

## **Closed-Circuit Television as Deterrence in Shoplifting in Business Establishments in Baguio City**

Baygan, Joe Nari A.  
Aguillon, Antoneitte  
Cawi, Robino  
Nabunat, Laborah May  
Pico, Jennifer Ann  
Rivera, Sarah Jane  
Sadao, Jemalene  
Zaparita, Sunshine

*College of Criminal Justice Education, Graduate School, University of the Cordilleras, Baguio City*

---

**ABSTRACT:** *This study entitled “Closed-Circuit Television as Deterrence of Shoplifting in the Business Establishments in Baguio City” to determine if Closed-Circuit Television is effective as deterrent and to detect shoplifters inside the business establishments in Baguio City. Does it serve as a useful tool to lessen the shoplifting happening inside the business establishment. The researchers use descriptive qualitative method to aim the objective of this research study. This study is focused only on Business Establishments in Baguio City. The data gathering tools used by the researchers are in-depth interviews with the participants. There are five business establishments participants of this study. The researchers conducted a zoom and video call interview about their experiences as Closed-Circuit Television operator. After gathering the data, the researchers conducted comprehensive analysis of the raw data from the participants. Thus, the analysis and findings of this research study enumerated the experiences of Closed-Circuit Television Tactical Operations Center operators were also recorded such as intensified monitoring of the screen in the suspicious movement of customer and strict alertness when capturing or when shoplifting occurs. However, there are some problems encountered and thus need the following recommendations. Some of these problems are as follows, lack of personnel in viewing of the screen, blind spot area, and lack of Closed-Circuit Television cameras.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Close Circuit Television, Deterrence, Shoplifting*

---

Date of Submission: 13-07-2023

Date of Acceptance: 28-07-2023

---

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Is Closed-circuit television (CCTV) effective to detect and deter shoplifters in supermarkets and other business establishments? As Business owners expand their business it also gives the criminal offenders more opportunity in committing crime however, because of innovation business establishment install CCTV to deter possible shoplifting inside the establishment. When shoplifting or crime happened the law enforcement can use CCTV footage to lead them to the identify criminal and help them to answer the five W's (who, what, when, where, why) and one H (How). CCTV footage can also be evidence presented in the court of law to prove someone's guilt in the crime committed. It is a big help to the business establishments and to their security to monitor and observe the movement of the customers inside the premises. Any unusual activities or movements of customers can be easily observed and monitored by operators. The emerging innovations of this technology have helped security efforts tighter; however, does it have effect on would be shoplifters. The study determined the deterrent effect of CCTV in shoplifting in Baguio City based on the experiences of the CCTV Tactical operations Center operators.

In the last two decades, the use of CCTV surveillance cameras has become essential to modern crime prevention and policing efforts worldwide. (Goold, 2004; Weisburd & Majmundar, 2018; Welsh & Farrington, 2009, as cited in Thomas, A. et al., 2021). CCTV usage is expanding both domestically and internationally. When compared to other developed nations, such as the United Kingdom in the past, a high prevalence of CCTV cameras is no longer exclusively found in one or two of them (Norris & McCahill, 2006 as cited in Thomas, A. et al.,

2021). All of the inhabited continents currently have a significant urban population, with Asia, Europe, North America, and South America seeing the greatest development in the usage of camera systems. The camera systems are quite advanced in many of the major cities, including Beijing, Chicago, London, and Rio de Janeiro. They incorporate cutting-edge technologies including networked video systems, facial recognition software, and license plate reader technology. It has become common knowledge that this phenomenon is known as the "internationalization" of CCTV monitoring (Hier, 2010 as cited in Thomas, A. et al., 2021).

## II. METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative with the use of descriptive method. The data was gathered through in-depth interviews with the CCTV operators of five participating business establishments in Baguio City. The interviews were facilitated through zoom and video calls. The data collected were analyzed with thematic analysis and found recurring ideas that the researchers used to create themes.

## III. DISCUSSION

In the Philippines, CCTV has been popular on stores, gasoline stations, streets, elevators, laboratory, banks, condominiums, hallways, and privately owned area. In Baguio City, installation of CCTV by the City government projected it as a pro-active, aggressive and immediate response to situations of public concern CCTV. As proved by this study, it is indeed a helpful technology or tool in capturing shoplifters or shoplifting in progress. Some experiences of CCTV operators were also recorded such as intensified monitoring of the screen with the suspicious movement of customer and strict alertness when capturing or when shoplifting occurs. However, there are some problems encountered. Some of these problems are: lack of personnel in viewing of the screen, blind spot area, and lack of CCTV cameras. Although, it did not specifically answer the direct deterrence of the shoplifters, but it has helped security personnel in capturing shoplifters while shoplifting. This impact indirectly deters shoplifters knowing that they are being apprehended because of the aid of the CCTV.

The deterrent effect of CCTV cameras has been a typical strategy for reducing crime and disruption. There are also claims that CCTV gives people peace of mind and lowers their fear of crime, which might lead to more people using public areas (Bennett & Gelsthorpe, 2010 as cited in Cuevas, 2016). CCTV has popularly been used worldwide. Comparatively, the instant study proves similarity with this study that CCTV technology is indeed an innovation for peace and security. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) surveillance cameras serve many functions and are in both public and private settings. The prevention of personal and property crime is among the primary objectives in public space. In line with studies in Western countries, CCTVs in Korea were significantly associated with levels of property crime and the areas with larger surveillance zones had lower property crime levels. CCTV aims to minimize crime largely by making potential perpetrators believe there is a higher danger of discovery and capture, (Jang, Y. et.al, 2018). Similarly, the instant study determined that CCTV operators' experiences tells the intensified monitoring of the screen of any suspicious movement of customers and strict in capturing or when shoplifting occurs. Phillips (2006) supports the idea that CCTV is useful in preventing property crime. Based on the statement of the Business Watch, (2020), installing a closed-circuit television system is a practical way to strengthen a business's site's security while also enhancing the effectiveness and performance of its operations. In addition, the benefits of CCTV include preventing theft and vandalism, providing camera video as proof, monitoring employee performance and safety, giving visibility to the entire company property, assisting with insurance claims, lowering insurance costs, and offering piece of mind.

Based on the study and analysis of the answers of the respondents on the interviews conducted by the researchers and finding some problem, the following recommendations are: 1. Updating the knowledge and skills of CCTV operators through seminars and training; 2. Upgrading and/or additional CCTV cameras or installation of mock or false Cameras; 3. Utilization if not addition of Personnel Installation of signages saying that CCTV cameras are installed on the said establishments.

The effectiveness of the CCTV in surveillance and deterrence is an avenue for innovation, thus in the future research could determine the possibility of centralizing the CCTV operation or linkages to further tighten security measures.

## IV. FINDINGS

Upon analysis of the qualitative data, the researchers have identified themes with the experiences of CCTV Operators.

### Intensified monitoring of Suspicious people/ Surveillance

CCTV is a useful tool for beginning an investigation and for having deterrent effects on potential perpetrators (Khan, et. al, 2020). Monitoring the CCTV camera screens is the most important role of the CCTV operator, from the responses of the operators, it is depicted that familiarity of the vicinity of the establishment being

observed thru cameras or prior surveillance of the establishment to know the locations of the cameras installed is necessary. Responses correlate that the operators are strictly monitoring not only customers or probable shoplifters but also employees and delivery personnel. CCTV operators are always on alert to any incident that might happen during his tour of duty and could foresight some possible incident.

#### CCTV records previous incidents

o keep track of its workers and other stakeholders, several businesses today rely on various monitoring and surveillance procedures (Khan et. al, 2020). Previous incidents recorded and properly stored is useful for future reference. The operator has notably disclosed experience of usefulness of CCTV footage that they caught someone, but it was not real time, someone reported that something was stolen then he reviewed the CCTV where he found out that an employee stole merchandise. Upon validation it was positive that he really did it. Although in some instances, there are areas not covered by cameras as disclosed by another operator that when employees enter the warehouse, they are not covered by the CCTV cameras. This is not in contradiction to the capturing and recording of events by the CCTV cameras because entrances and exits are planted with cameras, thus they record who enters and leaves the premises. These challenges the operator who to pinpoint among the players in the footage as to who exactly committed the crime.

#### Quick reaction time.

The researchers identified that the experiences of the CCTV Operators are quick reaction time. As the response of CCTV Operator, immediate action in every incident is crucial. When there is an incident of shoplifting in business establishments, the CCTV Operator needs to alert all the security personnel with proper coordination by the use of radio to apprehend the shoplifter before they go outside of the store. Participants One said in interview that How did they react when a shoplifter was caught by the CCTV camera is call the attention of all personnel to be alert. When there is a suspicious customer inside the store, the CCTV operator alerts all personnel in the selling area and monitors the movement of the former. Before he/ she can go outside the establishment, the personnel assigned in the exit/ entrance must conduct frisking. This relates to the notion of alertness to crime, which holds that as a country develops, people's awareness of crime increases, leading them to report more crimes to the police and demand that they do more to effectively combat crime (Comin Atika, 2021)

#### Inadequacy of personnel

The job of a CCTV operator is difficult. Deep alertness and a high tolerance for boredom must be balanced among the CCTV operators. It must be able to recognize potentially serious situations during the whole shift in its capacity as a CCTV operator. As a CCTV operator, it must be able to identify potentially dangerous circumstances during the whole shift. Regarding the job of CCTV operator, the inadequacy of personnel is one experience of the CCTV Operator because shoplifting or theft can happen at quick notice. This is why live monitoring of screens in continuous time is important that needs adequate personnel to operate. Based on the study of Engetou M.E., (2017) on the topic of "Impact of Insufficient Personnel on Organizational Performance," it was established that having insufficient staff causes stress and tiredness levels to rise, which has an impact on how well an organization performs. Due to overload and less oversight of their actions caused by insufficient staff, work has increased.

#### Offenses other than Shoplifting

As Mc Call (1975) pointed out, low predictability and low frequency of offenses, reactive impacts of witnesses on potential perpetrators, and potential physical threat to witnesses are also factors. Furthermore, Offenders frequently attempt to carry out their crimes covertly in order to avoid detection. It is more difficult for CCTV personnel to monitor during rush hour because shoplifters take advantage of the throng. Shoplifters take advantage of the time when they are least observed by the CCTV operator to monitor the presence of a shoplifter on the premises. As mentioned by one of the CCTV operators, the problems they encountered were shoplifting, accidents inside the store, if someone broke an item, stealing of other customers from other customers. It is not just the store that becomes a target. Stealing from customer's valuables by pick pocketers is also happening. One of the oldest and most common crimes in the world is pickpocketing. A good pickpocket may steal just as much money as an armed robber without much risk of confrontation or risk of being recognized in a line-up, which is part of its attraction. The pickpocket has already left by the time the victim understands what has happened. Additionally, because there are no weapons used, pickpockets who are detected receive a short jail sentence.

#### Camera dead zone

The 'dead zone' or blind spot of a camera is the area under the camera where the camera cannot view the ground that must be considered during CCTV system design. Camera positioning should be in such a way that the dead zone of one camera is covered by another camera's field of view. The blind spots can hide the shoplifting that may happen. And if the shoplifter knows about the blind spots of the store premises its easier for them to act. The absence of the CCTV camera gives the person the chance to commit his unlawful action.

#### Competency of the personnel

Assessments that are competency-based are appropriate practices to implement rather than recent developments or trends. Employee competence evaluations have existed for long enough to have weathered the test of time and have proven to be a highly helpful tool in the toolkit of a human resource professional. Employee competencies are a collection of particular, well-defined abilities and behaviors that are used to outline a company's performance standards for a position or the culture of the business as a whole. For the HR professional, there are several tools available to assist them create and personalize a list of competences their firm can call their own. The individuals who will be working as CCTV operators should have the appropriate training because some employees without such qualification were given immediate employment. The individuals allocated to the job must possess the necessary skills and training. The person's effectiveness and efficiency will be greatly influenced by the instruction he received. To gain new information and better manage the issue, staff members participate in seminars and training.

#### Dress codes

Shoplifters do not fit one description. They can be of different ages, gender, ethnicity, and social class. Anyone can be a shoplifter, no matter what they wear or how they look. Sometimes, they enter the establishment wearing decent clothes and yet they just linger in the area to steal items.

#### Coded radio communication

With regard to the usage of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International (APCO) Ten-codes, what is captured in the CCTV cameras can be easily relayed to the other officers thru the use of APCO ten codes, from the CCTV operator to the entrance and exits and to the roving officers. Thus, APCO Ten-codes plays a very vital role for uniformed personnel, Security Guards and CCTV operators in deterring shoplifting incidents and to immediately address a shoplifting incident.

### **V. CONCLUSION**

Based on the careful analysis of the findings, the researchers arrived at the following conclusion: that CCTV cameras are indeed a helpful equipment or tool in capturing shoplifters' or shoplifting activities. Some experiences of CCTV operators we're also recorded such as intensified monitoring of the screen in the suspicious movement of customer and strict alertness when capturing or when shoplifting occurs. However, there are some problems. The following problems such as: lack of personnel in viewing of the screen, blind spot area, and lack of CCTV cameras are encountered and thus need the following recommendations.

The researchers analyzed the answers of the respondents in the interviews conducted and found some problems. The following recommendations are updating the knowledge and skills of CCTV operators through seminars and training. The fast innovation of technology creates new designs and techniques, thus the need to update the personnel manning the CCTV operations center is recommended. Upgrading and/or additional CCTV cameras or installation of mock or false Cameras. The conditional effect of CCTVs implies some neighborhood traits optimize the deployment of CCTV, which directs more effective implementation of CCTV system for crime control and prevention, (Jang, Y., et al., 2018). Additional CCTV cameras cover more angles or false cameras visible to customers imply deterrence. Utilization if not addition of Personnel. If more eyes are intensely observing the CCTV monitors the faster of detection of possible shoplifter. Installation of signages saying that CCTV cameras are installed on the said establishments. By the mere informing the customers that the establishment is CCTV covered, that immediately deter would be shoplifter of possible identification and arrest.

Researchers further recommend that the innovation on this technology opens opportunities for several research topics, like the centralization of the operations center or linkages of them in order to tighten the security measure and further develop operating procedures for operators.

**REFERENCES**

- [1]. Thomas, A., Piza, E., Welsh, B.C., Farrington, D.P. (2021) The Internationalization of CCTV Surveillance: Effects on Crime and Implications for Emerging Technologies. Retrieved from <https://www.crimrxiv.com/pub/sw8ljm5k/release/1>
- [2]. Cuevas, Q., Corachea, J.C., Escabel, E., Bautista, M.L. (Effectiveness of CCTV Cameras Installation in Crime Prevention) College of Criminal Justice, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Batangas City, Philippines. Retrieved from <https://research.lpubatangas.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CRIM-2016-003.pdf>
- [3]. Jang, Y., Kim, D., Park J. and Kim, D. (2018): Conditional effects of open-street closed-circuit television (CCTV) on Crime: A case from Korea
- [4]. Business Watch. (2020). The Benefits of CCTV for Businesses. Retrieved April 12, 2021, from <https://www.businesswatchgroup.co.uk/the-benefits-of-cctv-for-businesses/>
- [5]. Philips. C. (2006). A review of CCTV Evaluations: Crime Reduction Effects and Attitudes Towards its Use. Home Office Policing and Reducing Crime Unit.