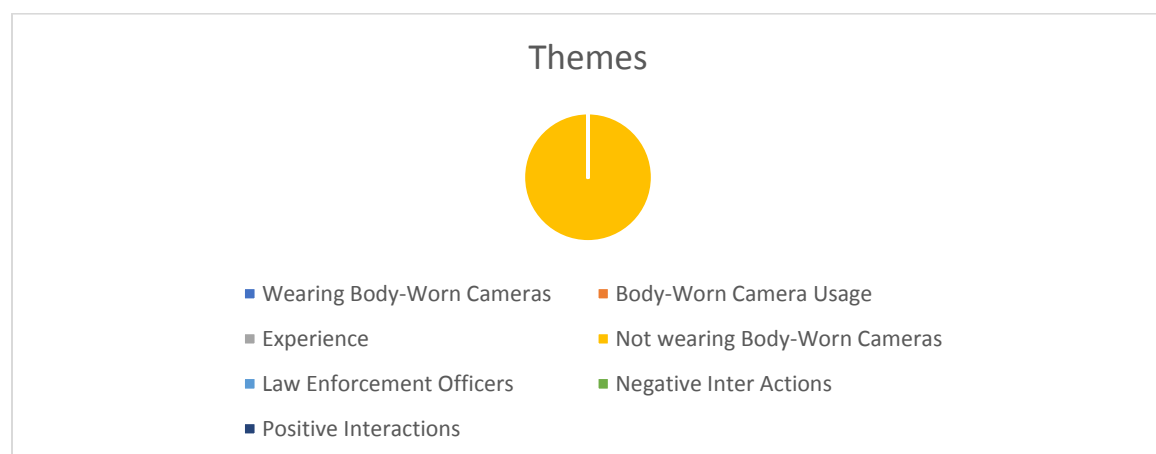


Figure 1. *Themes*

More than 10 open codes assigned to each developed theme. Every participant verbalized the descriptive used to create the themes. The seven themes were created from the analysis of the interview responses that were gathered from the participants from the following interview questions:

1. How would you describe your trust in law enforcement officers who wear body-worn cameras in your community?
2. How would you describe your feelings about the implementation of body-worn cameras on law enforcement officers?
3. How do you describe your observation of the attitude of law enforcement officers when you have witness them approach others?
4. Tell me about your experience/interaction with law enforcement officer(s).
5. Tell me about an experience you've had being approached by law enforcement wearing a body-worn camera. How did it feel being approached by a law enforcement officer wearing a body-worn camera?

6. Tell me about an experience you have had being approached by law enforcement not wearing a body-worn camera. How did it feel being approached by a law enforcement officer not wearing a body-worn camera?
7. How has your interaction with law enforcement officers affected your current beliefs of law enforcement officers who use body-worn cameras.
8. Has current media coverage on alleged police brutality played a role on your perception of law enforcement and the use of body-worn cameras? Why or why not?
9. Have there been any noticeable changes in behavior of citizens since the implementation body-worn camera usage by law enforcement? Please describe what you have observed.
10. Have there been any noticeable changes in behavior of officers since the implementation of body-worn camera usage by law enforcement? What have you observed?
11. Is there anything else that you would like to add before we end?
12. Please verbally acknowledge whether you would like to opt in or opt out of receiving an email link to access the completed research study and its results.
The detailed responses to the interview questions that were used to create the themes are listed as follows:

Question1: How would you describe your trust in law enforcement officers who wear body-worn cameras in your community?

Participant 1: There is still distrust because it can be altered. Can you clarify it?

The operation and functions of the body camera can be manipulated.

Participant 2: It helps increase trust because it presents transparency.

Participant 3: I am leery of officers in any situation and my trust is no different from when they wear body cameras.

Participant 4: I believe that law enforcement officers should not be in control of their cameras. If they weren't in control of the cameras, it would be beneficial.

Participant 5: I would feel safe to know that the facts could be seen. I would really trust them if I knew that they were being truthful with the video footage and not able to control the camera.

Participant 6: I am more likely to trust law enforcement officers who wear body cameras.

Participant 7: I live in a small town and know many of the officers on the force in my community. I trust the officers in my community. Some of them were classmates in high school

Participant 8: I do not trust them. I have had bad experiences with so called officers of the law.

Participant 9: When I know that an officer is wearing a body camera, I feel more at ease and more trusting of the officer.

Participant 10: I still will not trust an officer. I have seen officer video and other video of the officers doing wrong and the officers are still not getting punished.

Participant 11: I trust the officer with a body camera because the camera can record the entire encounter.

Participant 12: I feel that law enforcement officers feel that they are above the law, so I don't trust an officer with a body camera or without a body camera.

Participant 13: I will trust an officer wearing a body camera. I think that officers are generally trying to do a good job.

Participant 14: I would be skeptical of an officer with a body camera. They may start off doing things by the book because they know that they are being watch but after a while they may become desensitized to the body camera.

Participant 15: I trust an officer with a body camera. It makes me feel safer and I know that if something happened that the video footage will tell the true story.

Participant 16: My trust in law enforcement officers who wear body-worn cameras are more positive than negative.

Participant 17: I till trust officers who wear body cameras.

Participant 18: I would describe my trust with law enforcement as divided. I have seen may law enforcement employees who seem to have respect for people of all races and gender. I have also seen some that were not so great.

Participant 19: I trust officers who wear body cameras more than I trust officers who don't wear body cameras, so I am more trusting of officers who wear body-worn cameras.

Participant 20: I have only had two experiences with officers wearing body-worn cameras and they both were at a license and registration checkpoint.

Question 2: How would you describe your feelings about the implementation of body-worn cameras on law enforcement officers?

Participant 1: Body cameras are great if they are used properly. I would like them to be implemented in all law enforcement departments.

Participant 2: I have positive feelings on the implementation of required body cameras.

Participant 3: I am hopeful that implementing body cameras will create a better relationship with officers and the people.

Participant 4: I am suspect of the implementation of the body camera. Why? Because the cameras are controlled by the officers.

Participant 5: I would feel okay with that for additional support.

Participant 6: I support the idea of body worn cameras on law enforcement officers.

Participant 7: I welcome the implementation of body worn cameras. I think that if it is used correctly that it is a great for the safety of the people and officers. It has to be used properly.

Participant 8: I'm glad that they are being implemented by some police departments. The sooner the better, hopefully. All officers need to have them and should not be able to control them.

Participant 9: It makes me happy to know that body-worn cameras are being implemented for the officers to use.

Participant 10: I will be glad to see body cameras implemented.

Participant 11: I support implementing body cameras. It may help officers do a better job and not be so nasty.

Participant 12: I want body cameras to be used everywhere. I want officers to be exposed for the underhanded things that they do.

Participant 13: I approve the implementation of body cameras. It makes me feel more pride in the officers that protect and serve.

Participant 14: Although it really doesn't matter. I would rather that officers have body cameras, so they should be implemented.

Participant 15: I welcome the implementation of body cameras.

Participant 16: My feelings about law enforcement officers wearing body-worn cameras are more positive than negative if the cameras are constantly on at all times.

Participant 17: I still trust officers who wear body cameras.

Participant 18: I feel like the implementation of body cameras could be a great thing. In many cases they do help provide much needed evidence. However, there are many officers getting away with too much, even with the camera evidence. I do not find that to be fair.

Participant 19: I would say that I feel that they are very necessary in this day and time. I feel that it should be mandatory for all police departments to implement using body cameras for the protection of the people.

Participant 20: I think that the implementation of body-worn cameras is very necessary with the events that are occurring in today's society. Officers are being exposed for so much corruption.

Question 3: How do you describe your observation of the attitude of law enforcement officers when you have witness them approach others?

Participant 1: Most officers appear to be decent.

Participant 2: I have mixed attitudes towards officers. Sometimes they are positive and other times they are negative. It's different depending on the officer.

Participant 3: The officers seem to be entitled. Can you elaborate on your answer? Officers think that they are superior, and that the camera will make you do what they want in any situation.

Participant 4: It depends on the situation. Can you be more specific? Umm, there are times that officers have been respectful and there are times that they have been excessive with their mannerism and reactions.

Participant 5: I observe how the officers are so overly authoritative.

Participant 6: Officers are more professional when approaching citizens because they believe they are being watched and judged.

Participant 7: I have witness encounters that have been calm. I have witnessed encounters where I think that the officers went into overkill. They called for backup when there were three officers on the scene and one suspect. The suspect was already handcuffed. Some officers are cocky.

Participant 8: I hate to see them coming or approach anyone else. I really hate dealing with them.

Participant 9: I have seen officer approach people in the store because they were called, and they handled the situation well. It was two female officers. I thought that they were kind while doing their job.

Participant 10: I have seen them in passing. The officer was standing outside of the car and getting the driver's information through the window. I didn't stay around to see the whole scenario.

Participant 11: I have seen others approached by officers and said to myself that I was glad that it wasn't me. It was a car with a driver and no passengers but there were three police cars on the scene. I didn't know the details, but I didn't think that many officers were warranted.

Participant 12: I've seen the nasty attitude that an officer had when telling a homeless guy to get out of the parking lot at a fast food restaurant. I didn't think that the officer had to be so harsh.

Participant 13: I observed an officer with a caring demeanor. I guess that officer was off duty because he was shopping. A child was on the aisle crying because it wandered off from the parent. I'm assuming. The officer was gentle in approaching the child and calming her down. The officer stopped his shopping and sat with the child until the parent was identified. He paid for snacks for the kid while waiting and just talked with her.

Participant 14: Honestly, when I see an officer involved with someone else, I continue on with my business.

Participant 15: I have observed officers approach others and be cordial.

Participant 16: My observation of the attitude of law enforcement officers that approach others have been both positive and negative. In my opinion an officer wearing a body camera at the time and is not turned off, could defuse any negative situation.

Participant 17: In my observation, most of the officers have been nice when approaching others.

Participant 18: I have always seen the more positive experiences when I have seen law enforcement with other individuals, I have only seen many of the harsh things on television, often covered by the news.

Participant 19: My personal observation has been that female officers seem to have a better bedside manner so to speak in their approach. Male officers can tend to be more aggressive with males and intimidating with females.

Participant 20: In my experiences they have been kind of smug.

Question 4: Tell me about your experience/interaction with law enforcement officer(s).

Participant 1: I try to stay away from officers and not have any interactions with them.

Participant 2: My interactions have been mostly positive.

Participant 3: I don't have any experience with officers outside of the interactions from a minor traffic stop.

Participant 4: Bias due to relationship with an officer. My experience was one of a personal manner, so I can't speak on this question.

Participant 5: The officer provided a greeting, but it wasn't well received because I was so tensed even though, I was innocent of any wrong doing.

Participant 6: I've had several good experiences with law enforcement officers, and a few bad experiences. Most of the time they are alright, but there has been a select few that have used his position to bully me, intimidate me, or scare me.

Participant 7: Most times, I have a pleasant experience with law enforcement. I have a brother who is an officer in Decatur, Georgia, so I have to be open minded when dealing with police officers.

Participant 8: I hate to be your stereotypical black male, but they treat black men like they are all drugs dealers and stupid. They act like a black man doesn't work hard in order to have nice cars. They assume that I am dealing in illegal activity. I'm too big and too old to be doing illegal things and running from the police.

Participant 9: My interaction with a police officer was when I was pulled over for speeding. The officer was direct but not rude. I got a ticket, but it was my fault for speeding.

Participant 10: Officers come to the place where I work to eat many times. I provide them with good customer service but still don't want to meet them outside of my work. They are pleasant when they come in to eat.

Participant 11: I had an interaction with an officer at school once. The officers were checking lockers and had dogs with them. I thought that it was funny that one of the officers had a very small dog. The officer told me that he preferred the small dog when doing school checks because kids are less afraid.

Participant 12: I have interacted with law enforcement at football games. The officers are always in a group and all standing at the same metal detector. They are just waiting for someone to set off the metal detector.

Participant 13: I interacted with an officer who responded to my car accident. The officer took the report. Gave out insurance information and told me where to pick up my police report.

Participant 14: I interacted with an officer who pulled me over for a traffic violation. He was very condescending and made snide underhanded remarks. There was no need for some of the smart remarks that were made.

Participant 15: I interacted with officers at a funeral. One of the kid's father was killed in the line of duty. Many officers from all over came to attend the kid's graduation and the funeral.

Participant 16: My experience and interaction with law enforcement officers have been mainly positive because I try 100 percent of the time to comply with their commands.

Participant 17: In my interaction with a law enforcement officer, I cried. I got pulled over for the first time and cried because I was scared that I was in trouble.

Participant 18: For the most part, the officers that I have seen or had encounters with, they were more on the positive side. They were very positive, they smiled. Some of them speak in passing.

Participant 19: One of my experiences with an officer was when I made a police report when my vehicle was stolen. One officer did a great job after the vehicle was

found. He sat with me until the tow truck arrived. It took the tow driver forever because he went to the wrong address. The officer who took the report did his job but it seemed like he was trying to make me feel a little stupid for not knowing my tag number.

Participant 20: My experiences have been at a license and registration checks. The officer offered no greeting, he was straight to the point with a conceited demeanor.

Question 5: Tell me about an experience you've had being approached by law enforcement wearing a body-worn camera. How did it feel being approached by a law enforcement officer wearing a body-worn camera?

Participant 1: I have been approached by an officer with a body camera during a traffic stop. I was okay with being approached and had my license and insurance waiting for the officer.

Participant 2:

The majority of my interactions with an officer has been positive. Can you provide details? I have recently been through a road block. The officer approached with a mile when he requested to see my license and registration. I got kind of nervous and was having trouble getting my documents out. The officer was patient and told me not to be nervous and take my time. It is something about having an officer standing over you with a flashlight shining on you that gets me discombobulated. Anyway, I finally gathered my documents and presented them to the officer. He viewed them and smiled and told me to have a good evening.

Participant 3: I was worried when I was approached during a traffic stop by an officer wearing a body camera. I have not had an experience with an officer wearing a body camera.

Participant 4: I think that I was rather calm when I saw that the officer had on a body camera.

Participant 5: If the officer was wearing a body camera, I was not aware. I am too nervous to pay attention to outside factors other than giving the information that is asked of me. I don't even look at the officer's face or badge.

Participant 6:

I felt safer when the policeman has approached me and wore a camera. I was traveling out of state and was pulled over for speeding, the officer had a camera that snapped on the shoulder of his uniform. He seemed very careful with his words and maintained his composure.

Participant 7: I've been approached by both. I like knowing that an officer has on a body-worn camera. I feel more at ease for some reason when I see that an officer has on a body-worn camera.

Participant 8: Regardless, I feel that the judgement and unnecessary questions are about to begin as soon as they approach.

Participant 9: I was approached by an officer wearing a body camera in road block. I was still nervous.

Participant 10: I am always nervous about interaction with law enforcement. I was nervous even when I saw the body cam.

Participant 11: I felt safer when the policeman has approached me and wore a camera

Participant 12: I obliged to the officer's request or demands but I don't feel comfortable. I don't feel comfortable knowing that there is a body camera present. I even had the officer let me know the encounter was being recorded.

Participant 13: I felt more relieved when the policeman has approached me had a camera on.

Participant 14: When I was approached by an officer wearing a body camera, I started my phone recording to also record the interaction.

Participant 15: Being that I was stopped because of my neglect to fully stop at a stop sign, I wasn't upset by being stopped by an officer who wore a body camera. I was glad to see that the body camera was being used.

Participant 16: My experience was a positive one when approached by law enforcement wearing a body-worn camera. I felt pretty good and safe being approached by a law enforcement officer wearing a body camera because I knew that everything was being recorded.

Participant 17: My experience was okay. At first, I didn't know what that box was that was hooked on the officer's shirt. I inquired about it and the officer told me what it was.

Participant 18: From my memory, I have only had one experience with law enforcement wearing a body camera. This happened when I was rear ended by an 18-wheeler. The officer used the body camera to ask myself and my passenger what happened during this event.

Participant 19:

A body camera is something that I start looking for whenever I may have interactions with police. If on foot I look from the face, then directly to the chest. If in a car, I start looking out my rearview mirror to look for a body camera. I was approached by an officer wearing a camera during a license checkpoint. I guess that's what it's called. The officer motioned for me to pull up and let the window down. He advised that I was being recorded on his body-camera and asked for my license and registration. Then said, "Be safe and have a nice day". I felt okay; the officer was professional.

Participant 20:

Again, in my experiences have been at a license and registration checks. The officer offered no greeting, he was straight to the point with a conceited demeanor. The officer made me feel like I was bothersome to him for coming through the checkpoint.

Question 6: Tell me about an experience you have had being approached by law enforcement not wearing a body-worn camera. How did it feel being approached by a law enforcement officer not wearing a body-worn camera?

Participant 1: I felt intimidated by the officer's presence.

Participant 2: I felt that the officers in my experiences who did not have body-worn cameras were less professional than those who wore body cameras.

Participant 3: I was fearful and terrified when I was approached by an officer who was not wearing a body camera.

Participant 4: I was nervous when I was approached. The officer did not have on a body camera either.

Participant 5: I was not knowledgeable of the fact because of the same reasoning that I provided in the previous question. I feel that I somehow haven't been doing my civic duty because I am too nervous and afraid any time I am approached by an officer.

Participant 6:

I was pulled over for speeding in Fort Valley. The police officer was not wearing a camera (even though they had a camera on the dashboard). He seemed very angry and threatening. I was slightly argumentative, and his temper got the best of him, and he put unlatched his holster and put his hand on his gun to intimidate me and did a fake scare lunge with his body (keeping his feet in place). I was very shaken up by the entire experience. My uncle was very involved in the community and when he heard about it from my mom that night, he called and complained to the Chief. The chief pulled the camera footage from the dashboard

camera and they suspended the officer and he was put on probation. Also, that was not the officer's first complaint of bullying and using unnecessary force.

Participant 7: I've been approached by both. I like knowing that an officer has on a body-worn camera. I feel more at ease for some reason when I see that an officer has on a body-worn camera.

Participant 8:

An officer once told me that he would lock up everyone in my house. My wife, my daughter, my son, and myself. The officer said that they were watching my house and noticed the friends of my son. He said that my son and his friends were smoking and dealing drugs. The officer said, that he watched my wife and I leave for work in the mornings and watched my daughter get on the school bus every morning. After this, my son's friends would come to my house and he would watch their activity. I don't mind policemen taking actions on those that are responsible for wrongdoings but don't threatened me, my wife, and my daughter, especially when you have said that I know that you all didn't have anything to do with this and could tell that you all had no knowledge to what was going on. If you know what's taking place in our absence, don't threatened the innocent black people.

Participant 9: Until recently there were no body cameras being used, so I felt a little afraid back then.

Participant 10: I am nervous when dealing with officers, but I am even more nervous to know that they don't have a body camera.

Participant 11: I am trusting that an officer will not harm me, so I am not afraid of being approached by an officer not wearing a body camera. I have been stopped by an officer not wearing a body camera.

Participant 12:

I do my best to make my interaction quick. Officers who wear body cameras make me feel some kind of way, just as well as officers who don't wear body cameras. If I had to choose, I would rather a body camera be present.

Participant 13: I was okay with being approached by an officer without a body camera because it was in the daytime. I may have felt differently if had been late night and extremely dark.

Participant 14:

I don't like to be approached either way, but I really don't want to be approached by an officer not wearing a body camera. Being approached by officers not wearing body cameras use to be the normal operation. I will have to deal with whichever situation I am put in.

Participant 15: I feel safe when I am approached by an officer not wearing a body camera. I have been situations where the officer did not wear a body camera.

Participant 16:

My experience was not as positive when approached by a law enforcement officer not wearing a body-worn camera because it was not recorded, and the officer was very rude. My feelings were not good at all being approached by a law enforcement officer not wearing a body-worn camera.

Participant 17: I cried during my experience with an officer who was not wearing a body camera. The officer was a little mean and seemed to be upset with me because he had to do his job.

Participant 18:

I have only been approached by one officer, years ago, who was not wearing a body camera. It was for speeding. I felt normal when being approached. I didn't know that I was speeding. The officer was nice about it, he greeted me and let me know what happened. There was no hint of an attitude or any negativity. Besides me speeding, it was not a bad encounter.

Participant 19:

I had an experience during a report being made for an accident report. I felt like the officer was being a card because of the accident. Looking back; the story was a little funny. My car was hit by a deer who was running beside my car. I would slow down and the deer would slow down. I would speed up and the deer would speed up. I would stop, and the deer would stop. I guess I would find it hard to believe too, if I didn't have witnesses in the car with me. I felt okay being approached because I had other people with me.

Participant 20:

Whew, the last time I interacted with an officer not wearing a body camera was many years ago. I was stopped for not making a complete stop at a stop sign. I felt chastised. The offer was like, do you know why I stopped you. When I said no, he appeared to be shocked and went into reprimand mode because he couldn't believe my response.

Question 7: How has your interaction with law enforcement officers affected your current beliefs of law enforcement officers who use body-worn cameras.

Participant 1: My interactions were pretty much the same. There were no noticeable differences between the mannerism of the officer with a body camera than the officer without a body camera.

Participant 2: I fell that body cameras are positive for both parties. Can you clarify parties? The citizens in the communities and the police officer.

Participant 3:

It has not affected my belief because it's still the same person only the added camera. I do not think the camera will change the way they think or the way they handle evidence. Can you clarify, they? The police officer.

Participant 4: Yes, it has negatively influenced my current beliefs.

Participant 5: My interactions can't be contributed to the fact that I am grateful that body cameras are good support for occurrences between law enforcement and the regular people.

Participant 6: I believe cameras keep the cops honest. I believe now that it is a tool used to hold them accountable, and they understand how footage can help them or hurt them, depending on their behavior.

Participant 7:

My interactions have made me feel resentment towards officers in certain counties. I know that there are many good officers in the world, but I have to admit that I hate seeing officers when I am in certain areas (participant frowns).

Participant 8: I've had bad experiences because I feel that the police is so judgmental with black people. I feel that they are always prejudging me, and I just don't care to deal with them (participant frowns).

Participant 9: My interactions with law enforcement has made me supportive of officers having body cameras.

Participant 10: My interactions are why I would like body cameras to be used.

Participant 11: My interactions with law enforcement has been pretty good so it hasn't affected my thoughts on using body cameras but the recent activity on the news has made me more aware and wanting body cameras to be used.

Participant 12: I am all for using body cameras because of the interactions that I have had with law enforcement. It doesn't make me trust them, but I would rather that body cameras be used.

Participant 13: My interactions with law enforcement who use body cameras has made me believe that using body cameras are a good thing. It makes me feel more secure.

Participant 14: My interactions hasn't made me change my current beliefs on officers who wear body cameras. I just don't trust them.

Participant 15: It is the news reports and not my interactions that have made me start to believe that we need body cameras to be used.

Participant 16: It was my belief that law enforcement officers should wear body cameras at all times because this protects both the officers and suspects from false and unfounded allegations.

Participant 17: This has made me believe that all officers should be equipped with body cameras anytime they have to interact with the citizen.

Participant 18:

My personal experience has not affected my view of law enforcement at all. The stories that I am seeing on the news have. It is sad to see that there are officers wearing body cameras, and there are still not consequences for their actions. I understand that there are some people who have done a crime, but the way some of these officers are conducting themselves does not seem ethical at all.

Participant 19: Because of my experiences, I would say that my beliefs are that using body cameras are needed. This is helpful for the person, the regular person and the officer.

Participant 20: My interactions has not played a role on my beliefs; the news stories have altered some of the trust that I have in police officers.

Question 8: Has current media coverage on alleged police brutality played a role on your perception of law enforcement and the use of body-worn cameras?

Why or why not?

Participant 1: Yes, it has. I see all of the brutality committed by officers and there are no consequences. The officers are brutally wrong.

Participant 2: Yes, media coverage has brought light and attention to the brutality and the high need for all officers to utilize body cameras.

Participant 3: Yes, because some officers are on edge because of the added media coverage and in my opinion, it's added stress on the officers and most human beings don't think things through in stressful situations as we should.

Participant 4: Yes, it has because all stories on the news are fake news.

Participant 5: Yes, In the order of operation in the police departments. I now believe that the higher ups play a role in the brutality either by covering up information or approving the behavior of the officer who commit these acts.

Participant 6: No. The media is biased. They never show all the great things police officers are caught doing on film. Good news is no news and is rarely news worthy to be televised.

Participant 7:

Yes, it has. It has made me want to record everything, but it also is like a slap in the face when the video footage that is shown on the news is overlooked when these police officers go to court. They can do no wrong.

Participant 8: The news media in addition to personal experience has played a role on my perception of law enforcement officers who use body cameras. People really should know who we have that are supposed to protect us.

Participant 9: Yes, it has. I believe the news is the reason that law enforcement needs body cameras. I mean it is the action of the officer, but the news makes it widely known.

Participant 10: I don't think that the news media has played a role on my perceptions. I know that it exists but not like the media wants us to believe.

Participant 11:

I don't think that the news media has played a role on my perception of the police. I think that the news is doing a good job of exposing the bad apples of the bunch, so to speak. The bad ones make it harder for those who are great at doing their jobs.

Participant 12: The media hasn't been an influenced my beliefs, it just makes others aware of police brutality.

Participant 13: Yes. The media has made me aware of things that I didn't know was going on in the world with police brutality.

Participant 14:

The news media has opened my eyes more to realize that I am not the only one who has had bad experiences with law enforcement. The body cameras just show more of the brutality that the police have been practicing.

Participant 15:

Wow, I just said that the news reports and not my interactions that have made me start to belief that we need body cameras to be used. The media has played a great role and influence on my beliefs about using body cameras.

Participant 16: Yes, current media coverage has played a role in my perception, but it cut both ways because officers who have been falsely accused have been cleared and suspects who have been falsely accused have also been cleared.

Participant 17: No, it hasn't. I tend to form my own opinion after I get more facts.

I know that the media doesn't tell the whole story and use the most ear catching phrases to grab your attention.

Participant 18:

Yes, I feel as though officers enforce harsher punishment on people of color. They are not treated fairly or treated the way they treat those of lighter skin. I believe that people should be treated equally. I feel as though an African American and White person can commit the same crime, but the African American will be shot, abused and killed without any questions being asked. I feel like if a person is white, they will be detained with minimal force. This should not be okay.

Participant 19:

I hate to say it but media has played a role on my perception on officers who use body cameras. The media has opened my eyes to what could happen and not having a body camera present can make the situation much worse. Example, I saw a new report of an officer without a body-camera planting illegal drugs on a young black male business owner and arresting him. The officer didn't know that the owner had hidden cameras. The lawyer presented the video during court. It showed the officers' actions. There are some real evil and dirty cops in this world.

Participant 20: Yes, it has. It has made me more aware of the evilness of some of those officers who are hiding behind a uniform.

Question 9: Have there been any noticeable changes in behavior of citizens since the implementation body-worn camera usage by law enforcement? Please describe what you have observed.

Participant 1: No, I haven't noticed any changes in the behavior since body cameras have been implemented.

Participant 2: This is an unknown area to me. I have not paid attention to the behavior of other citizens.

Participant 3: Many people record interactions with officers simply because of fear of what could happen.

Participant 4: No, there has not been any noticeable changes in my opinion.

Participant 5: I cannot say that there has.

Participant 6:

The human behavior door swings both ways. If a citizen is questioned, pulled over for a traffic violation, or even arrested for illegal activities, he/she is more likely to behave due to the fact the footage can be used against him/her during the conviction.

Participant 7: Not really. People just go on about their business.

Participant 8: Nope. It still makes the people that I know not want to deal with cops.

Participant 9: I think that the people are more open. I see people more willing to have conversations with police officers.

Participant 10: I think that people are feeling more comfortable with officers who are wearing the body cameras. I see the body posture. It looks more comfortable.

Participant 11: I haven't really paid attention to the behavior of others, but I think that the citizens are more open to the officers who wear a body camera because I am.

Participant 12: Yes. My people are more untrusting of officers wearing body cameras because the body cameras catch officers doing wrong and they still get off without any consequences.

Participant 13: Yes, I have. I have actually talked with others about the new body cameras. The conversations were positive, and the people are very accepting of using body cameras.

Participant 14: Believe it or not, I have. Using body cameras have made people feel better about officers. I am not one of those people, but it makes some feel better.

Participant 15: Yes. I think it has made the people as well as the officers be more compassionate to others.

Participant 16: Yes, there have been noticeable changes in citizen's behavior because they know that of a law enforcement officer is wearing a body camera, then their charge or allegation against the officer is being recorded and cannot be fabricated.

Participant 17: I have not noticed any changes in the behavior of the citizens.

Participant 18:

I do not feel like there have been changes in citizens, as far as how they behave with law enforcement. I do believe that people are speaking out more about using the evidence. They also want the use of the evidence to be fair. If we see a person cooperating with an officer, and they are still harmed, that officer should not be able to get away with their negative actions.

Participant 19:

I think so. The people seem to be more alert. It just seems that people are paying attention when dealing with an officer. They are using their own cameras to record incidents. It could be due to fear of what could happen or just as a precaution. I'm not 100% sure.

Participant 20: I haven't noticed the changes because I haven't been paying attention.

Question 10: Have there been any noticeable changes in behavior of officers since the implementation of body-worn camera usage by law enforcement? What have you observed?

Participant 1: I don't think so.

Participant 2: This is also an unknown area because I have not paid attention to how officers interact with others.

Participant 3: No, nothing has changed as far as the behavior in most officers.

Participant 4: Yes, the offices tend to be more nervous now.

Participant 5: I am not sure.

Participant 6: Police Officers are consistently professional, while wearing the body cameras.

Participant 7: No. I haven't noticed any changes in the behaviors of the officers since they have started wearing body cameras.

Participant 8: No. The officers remain the same as they have always been.

Participant 9: Yes. Officers are more compassionate.

Participant 10: I think that the officers are more comfortable with the body cameras because it also gives them a sense of security and accountability for the person that they have to manage.

Participant 11: I have seen more officers perform acts of kindness. I don't know if I can contribute it to the body cameras are something that is within them.

Participant 12: I guess I believe that the officers have altered their behaviors. Not completely but it is a start.

Participant 13: Yes. I think it is causing the officers to think more about how their actions are perceived.

Participant 14: It actually has. Some of the attitudes of the officers are better and the looks that they give you are not always one of judgement.

Participant 15: Yes. I think it has made the people as well as the officers be more compassionate to others. You got me again with the follow up question that I have same answer.

Participant 16: Yes, there have been noticeable changes in the officer's behavior because they can no longer just write a false police report, if the event is being recorded. The recorded event speaks for itself.

Participant 17: I have not noticed any changes in the behavior of the officers. They are still intimidating.

Participant 18:

I do not feel like there has been a change in officers. I do feel like some know that they will get away with the things that they are doing, so having the body cam does not make a difference to them. While there are many great law enforcement individuals, the few bad ones can cause one to have negative thoughts about law enforcement.

Participant 19:

The officers in this area seem to be more courteous. During a traffic stop that I didn't agree with, the officer stated, "I honestly believe you because I never saw your break lights and it didn't take an effort to catch up to you. He was told by another officer to give a speeding citation. This practice is not one that I agree with.

Participant 20: I don't think there has been a noticeable change from the officers that I have dealt with. They still seem to have a conceitedness to them.

Question 11: Is there anything else that you would like to add before we end?

Participant 1: No. Thank you for letting me be a part of your research.

Participant 2: No, I don't have anything to add.

Participant 3: No ma'am.

Participant 4: No, there is nothing further to add.

Participant 5: I hope that the implementation of the body cameras being used by law enforcement will save lives.

Participant 6:

I do believe the camera footage should be kept very secure, and only reviewed during a complaint or if an incident is up for question. It should not be used for live monitoring or just a general review for the officer's overall behavior.

Participant 7:

I think that having a personal relationship and friendships with officers have helped me be more open to officers. Even though, I have relationships with officers, I prefer that my interactions with them are with officers wearing body cameras.

Participant 8: No, I don't have anything else to add.

Participant 9: No. I actually enjoyed this. I didn't know what to expect but wanted to participate.

Participant 10: No, I don't.

Participant 11: No ma'am.

Participant 12: No ma'am.

Participant 13: No.

Participant 14: No.

Participant 15: No

Participant 16: The use of body cameras worn by law enforcement cuts both ways because it will free the innocent suspects who have been charged as well as, support innocent officers who have charged and vice versa for both.

Participant 17: No.

Participant 18: I would like to see the proper consequences delivered to those officers who abuse their power, when they are supposed to protect and serve citizens. I would like to see all people treated equally by law enforcement.

Participant 19: No

Participant 20: No there is not.

Summary

This chapter provided information regarding the recruitment efforts for the research study to understand the perception of the citizens in two counties in Georgia. The results of the analysis were presented in order to link to the research question. There were 20 participants who contributed to the interviews for this qualitative research model. The research was structured to understand the perception of the citizens on the usage of body-worn cameras by law enforcement officers. The participants in this study were residents of two counties, have resided in those counties for at least 5 years, and are 18 years of age or older. Results of the study signify prior interactions, beliefs, and media stories factor into thoughts of the usage of body-worn cameras by law enforcement and the perception of the citizens of two counties in Georgia.

The data analysis from the research has produced themes based on the citizens' responses from the interviews. The citizens' interviews replicated contribution on the effect of the usage of BWC by law enforcement on the citizens' perception. The participants who were interviewed for research offered their perspectives on the questions that were asked with specific attention given to the developed themes. Chapter 5 delivers an interpretation of the findings, implications, recommendations, and conclusions.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This study was conducted to explore citizens in a small rural Georgia county and their perception of the usage of body-worn cameras by law enforcement officers. I targeted citizens who lived in two counties in Georgia who had lived in the community for more than 12 months and their experiences with law enforcement who used BWC. BWC are defined as the primary portion of the digital camera that contains the controls, the LCD, the internal image processor, and the associated circuitry (Lucianetti, 2011).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were addressed according requirements of the local counties, the Belmont Report and the IRB process. Identifiable ethical issues within the research study were minimized by respecting the rules of protection from harm, obtaining informed consent, providing a right to privacy, and being honest throughout the research process. The Belmont Report outlines and identifies ethical practices that bound human participant protection, beneficence, and respect (HHS.gov, n.d.). The IRB process through Walden University implements strict protocol to protect human subjects through the application process.

Summary of Interpretations and Findings

Few scholars have focuses on the perception citizens have of police officers use of BWC. There is a need for researchers to address citizens' perceptions on the usage of BWCs by law enforcement. Literature on BWC often entails the standpoint of law enforcement officers. In recent years, scholars have started to seek the understanding of

the citizens' views of police officers' use of BWC. Demir (2018) stated, "Most of the existing BWC research has examined the impact that BWCs have on officer use of force and on citizen complaints brought against officers" (p. 130). Although previous researchers offered insight on the perceptions of law enforcement use of BWC, there is little information on the perception of the citizens about BWC used by those who are involved with law enforcement in the community. A limited body of knowledge exists on the perceptions of citizens about the use of BWC among law enforcement officers in small rural Southeast regions of Georgia.

In this study, I found that participants who live in small rural counties are in agreeance with law enforcement wearing BWC. I identified that BWC usage has led a change in the perception of the citizens BWC usage among law enforcement officers. The citizens perceived that the change in the behavior of officers was positive; however, many citizens perceived that some problems continued to exist among police officers in the way they treated citizens being arrested even though they were using BWCs. There were a few participants who noted that their experience with law enforcement has not been impacted by the use of BWCs or remained neutral in the way that they perceived officer who use BWCs. BWCs appear to play a role in the way citizens perceive trust with law enforcement interactions. The results of this study provide information for law enforcement about citizens' perceptions of police wearing body-worn cameras. The results of this study accentuated the importance of the beliefs of the people in the community. Empowering citizens and law enforcement through collaborative decision making, creating space for police peer interaction on duty, and promoting relationship

growth are paramount to a healthy, satisfied opinion about police officers using BWCs within the community.

The citizens' perceived that body-worn cameras provided a level of security, trust, and transparency. It was also mentioned that the posture of an officer is indicative of his or her demeanor. Some of the participants stated that they would not have had knowledge of the presence of the body-camera if they were not made aware of the camera by the officer. A few of the participants reported that they had negative interactions with officers in the past and during interactions with officers who were not wearing body-worn cameras. The negative interactions caused a bad memory to surface when interacting with law enforcement.

According to the self-awareness theory, people become aware of their actions and or behaviors and present a behavior that is socially acceptable when they know that they are being watched or observed. The theory is applicable to the law enforcement officers and the citizens. Citizens' statements reflected the lack of trust in officers who did not use body-worn cameras as well as a perception of more civility when interacting with officers who wore body-worn cameras. Scholars also revealed a decrease in the complaints made by citizens when BWCs were implemented. According to Ariel et al. (2018) scholars have applied self-awareness theory to explain why BWCs affect encounters between the public and police, with its most immediate manifestation being a reduction in complaints against police (p. 127). Usage and awareness of BWCs have an impact on citizens' perceptions and the behavior of officers.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

This study was exploratory in nature and only studied two rural counties in the North Georgia regions. Although the study was designed to promote findings about citizens perceptions of police officers' use of BWCs, it was not designed to exclude all limitations. Although I found that the citizens' trust in law enforcement increased with the use of BWCs, there a need for further studies to explore other issues on the subject. There is still more to learn about police officers and their experiences in conducting law enforcement duties while using BWCs. I did not try to find patterns or relationships between demographics of the people. Also, I did not explore the legal backgrounds of the participants. Future researchers may want to explore the different usages of BWCs by law enforcement officers in different locations in Georgia as well as in similar locations in other states through the nation. The citizens in the community and their perceptions are vital to their relationships with officers.

This study provided findings from responses of citizens who lived in two counties in, Georgia. Participants provided responses to 11 questions that explored their feeling about interactions they had with police officers who used BWCs. The scope of this study was limited to 20 participants. Expanding the number of participants might be useful to help researchers understand other issues such as the police officer's level of education, race, marital status, or behavior in conducting prior criminal activities while using BWCs. One key area for future research to gain a better understanding of the impact of how citizens are impacted by police officers using BWCs in other locations other than the two counties selected for this study. The researcher also recommended future research of

police officers use of BWC in metropolitan areas and other areas that are prone to high criminal activities.

Findings from the research suggest that BWCs could be beneficial to the community by increasing citizens' respect for law enforcement officers who are on duty to protect and serve them. While the results suggest that body-worn cameras may be a tool that is necessary for promoting civility, trust, and transparency in law enforcement officers, it is not the sole solution to the issue, but with other methods it seems to be beneficial. This is beneficial due to the change of behavior and or thought about civility and trust stemming from perceptions of police officers' use of BWCs and how much trust the citizens have in the use of these instruments, as a whole..

Implications for Social Change

The implication for social change from this study was to provide a better understanding of the perception of the citizens about police officers' use of BWCs and to gain knowledge about police officers behaviors that are useful for relationships between the people and law enforcement. The participants involved in this study demonstrated their personal thoughts and feelings to provide an understanding of their thought and beliefs when it comes to the usage of BWCs by law enforcement officers. Law enforcement from the two county areas in the study as well as other county law enforcement can build on the positive and negative experiences from the citizens to serve as guidelines or insight for building future relationships with the community. Law enforcement can use the information that the citizens provided as a tool to create training and mentoring programs for the communities.

Data from the study exposed a huge quantity of support for the need to implement using BWCs by law enforcement officers. BWCs should be introduced into the vast departments of law enforcement and the officers that patrol the communities. BWCs should be assigned to all officers on duty to help ensure the highest level of safety and trust to the citizens in the communities. Understanding the experiences of the citizens with police officers using BWCs could provide law enforcement with an understanding of how law enforcement is perceived.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this study offered value in beginning to understand the perception of the citizens about police officers use of BWCs. Understanding the experiences of the peoples' perceptions of police officers use of BWC in the community and their associations with law enforcement could be beneficial for promoting good relationships between the two groups. Little research was available that documented what the citizens experience in forming perception of police officers use of BWCs. The results from this research determined that the presence of BWCs promote positive perceptions of the citizens on law enforcement officers who utilize the technological tool. The study revealed that citizen's perceptions of officers who used BWCs affected the perception of the citizens about the behavior of police officers in a positive manner. It appeared that officers who used BWCs were better perceived than officers who did not use BWCs by the citizens in the two counties studied in Georgia. It was therefore concluded that citizens had a better perception of officers who were equipped with BWCs. The findings indicated that the usage of BWCs in small rural areas increased the citizens' trust in their

interactions with police officers. The study identified the desire of the citizens' preference of interacting with law enforcement officers who used BWCs. It appeared that most individuals in small communities who interacted with law enforcement officers who used BWCs viewed BWCs as an important component of trust and transparency. Body-worn cameras also played a great role in the perception of the citizens. This meant the effect of body-worn cameras on the citizen's perception was positive among the citizens in two counties Georgia.

In the past, divisive relationships occurred between citizens and those that have taken an oath to serve and protect. Media reports in the years has not done much to mend the sometimes-controversial relationship. The events that occurred in Chicago, and Ferguson presented some of the tenseness that existed between citizens and law enforcement and the need for transparency. A 2014 study showed that police BWCs reduced the prevalence of use of force by police officers as well as the incidence of complaints against police (Ariel, 2014, p. 533). BWCs appeared to have allowed transparency of the interactions among citizens and the officers and a vital tool for building trust of the citizens in their law enforcement officers. Implementation of BWCs is a necessity in building positive relationships between citizens and law enforcement officers.

The findings of the study were consistent in that using BWCs are beneficial for positive encounters. The object of this research was to explore and pinpoint the lived experiences of the residents in two counties in Georgia in order to understand their perception on usage of BWCs by law enforcement officers. Self-awareness theory was

the theoretical framework used in evaluating how being recorded or seen by others play a role in acceptable behaviors being obtained.

All participants agreed that law enforcement officers should be equipped with BWCs and that they felt safer or preferred to have an encounter with a law enforcement officer who was equipped with a BWC. The participants agreed that the usage of BWCs have played a vital role in improving their perception and interaction with law enforcement officers using BWCs. One third of the participants expressed negative perception about being about being approached by officers who did not use BWCs. Only two participants stated that their perception of officers who used BWCs compared to officers who did not use BWCs had not changed. The two participants had negative perceptions because of prior negative interactions with police officers. Most participants reported positive relationships and perception of officers regardless of the presence of a BWC.

The specified reason for the citizens wanting to implement the usage of BWC was the sense of safety and accountability of events, which protects the citizen and civilian. Few of the participants acknowledged that they were frustrated with the intimidating and condescending attitudes and behaviors exuded by officers whom they have been in contact. They perceived that not using BWCs could warrant even more undesirable behaviors.

All participants were eager to be a part of the research study. The participants seemed happy to present their experiences and engage in the possibility of bringing forth information to promote change in law enforcement. This study contributes to the body of

literature regarding the perception of citizens who live in small northern rural areas on the usage of BWCs. The outcome of the study offers insight to criminal justice agencies on how to serve better and promote positive relationships with the citizens through awareness of the citizens' perceptions of police officers.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. How would you describe your trust in law enforcement officers who wear body-worn cameras in your community?
2. How would you describe your feelings about the implementation of body-worn cameras on law enforcement officers?
3. How do you describe your observation of the attitude of law enforcement officers when you have witness them approach others?
4. Tell me about your experience/interaction with law enforcement officer(s).
5. Tell me about an experience you've had being approached by law enforcement wearing a body-worn camera. How did it feel being approached by a law enforcement officer wearing a body-worn camera?
6. Tell me about an experience you've had being approached by law enforcement not wearing a body-worn camera. How did it feel being approached by a law enforcement officer not wearing a body-worn camera?
7. How has your interaction with law enforcement officers affected your current beliefs of law enforcement officers who use body-worn cameras.
8. Has current media coverage on alleged police brutality played a role on your perception of law enforcement and the use of body-worn cameras? Why or why not?
9. Have there been any noticeable changes in behavior of citizens since the implementation body-worn camera usage by law enforcement? Please describe what you have observed.
10. Have there been any noticeable changes in behavior of officers since the implementation of body-worn camera usage by law enforcement? What have you observed?
11. Is there anything else that you would like to add before we end?
12. Please verbally acknowledge whether you would like to opt in or opt out of receiving an email link to access the completed research study and its results.