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Research Paper

Developing a Change Management Framework to Enhance Operational Excellence in Law Enforcement Organizations

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Abstract:

This research aims to investigate the current operational status of the Ajman Police, focusing on identifying elements and issues that affect operational excellence. Using change management models, including Kotter's 8 Step Model and the ADKAR Model, the paper critically examines the hierarchical structure of the Ajman Police, its specialist groups, and their performance indicators. The problem statement highlights the negative impact of traditional and rigid organizational structures on innovation, responsiveness, and the limitations of implementing effective public safety measures, prevention, and community policing. The research design adopted is a qualitative methodology, and a sample of senior police officers was interviewed to record their views on the issues of operation and preparedness to change. In conducting the study, Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 participants. Results indicate that the Ajman Police has already ventured into technological advancements and civil policing. However, there are still gaps in continuous development, innovation, and the implementation of modern change management practices. The research proposes a culturally, operationally, and technologically oriented framework for change management, specifically tailored to the context of the Ajman Police. The study makes a significant research contribution to both the practice and theory fields by providing a guideline for a change management roadmap for the Ajman Police and other similar agencies, ensuring operational excellence in fast-changing environments.

Keywords:

Operational excellence, change management framework, technology integration, leadership support.

ورقة بحثية تطوير إطار لإدارة التغيير لتعزيز التميز التشغيلي في المنظمات الأمنية

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المستخلص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة الوضع التشغيلي الحالي لشرطة عجمان، مع التركيز على تحديد العناصر والقضايا التي تؤثر على التميز التشغيلي. وباستخدام نماذج إدارة التغيير، بما في ذلك نموذج Kotter المكون من 8 خطوات ونموذج ADKAR، يقوم البحث بفحص نقدي للهيكل الهرمي لشرطة عجمان، ومجموعاتها التخصصية، ومؤشرات أدائها. تتمثل مشكلة البحث في التأثير السلبي للهيكل التنظيمية التقليدية والجامدة على الابتكار وسرعة الاستجابة، بالإضافة إلى القيود التي تحد من تنفيذ تدابير فعالة للسلامة العامة والوقاية والشرطة المجتمعية. اعتمد تصميم البحث على المنهج النوعي، حيث أجريت مقابلات مع عينة من الضباط الكبار في الشرطة لتسجيل آرائهم بشأن قضايا التشغيل والاستعداد للتغيير. وقد تم إجراء مقابلات شبه منظمة مع 10 مشاركين. تشير النتائج إلى أن شرطة عجمان قد بدأت بالفعل في التوجه نحو التطورات التكنولوجية والشرطة المدنية. ومع ذلك، لا تزال هناك فجوات في مجالات التطوير المستمر، والابتكار، وتطبيق ممارسات إدارة التغيير الحديثة. يوصي البحث بإطار لإدارة التغيير يأخذ بعين الاعتبار الأبعاد الثقافية والتشغيلية والتكنولوجية، مصمم خصيصًا لواقع شرطة عجمان. وتعد هذه الدراسة مساهمة بحثية مميزة في مجالي الممارسة والنظرية من خلال تقديم خارطة طريق لإدارة التغيير لدى شرطة عجمان وغيرها من الجهات المشابهة، بما يضمن تحقيق التميز التشغيلي في بيئات سريعة التغيير.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

التميز التشغيلي، إطار إدارة التغيير، دمج التكنولوجيا، دعم القيادة.

مجلة

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Law enforcement agencies worldwide are under increasing pressure to adapt to the rapid socio-economic and technological changes that characterize the 21st century. In this context, the pursuit of operational excellence has become a strategic imperative, particularly for organizations tasked with ensuring public safety. Operational excellence refers to the continuous improvement of processes, systems, and practices to enhance organizational performance, responsiveness, and service delivery. For police departments, achieving operational excellence entails streamlining internal processes, leveraging advanced technologies, and aligning organizational culture with public expectations. A core enabler of this pursuit is change management, which provides the methodologies, frameworks, and tools necessary to guide and sustain organizational transformation.

Ajman Police, a key law enforcement agency in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), presents a valuable case for studying the application of change management models in policing. Operating in Ajman, the Ajman Police is tasked with law enforcement, crime prevention, emergency response, and fostering public safety to support economic and social development. Strategic initiatives such as community policing, technology integration, and continuous staff training aim to strengthen operational capacity and productivity.

The adoption of structured change management practices is supported by growing academic evidence. Errida (2021) highlights change models as tools to overcome structural inertia, cultural resistance, and external challenges. Carvalho et al. (2023) argue that operational excellence in fluctuating environments requires models that not only support transformation but also engage employees. Harrison et al. (2020) note that frameworks such as Kotter's 8-Step Change Model and the Prosci ADKAR Model address human, cultural, and operational dimensions of change.

Kotter's model, well-suited for complex organizations like police departments, emphasizes urgency, coalition building, vision development, and embedding new behaviors in the culture—reducing resistance while increasing adoption. The ADKAR Model focuses on individual transitions through Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement, making it particularly relevant to policing, where officer attitudes and behaviors directly impact operational success (Leung et al., 2021). In the Ajman Police, readiness for innovation is evident in its emphasis on training, technology integration, and community engagement. However, as Almansoori (2020) observes, hierarchical cultures, bureaucratic rigidity, and entrenched work styles can slow change. Applying structured change models can help overcome these barriers and sustain progress.

Law enforcement in the Middle East, including in Ajman, has undergone significant modernization, investing in infrastructure, hiring skilled personnel, and adopting global best practices. Initiatives such as community policing and the adoption of technology aim to improve public trust and service quality. However, Gkrimpizi et al. (2023) caution that resistance, political instability, and resource constraints can limit the effectiveness of reform unless cultural and environmental challenges are addressed. The Ajman Police aligns its operations with the UAE federal goals and international standards, deploying innovative policing tools, online service portals, and high-tech surveillance to enhance efficiency. However, Johnson et al. (2020) emphasize that technological advancements must be supported by cultural and procedural changes, reinforced by training and structured change management. Performance measurement and feedback are critical to sustaining change. Al-Subaihi et al. (2023) recommend using both quantitative metrics (e.g., response times, crime resolution rates) and qualitative indicators (e.g., community satisfaction, officer morale) to ensure continuous improvement and accountability—key elements of operational excellence.

The organization's hierarchical structure, while effective for command and control, can hinder flexibility and innovation. Kleizen (2020) notes that rigid structures slow decision-making in dynamic environments. To address this, the Ajman Police may need to be restructured to align operations with strategic priorities and emerging threats—possibly through the establishment of specialized units, resource reallocation, and more adaptable operational models.

In summary, Ajman Police's efforts in training, technology adoption, and community engagement illustrate a readiness for transformation. Applying structured change management models, such as Kotter's and ADKAR, can address organizational resistance, enhance adaptability, and ensure that reforms are culturally embedded. Combined with performance monitoring, flexible structures, and community collaboration, these approaches can drive sustainable operational excellence in a rapidly evolving security environment.

2.1. Location of the Current Study

Ajman, one of the seven emirates of the UAE, provides a unique setting for the study of change management in law enforcement. Despite its small geographic size, Ajman is experiencing rapid urbanization, population growth, and economic development. These changes place new demands on public institutions, particularly the police, to adapt and respond effectively to these challenges. The Ajman Police Department operates in a multicultural environment, serving both local citizens and a significant expatriate population. This diversity necessitates a nuanced approach to policing that balances traditional enforcement with community-based strategies.

The emirate's compact size allows for close coordination among government agencies and facilitates the implementation of pilot programs. As such, Ajman serves as an ideal microcosm for testing and evaluating change management frameworks. Insights gained from this context can inform broader policy and organizational reforms across the UAE and in similar jurisdictions worldwide. Furthermore, the alignment of Ajman Police with national security objectives and international best practices enhances the generalizability and relevance of the findings from this study.

In conclusion, integrating change management frameworks into the operations of Ajman Police provides a pathway to achieving operational excellence. By examining the processes, challenges, and outcomes associated with these efforts, this study aims to contribute to the literature on public sector innovation and provide practical recommendations for law enforcement agencies facing similar circumstances.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Data Collection Procedures

The data for the current work were collected using qualitative methods, including a semi-structured interview employing the critical method and document analysis as an auxiliary tool. The interviews became the primary source of data collection due to their ability to yield rich data on the perceptions of police personnel and stakeholders working at Ajman Police, as well as their experiences and attitudes. Ethical clearance was obtained from the relevant research oversight agencies, and the Ajman Police administration granted permission as the initial step. The participants were formally contacted and invited to participate voluntarily, with their anonymity and confidentiality guaranteed.

An interview protocol was developed, guided by the research aims, for the semi-structured interviews. The protocol consisted of open-ended questions that enabled exploratory discussions, with the interviewer following up on issues of interest that emerged. Interviews were scheduled based on the participants' availability. They were conducted either in person or through secure video conferencing platforms, such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, depending on logistical and ethical considerations.

The interviews each lasted approximately 45 minutes to an hour. With the participants' consent, the interviews were recorded in audio format to ensure the accuracy of the data collected. Notes were also taken during the interviews to facilitate immediate reflections and serve as backups. Once the data were collected, transcriptions were done verbatim to preserve the richness of the accounts.

The interviews were complemented by the use of official documents from the organization, including internal memos, strategy reports, and training manuals related to change management and operational policies conducted within the Ajman Police. These documents contributed to the contextual background and supported the

triangulation of data. Document analysis helps validate participants' narratives and enhances the depth of data interpretation.

2.2.Data Analysis Techniques

Thematic analysis will be employed for data analysis in this study. Thematic analysis is an inductive and flexible method for analyzing qualitative data, enabling the identification, analysis, and reporting of themes within datasets (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method is particularly suited for exploratory qualitative studies as it facilitates a deep understanding of complex social phenomena, including organizational change.

The analysis will follow the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) Familiarization with data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, and (6) Producing the report. Data familiarization will be achieved by thoroughly reading and re-reading interview transcripts. Coding will be performed manually and supported using qualitative data analysis software, NVivo 12 Plus.

Table (1). The Six-Phase Framework Proposed By Braun And Clarke

Phase	Description of the process
Organization and arrangement of data	Arranging the data for easier references and perusing
Familiarizing with the data	Transcribing data, reading and re-reading, coupled with noting of ideas
Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data systematically across the entire data set, and collating data relevant to each code.
Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work with the coded extracts in the entire data set, generating a thematic map of the analysis
Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
Producing the reports	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of the selected extract, and relating the analysis to the research question and literature.

Initial codes will be developed by tagging relevant data segments in the transcripts. These codes will then be clustered into potential themes based on similarities and overarching ideas. Themes will be iteratively reviewed and refined to ensure internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity, reflecting a coherent narrative of participants' experiences. The final themes will be defined and named clearly to capture their essence. Standard international units and terminology will be adhered to in reporting findings. For example, participant counts will be expressed in absolute numbers and percentages, while illustrative quotes will be attributed using anonymous identifiers (e.g., Participant 1, Officer A).

2.3. Trustworthiness of the Research

To ensure the trustworthiness and rigor of the qualitative findings, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability will be applied.

- **Credibility** will be established through prolonged engagement with participants, member checking (i.e., participants reviewing interview transcripts or summaries), and peer debriefing.
- **Transferability** will be supported by providing thick descriptions of the study context, participant characteristics, and the nature of policing within Ajman.
- **Dependability** will be ensured through an audit trail documenting research procedures, changes, and rationales during the study.
- **Confirmability** will be supported through reflective journaling by the researcher and triangulation of data sources (interviews and documents).

2.4. Statistical Software and Ethical Considerations

Although the study employs a qualitative research design, NVivo 12 Plus will be used to organize and code the qualitative data. NVivo is a robust qualitative data analysis (QDA) software designed to facilitate thematic and content analysis, code frequency counting, and co-occurrence exploration. This software enhances data management and enables efficient analysis of large textual datasets.

All abbreviations and statistical terms used in the manuscript will be defined as follows:

- **QDA:** Qualitative Data Analysis
- **NVivo:** Qualitative data analysis software by QSR International
- **Coding:** The process of labeling data segments with tags or labels
- **Theme:** A pattern or trend of meaning in the data

2.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical concept plays a significant role in research because they guarantee the integrity, credibility, and trustworthiness of the study. In a study project targeting law enforcement, including the Ajman Police, ethical rigor is crucial due to the hierarchical nature of the working environment and the sensitivity of the law enforcement environment. To meet the ethical needs of this qualitative research, various measures were considered to protect the well-being of participants, their autonomy, and privacy.

A core element of the research process was informed consent. In the context of the Ajman Police, this went beyond obtaining signed forms; it required clear, culturally appropriate explanations in simple language. Before the study began, researchers outlined the objectives, methodology, potential risks, and benefits to all participants. Consent forms emphasized participants' rights, including the ability to withdraw at any stage without consequences, ensuring voluntary participation. Consent was reaffirmed through ongoing engagement, mainly when sensitive topics arose. This interactive process built trust, encouraged understanding, and ensured participants felt secure and respected.

Strict measures were taken to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Identities and sensitive information were protected using pseudonyms and unique codes during data collection and reporting. Digital files, including interview recordings and transcripts, were encrypted and securely stored, accessible only to the core research team. Encrypted communication platforms were used to reduce the risk of data breaches. Participants were also informed about how their data would be used, stored, and eventually destroyed, ensuring complete transparency and accountability.

The principle of autonomy was observed by acknowledging the hierarchical power dynamics inherent in policing. The study environment was designed to allow officers, regardless of rank, to speak freely. Clarity about the study's purpose and its implications for participants' professional roles supported independent decision-making. Voluntary participation was reinforced, and diversity of perspectives was encouraged by involving officers from various ranks and units. Additional assurances of confidentiality and data de-identification facilitated open and honest communication. Through these measures, the study upheld high ethical standards, ensuring transparency, respect, and protection for participants while fostering an environment conducive to open and meaningful engagement.

To conclude, the study's ethical aspects were complex and tailored to the specific needs of law enforcement in the Ajman region. These data and participants were engaged ethically and effectively, ensuring that the researchers were respectful in the collection of data through the use of informed consent, confidentiality, autonomy, and harm minimization.

3. Results

Relevant demographic information of the participants, including gender, age, work position, years of service, department of affiliation, and job role, is presented to facilitate a context for the analysis. A total of 10 participants were included in the study, all of whom are senior officers in their respective departments.

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Information

Participants	Gender/Age	Work position	Years of service	Department affiliation
Participant 1 (Ahmad Zayed)	Male: 39	Senior police constable	10 years	Criminal Investigation Division
Participant 2 (Maewan Abdulah)	Male: 35	Senior police constable	8 years	Training and development unit
Participant 3 (Saeed Saleh)	Male: 29	Senior Sergeant	9 years	Community policing unit
Participant 4 (Mohamed Faizal)	Male: 42	Senior police constable	9 years	Internal affairs
Participant 5 (Hafiz Rahman)	Male: 46	Inspector General	10 years	Community policing unit
Participant 6 (Aisha Rashid)	Female: 44	Assitant Inspector	8 years	Community policing unit
Participant 7 (Omar Sultan)	Female: 31	Lieutenant	10 years	Internal affairs
Participant 8 (Fatimah Abdul)	Female: 32	Lieutenant	7 years	Training and development unit
Participant 9 (Salem Khalifa)	Male: 45	Senior police constable	10 years	Training and development unit
Participant 10 (Huda Saif)	Female: 28	Senior police constable	7 years	Training and development unit

3.1.Factors Contributing to Operational Excellence

The study aimed to investigate the key factors that contribute to operational excellence within the Ajman Police. The findings revealed two dominant themes: leadership support and training. These factors emerged consistently across participants' responses and demonstrate the interconnected dynamics of strategic direction, resource allocation, and capacity building within the force.

- **Leadership Support**

Most respondents strongly emphasized the importance of leadership support as a vital element driving operational success. Participants indicated that visible and active involvement by top leadership has a significant influence on morale, resource allocation, and performance outcomes. Effective leaders, as noted, play a crucial role

in setting strategic direction, clarifying responsibilities, and modeling professional behavior. This leadership alignment not only fosters a strong internal culture but also ensures organizational goals are met through a shared vision and mutual accountability. According to the data, leadership support also enhances cultural transformation by establishing values centered around discipline, efficiency, and innovation.

In support of this, Participant 1, Ahmad Zayed, stated:

“I think operational excellence focuses on optimal use of resources, both personnel and materials. Effective leadership support contributes to operational excellence. This is why I try as much as possible to ensure my juniors are provided with the necessary resources to undertake their responsibilities.”

Participant 2, Marwan Abdullah, also noted:

“It guarantees that all policing activities result in good outcomes for the benefit of citizens. Some contributing factors are receiving top leadership support, good communication, and working as a team.”

The significance of leadership was further reinforced by Participant 4, Mohamed Faizal, who stated:

“The presence of a well-established leadership support is a notable factor. I have seen that good leadership will automatically improve police performance because of the possibility of being a good role model and inspiration to the subordinates.”

Across these responses, it is evident that leadership influences operational performance by aligning employee tasks with strategic priorities, providing mentoring, and ensuring that suitable personnel are matched with suitable roles. A consistent theme was that leadership provides not only direction but the morale boost necessary for proactive policing.

- **Training**

Training emerged as the second central theme related to operational excellence. Participants agreed that continuous training and upskilling enhance professional readiness, ensuring that officers remain competent in dealing with evolving threats. These training efforts range from mandatory skill refreshers to workshops on new technologies and tactics. The consensus among respondents is that training fosters a culture of excellence, reduces operational errors, and ensures the standardized execution of police functions.

Participant 1, Ahmad Zayed, remarked:

“Well, often there are mandatory training sessions offered to the police to renew their skills. Mandatory training sessions ensure that no police officer is left behind in upskilling and reskilling, ensuring they are equipped adequately to undertake functions.”

Participant 2, Marwan Abdullah, emphasized technological readiness:

“Some police are trained on how to use new technologies in their operations. Training is important since it enables the officers to learn how to use the new technologies depending on the situation they are in.”

Participant 3, Saeed Saleh, focused on skill enrichment and safety:

“More attention is directed towards training and development programs, which offer the desired skill set to the officers. Desired skills are important as they help in the betterment of the police force, enabling efficient operations.”

Participant 4, Mohamed Faizal, added:

“Experts are invited to guide police during workshop training sessions, where new tactics are taught about good policing practices.”

Participant 5, Hafiz Rahman, explained how training reduces fatigue and improves specialization:

“There are routine training sessions in our workshops, which are intended to offer guidelines on how to conduct specific tasks. Specialization and division of duties and tasks enhance autonomy and long working periods with minimum exhaustion...”

Collectively, these responses highlight that both technical and leadership training programs play a pivotal role in preparing Ajman Police officers to navigate a dynamic law enforcement environment. Training also ensures that officers are not only compliant with modern legal frameworks but are also adaptive, specialized, and proactive in their engagement with the community.

- **Technology Integration**

Technology integration emerged as a key driver of operational excellence within Ajman Police. Participants described how digital systems, communication technologies, and real-time surveillance have transformed internal operations, enhanced crime response, and facilitated community collaboration. The integration of technology is not merely an enhancement tool—it plays a transformative role in operational workflows and service delivery. In this study, participants emphasized that digital advancements have enabled faster communication between field officers and command centers, enhanced the tracking of suspects, and improved data management and analysis. Technology also offers predictive capabilities that assist in crime prevention strategies.

Participant 2 (Marwan Abdullah) illustrated the role of resource allocation in enabling these innovations:

“Our leader ensures that technology and financial resources are fairly allocated to promote operational objectives. Financial resources form the backbone of any police operations, and we ensure technological advancement is one of the sectors we are proficient in.”

This comment highlights the importance of aligning technological investments with adequate budgetary support. Without strategic financial planning, even the most promising technologies risk being underutilized. The integration of tools such as surveillance cameras, GPS tracking, and digital evidence management systems requires training, maintenance, and policy adaptation—elements that demand sustainable funding and top-level buy-in. The evidence suggests that Ajman Police understands the need to modernize operations through technological means, but this must be a continuous, well-funded endeavor to remain effective.

In contrast, concerns were raised about challenges that accompany rapid technological advancement. Participant 3 (Saeed Saleh) commented:

“The speed of technological breakthroughs sometimes outpaces police departments’ ability to adjust... Data privacy concerns and ethical issues create additional difficulties.”

This statement highlights the complexity of aligning emerging technologies with legal, ethical, and operational frameworks. There is often a lag between innovation and implementation readiness, creating inefficiencies or vulnerabilities in practice. Moreover, balancing technological power with citizens’ privacy and civil liberties is a delicate task. The findings align with the literature by Laufs and Borrion (2021), who observed that law enforcement faces difficulties with both the pace of technological change and ensuring the ethical deployment of technology.

Nonetheless, many participants appreciated the enhancements technology brings. Participant 4 (Mohamed Faizal) noted:

“Our department integrates technology to promote smooth communication and information sharing... desk officers can communicate in real-time with field officers while they are looking for suspects.”

This reflects the operational advantages of real-time communication. Interconnectivity between officers through secure digital systems reduces time-lags, enhances situational awareness, and supports agile decision-making. Cloud systems and mobile-enabled platforms allow decentralized access to data, strengthening team coordination and workflow efficiency.

- **Workflow Improvement**

Another central theme that emerged was the improvement in workflows, which is central to achieving operational excellence. Participants described how streamlined processes, removal of redundancies, and improved coordination within departments have elevated their day-to-day functions. Improved workflows enable Ajman Police to respond more efficiently to incidents, optimize human and material resources, and deliver better public services. This finding is consistent with research by Jabeen (2022), who emphasized that workflow optimization in law enforcement leads to increased service reliability and employee satisfaction.

Participant 10 (Huda Saif) articulated this as follows:

“I think operational excellence enhances improvement in routine workflows... Reduced operational inefficiencies also reduce wastages, unproductivity, and increase coordinated operations aimed at protecting the community.”

This suggests that the organization’s internal culture fosters efficiency and problem-solving at the departmental level. Officers are encouraged to identify gaps, propose improvements, and align their actions with broader organizational goals. Operational excellence, in this case, is a philosophy embedded in everyday work routines, creating a system where incremental improvements become normalized.

Participant 8 (Fatimah Abdul) provided further insights:

“Through operational excellence, it is possible to optimize processes, reduce wastage, and support increased productivity. Good operational excellence is the backbone of any successful police department...”

This reflects a proactive stance toward continuous improvement. Standard operating procedures (SOPs), regular performance reviews, and technology-enabled workflow management help in maximizing productivity. The reduction of duplicative efforts, better deployment of staff, and faster data access were reported to contribute directly to improved policing.

Participant 5 (Hafiz Rahman) added:

“It is characterized by unified integration of processes, optimal use of resources, and consistent drive towards attaining law enforcement goals.”

This reinforces the principle that organizational alignment—through structure, communication, and leadership—is crucial for effective operations. Optimized workflows minimize manual errors, clarify responsibilities, and enable strategic focus. The findings show that Ajman Police are leveraging workflow efficiency not only to improve performance but also to enhance officer satisfaction and public trust.

3.2.Challenges and Gaps in the Current Operational Model at Ajman Police

This section presents the results related to the second research objective: to examine the challenges and operational gaps that limit the effectiveness of the Ajman Police. Despite advancements in leadership training, technology, and strategic reforms, the force continues to face critical issues that hinder operational excellence. Two major themes emerged: a shortage of resources and high-stress work environments.

a) Shortage of Resources

Participants consistently identified a shortage of financial, technological, and human resources as a key challenge affecting both day-to-day operations and long-term planning. Limited funding restricts the Ajman Police from acquiring modern technologies and conducting routine training, leaving officers ill-equipped to respond to increasingly complex security demands.

“There is a lack of resources, tools, and a limited budget, which makes it hard to attain daily operations... This makes it difficult even to arrest and identify the criminals in society.” — Participant 1 (Ahmad Zayed)

Participants emphasized that budget constraints hinder the purchase of surveillance systems, digital forensics tools, and communication equipment, placing the force at a disadvantage in crime detection and resolution.

“Due to low budget, issues are adopting new technologies... we do not have enough resources at the moment.” — Participant 10 (Huda Saif)

Resource shortages also translate to understaffing, resulting in high workloads and slower response times. Officers are often overburdened, which affects morale and diminishes the quality of community engagement and policing outcomes. Furthermore, without regular access to updated training, the officers lack expertise in handling new technologies, further weakening their capacity to modernize their practice.

“There are not enough tools... only a few of the officers know how to use the modern technologies... we do not have enough modern technologies even to solve some issues.” — Participant 3 (Saeed Saleh)

These limitations not only reduce operational effectiveness but also affect officer safety and public trust. Participants called for targeted investments in both digital infrastructure and personnel training to overcome these constraints and enhance service delivery.

b) High-Stress Situations

Participants also reported high levels of stress stemming from long hours, exposure to violent incidents, and unpredictable work environments. The pressure from operational demands, particularly with limited staffing, often leads to fatigue, burnout, and health issues.

“Extreme work pressure is a challenge, which affects my physical health. High work pressure leads to high burnout...” — Participant 5 (Hafiz Rahman)

Participant testimonies highlighted the emotional and physical toll of constant exposure to danger. Night shifts, traumatic encounters, and lack of rest contribute to mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression. Officers are frequently placed in life-threatening scenarios without sufficient protective equipment.

“One of the reasons why I find this work challenging is the direct exposure to risky situations, which can sometimes cause harm...” — Participant 6 (Aisha Rashid)

In summary, the findings show that Ajman Police faces significant operational gaps. Inadequate resources and high-stress environments severely hinder the institution’s ability to deliver effective policing. To achieve operational excellence, the department must address these issues through better resource allocation, investment in officer well-being, training in modern tools, and structural reforms aimed at enhancing workplace support and resilience.

4. Change Management Framework: Results and Interpretation

One of the primary objectives of this study was to develop a change management framework tailored to the operational context of the Ajman Police. The framework is conceived as a structured approach designed to facilitate organizational transformation, aligning tools, policies, and communication strategies to streamline the transition toward operational excellence. The proposed framework emphasizes communication, stakeholder engagement, leadership, and continuous evaluation to ensure adaptability and responsiveness. Although Figure 1 illustrates the process visually, this section focuses on the thematic results derived from participant responses, emphasizing how the change management principles are manifested in practice.

a) Effective Communication in Enhancing Coordination and Cooperation

Effective communication emerged as a critical theme influencing the implementation of change. Participants emphasized the importance of transparent and strategic communication that clearly outlines the need for change, its benefits, and the necessary steps to achieve it. Communication not only builds trust but also preempts

resistance by creating clarity and ownership among stakeholders. Respondents highlighted that without a clear communication strategy, even well-designed change frameworks could face failure.

“A good communication plan is good to show the benefits of change. Good communication reduces information overload and increases collaboration and coordination between the police officers.” – Ahmad Zayed (Participant 1)

Communication was also found to promote coordination across departments, enabling officers to align their efforts toward common goals. Participants emphasized that information dissemination should be structured, with content tailored to different ranks and units within the organization. The involvement of key stakeholders—officers, supervisors, and community representatives—was identified as a prerequisite for successful implementation. Furthermore, effective communication encourages inclusivity and innovation, allowing feedback loops that help refine change strategies over time.

“The whole idea should be communicated to all stakeholders. It is important that a strategy can be developed and supported to introduce new changes in the police department.” – Mohamed Faizal (Participant 4)

The role of leadership in this process was especially emphasized. Participants noted that senior officers should take the lead in communicating change initiatives, acting as role models and liaisons between departments.

“Top leaders are supposed to communicate the whole change process in advance... to reduce the rate of resistance.” – Hafiz Rahman (Participant 5)

Diverse communication channels were also considered crucial in supporting change, from formal briefings and memos to informal discussions and digital platforms. These allow for continuous updates and collective problem-solving, bridging communication gaps across shifts and teams.

“Ideas should be shared using diverse communication channels... it can also provide new insights into how the idea can be good or bad.” – Omar Sultan (Participant 7)

a) Efficient Organizational Change Process

Participants described organizational change as a deliberate shift in structures, policies, and protocols aimed at meeting current operational demands. These could involve creating new units, updating procedures, or introducing new technologies. The consensus was that change must bring measurable benefits to be considered viable. The process should be incremental but strategic, targeting problem areas while ensuring continuity in core police functions.

“There is no change management that can be implemented if there are no benefits... A change is only viable if the proposer can lay out the intended benefits.” – Ahmad Zayed (Participant 1)

Some respondents advocated for localized change interventions rather than sweeping organizational reform, arguing for flexibility and strategic focus.

“Change management... is solely dependent on the current problem being experienced in the society and ways of resolving the problem.” – Saeed Saleh (Participant 3)

b) Reinforcement of Change Management Evaluation

Evaluation of change management initiatives was another emergent theme. Participants emphasized the need for protocols that include budget planning, open communication across ranks, and equitable distribution of resources. Ensuring transparency and accountability were considered crucial to securing organizational buy-in and preventing internal resistance.

“A good protocol must be followed... budget considerations, open communication between seniors and juniors, and equal resource distribution.” – Fatimah Abdul (Participant 8)

The integration of leadership, communication, and resource planning into evaluation protocols was seen as a key mechanism to ensure that change initiatives not only begin well but are also sustained effectively.

“Effective leadership must be present, followed by a mutual communication plan... Undertaking change management is not that easy and requires dedication from all stakeholders.” – Anonymous Participant.

Participants also suggested strategies such as developing roadmaps, inclusive planning, and equal opportunity for participation, underscoring the importance of ownership and trust in successful change processes.

“I think different strategies can be used... creating a roadmap for all people, and inviting equal participation and sharing of ideas.” – Huda Saif (Participant 10)

5. To determine how the implementation of the change management framework can be evaluated at the Ajman Police. (KPIs)

To assess how the implementation of the change management framework can be evaluated at Ajman Police, a thematic analysis was conducted on interview transcripts collected from ten participants. This analysis revealed six key performance indicators (KPIs) that serve as critical benchmarks: Leadership Support,

Communication Effectiveness, Training and Development, Resource Utilization, Employee Engagement, and Operational Efficiency. These KPIs collectively form a comprehensive framework for evaluating the impact and sustainability of change initiatives within the organization.

- **Leadership Support** emerged as a vital factor, signifying the extent to which top management actively backs and steers change processes. Strong leadership helps align strategic goals with operational needs and instills a culture of accountability and motivation among officers. It also plays a central role in resource allocation and policy formulation, influencing all aspects of the change management lifecycle.

“I think operational excellence focuses on optimal use of resources, both personnel and materials. Effective leadership support contributes to operational excellence. This is why I try as much as possible to ensure my juniors are provided with the necessary resources to undertake their responsibilities.” – Ahmad Zayed, Participant 1

“The presence of a well-established leadership support is a notable factor. I have seen that good leadership will automatically improve police performance because of the possibility of being a good role model and inspiration to the subordinates.” – Mohamed Faizal, Participant 4

- **Communication Effectiveness** was also highlighted as a critical enabler. Transparent, timely, and inclusive communication reduces resistance and ensures that all stakeholders clearly understand the scope and rationale behind the changes. It fosters trust, which is essential for smooth implementation.

“Top leaders are supposed to communicate the whole change process in advance. This can ensure that the change framework is well known to the teams.” – Hafiz Rahman, Participant 5

“First, effective leadership must be present, followed by a mutual communication plan, and transparency regarding how the change will take effect. Besides, training should be considered.” – Salem Khalifa, Participant 9

- **Training and Development** emerged as a KPI that ensures staff preparedness and enhances adaptability. Officers who undergo structured training programs are better equipped to handle new technologies, policies, and procedures associated with change.

“More attention is directed towards training and development programs, which offer the desired skill set to the officers.” – Saeed Saleh, Participant 3

“Currently, all police officers are required to undergo a training and development program to boost their skills regarding law enforcement.” – Aisha Rashid, Participant 6

- **Resource Utilization** reflects how well the available financial, human, and technological resources are deployed to support change. Effective resource utilization not only supports efficiency but also demonstrates the organization's commitment to achieving strategic objectives.

“Okay, our leader ensures that technology and financial resources are fairly allocated to promote operational objectives.” – Marwan Abdullah, Participant 2

“I always utilize resources equitably to meet operational goals.” – Huda Saif, Participant 10

- **Operational Efficiency** was the final KPI identified. It measures improvements in workflow, responsiveness, and service delivery resulting from the implementation of the change. Enhanced efficiency not only reflects successful change but also boosts public trust in policing services.

“Our department integrates technology to promote smooth communication and information sharing, and decision making, boosting overall efficiency.” – Mohamed Faizal, Participant 4

In summary, the six KPIs—Leadership Support, Communication Effectiveness, Training and Development, Resource Utilization, Employee Engagement, and Operational Efficiency—provide a robust structure for evaluating change management at Ajman Police. These indicators, supported by qualitative data, offer actionable insights and measurable outcomes. Monitoring these KPIs will allow the organization to track progress, adjust strategies, and ensure the sustainability of change initiatives aligned with broader goals of operational excellence.

6. Discussion

6.1. Operational Excellence

The results of this research at the Ajman Police contribute to the existing literature, which emphasizes the importance of leadership support in achieving operational excellence. Leadership has always been highlighted as one of the most important stimulants to inspire employees, coordinate organizational interests, and establish a comfortable culture of change. As this research has shown, based on previous studies, transformational leaders —those who are inspirational and role models —are involved in the positive performance of an organization (Sarikaya & Khalili, 2019). This is consistent with the views expressed by the respondents in the present case, such as Ahmad Zayed, who focused on resource distribution, and Mohamed Faizal, who cited leadership as the means of inspiring subordinates. These illustrations reflect statements provided by Yukl (2013), who claims that the culture of flexibility and constant evolution is created by a competent leader, and by Bass and Avolio (1994), who also state that teamwork and communication should be the

foundations of organizational success. The research, therefore, affirms that leadership support remains core to operational excellence, as it determines both the inner culture and the resultant top performance on the outside.

Technology integration was another critical theme, aligning with modern perspectives that see digital transformation as a path to operational excellence in public safety organizations. Respondents emphasized the value of advanced communication systems and predictive analytics, which aligns with Moktadir et al. (2020), who highlighted technology's role in facilitating faster and more responsive decision-making. Leadership's role in guiding technological adaptation, as noted by Marwan Abdullah, supports Laufs and Borrion's (2021) findings on the importance of strong leadership for successful implementation. However, resource constraints were noted as obstacles, paralleling McCarthy et al. (2020), who identified financial challenges as barriers to sustained innovation. Ethical concerns, particularly those related to privacy in surveillance technologies, were also raised, resonating with Shapiro and Roth (2020). Thus, while technology offers significant benefits in terms of efficiency and situational awareness, its adoption must be accompanied by ethical regulation and adequate resources.

In conclusion, the research reveals that a combination of interdependent factors drives the operational excellence of the Ajman Police, including leadership support, employee training, the integration of technology, and efficient workflow. The dimensions reflect the current body of research, but also provide contextual information relevant to the policing domain. These empirical results suggest that a comprehensive approach, centered on the leadership and mobilization of resources, is a crucial component of maintaining high performance and flexibility in law enforcement organizations.

6.2.Challenges facing the Ajman Police

The findings of the current research align with the broader concerns of law enforcement agencies worldwide. The scarcity of resources, whether financial or technological, is among the most pressing problems, as it has a devastating impact on the department's effectiveness. The study results reveal that most police personnel in the Ajman Police typically lack access to the latest equipment, adequate infrastructure, and sufficient human resources, which are essential for providing effective policing. Participant 10, in turn, expressed the issue of financial constraints not allowing them to adopt new technologies, an issue also mentioned by Almansoori and Gupta (2020), who noted that tight budgets often led to the use of outdated policing methods and hindered modernization processes. Such restrictions form a spillover; departments unable to fund critical areas, such as training or recruitment, further exacerbate the gap in operations.

Another pressing issue identified was the high levels of stress among Ajman Police officers. Respondents described emotional and physical exhaustion due to traumatic incidents, unpredictable workloads, and extended working hours. This mirrors Lentz et al. (2020), who found that law enforcement professionals are highly susceptible to stress-related health problems such as hypertension and burnout. Participant 5 specifically noted the deterioration of physical health linked to job pressures, supporting Miller et al. (2019), who associated long-term occupational stress with cardiovascular diseases in officers. Overall, these findings demonstrate that resource constraints, technological needs, and officer well-being are deeply interconnected in shaping operational effectiveness within the Ajman Police.

All in all, the data in this research contribute to the appeal to perceive the necessity of structural transformations in the Ajman Police. The department could utilize targeted investments in modern resources, technologies, and the same personnel, as well as improvements to support systems focused on mental health and well-being. Addressing these challenges not only yields improved operational results but also fosters a healthier and stronger police service that can effectively handle the challenges of modern-day law enforcement.

6.3. Change Management Framework

In the Ajman Police, communication is a key enabler of effective change management. It ensures that all stakeholders are informed, involved, and aligned with the transformation's goals. Open and timely communication helps build trust and buy-in by clearly explaining the reasons for change and the expected outcomes. This transparency allows officers and staff to internalize the vision, making them more likely to support and actively participate in initiatives. Consistent with Stogner et al. (2020), effective organizational communication reduces uncertainty and psychologically prepares employees for change. Clear communication also reduces misunderstandings and resistance, while boosting morale by clarifying how change aligns with organizational goals and objectives. It is both informational and emotional—promoting optimism, highlighting benefits, and recognizing staff efforts. Celebrating milestones strengthens momentum for adoption, while interactive channels encourage the sharing of ideas and feedback. In the Ajman Police, listening to officers transforms them from passive recipients into active contributors, fostering a sense of ownership and collective responsibility. Equally vital is leadership in guiding change. Senior leaders in Ajman Police shape vision, culture, and direction, and their active involvement in planning, communication, and championing initiatives directly affects staff acceptance. Effective leaders model desired behaviors, uphold organizational values, and create a culture of flexibility and resilience. Leaders are also strategically positioned to allocate resources, adjust priorities, and remove barriers to change. This ability ensures initiatives receive the institutional attention and momentum needed for successful implementation. Their advocacy

mobilizes both financial and human resources, preventing administrative or logistical delays. In a traditionally conservative institution like Ajman Police, where innovation can be slowed, leadership is central to maintaining momentum, instilling confidence, and ensuring that both officers and the community embrace transformation. A crucial element of effective change management in the Ajman Police is the continuous assessment of organizational change. In a law enforcement context, it is crucial to assess whether changes are yielding the intended improvements in efficiency, effectiveness, and public safety. Regular assessments enable leaders to track progress against key performance indicators and pinpoint areas for improved implementation planning. As Gutschmidt and Vera (2020) note, frequent evaluation ensures that objectives are met and resources are used optimally.

Evaluation serves both as a feedback mechanism and a learning tool, enabling evidence-based decision-making and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Involving various stakeholders—officers, staff, and the community—ensures diverse perspectives are considered, enhancing legitimacy and uncovering insights about unintended outcomes or overlooked challenges. Regular review also allows the organization to build on past successes and avoid repeating mistakes. Ongoing assessment strengthens the institution by embedding reflection and adaptability into its organizational ethos. This readiness to evaluate and refine processes increases accountability and builds credibility with both internal and external stakeholders. Transparency in measuring and optimizing performance enhances public trust—an essential asset in policing. Overall, a change management system at Ajman Police will be successful if three key factors are incorporated, namely strategic communication, visionary leadership, and a rigorous evaluation process. Communication makes all stakeholders aware, exposed, and committed to the vision of change. Leadership is a guide, inspiration, and mobilization of resources that would propel change. Evaluation, on the other hand, ensures learning, accountability, and long-term sustainability. All these combined form the core of a successful and adaptive organizational change structure that meets the specific needs of a contemporary police force.

7. Conclusion and Proposals

This research confirms that operational excellence in the Ajman Police is the result of the interplay of several interconnected factors, rather than isolated initiatives. Key among these are visionary leadership, continuous training and development, effective communication, and robust change management frameworks. Transformational leadership emerged as particularly critical, as it motivates officers, optimizes resources, and fosters a culture of continuous improvement. Participants emphasized that leadership support boosts morale, aligns individual efforts with organizational goals, and frames change as a collective responsibility rather than a top-down directive. Training and capacity building were also highlighted as essential pillars of operational excellence. Structured programs provide officers with the skills

and knowledge needed to adapt to rapidly evolving security challenges. This aligns with global law enforcement best practices, which recognize professional development as vital to performance and public trust. The balance between technical skills and interpersonal development is essential in a complex, multicultural policing environment such as Ajman. Technological integration is another crucial factor, with predictive analytics, digital surveillance, and advanced communication tools offering transformative potential. However, participants recognized the dual nature of technology: while it can enhance responsiveness and data-driven decision-making, it also raises concerns about financial sustainability and individual privacy. This reflects global debates on striking a balance between innovation and responsible governance. Addressing these challenges will require strategic investment, workforce support, and wellness initiatives to ensure that officers—who form the backbone of public safety—can operate in safe and sustainable conditions while delivering excellence in service.

Based on the insights gathered, the following proposals are put forward:

1. Leadership Development Programs have to be institutionalized.

The Ajman Police should develop a systematic training method on leadership, an approach that targets all levels of the organization, focusing on transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, and ethical decision-making. The internal adaptability culture would be reinforced through such programs, and the junior officers would be exemplified through their behaviors.

2. Increase spending on Technology and Infrastructure

To enhance operational responsiveness, the department should focus on investing in innovative technologies, such as those utilizing AI analytics, mobile communication, and intelligent surveillance. They must come with a firm data privacy policy and regular training on the ethical use of technology.

3. Increase Learning and Career Enhancement

An ongoing education process must be established, and special sessions on crisis management, cultural competency, cybercrime, and community involvement should be developed. There must be mandatory training, which should be periodically evaluated to ensure it remains relevant and has a positive influence.

To summarize, the secret to the success of the operational excellence and change management system adopted by the Ajman Police lies in a well-elaborated strategy that incorporates leadership, training, technology, and evaluation, while also focusing on addressing structural limitations and the well-being of officers. The above-presented proposals will not only help the Ajman Police improve its performance but also raise the level of public trust, enabling it to overcome the difficulties of modern policing with resilience, innovation, and integrity.

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