



Exploring the Effectiveness of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) During Police Operations in the Province of Albay

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ABSTRACT

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Law enforcement is a constantly evolving profession, and police officers regularly face dangerous encounters that pose a far greater risk than those experienced by the general public. Today, body-worn cameras are being used in police operations to enhance transparency, accountability, and the documentation of evidence. This study determined the status of Body Worn Cameras in the Province of Albay, explored the effectiveness of body-worn cameras during police operations, analyzed

the challenges encountered such as technical issues, ergonomic interference, and human error by the police officers in using Body Worn Cameras during Police Operations and proposed an Institutional Framework that will enhance the effectiveness of the police officers in using Body Worn Cameras during Police Operations and standardize the operating procedures by addressing the recognized challenges through structured governance, dedicated resources, and



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clear policies. The study reveals that the used of Body-Worn Camera (BWC) in Albay has successfully initiated an irreversible, legally binding cultural shift toward verifiable accountability, necessitating a proposed institutional framework to mitigate these challenges and fully realize the BWC's potential as a reliable tool for law enforcement. Thus, Body Worn Cameras serve as an objective digital witness, ensuring that police officers remain accountable for their actions and maintain the highest standards of integrity during every police operation.

INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement is a constantly evolving profession, and police officers regularly face dangerous encounters that pose a far greater risk than those experienced by the general public. Today, body-worn cameras are being used in police operations to enhance transparency, accountability, and the documentation of evidence. Body-worn cameras, or BWCs, are compact devices that record what happens during interactions between police officers and the public, including victims and suspects. These video and audio recordings serve several key purposes. Law enforcement can use them to be more transparent with the community, document important details like statements and behaviors, and collect evidence. They also act as a deterrent, discouraging unprofessional, illegal, or inappropriate behavior from both officers and the public (National Institute of Justice, 2016).

According to Harun (2026), the Indonesian police are focusing on reforms amidst societal skepticism, indicating a struggle between reformatory efforts and ingrained public perceptions. Moreover, accountability is a primary focus in the discourse surrounding police operations across Indonesia. The presence of BWCs is theorized to deter misconduct among officers, as their actions are recorded. This expectation is grounded in empirical research indicating that BWCs can effectively limit excessive force and enhance the adherence to protocols (Sani et al., 2026). The dilemmas faced in policing technologies extend beyond BWCs. Chen and Dai (2026) explore the complexities involved in using facial recognition technology in China, providing insights transferable to other regions, including ASEAN. Moreover, Siddik et al. (2026) analyze the tragic use of lethal weapons by law enforcement in Bangladesh, emphasizing that even with BWCs, accountability can be insufficiently addressed if underlying systemic issues remain unresolved.

The legal framework governing Body-Worn Camera (BWC) use by law enforcement in the Philippines is a comprehensive, multi-layered system anchored by the Supreme Court's mandate (A.M. No. 21-06-08-SC), which makes BWC use mandatory during the execution of arrest and search warrants and establishes

strict protocols for evidence integrity and due process. This judicial cornerstone is supplemented by internal operational procedures from the Philippine National Police (PNP), including foundational circulars like the early MC No. 2018-009 and later comprehensive revisions like MC No. 2025-020, which standardize the day-to-day use, activation, and compliance standards for officers. Furthermore, the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) Resolution No. 2023-1612 sets vital minimum quality specifications for BWC hardware to ensure reliability in evidence collection, while the National Privacy Commission (NPC) enforces the Data Privacy Act of 2012 to safeguard the privacy of individuals by governing the collection, retention, and disposal of BWC-captured data, collectively forming a robust legal and institutional system aimed at increasing police accountability and upholding citizen rights.

The implementation of Body-Worn Cameras faces several critical gaps, including a limited number of units and essential accessories, a lack of personnel training on proper usage, the absence of local service centers for maintenance, low internet connectivity in specific areas, and the lack of a dedicated budget for necessary SIM card loads. Specifically, this study explored the effectiveness of Body-worn Cameras during police operations. It explores the effectiveness of using body-worn camera in police operations in terms of transparency and accountability; reducing citizen complaints and false accusations; officer safety and de-escalation of conflict; and evidence collection and prosecution of cases. It also analyzed the challenges encountered by the police officers and propose an Institutional Framework that will enhance the effectiveness of the PNP in using Body Worn Camera during Police Operations.

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on General System Theory of Karl Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1968 (Heylighen & Joslyn, 1992) to elucidate and explore the concepts and principles of the research. The initial component in the paradigm is systems theory, which is pertinent to the study's objectives. The organizational systems theory posits that organizations consist of multiple subsystems that may not be directly related but collaborate to constitute the entire entity. In addition, this study is anchored on Procedural Justice Theory by Tom R. Tyler introduced in 1990 (Tyler, 2024). Tom R. Tyler's theory of procedural justice emerged as a significant structure to understand the dynamics of legal systems and their impact on public perception and social compliance. The implications of procedural justice theory for legal systems are profound. Furthermore, this study is relevant to Innovations Diffusion Theory by Everett Rogers in 1962. The theory identifies

several components that contribute to the adoption of innovation: innovation itself, communication channels, social systems and the time dimension involved in the diffusion process. Everett Rogers' innovations diffusion theory provides vital information on multifaceted processes of how new ideas and technologies spread throughout society.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study explored the effectiveness of body-worn cameras (BWCs) during police operations within the Province of Albay. Specifically, it explores the effectiveness of body-worn cameras during police operations in terms of Transparency and accountability; Reducing citizen complaints and false accusations; Officer Safety and de-escalation of conflict; and Evidence collection and prosecution of cases. Likewise, it analyzed the challenges encountered by the police officers in using Body Worn Cameras during Police Operations and proposed an Institutional Framework that will enhance the effectiveness of the police officers in using Body Worn Cameras during Police Operations.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used the descriptive qualitative research design. Qualitative descriptive studies aim to provide a comprehensive summary of events. The approach to this study design is journalistic, with the aim being to answer the questions who, what, where and how (Foye et al., 2024). A descriptive qualitative study is an important and appropriate design for research questions that are focused on gaining insights about a poorly understood research area, rather than on a specific phenomenon. This was utilized to explore the effectiveness of body-worn cameras during police operations in the province of Albay. Specifically, it discussed the effectiveness and challenges in the use of body-worn cameras during police operations. This method ensures a transparent and auditable path from the raw narrative data to the final description of the phenomenon, making it a vigorous choice for research focused on uncovering the core meaning of human experiences.

Research Site

This study conducted in the province of Albay, specifically in Legazpi City, Tabaco City and Logao City. Explicitly, Legazpi City is a chartered city located in the province of Albay, in the Bicol Region of the Philippines. Legazpi City

is situated on the eastern side of Albay Province, facing the Philippine Sea. The city government is responsible for providing essential services to its residents and implementing development initiatives. On the other hand, Tabaco City is situated in the eastern part of Albay Province, facing the Philippine Sea. It is known for its coastal areas and is adjacent to the municipality of Malinao. The economy of Tabaco City is driven by various sectors, including agriculture, trade, and services. The city's location along the coast contributes to fishing activities. Lastly, Ligao City is situated in the eastern part of Albay Province, Bicol Region, Luzon, Philippines. The city features a mix of urban areas, agricultural lands, and hilly terrain. Ligao City operates as a component city with its local government unit. The city government is responsible for providing essential services to its residents and implementing development initiatives.

Respondents

The study's primary participants consist of nine PNP personnel specifically three Chiefs of Police coded as COP 1, 2, and 3; three Warrant Officers coded as Warrant 1, 2, and 3; and three Videographers coded as Videographer 1, 2, and 3 whose qualitative data were processed through a systematic coding procedure to identify recurring themes regarding BWC implementation. The participants for a study on the effectiveness of BWCs in police operations are chosen based on their unique roles and perspectives, which together provide a comprehensive understanding of the program. The Chief of Police is essential for their administrative and strategic insight. They articulate the institutional goals for BWC use, discuss policy implementation, and provide high-level information on resource allocation and department-wide accomplishments. In addition, the Warrant Officers and Videographer offers an essential legal viewpoint, as they are the ones who use BWC footage as evidence in criminal cases.

Instrumentation

This study used Interview Guide Question. To ensure that the instrument comprised the themes and areas that the study was supposed to examine, the items included in the interview guide was subjected to validation. Face and content validity are questionnaire measurement techniques used to judge and quantify measurements that appear acceptable to the general public and highly qualified experts. The interview guide able the researcher to clearly gather the data applicable to the participants. The interview guide answered by the selected PNP personnel directly involved in police operations of the BWCs.

Sampling Technique

To choose the respondents for this research, a purposive sampling method was employed. Purposive sampling encompasses various non-probability techniques, also recognized as selective or subjective sampling. In this approach, the researcher used their judgment to select units for study. Purposive sampling aims to concentrate on specific characteristics within a population that are pertinent to answering the research questions effectively. Purposive sampling was employed for the selection of PNP personnel who were involved and knowledgeable in the use of BWC during police operations.

Data Analysis

To get a reliable response, this study used the Thematic Analysis. The Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data that involves reading through a set of data and looking for patterns in the meaning of the data to find themes. It was used on the responses of the selected participants in exploring the effectiveness of body-worn cameras during police operations in terms of Transparency and accountability; Reducing citizen complaints and false accusations; Officer Safety and de-escalation of conflict; and Evidence collection and prosecution of cases and in analyzing the challenges encountered by the police officers in using Body Worn Cameras during Police Operations.

Research Ethics Protocol

This study adhered to strict ethical standards. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent obtained through a consent letter. Respondent anonymity was guaranteed, and the dignity of participants was prioritized through careful question design. The researcher is committed to the independent and impartial presentation of all collected data.

The authors used AI-assisted tools, including Gemini, ChatGpt, and Writeless during the preparation of this manuscript. These tools were utilized solely for language refinement, grammar checking, paraphrasing, and improving the clarity and organization of the manuscript.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides a detailed analysis and interpretation of the data collected, focusing specifically on the deployment and use of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) within the Province of Albay.

1. Effectiveness of body-worn cameras during police operations

Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) are widely adopted in law enforcement due to their multifaceted impact on police operations, primarily driving improvements across four key areas.

a. Transparency and accountability

The transparency and accountability are foundational principles in policing, crucial for maintaining public trust and ethical standards. Transparency involves making police actions visible and open to public scrutiny, allowing for informed stakeholder involvement. On the other hand accountability ensures that police officers are answerable for their conduct, particularly regarding the use of force or misconduct, aligning actions with organizational responsibility.

a.1. Role in Fostering Transparency.

This measures the BWC's effectiveness in providing an objective, verifiable record of police-civilian interactions. High effectiveness means the camera reliably records incidents from the officer's perspective, making police actions visible to command and the public, thereby reducing reliance on conflicting verbal accounts.

On the contribution to transparency, the COP 1 says, *"I believe that BWC's contribute to transparency in police-civilian interactions because it can be monitored in command center where other person can view them live streaming and also recording.* This is similar to the response of the COP 2. He says, *"BWCs promote transparency by recording real-time interactions between Police Officers and civilians. This helps provide an objective account of events, minimizing misinformation and enhancing public trust in Law Enforcement".* In addition, the COP 3 says that, *"During law enforcement operations such as buy-bust operations, and the arrest of wanted persons, body-worn cameras (BWCs) play a crucial role in documenting events. They provide an objective record that helps ensure transparency, protect both officers and civilians, and support the integrity of the operation".*

The Chief of Police's responses provide a strong analysis that centers on the multifaceted functional value of Body-Worn Cameras in promoting

transparency. This analysis moves beyond simple recording, highlighting two key mechanisms, the ability to provide an objective, real-time record that minimizes misinformation, and the advanced capability of live streaming and remote monitoring from the command center.

On the other hand, based on the responses of the Warrant PNCOs about transparency, Warrant 1 says that, *"It is a credible piece of evidence which is less to corrupt."* Likewise, Warrant 2 also says that, *"BWC can provide an objective record of interactions between police officers and the public and can be used to deter unprofessionalism, illegal, and inappropriate behavior by both police officers and the public"*. Moreover, Warrant 3 says that, *"By providing an accurate recording of events. They build public trust by demonstrating that law enforcement actions are monitored as subject to review"*.

The Warrant Officers' responses offer a strong analysis of BWC transparency centered on its integrity and dual deterrent effect. They clearly articulate that the footage's value lies in its status as a credible piece of evidence which is less to corrupt, directly establishing it as superior to potentially biased verbal accounts. Significantly, the analysis highlights that BWCs exert a dual deterrence by simultaneously curbing unprofessionalism, illegal, and inappropriate behavior from both police officers and the public.

According to the responses of the assigned videographer during police operations specifically in drug operations, Videographer 1 says that, *"BWC's enhance police-civilian transparency by providing an impartial video and audio record of interaction"*. Furthermore, the statement of Videographer 1 is similar to Videographer 3. He also says that, *"BWC provide a visual and audio recording of interactions, creating an objectives records of events"*. In addition, Videographer 2 says that, *"By providing an objective record of interactions between Police Officers and civilians. They allow both parties to be more accountable with their behavior. This reduces incidents of abuse"*.

The Videographer's responses deliver a focused analysis of BWC transparency rooted in the concept of impartiality and objective evidence. They emphasize that the camera's value lies in its ability to generate an impartial video and audio record, establishing a single, objective narrative that transcends subjective accounts.

a.2. Effect on Police Accountability Perception.

This third theme focused on the public's perception of the police department's accountability has changed since the introduction of BWCs. High effectiveness is indicated by positive public sentiment regarding the fairness and justness of police conduct following the camera's introduction.

All Chief of Police were agreed that the public's perception of the police department's accountability has changed since the introduction of BWCs. The COP 1 says that, *"I think the public's perception of the police department's accountability has changed since the introduction of BWC's because they know we are serious with it come to accountability and the BWC is one of the proof"*. Meanwhile, COP 2 says that, *"Many members of the public feels more confident that officers are being monitored, which improves perception of accountability and reduces community tensions"*.

On the other hand, COP 3 says that, *"Police officers are more careful when arresting suspects due to the use of body-worn cameras (BWCs). The presence of BWCs helps prevent unexpected injuries to the arrested individuals by encouraging officers to follow proper procedures. Additionally, BWCs provide clear evidence in court, making it easier to prove if a suspect resisted arrest, thereby protecting both officers and suspects through transparent documentation"*.

The Chief of Police's response clearly identifies Body-Worn Cameras as a strategic tool for public relations and institutional commitment to accountability. The key assertion is that the introduction of BWCs has positively shifted the public's perception by serving as visible proof of the department's seriousness regarding accountability.

The Warrant Officers also confirmed that the public's perception of the police department's accountability has changed since the introduction of BWCs. Significantly, Warrant 2 says that, *"Public perception of police accountability has generally become positive, as citizen often view them as a tool for increased transparency, reduced misconduct, and improve professionalism"*.

Relatedly, Videographer 1 says that, *"Yes, it reduced complaints,*

improved citizen satisfaction". Meanwhile, Videographer 2 says that, *"The public generally views the use of BWCs as a sign that the authority is committed to accountability and transparency"*. Lastly, Videographer 3 says that, *"Can enhance public trust by demonstrating a commitment to transparency and accountability"*.

The Warrant Officer and the videographers response strongly validates that the use of Body-Worn Cameras has led to a favorable and measurable change in the public's perception of police accountability. They assert that public perception has generally become positive because citizens view BWCs as a genuine tool for increased transparency, reduced misconduct, and improved professionalism.

This implies that the success of the BWC program is inherently tied to public relations and community trust, not just internal evidence gathering. This means that the protocols for releasing footage, investigating misconduct captured on camera, and demonstrating fair resolution of complaints must be transparent and consistent. Thus, the BWC program implies a permanent, high-stakes commitment to visibly demonstrate transparency as the cornerstone of maintaining the public's currently positive view of police accountability.

The policy and legal frameworks surrounding Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) are critical for balancing accountability, privacy, and public trust (Fairchild, 2024), requiring an iterative approach guided by technology and community feedback (White et al., 2025). BWCs are seen as a potential paradigm change in accountability by visually documenting interactions, which also improves legitimacy and reduces excessive force (Alda & Dammert, 2025). This deterrence theory is supported by findings that BWC presence reduces misconduct and citizen complaints (Rios, 2024; Gilling, 2025). Ali (2026) discusses transformational leadership within the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP), emphasizing the need for innovative solutions in modern policing. This highlights that successful BWC implementation transcends mere acquisition of technology.

b. Reducing citizen complaints and false accusations

BWCs serve as an effective mechanism to mitigate conflicts by providing accurate documentation of events. This variable record helps to decrease the volume of citizen complaints against officers and, equally important, swiftly exonerate officers who are falsely accused of wrongdoing.

b.1. Effectiveness in Complaint Reduction. This theme focused if there is a decrease in the number of citizen complaints against officers since BWCs were implemented. This measures the BWC's effectiveness as a deterrent on both officer misconduct and frivolous accusations.

Based on the responses, COP 1 says that, *“Yes, I noticed a decreased in number of citizen complaint against officers since BWCs were implemented because they knew if they make false reporting against the police, the BWC can prove what really transpired”*. The COP 2 also confirmed that there is a decrease in the number of citizen complaints against officers since BWCs were implemented. He says, that. *“Yes, there has been a noticeable decline in complaints. Many minor misunderstandings are resolved quickly after footage is reviewed”*.

Likewise, COP 3 also confirmed that, *“Yes, numerous citizen complaints against officers have decreased since the implementation of body-worn cameras (BWCs), as the recorded footage provides clear and objective evidence that helps address both false accusations and legitimate grievances. BWCs have been shown to improve officer behavior, enhance accountability, and foster better interactions between police and the community. These improvements collectively contribute to a significant decline in complaints, reinforcing the crucial role BWCs play in building trust, transparency, and legitimacy in law enforcement”*.

The Chief of Police offers a strong, multifaceted endorsement of Body-Worn Cameras as a highly effective tool for reducing citizen complaints. The core mechanism identified is the camera's ability to provide clear and objective evidence, which functions as a deterrent against false reporting because citizens know the BWC can prove what really transpired.

The Warrant Officers and the Videographer have similar responses that there is a decrease in the number of citizen complaints against officers since BWCs were implemented. Remarkably, Warrant 2 says that, *“Yes, this reduction attributed to the camera's ability to provide clear view and preventing the misconduct of police officers”*. Moreover, Videographer 3 says that, *“BWC can deter frivolous complaint by providing an objective record of interactions”*.

The Warrant Officer clearly attribute the reduction in complaints directly to the functional and deterrent capabilities of Body-Worn Cameras. The BWC's production of an objective record of interactions is highlighted as a tool to deter frivolous complaint. This perspective shows that the officers view the camera as a powerful, non-subjective arbitrator that works both proactively in preventing police misconduct and reactively, thereby efficiently eliminating two major sources of citizen grievances and justifying the BWC as a successful tool for complaint management.

b.2. Utility in Disproving Allegations. This theme focused on the effectiveness of BWC in refuting false accusations made against officers. This defines the BWC's effectiveness as a tool for officer exoneration.

The COP 1 is the only participant among the three Chiefs of Police have no experience in refuting false accusations made against officers. He says that, *"I have not yet experience false accusations while using BWC, but it think can protect the police officer of those false accusations against them"*. On the other hand, COP2 and COP3 have experience in refuting false accusations made against officers. The COP 2 says that, *"Yes, in one instance, a citizen an officer using excessing force during an arrest, the BWC footage showed the officer followed the protocol, and the complaint was dismissed"*.

Likewise, COP 3 also says that, *"Yes, body-worn cameras (BWCs) have proven effective in refuting false accusations against officers. The video footage provides a neutral and objective record of events, which can exonerate officers when needed. Additionally, BWCs enhance accountability by documenting interactions between officers and civilians, thereby fostering greater transparency and building trust within the community. Over time, this increased trust can contribute to improved cooperation and safer public interactions"*.

The Chief of Police's response provides a clear and practical validation of Body-Worn Cameras as an essential protective tool for officers against false accusations. The Chief confirms that while they may not have personally encountered a false claim yet, the expectation that the BWC can protect the police officer is a core part of its value proposition. A specific, compelling case is cited where BWC footage objectively demonstrated that an officer followed the protocol during an

arrest, leading to the immediate dismissal of an excessive force complaint.

For Warrant Officers, Warrant 2 and 3 and Videographer 1 and 2 have an experience in refuting false accusations made against officers. However Warrant 1 says that, *“Yes. An incident with one accused imputing us of harassment”*. Likewise, Videographer 3 says that, *“Yes, BWC have been effective in refuting false accusations For example; in case where an officer was accused of using excessive force during an arrest BWC footage showed that the officer’s action were within policy and justified by the suspects resistance. This evidence led to the dismissal of the complaint and exonerated the officer”*.

The combined responses from the Warrant Officer and the Videographer offer a direct, experienced-based confirmation of the BWC’s vital role in disproving false accusations and protecting officers. The Warrant Officer notes personal experience with an accused imputing them of harassment, indicating the frequent need for self-protection against claims. The Videographer provides a specific, powerful example, BWC footage clearly demonstrated that an officer’s actions, initially accused of being excessive force, were in fact within policy and justified by the suspect’s resistance, leading to the complaint’s dismissal and the officer’s exoneration.

Research consistently shows that Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) are highly effective in mitigating citizen complaints and enhancing public trust in law enforcement. A longitudinal study by Gilling (2025) on the NYPD and a comparative analysis by Gosney and Phan (2025) both demonstrated a marked reduction in complaint rates after BWC introduction, attributing this to the recording device’s deterrent effect which encourages officers to adhere to professional standards. Furthermore, BWCs defend officers against false accusations by providing objective evidence that often corroborates their accounts, thereby reducing the emotional stress of investigations (Brown, 2025). Privacy concerns and the appropriate management of recorded footage present significant challenges that vary widely across Asian legal frameworks. Joyce and Laverick (2026) discuss the governance of police discretion, emphasizing the necessity for clear policies that not only protect individual rights but also promote public trust.

c. Officer safety and de-escalation of conflict. The presence of BWCs positively impacts both officer security and community relations. The

camera's record often encourages more cautious and professional behavior, which is linked to effective de-escalation techniques and a reduced risk of conflict escalation in potentially violent situations.

c.1. Police Officer Safety Tool. This theme focused on the presence of a BWC influence the behavior of citizens during an interaction. This analyzed the BWC's effectiveness in enhancing officer security by potentially deterring attacks, documenting threats, or confirming an officer's use of force was justified.

The COP 1 says that, *"The wearing of BWC has impact the sense of safety during police operation because it can refute or challenge the false accusations of the arrested persons"*. On the other hand, COP 2 says that, *"Knowing the interaction is being recorded can provide a sense of protection, as it may deter aggression and provide evidence in case of an incident"*. Furthermore, COP 3 also says that, *"Wearing a body-worn camera (BWC) can promote a sense of safety and ease by increasing awareness and potentially de-escalating behavior during police interactions. This not only helps in reducing conflicts but also enhances transparency and accountability, fostering greater trust between officers and the community"*.

The Chief of Police views the Body-Worn Camera as a fundamental psychological and legal tool for officer safety, arguing that it positively impacts the sense of security during operations. The primary safety benefit is not physical protection but the BWC's ability to refute or challenge the false accusations of arrested persons. In providing clear, recorded evidence, the BWC gives officers a sense of protection from career-damaging complaints and legal challenges following an incident.

Warrant 1 and 3 have similar response on the presence of a BWC influence the behavior of citizens during an interaction. They says that BWC protected the police officers from false accusations. Remarkably, Warrant 2 says that, *"Police officers can be safe during police operation, when they announce that recording has begun which can reduce aggression to the officers"*.

The Warrant Officer's response clearly identifies the announcement of recording as the primary safety mechanism provided by the Body-Worn Camera.

The analysis links this explicit notification directly to a behavioral deterrent, stating that the announcement can reduce aggression to the officers. This perspective focuses on the BWC's ability to proactively de-escalate a situation by immediately altering the conduct of the citizen being recorded.

Meanwhile, Videographer 1 and says that BWC is acting as a deterrent to aggression for both officer and civilian from suspects. Significantly, Videographer 3 says that, *"Can increase an officer's sense of safety by providing a deterrent to violence and misconduct and provide valuable evidence in the event of an attack or other incident, helping to ensure that the officers are protected"*.

The videographer's response clearly identifies the Body-Worn Camera as a dual-function tool that significantly boosts an officer's sense of safety by addressing both proactive prevention and reactive defense. Proactively, the BWC acts as a deterrent to violence and misconduct from both citizens and officers, establishing a safer environment for the interaction.

c.2. Role in Conflict De-escalation. This focused that the presence of a BWC can help de-escalate a tense or confrontational situation. This defines the BWC's effectiveness in reducing the severity of tense situations.

The COP 1 says that, "Yes, because the police officers who is wearing BWC should met in accordance to the law and also the civilian know that the recording in BWC can use by the police officers in the court".

On the other hand, COP 2 also says that. *"Yes, the knowledge that behaviour is being recorded often causes both the officer and the civilian to act more cautiously, which can de-escalate potential conflicts"*. COP 3 also says that, *"Yes, being aware of the presence of a body-worn camera (BWC) makes both parties more conscious of their words and actions. This awareness often leads to more respectful and measured behavior, helping to reduce conflicts and promote accountability during interactions"*.

The Chief of Police clearly identifies the mutual awareness of recording as the primary driver for conflict de-escalation, establishing the Body-Worn Camera as a powerful psychological and procedural restraint. The analysis hinges on

the fact that the BWC compels both the officer and the civilian to act more cautiously. For the officer, this means ensuring actions are in accordance to the law, reinforcing professional compliance.

The Warrant 1 and 2 have similar response that the presence of a BWC can help de-escalate a tense or confrontational situation. Both participants says that police explain that things are being recorded. However, Warrant 3 says that, *“Yes, knowing that the actions are being recorded both the police officers and civilians encourage to behave responsibly”*. Lastly, Videographer 3 say that, *“Yes, BWC can help de-escalate tense situations and can also provide an objective record of events which can help to resolve, disputes and ensure accountability”*.

The collective analysis from the Chief of Police, Warrant Officers, and Videographers presents a comprehensive view of the Body-Worn Camera as a powerful, multi-functional safety and de-escalation tool. The central theme is that officer safety is achieved primarily through digital defense and behavioral deterrence, rather than physical protection. The BWC's key function is its ability to refute false accusations, giving officers a digital shield against professional harm, which significantly boosts their confidence. Proactively, the mutual awareness of recording compels both officers and civilians to act cautiously, leading to a civilizing effect and de-escalation of conflicts, which is often triggered simply by the officer's mandatory announcement of recording.

Recent research underscores the significant role of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) in promoting de-escalation, enhancing officer safety, and improving public perception. A large-scale causal analysis by Headley et al. (2025) found a direct correlation between BWC introduction and a reduction in officer use-of-force incidents, suggesting the camera's presence modifies interaction dynamics toward safer outcomes. This reduction is often linked to de-escalation; the work of Orosco et al. (2025) and MacIsaac et al. (2024) posits that de-escalation training, when combined with BWC availability, further mitigates tensions and aggression in civilian encounters.

d. Evidence collection and prosecution of cases. BWC footage plays a vital role in the criminal justice system by acting as a reliable, high-integrity tool for evidence collection. The video documentation directly strengthens the prosecution of cases, providing visual and audio proof that supplements testimonial evidence and enhances the reliability of the materials presented in court, thereby influencing judicial outcomes.

d.1. Enhancement of Investigative Evidence. This theme focused in the impact of BWC on the evidence collection process for criminal investigations.

The COP 1 says that, *“BWC footage have great impact in the evidence collection process for criminal investigations because the footage will be presented to the court during the course of a trial”*. Moreover, COP 2 says that, *“It has improved evidence collection by providing clear and unbiased footage of incidents as they occurred, which can be used to corroborate other evidence or witness testimonies”*. Furthermore, COP 3 also says that, *“Body-worn camera (BWC) footage significantly impacts evidence collection by providing an objective, detailed record of encounters, corroborating statements, and improving case resolutions through a more complete understanding of events”*.

The Chief of Police offers a strong and unequivocal assessment of Body-Worn Camera footage as a game-changer for evidence collection and criminal investigations. The core impact is the provision of a clear and unbiased footage of incidents as they occurred, which is explicitly valued for its ability to corroborate other evidence or witness testimonies.

The warrant officers have different responses on the evidence collection process for criminal investigations. Warrant 1 says that, *“The BWC worn by the responding policemen could be review by the investigator for possible witnesses”*. The Warrant 2 says that, *“BWC footage can provide video-evidence that can lead to more guilty pleas or verdicts particularly in cases of domestic violence”*. On the other hand, Warrant 3 says that, *“By providing detailed record of events that will support or contradict statements from the officers, witnesses and suspects that will verify facts and build a stronger case”*.

The Warrant Officers identify Body-Worn Camera footage as a powerful investigative and prosecutorial asset that extends far beyond simple documentation. Their analysis highlights the BWC's role in providing a detailed, objective record of events that can directly support or contradict statements from officers, witnesses, and suspects, thereby verifying facts and building a stronger case.

There is a positive responses from the videographer on impact of BWC on the evidence collection process for criminal investigations. The Videographer 1 says that, *“BWC impacted criminal investigations by comprehensive video and audio evidence of interaction and crime scene and improving the documentation of operation”*. In addition, Videographer 2 says that, *“BWC has significantly improved the quality and reliability of evidence. It provides a real-time events wlc can be used to verify witness statements, identify suspects. This can lead to stronger cases and more accurate outcomes”*. Lastly, Videographer 3 says that, *“BWC footage provides a direct, objective and record of operation, enhancing the accuracy and reliability of evidence”*.

The Videographer offers an overwhelmingly positive assessment of the Body-Worn Camera footage, highlighting its direct role in significantly improving the quality and reliability of evidence for criminal investigations. The core contribution is the provision of comprehensive video and audio evidence that captures real-time events and enhances the documentation of the entire operation.

d.2. Footage as a Prosecutorial Asset. This theme focused on how valuable is BWC footage to prosecutors when building a case. This analyzed the BWC's effectiveness in strengthening criminal cases. Based on the interview conducted:

The COP 1 says that, *“BWC footage is valuable to the prosecutors when building a case because it make the affidavit of the police stronger to prove a particular case”*. Positively, COP 2 says that, *“Extremely valuable. Prosecutor's often use BWC footage to establish timeliness, verify officer conduct, and demonstrate suspect behaviour in court”*. Remarkably, COP 3 says that, *“BWC footage is highly valuable to prosecutors as corroborating evidence, providing objective documentation of events that can lead to quicker resolutions, increased guilty pleas, and higher conviction rates”*.

The Chief of Police offers an emphatic analysis, recognizing Body-Worn Camera footage as an extremely valuable and highly effective prosecutorial asset. The footage's value stems from its ability to provide objective documentation that significantly strengthens the prosecution's case. Specifically, the BWC footage makes the affidavit of the police stronger, allowing prosecutors to establish crucial elements like timeliness, verify officer conduct, and demonstrate suspect behavior in court.

Similarly, Warrant 1 and 2 says that it is very important in corroborating evidences. Specifically, Warrant 3 says that, *“This help us to speed up the filling of case”*.

The Warrant Officers clearly affirm the critical importance of Body-Worn Camera footage as a prosecutorial asset, specifically highlighting its value in corroborating evidence. Their unified response underscores that the objective footage serves as vital support for testimonial and physical evidence, which directly enhances the strength and credibility of the entire case file.

The videographer have also a positive responses on how valuable is BWC footage to prosecutors when building a case. Videographer 1 says that, *“BWC is very valuable to prosecutors improve case resolution, act as corroborating evidence”*. In addition, Videographer 2 says that, *“It is extremely valuable to prosecutors as it serves as direct evidence that can be corroborate testimonies or challenge false claims”*. Lastly, Videographer 3 also says that, *“BWC footage is extremely valuable to prosecutor as it provides compelling visual evidence that can strengthen the case”*.

The Videographers’ response offers an emphatic confirmation of the Body-Worn Camera footage as an extremely valuable and indispensable asset for prosecutors. It highlights the footage’s role as direct evidence that provides compelling visual proof to strengthen a case. Significantly, it stress its function as corroborating evidence, verifying the truthfulness of testimonies, while also having the power to challenge false claims.

The BWC’s role in evidence and prosecution is the creation of a new, legally binding evidentiary baseline that mandates the institutionalization of digital forensics rigor. The judicial system’s reliance on the BWC footage to secure convictions and determine the legality of police actions has deepened the interdependency between police and prosecution.

The research highlights the significant and multifaceted impact of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) on the criminal justice system, primarily through their role in evidence collection and procedural justice. Todak et al. (2024) empirically demonstrated the probative value of BWC footage in courts, showing that its presence significantly increases the likelihood of defendants accepting plea agreements, thereby streamlining the judicial process. This positive effect is

supported by Poirier et al. (2024), who found that officers perceive BWCs as encouraging greater adherence to procedural justice, leading to more complete investigations and better preparation for court.

Table 1
Summary of Responses on the Effectiveness of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs)

Topic	Sub-theme	Key Response Summary	No. of Participants
a. Transparency & Accountability	a.1 Role in Fostering Transparency	BWCs provide objective, impartial, real-time video/audio recording that enhances transparency and builds public trust.	9
	a.2 Effect on Police Accountability Perception	BWCs improved public perception of police accountability and professionalism.	9
b. Reducing Citizen Complaints & False Reduction Accusations	b.1 Complaint	BWCs reduced citizen complaints and deterred false or frivolous accusations.	9
	b.2 Utility in Disproving Allegations	BWCs effectively refuted false accusations and protected officers (actual experience cited).	8
c. Officer Safety & De-escalation	c.1 Officer Safety Tool	BWCs enhance officer safety by deterring aggression and protecting against false claims.	9
	c.2 Conflict De-escalation	Presence of BWCs promotes cautious behavior and helps de-escalate tense situations.	9
d. Evidence Collection & Prosecution	d.1 Enhancement of Investigative Evidence	ofBWCs improve quality, reliability, and corroboration of evidence.	9
	d.2 Prosecutorial Asset	BWC footage is extremely valuable in strengthening cases, corroborating testimony, and increasing conviction likelihood.	9

2. Challenges encountered by the police officers in using Body Worn Cameras during Police Operations

The implementation of Body-Worn Cameras in police operations presents officers with a diverse spectrum of hurdles, categorized into critical operational domains. These challenges span from fundamental Technical Challenges, Physical Use Challenges, Policy-Related Challenges, and other Challenges.

a. Technical and Functionality Issues. This theme focused on the most significant technical challenges you've encountered with BWCs. This challenge describes how hardware or software failures directly reduces the camera's ability to capture evidence and maintain accountability. The Chief of Police's response clearly identifies technical durability and maintenance as the most significant challenges to the Body-Worn Camera program's reliability.

According to COP 1, he says that, *"The BWC is an equipment that are not exempted from damages. Our unit surrender to the supply office two (2) BWC because it is already damage"*. The COP 2 responses that, *"Battery life is a major issue, especially during long shifts, there also been occasional problems with data upload and syncing devices"*. On the other hand, COP 3 says that, *"The most significant technical challenge encountered with BWCs is the unavailability and difficulty of purchasing spare parts. Additionally, the parts of the BWC are fragile, and the rubber buttons are easily detached"*.

Warrant 2 and 3 and Videographer 1 have similar responses on the most significant technical challenges you've encountered with BWCs, it is the battery life. Meanwhile, Warrant 1 stated that is the size of the BWC. Furthermore, Videographer 2 says that it is the storage capacity, equipment malfunctions.

Specifically, Warrant 2 says that, *"Battery which requires a frequent recharging. The storage in storing and managing a large file during coverage has an internal of 10 minutes. Equipment malfunctions due to various reasons including battery failures and device malfunctions"*. While, Videographer 3 says that, *"BWC occurred malfunction such as the battery which compromise the reliability of the footage"*.

The responses from the Warrant Officers and Videographers reveal that inadequate battery life is the most universal and critical technical vulnerability affecting Body-Worn Camera reliability, with several participants citing the need for frequent recharging and the resulting compromise to footage integrity.

b. Ergonomic Problem. This theme describe the challenges associated with the physical use of the camera itself. This challenge relates to how the camera's physical design and placement hinder officer performance and safety.

The COP 1 says that, *“The BWC cannot be utilized by the intelligence personnel during intelligence operation because of its size, it cannot be hide by the intelligence operatives”*. In addition, COP 2 stated that, *“Some cameras are bulky and uncomfortable, especially in hot weather. They can get in the way of body armour and radio equipment”*. However, COP 3 also says that, *“The device is comfortable to wear and does not interfere with the use of other equipment, allowing officers to perform their duties without hindrance. This ease of integration is crucial for ensuring that body-worn cameras are consistently worn and effectively utilized in the field”*.

The Chief of Police’s response presents a contrast regarding the ergonomic challenges of Body-Worn Cameras, acknowledging significant practical difficulties alongside a stated ideal of seamless integration. The primary concern is the unsuitability of the BWC for covert operations, as its size prevents intelligence personnel from concealing it, thereby limiting its deployment in critical areas.

c. Human Error. This theme is on the other challenges you have faced during police operations using the BWC. This challenge captures the external, logistical, or psychological barriers that disrupt BWC use outside of the primary categories.

According to COP 1, *“The challenge of BWC during police operations is when the police officer forget to check if it is on or during the actual police operations. It accidentally turn off or the battery is low without being notice by the police officer wearing it”*. Meanwhile, COP 2 says that, *“Some civilian refuse to speak freely while being recorded”*.

Lastly, COP 3 stated that, *“Challenges during police operations with BWCs include technical issues like short battery life, bulky hardware, inadequate technical expertise for maintenance, and data overload from inefficient transfer and storage. Environmental factors such as background noise and poor lighting can affect recording quality. Additionally, implementing the technology requires addressing privacy concerns, ensuring data integrity, and providing comprehensive training for officers. Signal of Internet connection when connecting police operations on those places that are no internet connection or no signal. The BWC cannot provided live – viewing capabilities”*.

These numerous operational challenges are that the BWC system currently

provides an inconsistent and unreliable promise of accountability and transparency. The frequent gaps in recording due to human forgetfulness or technical failure mean that the department cannot guarantee objective evidence for every critical incident, which can lead to continued public skepticism. This implies a need for a fundamental reevaluation of the BWC strategy: the department must invest in off-grid solutions for real-time data collection, develop mandatory pre-operation checklists to address human error, and secure more robust, low-light-capable hardware to ensure that the commitment to transparency is operationally sound across all environments.

A qualitative study by Miranda (2020) exploring BWC implementation in two UK police forces highlights a range of interconnected contextual, technical, and ethical challenges, particularly concerning the cameras' movement and use in diverse environments, stressing that frontline officer perspective is crucial for effective design. Technical issues pose significant operational threats: Javaheri (2024) and Lee et al. (2024) both document that equipment malfunction and insufficient battery life lead to device errors and crucial gaps in recorded evidence, undermining integrity. In some ASEAN nations, officers face issues such as poor video quality, limited storage capacity, and difficulties with data transfer (Retiza et al., 2025). These technical problems can lead to inadequate documentation of police interactions, diminishing the potential benefits of BWCs.

Table 2
Summary of Responses on Challenges Encountered

Topic	Sub-theme	Key Response Summary	No. of Participants
Challenges in Using BWCs	a. Technical Issues	Battery life problems	6
		Equipment malfunction/damage	4
		Storage/data upload issues	3
	b. Ergonomic Interference	Bulky size/interference with other gear	3
		Not suitable for covert/intelligence operations	1
		No interference/manageable	1
	c. Human Error	Forgetting to turn on/human error	1
		Internet/signal limitations for live viewing	1
		Privacy concerns & civilian reluctance	1
		Environmental factors (noise, lighting)	1

3. Institutional Framework that will enhance the effectiveness of the police officers in using Body Worn Cameras during Police Operations.

The proposed institutional framework aims to seamlessly integrate Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) into standard operating procedures by addressing the recognized challenges through structured governance, dedicated resources, and clear policies. This framework is essential to transform the BWC from a simple recording device into a reliable, high-impact tool for accountability and evidence collection. Its rationale is rooted in the current data indicating that technical, physical, and policy ambiguities significantly compromise the camera's effectiveness, leading to gaps in transparency and undermining its value in internal affairs and prosecution. The general objective is to establish a robust, sustainable system where mandatory continuous training, clear operational guidelines especially concerning activation/deactivation during dynamic events, and dedicated technical maintenance teams mitigate operational friction points. This ensures officers can rely on the BWC as an ergonomic and dependable part of their gear, thereby maximizing its potential to foster transparency, reduce complaints, enhance officer safety, and secure decisive evidence in every police operation.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite significant technical and operational flaws that compromise its effectiveness, the Body-Worn Camera (BWC) has successfully driven an irreversible cultural shift toward verifiable accountability, establishing itself as the legally binding, foundational layer of objective evidence crucial for officer safety, de-escalation, and successful criminal prosecution. The cumulative effect of technical unreliability, ergonomic flaws, and policy ambiguities results in an inconsistent and flawed BWC system that fails to guarantee objective evidence and creates critical gaps in accountability, necessitating fundamental strategic reforms in hardware, logistics, and training to ensure operational integrity. The proposed institutional framework seeks to mitigate current technical, physical, and policy challenges through structured governance and dedicated resources, ensuring the seamless integration of BWCs as a reliable, high-impact tool for accountability and evidence collection in every police operation.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The findings of this study offer significant insights for translational research, aiming to bridge the gap between academic conclusions and practical application by developing media and educational materials to promote transparency in law enforcement. Specifically, the identified challenges can be directly translated into a comprehensive institutional framework. This Institutional Framework is necessary to mandate a fundamental reevaluation of the BWC strategy, requiring investment in off-grid solutions for real-time data collection, the development of mandatory pre-operation checklists to mitigate human error, and the securing of more robust, low-light-capable hardware to ensure the commitment to transparency is operationally sound across all environments, thereby establishing consistent, auditable, and reliable BWC usage.

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