COVER PAGE AND DECLARATION

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A Scoping Review of Studies About Performance Measurement Systems Using OKRs

Abstract

Objectives: Objectives Key Results (OKRs) have become an increasingly popular approach for setting goals and measuring performance, especially in technology companies and startups. However, academic research on OKRs is still limited. This scoping review aims to provide an overview of existing studies on performance measurement systems using OKRs and identify knowledge gaps to inform future research.

Methods: A systematic search was conducted across Google Scholar databases to find relevant articles published from Since 2020-2023. Additional studies were identified through hand searches and expert recommendations. Articles were included if they empirically examined the implementation or outcomes of OKR-based performance measurement, in any type of organization. Extracted data included study context, objectives, methods, key findings, and limitations.

Results: The searches identified 2,420 records, of which 20 studies met the inclusion criteria after screening. Most studies were qualitative (e.g. case studies, interviews). The key aspects examined across the studies were OKR goal setting processes, perceived benefits of OKRs, implementation challenges, and impact on employee engagement. Reported benefits included increased alignment, transparency, autonomy, accountability, and Motivation. However common problems were unrealistic goals, loose accountability, and evaluation tool misuse. There was little examination of long term or objective organizational impacts.

Conclusions: Despite growing interest, rigorous empirical research on OKR-based performance management is still lacking. Significant knowledge gaps remain regarding objective outcomes, effective implementation strategies across organization types, integration with other systems, and longitudinal impacts over time. More quantitative and mixed methods studies are needed on larger, more representative samples. Contextual factors enabling the successful adoption of

OKRs also require further investigation. This scoping review provides insights to guide both academics and practitioners in advancing research and evidence-based practice on OKR goal setting approaches.

Keyword: Objectives Key Results (OKRs), Performance Measurement

Rationale for the Research (Background of the study)

Scoping studies are an increasingly popular approach to reviewing health research evidence. In 2005, Arksey and O'Malley published the first methodological framework for conducting scoping studies (Levac et al, 2010). In an effort to provide guidance to authors undertaking scoping studies, Arksey and O'Malley developed a six-stage methodological framework: identifying the research question, searching for relevant studies, selecting studies, charting the data, collating, summarizing, and reporting the results, and consulting with stakeholders to inform or validate study findings (Table 1)

Table 1 Overview of the Arksey and O'Malley methodological framework for conducting a scoping study (Levac et al, 2010)

Arksey and O'Malley Framework Stage	Description
1: Identifying the research question	Identifying the research question provides the roadmap for subsequent stages. Relevant aspects of the question must be clearly defined as they have ramifications for search strategies. Research questions are broad in nature as they seek to provide breadth of coverage.
2: Identifying relevant studies	This stage involves identifying the relevant studies and developing a decision plan for where to search, which terms to use, which sources are to be searched, time span, and language. Comprehensiveness and breadth is important in the search. Sources include electronic databases, reference lists, hand searching of key journals, and organizations and conferences. Breadth is important; however, practicalities of the search are as well. Time, budget and personnel resources are potential limiting factors and decisions need to be made upfront about how these will impact the search.

Arksey and O'Malley Framework Stage	Description
3: Study selection	Study selection involves *post hoc* inclusion and exclusion criteria. These criteria are based on the specifics of the research question and on new familiarity with the subject matter through reading the studies.
4: Charting the data	A data-charting form is developed and used to extract data from each study. A 'narrative review' or 'descriptive analytical' method is used to extract contextual or process-oriented information from each study.
5: Collating, summarizing, and reporting results	An analytic framework or thematic construction is used to provide an overview of the breadth of the literature but not a synthesis. A numerical analysis of the extent and nature of studies using tables and charts is presented. A thematic analysis is then presented. Clarity and consistency are required when reporting results.
6: Consultation (optional)	Provides opportunities for consumer and stakeholder involvement to suggest additional references and provide insights beyond those in the literature.

Scoping studies (or scoping reviews) represent an increasingly popular approach to reviewing health research evidence. However, no universal scoping study definition or purpose exists. Definitions commonly refer to 'mapping,' a process of summarizing a range of evidence in order to convey the breadth and depth of a field. Scoping studies differ from systematic reviews because authors do not typically assess the quality of included studies. Scoping studies also differ from narrative or literature reviews in that the scoping process requires analytical reinterpretation of the literature (Levac et al, 2010).

Alignment of individual, team, and organizational goals is vital for business success. However, traditional performance appraisals and management by objectives often fail to create this critical alignment (Crabtree, 2004). Consequently, there has been growing interest in Objectives and Key

Results (OKRs)—a flexible goal setting framework rapidly adopted by leading technology companies such as Google, LinkedIn, and Twitter (Doerr, 2018).

OKRs aim to connect lofty qualitative goals to quantified measurable outcomes that indicate progress. Employees at every level transparently set their own OKRs that ladder up to team or company objectives (Doerr, 2018). This fosters autonomy and engagement in achieving ambitious goals (Doerr, 2018). Regular tracking meetings focus on progress and obstacles without top-down evaluation. Proponents claim OKRs enhance agility, innovation, accountability, stretching, and purpose (Doerr, 2018).

However, academic research struggling to keep pace with industry adoption. Much commentary on OKRs comes from practitioners rather than empirical studies. Management fashion and fads often outstrip evidence regarding effectiveness (Abrahamson, 1991). Critical organizational research also cautions performance management innovations risk goal displacement, gaming, unsustainability, and distrust when not properly implemented (Smith and Goddard, 2002).

This scoping review will provide a systematic overview of existing research on OKRs, evaluating claimed benefits against actual evidence. Mapping OKR focus areas, methods, findings, and limitations will highlight significant knowledge gaps to be addressed. Insights can inform both scholarly understanding and evidence-based practice. Understanding enablers, barriers, and impacts will aid organizations considering implementing OKRs.

The rationale highlights OKRs' rising popularity and need for more rigorous academic scrutiny. It contrasts practitioner advocacy with management fashion warnings and possible downsides lacking examination. Scoping known evidence and gaps lays the foundation for the review's value to both theorists and organizational leaders.

Research Questions and Research Objectives

Research Questions

This scoping review aims to systematically investigate the following questions:

1. What are the main focus areas, methods, contexts, and key findings of studies done to date on OKR-based performance management?
2. What are the perceived benefits and challenges of OKRs reported across the literature?
3. What contextual factors and best practices have been identified regarding successful adoption of performance measurement with OKRs?

Research Objectives

The scoping review has the following key objectives:

1. To provide an overview of existing research on OKRs including methods, contexts, key focus areas, and high-level findings
2. To summarize reported benefits and barriers to implementing OKR systems based on current literature
3. To formulate insights and recommendations of value to both researchers and practitioners interested in studying or adopting OKR systems

The questions frame the scoping review's purpose around synthesizing extent research and identifying gaps to be filled. The objectives structure planned mapping and analysis outcomes expected to benefit both academics and organizational leaders. These will guide study inclusion, data extraction, and synthesis in line with established scoping methodologies (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005).

Literature Review

Introduction

Scoping reviews have emerged in recent years as a useful approach for synthesizing research evidence across heterogenous bodies of literature. Scoping reviews provide a preliminary assessment of potential size and scope of available research literature without attempting to address more specific review questions about interventions or effects. This literature review synthesizes methodological guidance from published literature to outline current best practices for conducting scoping review research.

Methodology

The seminal framework for scoping review conduct was published by Arksey and O'Malley in 2005, outlining a six-stage approach: (1) identifying the research question, (2) searching for relevant studies, (3) selecting studies, (4) charting the data, (5) collating, summarizing and reporting results, and (6) optional consultation. This framework has been augmented over time to enhance rigor. Levac et al. (2010) emphasized the need for an iterative approach rather than linear stages. Iteration facilitates considering the breadth of literature and refining concepts, terms, and search strategies at several points during review conduct. Peters et al. (2015) further built on this framework to enhance rigor and application of systematic review techniques, developing the Joanna Briggs Institute methodology for scoping reviews involving three key phases: (1) planning (protocol development), (2) execution (searching, screening, data extraction and charting), and (3) reporting results.

Other key methodological considerations relate to the search strategy, study selection, extraction, analysis, and presentation of results. Comprehensive search strategies are essential, including searches of electronic databases, reference lists, key journals, and grey literature. Selection criteria should link clearly to the review scope and questions. Data extraction approaches may combine quantitative details on the number and types of records with qualitative charting of key details and themes arising. Analysis aims to provide a descriptive overview of the amount,

design, focus and major concepts or themes arising. Visual mapping of literature is also a key output.

Troian et al. (2022) studied conducted a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) based on two databases and added to the results other studies arising from the snowball method. Three categories of studies within the OKRs theme are identified and described in this review: Studies on application of the OKR methodology; Studies that are based on OKRs as a starting point for developing new performance tracking models based on it and theoretical discussions that aim to understand and explain OKRs. The results show a growing use of the methodology, and this study points out common gains from the application of the OKRs, such as increased transparency within the organizations, increased team performance, and increased engagement around the global goals of the companies.

Conclusion

Scoping review methodology continues to evolve to enhance rigor and mapping of complex and disparate bodies of literature. The current best practices emphasize an iterative approach with ample planning, comprehensive searching, and detailed extraction to categorize concepts and themes. Scoping reviews represent an efficient means of summarizing the extent and nature of research evidence on broad topics where many study designs and Concepts are applicable. Their descriptive and visual mapping outputs help determine value and scope for systematic reviews. They also identify substantive and methodological gaps to guide future primary research.

Methodology

Description of scoping review of the study

This scoping review will follow the rigorous 5-stage methodology outlined by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) to map the extent, range, and nature of existing research evidence.

Stage 1 - Identifying the Research Questions:
The research questions were developed to define the scope of inquiry into academic literature on performance measurement systems using OKRs. They seek to summarize extent research approaches, topics, contexts, findings and limitations.

Stage 2 – Identifying Relevant Studies:
A systematic search will identify potentially relevant peer-reviewed and scholarly articles published in academic journals or conferences. A major databases will be utilized: Google Scholar. Search terms will include "objectives and key results", "OKRs", and "stretch goals". Reference lists of included articles will be screened. Additional relevant articles will be sought through expert recommendations and Google Scholar citation tracking. Sources in all languages will be considered. Grey literature or non-peer reviewed publications may be excluded depending quality assessment.

Stage 3 – Study selection:
Articles will be included if they empirically examine implementation or outcomes of OKR systems for performance measurement or goal setting in any type of organization. Studies solely focused on related concepts like MBOs or stretch goals without OKR frameworks will be excluded.

Stage 4 – Charting the Data:
A data charting form will be used to extract key information from included articles such as authors, year, contexts, objectives, methods, participants, variables studied, key findings and limitations. This synthesis will map OKR focus areas and evidence landscape.

Stage 5 – Collating, Summarizing and Reporting Results:
Analytic frameworks will guide analysis on extent, nature, and distribution of studies Analytic frameworks will guide analysis on extent, nature, and distribution of studies. Numerical analysis and thematic coding will summarize key focus areas. Evidence maps and tables will collate study contexts, methods, and factors examined. Descriptive numerical analysis will profile samples and measurement approaches. Narrative synthesis will summarize perceived benefits and challenges of OKRs reported across the literature. All results will link back directly to address the scoping review questions defined a priori.

Gaps in research methods, contexts, topics, and sample characteristics will inform an evidence-based research agenda for future studies to pursue. These will highlight priorities for advancing rigor and understanding of OKR performance measurement over time.

Recommendations will also translate findings to practical insights for organizations and change leaders considering implementing OKRs. This will support evidence-based decision making and avoid reliance on anecdotal claims.

Limitations:
Potential limitations of this scoping methodology include resource constraints for truly exhaustive searching, inherent subjectivity in study inclusion and data extraction, difficulties comparing heterogeneous studies, incomplete grey literature capture, and possible timescale lag regarding emerging research. Coding frameworks balance sensitivity and validity. Comprehensiveness will be balanced with feasibility. Limitations will be reappraised in light of final results.

In summary, this robust scoping review methodology will facilitate a broad evidence mapping on OKRs to inform scholarly understanding and organizational practice alike. The search, selection, extraction, and analytic procedures balance rigor with practical viability to guide present and future research directions.

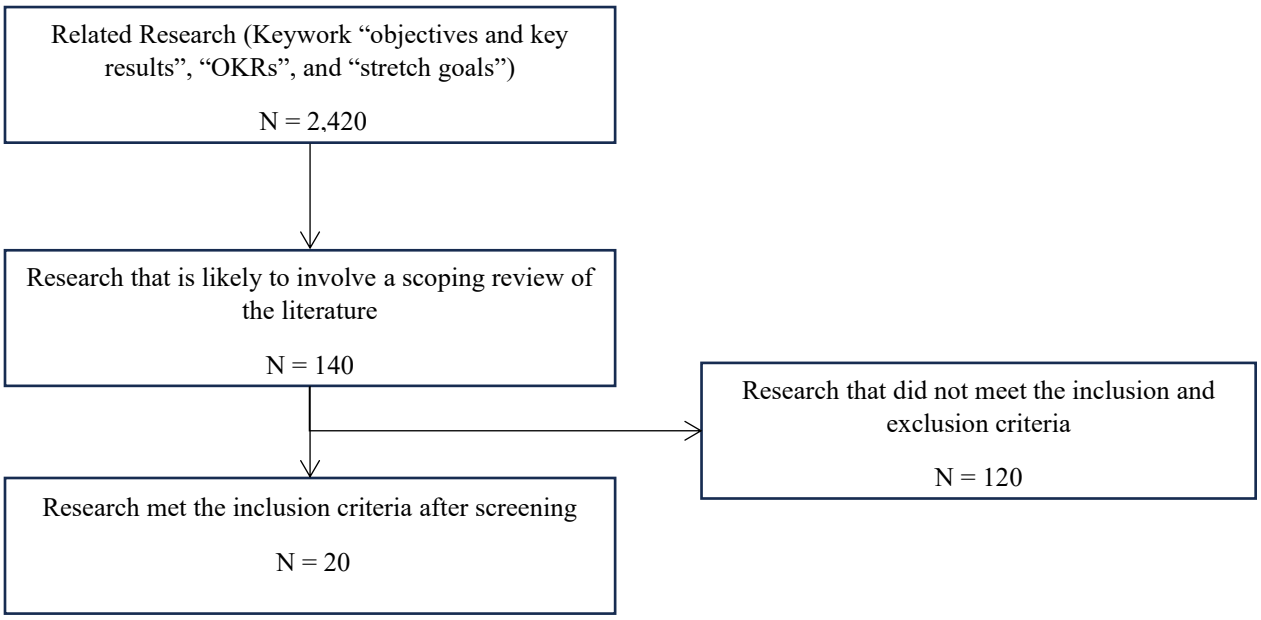


Figure 1. The process of searching for information to find relevant research

The final step in the data search process is to extract data from the selected studies that meet the criteria. to identify relationships By the process of searching for information to find relevant research, the research can be identified. There were a total of 20 studies (Table 2) which were used for analysis according to the data analysis methods described in the next section.

Table 2 Relevant research

Research Topic	Cite
OKR Methodology: Case Study in Sebrae Meier	Fernandes, B. C. L., & Gomes, J. V. (2023). OKR Methodology: Case Study in Sebrae Meier. *International Journal of Strategic Decision Sciences (IJSDS)*, *14*(1), 1-11.
Using objectives and key results (OKRs) and slack: a case study of coordination in large-scale distributed agile.	Stray, V., Moe, N. B., Vedal, H., & Berntzen, M. (2023). Using objectives and key results (OKRs) and slack: a case study of coordination in large-scale distributed agile.
Do objectives and key results solve organizational performance measurement issues?	Rompho, N. (2023). Do objectives and key results solve organizational performance measurement issues?. Benchmarking: An International Journal.
The Perceived Affordances and Challenges in the Newly Introduced OKR-Based Performance Appraisal System in an Omani HEI	Al-Saadi, Z., Al-Maawali, W., Ali, H. I. H., & Al Rushaidi, I. (2023). The Perceived Affordances and Challenges in the Newly Introduced OKR-Based Performance Appraisal System in an Omani HEI. SAGE Open, 13(2), 21582440231179632.
How agile teams make Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) work.	Stray, V., Gundelsby, J. H., Ulfsnes, R., & Brede Moe, N. (2022, May). How agile teams make Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) work. In Proceedings of the International Conference on Software and System Processes and International Conference on Global Software Engineering (pp. 104-109).
Strategy Evaluation Of Objective And Key Results (OKRs)	Huangtong, S., & Sirikit, R. (2023). Strategy Evaluation Of Objective And Key Results (OKRs) Implementation

Implementation Of Public Health Work At Ratchaburi Province	Of Public Health Work At Ratchaburi Province (Doctoral Dissertation, Srinakharinwirot University).
Optimal Design of Enterprise Performance Management Model based on OKR.	Wu, H. (2023). Optimal Design of Enterprise Performance Management Model based on OKR. Frontiers in Economics and Management, 4(4), 200-205.
Research on Implementation Strategy of Objectives and Key Results Assessment in State-Owned Enterprises.	Wang, X., Su, M., & Sun, X. (2023, July). Research on Implementation Strategy of Objectives and Key Results Assessment in State-Owned Enterprises. In 2023 3rd International Conference on Public Management and Intelligent Society (PMIS 2023) (pp. 718-723). Atlantis Press.
Evaluating OKR Framework as a Strategy Implementation Tool: A Case Study for an IT Company.	Lehto, M. (2023). Evaluating OKR Framework as a Strategy Implementation Tool: A Case Study for an IT Company.
Research on Enterprise Performance Management from the Perspective of OKR.	Chen, D., Chen, J., & Ning, M. (2022, April). Research on Enterprise Performance Management from the Perspective of OKR. In 2022 International Conference on County Economic Development, Rural Revitalization and Social Sciences (ICCRS 2022) (pp. 91-95). Atlantis Press.
Linking OKRs to Strategy. In Link Technology to Your Long-Term Business Goals: How to Use Technology to Mobilize Your People, Strategy and Operations	Praz. (2022). Linking OKRs to Strategy. In Link Technology to Your Long-Term Business Goals: How to Use Technology to Mobilize Your People, Strategy and Operations (pp. 55-58). Berkeley, CA: Apress.
Setting Up OKRs. In Link Technology to Your Long-Term Business Goals: How to Use Technology to Mobilize Your People, Strategy and Operations	Praz. (2022). Setting Up OKRs. In Link Technology to Your Long-Term Business Goals: How to Use Technology to Mobilize Your People, Strategy and Operations (pp. 49-53). Berkeley, CA: Apress.

OKR as a Continuous Process. In Link Technology to Your Long-Term Business Goals: How to Use Technology to Mobilize Your People, Strategy and Operations.	Praz. (2022). OKR as a Continuous Process. In Link Technology to Your Long-Term Business Goals: How to Use Technology to Mobilize Your People, Strategy and Operations (pp. 63-65). Berkeley, CA: Apress.
GOAL-OKR: A Framework for Strategic Focus Using Objectives & Key Results and Theory of Constraints.	Kunrath, T. L., Machado, M. P., & Lacerda, D. P. (2022, July). GOAL-OKR: A Framework for Strategic Focus Using Objectives & Key Results and Theory of Constraints. In International Joint conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management (pp. 359-371). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
How agile teams make Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) work.	Stray, V., Gundelsby, J. H., Ulfsnes, R., & Brede Moe, N. (2022, May). How agile teams make Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) work. In Proceedings of the International Conference on Software and System Processes and International Conference on Global Software Engineering (pp. 104-109).
Objectives and Key Results: How Navigating Travelling Organizations Might Succeed.	Wirl, D., & Luge, S. (2022). Objectives and Key Results: How Navigating Travelling Organizations Might Succeed. In *Navigating a Travelling Organization: Insights, Ideas and Impulses from the 3-P-Model* (pp. 127-140). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
Objectives and key results as a tool for organizational agility: the case of digital start-ups.	FERRAZZI, M. (2021). Objectives and key results as a tool for organizational agility: the case of digital start-ups.
Performance Management Cycle, KPI, and OKR. Operations and Supply Management 4.0: Industry Insights, Case Studies and Best Practices	Helmold, M., Terry, B., Helmold, M., & Terry, B. (2021). Performance Management Cycle, KPI, and OKR. Operations and Supply Management 4.0: Industry Insights, Case Studies and Best Practices, 145-154.

Effect of Objectives and Key Results (OKR) on Organisational Performance in the Hospitality Industry. Effect of Objectives and Key Results (OKR) on Organisational Performance in the Hospitality Industry	IRIKEFE, P. O. (2021). Effect of Objectives and Key Results (OKR) on Organisational Performance in the Hospitality Industry. Effect of Objectives and Key Results (OKR) on Organisational Performance in the Hospitality Industry, 91(1), 11-11.
A Deliverable Delay Management of Software Development in Railway Project using an OKR-Based Scrum Process.	Sowkasem, C., & Kirawanich, P. (2021, January). A Deliverable Delay Management of Software Development in Railway Project using an OKR-Based Scrum Process. In 2021 The 4th International Conference on Software Engineering and Information Management (pp. 10-16).

Data Analysis & Presentation of Results of Findings

Analysis Framework

A framework analysis approach will guide thematic categorization of key variables, factors and concepts examined across the collated studies to reveal the predominant analytic lenses being applied to OKRs research. Custom taxonomies tailored to emerging coding needs are well suited for scoping diverse bodies of evidence (Ward et al. 2013).

An initial coding hierarchy will categorize article topics into higher level groupings such as:

- OKR Goal Setting Approaches
- Measurement Factors
- Implementation & Change Management
- Perceived Outcomes: Benefits
- Perceived Outcomes: Challenges
- Contextual Integration Issues
- Objective Performance Outcomes
- Moderators or Mediators

Second-order categorization will capture more granular topic patterns under these categories as they manifest in the literature. For example, specific benefits coded may include alignment, satisfaction, or innovation. Challenges may encompass unrealistic goals or ignoring intangibles. Iterative classification will incorporate new codes as needed to comprehensively capture analytic dimensions.

Concurrently, methodological components will undergo framework coding around dimensions like:

- Year/Time Periods
- Locations
- Research Methods and Data Characteristics

- Sampling and Participants

When the researcher had extracted all the data from 20 studies, the researcher then used the Thematic Analysis process, which consists of segmenting, grouping, and linking various elements of the data. together as well as interpreting the meaning of such information (Grbich, 2007), Frequency analysis will quantify research attention dedicated to various OKR focus areas and methodologies over time. Co-occurrence mapping between codes will reveal relationships between key topic areas. Combining hierarchical coding with temporal and methodological analytics will enable meta-level understanding of how and where the OKR literature has concentrated analytic efforts.

Analytic outcomes will tie directly to scope review objectives around summarizing OKRs topics studied, methods used, underlying limitations, and knowledge gaps to address in an updated research agenda.

Results of Findings

A summary of the main focus areas, methods, contexts, and key findings from studies done to date on OKR-based performance management
Focus Areas

- Implementation approaches, change management practices, and support factors related to OKR adoption
- Perceived benefits such as increased alignment, engagement, innovation, autonomy
- Challenges and critiques like unrealistic targets, loose accountability, sustainability issues
- Impacts on objective performance outcomes beyond perceptions

Methods

- Qualitative approaches predominate, including interviews, case studies, focus groups
- Limited surveys assessing employee reactions or quantitative performance data
- Few rigorous empirical designs like experiments or longitudinal productivity analyses

Contexts

- Research unconfined to tech sector companies
- Limited spread across countries, industries, or organizational types
- Mainly senior leadership perspectives

Key Findings

- Perceptions of increased alignment, transparency, innovation, motivation gains
- But evidence for long term, objective impacts lacking with potential negatives unexplored
- Best practices and sustainability over time understudied

In summary, current studies reveal a need for research expansion beyond exploratory qualitative perceptions to substantiate OKR effectiveness claims with generalizable, unbiased evidence tied to real performance outcomes over longer periods across diverse organizational contexts.

A summary of the key perceived benefits and challenges of OKRs reported in the literature

Table 3 the key perceived benefits and challenges of OKRs reported in the literature

Key results	Results of Findings
Perceived benefits	• Increased strategic alignment and connectivity of goals across the organization • Enhanced transparency into company priorities and performance • Greater autonomy for employees to define ambitious objectives • Improved accountability and tracking of measurable results • Fostering innovation by encouraging stretching goals • Boosting engagement and motivation around vision-driven goals
Perceived Challenges	• Potential for unrealistic or unethical stretch goals • Loose accountability if not coupled with regular progress tracking • Risk of demotivation if used as performance evaluation • Difficulty sustaining focus as goals frequently change • Ignoring intangibles not easily measured • Information overload from extreme transparency

A summary of the key contextual factors and best practices identified so far regarding successful adoption of performance measurement with OKRs

Contextual Success Factors

- Securing genuine buy-in and role modeling from leadership
- Starting small before scaling OKRs organization-wide
- Integrating systems like coaching and training to support adoption
- Customizing for organization's existing culture and change capacity
- Iteratively piloting and learning before full rollout

Best Practices

- Linking OKRs to autonomous development and growth rather than evaluations
- Focusing regular check-ins on progress barriers not criticism
- Allowing flexibility to adjust goals based on evolving priorities
- Complementing OKRs with recognition for qualitative outcomes
- Granting some failure allowance on ambitious goals

However, academic evidence remains limited with clear gaps around proven guidelines for enabling successful, sustainable implementation across various organizational contexts. Most recommendations originate from practitioner commentary rather than empirical research.

A summary of the reported benefits and barriers to implementing OKR systems based on current literature

Table 4 the reported benefits and barriers to implementing OKR systems

Benefits	Barriers
• Increased Strategic Alignment • Greater Transparency • Autonomy in Goal Setting • Improved Accountability • Motivation Towards Vision	• Potential for Stretch Goal Dysfunctions • Loose Accountability and Gaming • Evaluation Tool Misuse • Loss of Long Term Strategic Focus

Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

This scoping review synthesized current academic knowledge regarding the implementation and impacts of performance measurement systems centered on Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) for goal-setting and strategic alignment. Analysis has revealed a body of literature still in its emerging stages, with significant opportunities to improve evidence credibility, expand contextual understanding, and address critical knowledge gaps through targeted research expansion.

Current evidence relies predominantly on singular qualitative case studies centered in the technology sector, leaning disproportionately on employee perception data. Yet industrial adoption of OKRs continues accelerating across domains. This signals a pressing need to reinforce scholarly rigor and insights into the transferability, effectiveness mechanisms, and long-term sustainability of OKR frameworks as applied in diverse organizational settings over time.

Major trends uncovered in terms of beneficial versus detrimental impacts require further validation through triangulated methods and objective quantitative indicators. As OKRs diffuse globally, understanding cultural situatedness and localization requirements also emerges as a research priority to inform international development initiatives and technological transformation projects employing results-based financing models.

Implications

Several implications arise from scoping the extent of research on OKR performance measurement:

Theoretical Implications:

- Goal-setting motivational models require expansion to address interactive effects of radical transparency, accountability autonomy, flexibility and focus induced in OKR systems and their offline behavioral impacts.

- Links between OKRs spanning organizational levels and perceived fairness, trust, justice, psychological safety climate and ethics warrant attention.
- Cultural relativist critiques highlight risks inherent in diffusion of results-based management innovations.

Practical Implications:

- Multiple context specific trials using formative evaluation are needed to identity best practices for successful implementation, capacity building and change leadership around OKRs.
- Studies should assess integration with adjacent performance infrastructure like compensation, job design, competencies and learning systems.
- Overemphasis on OKRs risks dysfunctional displacement of intrinsic motivation and multiplicity neglect in complex environments.

Recommendations

Based on identified limitations and evidence gaps, the following research agenda would significantly strengthen the knowledge base to inform academic understanding and evidence-based practice regarding OKRs:

1. Increased large sample hypothesis testing studies leveraging causal and quantitative designs on statistically representative participant pools beyond Silicon Valley tech firms
2. Longitudinal rather than cross-sectional data collection across phases of OKR adoption and sustainment over multiple goal cycles
3. Comparative evaluations against alternative goal frameworks like Management by Objectives or Balanced Scorecards
4. Focus on potential negative impacts and unintended consequences such as short termism, demotivation, or learning impediments
5. Explicit examination of integration requirements with human resource systems and CHANGE LEADERSHIP INTERVENTIONS needed for sustainable and contextualized adoption

6. Assessment of national, cultural and industrial moderators that dictate necessary adaptations for OKR goal setting approaches to positively impact performance and prevent harm

In summary, this scoping review has highlighted current understanding while mapping terrain where increased rigor and expansion would enhance transferability of insights to guide 21st century organizations in responsibly improving strategy alignment, ingenuity, and outcomes through data-driven results-based transparency. Next phase research across contexts is called for to match the pace of contemporary OKR innovation diffusion.

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