Evaluating Training Using Body-Worn Cameras: A Pilot Study Using Cadets in the WSU Police Corps

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Overview

• Research Goal: Evaluate the implementation of BCWs into a training environment to document how training procedures for law enforcement can be improved.

• This presentation discusses the partnership between the Complex Social Interactions Lab and the Washington State University Police Department Cadet Program.

• We will be discussing the cadet program, implementation process, and cadet experiences using BWCs.
Complex Social Interactions (CSI) Lab

**Mission:**
- The Complex Social Interactions Lab is committed to developing new behavioral science methodologies and technologies that can be utilized in real world applications to investigate police officer decision-making and interpersonal interaction by examining unredacted footage recorded by officer body-worn cameras (BWC).
Washington State University Police Corps

**Mission Statement:**

- To assist local law enforcement agencies in carrying out their duties while furthering our knowledge and experience in the law enforcement.

**Status:**

- Established in 1985 and since then there has been approximately 750 cadets
- Currently 47 cadets

**Services:**

- A Police cadet is a WSU student working as a volunteer for the WSU Police Department. Cadets are non-commissioned, uniformed members of the Police Department who work with commissioned police officers who provide supervision, training, and direction.
Purpose of the Partnership

• Improving training through analysis of footage associated with low-risk, real world environments
  ▪ I.e. Directing Traffic, foot patrols, providing assistance.

• Incorporates documentation of best practices into the training program.

• Identity poor technique use for early interventions
  ▪ document the success of interventions

• Provide opportunities for Cadets to review their mock scenes for improvement.
  ▪ Focus on best practices and areas of improvement.
Implementation Phases

1. Develop BWC policy, integrate cameras into daily routines, develop protocol for footage tagging, develop Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for mock scenes and low-risk activities.

2. Documentation and analysis of cadet KPI acquisition.

3. Experimental Phase - Stress and Key Performance Indicators
Body Worn Cameras in a Cadet Program

• Since implementation of the BWCs in September, they have been used during: WSU Football and Basketball games, Mock Scenes, Night Patrol, Traffic Control, and Library Security.
Mock Scenes - Training
Pictures of Corps Activities
Cadet Interviews - The Preliminary Results

- Ten cadets were interviewed (out of 47).
  - Volunteer hours ranging from 244.5-816 hrs (as of November 2017)

- All have career goals in some type of law enforcement agency.
Cadet Interviews - The Preliminary Results

- **Glasses Pro**: accurate view/perception
- **Glasses Con**: weather conditions, lopsided weight, wires
- **Chest Pro**: easy to wear, no wires
- **Chest Con**: magnet
- **Shoulder Pro**: sturdy
- **Shoulder Con**: angle

“The glasses seemed uncomfortable to me like it was weighted to one side.”

“Right now I am using the body one because with the weather that we’ve been having I don’t want to be wearing a camera on glasses because they could fog up or get rain or snow on them.”
Cadet Interviews - The Preliminary Results

Positives of wearing the cameras:
• “It makes me more conscious about things I do and say especially while I’m recording.”
• Report writing
• “Body cams benefits hold more accountability for both the officers and the community and makes transparency for everyone.”
• Citizens more aware of actions
• Decreases corruption

Negatives of wearing the cameras:
• “Another thing you have to think about.”
• Time and resources; expenses
• Loud beeping
• Citizens did not like hearing “you are being audio and video recorded”
  • trouble remembering to inform
• Wires and uncomfortable
• Less discretion and decision making
Cadet Interviews - The Preliminary Results

• Mixed results about ability to remember informing citizen of recording.
• Cadets think of cameras as a “safety net.”
• All the interviewed cadets liked the BWCs.
  • “Body cameras are a blessing, I think they are amazing when you go into a case there is more evidence for backing up your story. There is more trust there because you have this concrete thing.”

Comparison between wearing & not:
• Mixed results regarding cadets behavior.
• Mixed results for whether the public changed their behavior.
• Camera placement could affect behavior.
Next Steps

Next:

• Interview more cadets.
• Finalize Phase I Analysis
• Develop Initial KPI for Traffic Stop and Independent Patrol
• Refine BWC Policy for Cadets
• Cadet Squad Leader Review Process – Pilot Study