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Body cameras and military policing: between institutional transparency and the challenges of operational culture.

"Body-Worn Cameras and Military Policing: Between Institutional Transparency and the Challenges of Operational Culture"

Body chambers and military police: between institutional transparency and the rights of operational culture

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Abstract

This article critically examines the use of body cameras by military police officers in Brazil, highlighting the intricate relationship between promoting institutional transparency and the persistent challenges posed by the operational culture of the corporation itself.

This study investigates the multifaceted impacts of body cameras on police accountability, the reduction of excessive use of force, and the integrity of officers, based on recent empirical studies and national experiences, especially in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. The methodology employed included a systematic literature review and a documentary analysis of news reports, allowing for a deeper understanding of practical and theoretical dilemmas. The results point to a transformative potential of the technology in reducing police lethality and increasing social trust, but also highlight significant internal resistance, governance problems, and gaps in the implementation of effective protocols. Finally, a set of practical and theoretical recommendations is proposed to optimize the benefits of body cameras, emphasizing the need for continuous dialogue, legislative adjustments, and cultural renewal within police forces, aiming to maximize the balance between control, autonomy, and operational effectiveness.

Keywords: Body Cameras; Military Policing; Transparency; Police Lethality; Organizational Culture.

Abstract

This article critically presents the use of body-worn cameras (bodycams) by military police in Brazil, analyzing the intricate relationship between fostering institutional transparency and the persistent challenges posed by the corporation's operational culture. It investigates the multifaceted impacts of this technology on police accountability, the reduction of excessive force, and the integrity of agents, based on recent empirical studies and national experiences, particularly in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. The methodology employed included a systematic literature review and documentary analysis of reports and news articles, allowing for a deeper understanding of practical and theoretical dilemmas. The results point to the technology's transformative potential to reduce police lethality and increase social trust, but also highlight significant internal resistance, governance issues, and gaps in the implementation of effective protocols. Finally, a set of practical and theoretical recommendations is proposed to optimize the benefits of body-worn cameras, underscoring the need for continuous dialogue, legislative adjustments, and cultural renewal within police forces, with the aim of striking a balance among

control, autonomy, and operational effectiveness.

Keywords: Body-Worn Cameras; Military Policing; Transparency; Police Lethality; Organizational Culture.

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1. Introduction

Public security in Brazil, with its complex web of social and institutional challenges, has
It has been the scene of intense debates about police action and the pressing need for mechanisms.
that ensure greater transparency and control. In this scenario, the use of body cameras by
Military police technology has emerged as one of the most promising technological innovations, but
also more controversial, from recent years. The promise of an "impartial witness" capable
to record interactions between citizens and security agents, protecting both the population
against abuses, as well as the police officer's own actions against false accusations, generated considerable...
Public expectation. However, this implementation did not occur without friction, encountering a
an operational culture deeply rooted in practical and ethical challenges that go beyond mere acquisition.
of equipment.

The issue takes on heightened relevance given the history of high rates of police lethality.
In Brazil, this is a factor that systematically strains the relationship between the police and society, undermining...
Trust and institutional legitimacy. The demand for a more responsible police force and
Transparency intensified, driven by widely reported cases of violence and human rights violations, which called
for effective accountability mechanisms.1 It is in this context that body cameras, or Bodycams (Body-Worn
Cameras – BWCs), or
Body-worn cameras (BWCs or BOPCs) emerge as a potential tool for
to mitigate this gap by offering an objective record of occurrences and, theoretically, inducing
to more appropriate behavior from both parties.

The history of body cameras dates back to international experiences, notably in
The United States and the United Kingdom, where they were initially tested as a means of reducing
incidents involving the use of force and documenting evidence. In Brazil, its adoption has been more...

[1] Accountability - There isn't one single word in Portuguese that translates "accountability," but rather a dozen terms that attempt to conceptualize it, such as control, oversight, responsibility, accountability, commitment, proactivity, and transparency. These and all other terms aim to show that accountability – whether in the public, private, or personal sphere – is a culture in which an individual or institution plays the "role of owner," assuming responsibility for the processes in which they are involved. In practice, accountability in public administration is based on the principle that there is someone or some organization responsible for managing decisions that impact society – public bodies and their managers – who must make this process as transparent as possible, reporting to the public and other bodies about their actions, expenditures, and policies, increasing the responsiveness of public managers and the power of control of society. Available at: https://clp.org.br/o-que-e-accountability/. Accessed on: 28/07/2025.

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Recent, but accelerated by court decisions and increasing social pressure. A milestone.
Fundamental was the Argument of Non-Compliance with Fundamental Precept (ADPF) 635 of
The Supreme Federal Court (STF)2 , which, in determining measures to reduce police lethality
Operations in Rio de Janeiro have driven the mandatory use of these devices.
highlighting the Judiciary's recognition of the importance of technology for the
External control of police activity.

However, the implementation of cameras is not limited to the installation of hardware. It reveals...
a complex web of interests, resistances, and perceptions that directly impact their
effectiveness. On one hand, proponents celebrate the undeniable benefits in terms of
Clarity in reporting incidents, protection for police officers, and a reduction in violence. On the other hand, a
A series of internal criticisms from within the police force itself, pointing to increased bureaucracy.
excessive, the feeling of constant surveillance, the loss of autonomy and the fear that the
Technology becomes a tool for punishment, not improvement. This polarization of
The views are not trivial; they reflect a fundamental tension between the logic of external oversight and the
The internal dynamics of a corporation that has historically been hierarchical and resistant to controls.

This article aims to explore this counterpoint in a dialogical and reflective way. The interest
The central question lies in understanding how body cameras, although designed to promote
Transparency and accountability interact with the operational culture of the Military Police.
Brazilian, generating both desired and undesired effects, such as resistance to activation and the
phenomenon of "depolicing"3 . The justification for this work lies in the absence of a
in-depth analysis that combines empirical impacts with qualitative perceptions of
actors involved, offering a more holistic and nuanced view of the implementation of this
Technology in one of the countries with the greatest challenges in the area of public safety. The study
will contribute to public debate and the formulation of more effective policies by proposing a
A critical look at the conditions necessary for body cameras to actually achieve...
its transformative potential.

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[2] ADF 635 – RJ. Available at: https://portal.stf.jus.br/processos/detalhe.asp?incidente=5816502. Accessed on: July 28, 2025.

[3] "Depolicing," in this case, refers to undesirable police behavior that can arise as an indirect and negative consequence of the implementation of body cameras. Therefore, "depolicing" is the idea that camera surveillance, instead of merely curbing abuses, can also inhibit legitimate and necessary police action, leading to decreased policing effectiveness or a change in the profile of interventions, all to avoid the perceived risks of having their actions recorded. It is a complex side effect that highlights how technology interacts with culture and with...

the agents' own perception of risk. (Emphasis added)

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1.1 Study Objectives

Based on the problem presented, this article has the general objective of:

- To critically examine the use of body cameras by military police in Brazil.

investigating its impacts on institutional transparency and the challenges inherent to the culture

operational aspects of the corporation.

To that end, the following specific objectives are established:

- To present the theoretical foundations and empirical evidence regarding the effects of

Body cameras in reducing the use of force and increasing institutional trust, with

Focus on the experiences of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

- Identify and discuss the main criticisms and concerns expressed by police officers.

military personnel regarding operational impacts, the perception of loss of autonomy, and the possible

The instrumentalization of technology for punitive purposes.

- To propose recommendations for the development of usage, governance and protocols.

more efficient data management, aiming to maximize the benefits of body cameras and

to mitigate adverse effects.

The article's structure will follow with the presentation of the methodology, a theoretical development.

In-depth discussion of the results and practical dilemmas, culminating in considerations.

finals and recommendations.

2. Methodology

To address the complexity of the topic "Body Cameras and Military Policing," the following approach was chosen:

through a qualitative methodology, of an exploratory and descriptive nature. The exploratory character

This is justified by the pursuit of a deeper understanding of the nuances and dilemmas surrounding the

the use of technology in the Brazilian context, while the descriptive aspect aims to outline the

impacts, challenges and perceptions of the different actors involved.

The data collection strategies were diverse, including:

2.1 Systematic Literature Review

A systematic literature review was conducted to identify and present studies.

National and international scientific studies on the use of body cameras by police forces.

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The databases consulted included Scielo, Google Scholar, CAPES Journals, and SpringerLink. and ResearchGate. The inclusion criteria prioritized articles published in the last ten years. (2015-2025), focusing on empirical research, literature reviews, and theoretical essays that They addressed the impacts of cameras on police lethality, the use of force, and transparency. institutional, in the perception of police officers and in the organizational culture. Search terms such as "police body cameras", "bodycams Brazil", "police lethality", "police culture" "Transparency and public safety" were used in both Portuguese and English. Among the studies Among the analyses, the evaluations of programs in favelas in Rio de Janeiro and the Program stand out. "Olho Vivo" in São Paulo, which provided crucial empirical data.

2.1 Document Analysis

Document analysis was an essential tool for contextualizing and substantiating the... discussion, when exploring the reality of camera implementation in different states. Brazilians. The following were analyzed:

· Journalistic Reports and Investigations: Publications from major media outlets communication (such as O Globo, Agência Brasil, Diário Carioca, A Voz da Cidade, Latam) Journalism Review, Wired, Police1, among others) were examined to identify cases. concrete examples of successes and failures in the application of the cameras, allegations of data manipulation and The public reaction to the topic. The GloboNews investigative series on the lack of transmission. Videos in Rio de Janeiro, for example, provided important input for the discussion about governance.

• Reports from Official Bodies and Research Institutions: Reports from the Institute of Public Security (ISP), from the Brazilian Forum on Public Security (FBSP) and research from Universities (such as UERJ, FGV, Unicamp) were consulted to extract statistical data. regarding the reduction of police lethality and other incidents, as well as analyses of the processes. implementation.

• Judicial Decisions and Relevant Legislation: ADPF 635 from the STF (Supreme Federal Court) and state ordinances. The use of cameras was analyzed to understand the legal framework and requirements. that govern the adoption of technology.

• Content from Forums and Social Networks: Reports and discussions on platforms such as Reddit These were considered secondary "qualitative observations," offering insights into the

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perception and resistance from the police officers themselves, especially regarding the fear of greater internal control and bureaucratization.

2.2 Analysis Procedures

The data collected through literature review and document analysis were submitted to a thematic content analysis. This approach allowed for the identification of patterns and categorization. recurring arguments (both for and against the use of cameras) and mapping the main ones challenges and benefits. The aim was to establish a dialogue between empirical evidence, the perceptions of the actors involved and sociological and organizational theories, in order to build a coherent and multifaceted argument. The interpretation of this data sought to go beyond Explicit, revealing the tensions underlying the relationship between technology, power, and culture. institutional.

2.3 Study Limitations

It is important to emphasize that this study, being of a bibliographic and documentary nature, does not... included primary field research with interviews or questionnaires applied directly to police officers. In this way, the agents' perceptions are inferred from the accounts presented. in the secondary materials analyzed. Although this approach was adequate for Regarding the proposed objectives, it is recognized that a future study with primary data could... to further deepen the understanding of the psychosocial and operational impacts of cameras bodily.

3. Theoretical Development

The debate surrounding body cameras in military policing goes beyond mere discussion. technological; it is part of a broader context of public security reform and the search for greater accountability of the police forces. To understand the multiple factors that For those working in this field, it is essential to anchor the analysis in concepts and theories that elucidate the... control mechanisms, organizational dynamics, and behavioral responses of agents.

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3.1 Body Cameras: Technology, Capabilities, and Implications

Body-worn cameras (BWCs), also known as Police Personality Cameras (PPCs).
or COP), are portable audio and video devices, usually attached to uniforms or
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for police officers. Its main function is to record the...
From the agent's perspective during the events, acting as an "impartial witness."
technical terms, most of the equipment used today in Brazil and internationally
offers:

- Image resolution: Usually high definition (HD) or Full HD (1080p).

ensuring visual clarity, although quality may vary in low-light environments.
brightness, which already constitutes a technical challenge.

- Recording capacity: Batteries designed to support shifts of up to 12 hours, with

Temporary internal storage prior to transmission.

- Additional features: Some models incorporate facial recognition for

Unlocking, GPS for geolocation of the incident, and pre-recording functionality.
(capturing seconds or minutes before formal activation), which is vital to avoid losing
The start of critical incidents.

- Attachment: Models vary, but they are commonly attached to a totem, uniform, or vest.

Tactical design with secure locks to prevent loss or tampering.
Data storage and access are critical aspects for system integrity.
Images are typically stored on cloud servers, ensuring security and access.
remote. The standard retention period ranges from 60 to 90 days for recordings without incident, but
It can be extended indefinitely in cases of investigative or judicial interest. Access,
However, it is strictly restricted: only the internal affairs department, the Public Prosecutor's Office, and the Public Defender's Office.
The public and stakeholders (such as victims and lawyers) can request the videos by
Formal request. Robust systems keep access logs, preventing deletion or...
Editing the images and tracking each request, which, in theory, strengthens the chain of custody.
and the reliability of the evidence.
Real-time transmission to a command center, with end-to-end encryption, is
A feature that enhances control and supervision. This allows supervisors to...
monitor ongoing operations, providing tactical support or intervening in situations.
Criticism, in addition to acting as an immediate deterrent to inappropriate conduct.

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3.2 Institutional Transparency and Police Accountability

The adoption of body cameras is directly linked to the concepts of transparency.
Institutional and police accountability. Transparency refers to openness and accessibility.
of an institution's information and processes, allowing for public scrutiny. In
In a police context, this translates into the capacity of civil society and oversight bodies.
to oversee the actions of the agents, promoting trust and legitimacy. The camera
In this sense, the body is a fundamental instrument of proactive transparency, since
It records police actions without the need for an initial formal request.
Accountability is the process by which individuals or institutions are held responsible.
obligated to justify their actions and to be subject to their consequences. In the field
In police matters, accountability can be internal (through internal affairs and chain of command) or external.
(via the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Judiciary, and civil society). Body cameras strengthen both
dimensions:

- Internal accountability: Allows supervisors to evaluate the performance of their employees.
subordinates, identify good practices and behaviors to be corrected, and serve as a basis for
internal disciplinary proceedings (PADs).
- External accountability: Provides objective evidence for criminal investigations and
In civil matters, it protects citizens' rights and facilitates the investigation of abuse allegations.
authority.

The theory of digital supervision is particularly relevant here. It posits that the simple
The presence of the camera acts as a substitute for observation, generating a deterrent effect on behavior.
abusive. The awareness that their actions are being recorded tends to shape the
The behavior of police officers, leading them to follow protocols more rigorously, a phenomenon
known as the "civilizing effect" of technology. However, this theory also warns that...
The effectiveness of digital supervision depends on adherence to a culture of activation and monitoring of...
internal protocols, as will be discussed later.

3.3 Police Operational Culture: Resistance and Adaptation

The introduction of a technology with disruptive potential, such as body cameras,
This inevitably comes into conflict with the organizational culture of the Military Police. The culture
Police can be defined as the set of values, beliefs, norms, and practices.

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shared by members of the corporation, which shape their behavior and their
Identity. In Brazil, this culture is often characterized by elements such as:

- Rigid hierarchy and discipline: A vertical structure that values obedience and compliance.
- Group solidarity: A strong sense of camaraderie and loyalty among peers, which This can, in some cases, lead to omission or mutual protection.
- "Warrior Police": A vision of the police as a combat force, operating in A hostile environment in which discretion and quick action are valued above control.

This culture is often resistant to external oversight mechanisms, which are perceived as distrust or as a "stifling" of the activity.

- Constant risk perception: The nature of police work, which involves dealing with High-risk situations generate a defensive mindset and, at times, a feeling of that the "rules of the game" on the field differ from the formal rules.

Organizational culture theory explains why the introduction of visibility mechanisms Direct contact, such as with cameras, can generate identity tensions. For many police officers, the camera is seen as... as a sign of distrust on the part of the institution itself or the State, a tool a control mechanism that exposes their actions to scrutiny they consider unfair or out of context.

If the use of cameras is primarily associated with increased administrative sanctions (In Administrative Disciplinary Proceedings – PADs), police officers can develop strategies. resistance, such as not activating equipment or minimizing proactive interactions, which can generate the phenomenon of "depolicing" — a retreat in approaches and actions. which could generate conflict and, consequently, records that could be used against they.

Resistance is not necessarily a refusal to be transparent, but often a defending professional autonomy and reacting to the perception that technology, instead of being... An ally in improving service and protecting good police officers, it is a surveillance tool. excessive and punitive. The effectiveness of cameras, therefore, does not depend solely on their capacity. technical skills, but also the institution's ability to negotiate and adapt its internal culture. transforming the perception of the tool from a "punishing eye" into an "ally that protects and qualifies".

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4. Development and Impacts: An Empirical and Practical Analysis

The implementation of body cameras in Brazil has generated a series of impacts that
They need to be analyzed both from the perspective of proven benefits and challenges and...
Persistent criticism. The experience of states like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro offers a rich...
field of observation to understand this dynamic.

4.1 Success Stories and Proven Benefits

Empirical evidence on the use of body cameras in Brazil and in similar contexts.
They consistently point to significant benefits, especially in reducing
police lethality and increased transparency:

- Reducing Police Lethality: One of the most notable impacts is the decrease in...
Deaths resulting from interventions by state agents. In São Paulo, police units
Military personnel equipped with body cameras recorded a reduction of up to 76% in lethality.
police between 2019 and 2022, an impressive figure that demonstrates the "civilizing effect" of
technology. Furthermore, there was a 67% decrease in adolescent deaths during operations.
in these units (Brazilian Forum on Public Security, 2023; Monteiro, Fagundes and Guerra,
2023). In Rio de Janeiro, after the start of operations with cameras in May 2022, the lethality
Police work fell by 45% in January 2024, compared to the same month in 2023, according to
data from the Institute of Public Security (ISP) and researchers from UERJ (Agência Brasil,
2024). BOPE operations, for example, also showed a significant reduction.
a 32.6% increase in the number of transactions in January 2024, following the expansion of the use of bodycams.
(Reddit, 2024). These numbers are not just statistics; they represent lives saved and a
A fundamental change in the dynamics of the confrontation.
- Increased Trust and Institutional Legitimacy: Greater Transparency
The information provided by the cameras helps to rebuild public trust in the police.
The ability to impartially record the facts can reduce the perception of impunity and of
Abuses are eliminated, making the police more legitimate in the eyes of society. This creates a virtuous cycle:
Greater trust leads to greater community cooperation with the police.
- Police Officer Protection: Cameras don't just protect citizens. They are a
a vital tool for protecting police officers themselves against unfounded accusations or for
to document the context of a legitimate action. In many situations, camera footage is used.

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Body parts were used to exonerate police officers or corroborate their versions of events, serving as irrefutable evidence in judicial and administrative proceedings.

- Evidence for Investigation and Legal Proceedings: The recordings provide material High-quality evidence. In October 2023, in Rio de Janeiro, a police officer was caught... for wearing a body camera and accepting R$100 from a detainee in Araruama. The case, widely reported as disclosed, it served as crucial evidence in the investigation and legal proceedings (Diário Carioca, 2023). Other reported cases include the extortion of drivers caught in the act during a traffic stop under the Law. Drought and illegal entry into homes without a warrant, reinforcing the power of technology to To expose inappropriate conduct and ensure accountability.
- Improving Operational Conduct: An experiment in Rio de Janeiro's favelas. It demonstrated that the installation of cameras resulted in a reduction of "stop-and-searches". (approaches and searches) abusive and aggressive behavior against police officers, although the study also pointed out some limitations related to the activation of the equipment (Magaloni et al., 2023; Poverty Action, 2021-2022). The mere presence of the camera seems to induce a more... professional and less conflict-ridden.

4.2 Challenges and Criticisms in Implementation

Despite proven benefits, the journey of body cameras in military policing is still underway. Brazilian politics has been marked by a series of challenges and criticisms, reflecting its complexity. The interaction between technology, institution, and culture:

- Police Resistance and Operational Culture: Resistance is one of the biggest obstacles. Police officers, especially veteran officers or those working in high-crime areas, They express concern about the loss of autonomy and a significant increase in lawsuits. Administrative Disciplinary Proceedings (PADs) (Mattos, 2024; Researchgate, 2023). There is a perception of that the cameras "paralyze" police action, generating insecurity when acting in the "heat of the moment." "Confrontation," in which decision-making is rapid and the consequences are immediate. Resistance is not merely a refusal to obey orders, but a manifestation of culture. of the "warrior police," who values discretion and sees external control as a intrusion. The fear of administrative retaliation in cases of documented infractions is real and generates aversion to technology.
- Problems with Manual Activation and "De-policing": One of the most critical bottlenecks. It is the manual activation of the equipment. Many agents do not activate "incident" mode or

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"occurrence", which results in the loss of important videos or the absence of a record in crucial moments. This flaw is not only technical, but also reveals a passive resistance. and an attempt to control the narrative of events. The experimental study in Rio de Janeiro, Although it showed a reduction in aggressive interactions, it also pointed to a clear effect of "Depolicing," with police officers responding to fewer incidents and avoiding proactive measures. even when the cameras were not activated (MagalonI et al., 2023). This suggests that the The perception of surveillance, and not just the recording itself, can lead to a strategic retreat in actions.

- Acquisition, Maintenance, and Storage Costs: Implementing a system of Body cameras are a high-cost undertaking. It involves the acquisition of equipment. (which can vary between R$ 2,000 and R$ 5,000 per unit), ongoing maintenance, data storage infrastructure (massive-capacity cloud servers), the development of image management software and, crucially, training and Continuous training of agents (Portal FGV, 2023; contrario sensu, 2023; Wikipedia, 2023). The operational cost of storage can be substantial, given the daily volume of recordings.
- Privacy and Data Usage Issues: The use of cameras raises serious questions about Privacy and security of personal data, both for citizens and for strategies. Sensitive operational equipment. Capturing images in private environments or recording people. that those not directly involved in the event require an ethical and legal debate about the Limits of recording and the protection of privacy. Furthermore, the recording of tactical strategies or... The sharing of sensitive information could compromise future operations if the data is not... managed with maximum security (Springerlink, 2023; Wikipedia, 2023; Security Forum, 2023). The General Data Protection Law (LGPD) in Brazil imposes strict guidelines for the collection, storage and processing of personal data, which requires a usage protocol and Very clear access and in compliance with the law.
- Technical Problems and Inaccurate Interpretation: Despite advances, the equipment They may still exhibit flaws, such as low resolution in dark environments, and malfunctioning buttons. activation or insufficient battery for long shifts (Omg Solutions, 2023). Furthermore, the Interpreting 2D images can be inaccurate, leading to incorrect distance readings. The speed or intensity of the threat in judicial and administrative analyses, which may to impair the assessment of an incident (Lewinski apud Police1, 2023). This highlights the

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The importance of images being only part of the body of evidence and not the sole source.
in truth.

These challenges, when not addressed proactively, can compromise effectiveness.
of cameras, transforming a potentially revolutionary tool into just another item of
bureaucracy or, worse, a catalyst for internal tensions.

5. Discussion: Between Theory and Operational Reality

The implementation of body cameras in Brazilian military policing represents a
a true social laboratory, in which theories of control and organizational culture collide with
the complex reality of the streets. The following discussion delves deeper into the dilemmas and nuances that
These findings emerge from this interaction, revealing that the effectiveness of the technology transcends its potential.
technical.

5.1 The Dilemma of Depolicing and the Culture of Activation

Depolicing – the reduction of proactive policing, responding to fewer incidents or
The retreat from approaches that could generate conflict – is one of the most significant side effects.
Concerning aspects of the use of cameras. The experimental study in favelas of Rio de Janeiro, although
While it demonstrates a reduction in abusive approaches, it also points to this phenomenon.
(Magaloni et al., 2023; Springerlink, 2023). My analysis suggests that this "double face" of
Cameras are not merely a consequence of surveillance, but a profound symptom of...
cultural resistance and the perception that technology has become a punitive instrument, and
neither protective nor even educational.

Organizational culture theory helps us understand this dynamic. In corporations
In hierarchical structures like the Military Police, the introduction of direct visibility mechanisms can
to be interpreted as institutionalized distrust. If the police officer associates the camera with
increased PADs and administrative overload (because they need to operate the equipment, report
and reviewing recordings, which can lead to burnout symptoms (Poirier et al., 2023), it is natural that
Adopt a more reactive stance, avoiding situations that put you under scrutiny. The fear of
administrative retaliation (Mattos, 2024) becomes a more decisive factor in
behavior rather than the pursuit of operational effectiveness.

The issue of manual activation is central here. Although, theoretically, it allows the police officer

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Discretion, in practice, opens loopholes for the manipulation of the narrative. Suspicions of
Cameras are strategically left unactivated during critical incidents to conceal misconduct.
Inadequate behaviors are recurrent (Reddit, 2020), which highlights the adherence to the "activation culture."
"Habit" remains a persistent challenge. Simply owning a camera does not guarantee...
Transparency; it is the activation and integrity of images that confer legitimacy to
process.

5.2 The Role of Image in Administrative and Judicial Investigations: Governance Failures

The images generated by body cameras should be the backbone of the evidence in
disciplinary and judicial cases. However, the reality in Rio de Janeiro, as exposed by
Marta Szpacenkopf (2025) and other investigations reveal alarming weaknesses in
Governance. Reports indicate that, out of 774 legal requests for videos, in 60% of cases,
The Military Police either did not hand over or deleted the recordings, frequently claiming they were not activated.
of the occurrence mode.

This massive failure cannot be attributed solely to the "inattention" of the agents. It exposes a
Structural governance problem: the absence of a clear protocol or oversight.
rigorous measures to ensure the integrity of the chain of custody of evidence. Non-delivery or "loss"
Releasing videos at crucial moments undermines the very essence of the transparency promised by...
Technology. The absence of videos can be as harmful as the presence of videos.
The incriminating individuals conveniently "disappeared." This raises profound questions.
Regarding police autonomy in managing their own evidence and the need for
More robust external control mechanisms. System reliability is directly
proportional to its inviolability and the responsibility of those who operate and manage it.

5.3 Cost and Cost-Benefit: Beyond the Numbers

The high cost of acquiring, maintaining, and especially storing data is...
frequently cited as a challenge (FGV Portal, 2023). In fact, the infrastructure
The necessary technology is complex and requires continuous investment. However, the discussion
cannot be limited to just the direct financial cost. It is crucial to consider the cost-benefit ratio.
a broader perspective.
What is saved in compensation for abuses, in lawsuits against the State, in

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What are the costs associated with restoring the institutional image and, most importantly, the lives saved? Reducing police lethality and increasing public trust are invaluable.

It transcends the budget balance. The investment in body cameras, when well executed, Managed, it can be seen as an investment in one's own legitimacy and effectiveness. public safety, reducing indirect and intangible costs in the long term. Ignoring the costs of "Lack of transparency" and "lack of accountability" would be strategic shortsightedness.

5.4 Institutional Culture and the Need for a Strategic Shift

The traditional police culture in Brazil, which sometimes resembles a "police-" model. "guerrilla warfare" (Magaloni et al., 2023), in which trust is built on the basis of power. The symbolic, in repressive action and in group solidarity, is profoundly challenged by Introduction of cameras. The technology imposes an unsettling visibility on the officer and, at times, threatening to that culture. The camera becomes an "omnipresent eye," demanding a renewal of institutional behaviors.

For body cameras to be fully effective, it is imperative that the institution promotes A strategic shift in its culture. This shift involves:

- Adopting a culture of habitual activation: Transforming the act of turning on the camera into a... A conditioned reflex and an integral part of the standard operating procedure.
- Institutional support for reporting and effective accountability: Creating an environment in that the police officer who follows protocols feels protected and that failures and abuses are addressed. investigated and punished effectively, without complacency.
- Clear and standardized protocols: Define precise guidelines for activation, the storage, access and use of images, in a way that is transparent to the agents and to the society.
- Dialogue and continuous training: Investing in training programs that are not not only technical aspects, but also the ethical, legal, and cultural implications of its use. technology, promoting internal dialogue and understanding of mutual benefits.

Without this cultural transformation, body cameras risk becoming mere... Technological gadgets, incapable of fulfilling their transformative role in public safety. Brazilian. The real revolution is not in the equipment itself, but in the way it is used. The corporation integrates him and embraces him as part of a new vision of policing.

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Conclusion

Body cameras undoubtedly represent a technological and institutional leap forward.
for police forces in Brazil, offering an undeniable potential to promote
transparency, reducing the excessive use of force, and protecting both the population and the authorities themselves.
agents. Empirical data, especially in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, attest to a
A significant drop in police lethality and an increase in social trust where technology is implemented.
It was implemented more effectively. The gains observed – from the prevention of abuses
even greater evidentiary accuracy in investigations – indicate that the adoption of cameras, when
When well managed, it brings concrete and positive impacts to public safety and legitimacy.
institutional.

However, in-depth analysis revealed that simply inserting the devices does not guarantee...
Achieving its objectives. The main challenges, intrinsically linked to culture.
Operational and institutional governance barriers emerge as significant obstacles:

- Low activation culture: The prevalence of manual activation and agent resistance.
Activating cameras during crucial incidents compromises the integrity of the recording and the
monitoring capacity.
- Internal resistance and fear of being used as a tool: The fear of lawsuits.
Administrative Disciplinary Proceedings (PADs), the feeling of loss of autonomy and "rigidity"
The actions of police officers create an atmosphere of distrust and, at times,
The phenomenon of "depolicing".
- Lack of effective governance: The absence of rigorous storage and management protocols.
Access, and the recurring failure to deliver legally requested videos, demonstrate that
The fragility of the control system and the risk of manipulation or concealment of information.
- High operating costs: Investments in acquisition, maintenance, and
In particular, data storage represents a considerable financial challenge.
although the cost-benefit ratio, in terms of lives saved and institutional legitimacy, justifies the
long-term investment.
- Privacy dilemmas: The collection of sensitive citizen data and the recording of
Strategic operational information raises ethical and legal questions that require guidelines.
clear and compliant with the General Data Protection Law (LGPD).

Therefore, in order for the transformative potential of body cameras to be fully explored,
Deep and systemic adjustments are essential, going beyond mere technological acquisition.

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The highly personal actions of managers and public policy makers, combined with a commitment
Unwavering in its commitment to transparency, it will be a game-changer.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the analyses and discussions presented, I recommend the following strategic actions:

- Transition to the automatic recording or decentralized triggering model:

Eliminate the manual activation button as the sole method for recording critical incidents.
Evaluate the implementation of systems that automatically start recording in certain situations.
predefined (e.g., when exiting the vehicle, when drawing the weapon, when identifying a change in the voice of
agent), or allow the command center to activate the cameras remotely. This would mitigate the
Resistance to activation would ensure the recording of crucial moments.

- Strengthening data governance and auditing: Establishing a system of

Robust and independent auditing of the recordings. Supervisors must be held accountable.
directly through the activation and initial analysis of their teams' images. Furthermore, it is crucial
to create a transparent and efficient mechanism for handling access requests to
recordings from the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Public Defender's Office, and the Judiciary, with clear deadlines and
Penalties for non-compliance. Failure to deliver videos should be treated as a serious breach.
of governance.

- Continuous investment in infrastructure and information security: Ensuring resources

suitable for secure cloud storage, equipment and systems maintenance.
Robust encryption. Data security is not just a technical issue, but also...
of public trust.

- Ongoing training and internal dialogue programs: going beyond technical training.

To promote discussions and workshops that address the purpose of cameras, as well as their...
Benefits for the protection of the police officer themselves and for institutional legitimacy. Creating channels
through dialogue so that police officers can express their concerns and suggestions, building support by
through a participatory process. The camera should not be seen as the "eye of the enemy".
but rather as an improvement tool.

- Establishing clear privacy protection guidelines: Develop and disseminate them.

detailed protocols on what can and cannot be recorded, ensuring the protection of
Personal data in accordance with the LGPD (Brazilian General Data Protection Law) and the privacy of third parties. Ensuring that...

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Sensitive images may be anonymized or edited, when necessary, for training purposes.
or public analysis, without compromising evidentiary integrity.

- Performance-based acquisition and maintenance models: Evaluating contracts with
suppliers that include performance and liability clauses regarding
functionality and storage, mitigating the risks of technical failures.

Ultimately, body cameras are not a panacea for all security ills.
public, but they represent a unique opportunity to modernize and democratize action.
police in Brazil. Its success will depend less on the technology itself and more on the capabilities of the
institutions need to reinvent themselves, to embrace transparency as an intrinsic value and to
to build, together with their agents, a new culture of accountability and trust.
The chamber, therefore, is a catalyst for change, whose destiny lies in the hands of those who...
They operate and manage it.

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