

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REVIEW
USING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ORIENTED OKRS APPROACH IN
COMPARISON TO KPI APPROACH



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Experimental Research on Employee Performance Review Using Knowledge Management Oriented OKRs Approach in Comparison to KPI Approach (56 pp.)

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ABSTRACT

Organizations engage in performance evaluations with a number of different tools and purposes, which in turn often resulting in confusion about the true purpose of performance evaluation. However, the use of Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) is still new in the Thai society. Therefore, this study is to investigate the understanding of Thai employee towards the adoption of OKRs, and to compare the performance with that of working under Key Performance Indicator (KPI). The results revealed that Thai employees were familiar with the working practices under the concept of KPI more than OKRs. This proved that OKRs was still new in the Thai society. It was clear that OKRs facilitates the process of knowledge sharing and exchange of information in the team. However, OKRs requires a team where its members have good knowledge or competence so that they can contribute to the team, as well as with the effective communication channel, and discipline to follow the key results. In other words, work practices under OKRs with no leader as the center will be less effective when team members have less or no competence, lack of effective communication, and no discipline of members.

Keywords: Employee Performance, Key Performance Indicator, Objectives and Key Results, Knowledge Management



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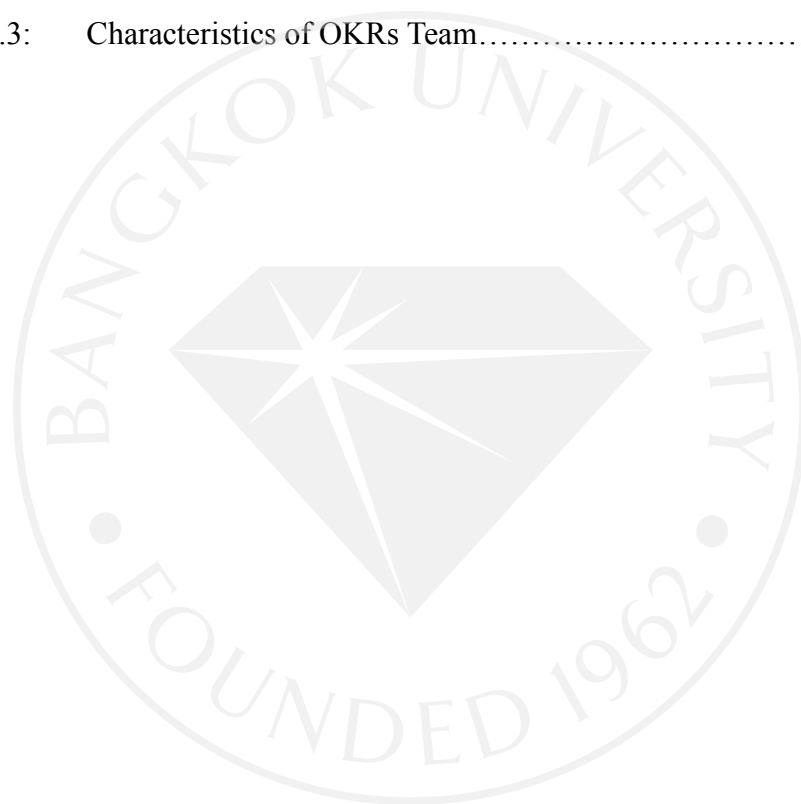
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of Problems

According to Kavanagh (1997), employees are different in terms of capabilities, skills, knowledge, and aptitudes, in which there is always a difference in the results of work performed among employees in terms of quality, quantity, or both. In this regard, performance evaluation is considered as essential for measuring and understanding of individual ability, competency, and relative merit and value for the organization. Barney (1995) suggested that performance evaluation is the process to assess the employees for their work performance that is required to implement on the continuous basis in order to know their situation in the organization and to find out whether they are improved or not; employees also want to know how well they performed their tasks, in which their contributions and efforts can lead to the survival and success of the organization.

Wiese and Buckley (1998) pointed out that the core of performance evaluation is that it allows an organization to measure and assess the behavior and accomplishment of individual employee over a particular time frame. Coutts and Schneider (2004) stated that performance evaluation is one of the key functions of human resources management practices that aims for assessing the extent to which each individual employee is aligned with the organizational goal. Cook and Crossman (2004) further suggested that performance evaluation is potentially one way that could drive the employee's contribution and efforts to align with the organizational goal through proper motivations and performance management. However, organizations

engage in performance evaluations with a number of different tools and purposes, which in turn often resulting in confusion about the true purpose of performance evaluation (Wiese & Buckley, 1998).

As suggested by Erdogan (2002), performance evaluation is an essential part of HRM for the effective distribution of rewards, motivations, and training and development that are provided to all employees based on the performance evaluation. At the same time, performance evaluation allows employees to express their feeling, perceptions, and views toward their jobs, managers, co-workers, department, and the organization. By setting a clear performance goals, Radonic (2017) suggested that organizations tend to increase focus, effort and persistence towards successfully achieved performance goals. Individuals pay more attention to a performance associated with goals than the ones that are not. On the other hand, people feel more energized and eager to put an extra effort if they see the final goal and are more persistent in achieving that goal. The use of Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) is still new in the Thai society. Therefore, this study is to investigate the understanding of Thai employee towards the adoption of OKRs, and to compare the performance with that of working under Key Performance Indicator (KPI).

1.2 Research Objectives

This study is to investigate the understanding of Thai employee towards the adoption of OKRs, and to compare the performance with that of working under KPI through the experiment study. Two experimental groups of employees engaged in the work of building a model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge, which was considered as a creative work.

1.3 Research Questions

There are two research questions which this study intends to find out the answer. The first question is we would like to find out if OKRs would fit for all kinds of work. We divided the work in to two broad categories of 1) very specific set of procedure with definite expecting delivery of planned outcome, and 2) the adjustable planned outcome. This leads to the first research question to find if OKRs approach is suitable for both type of work natures.

RQ 1: Which type of work would fit for OKRs evaluation and which type of work would fit for KPI evaluation?

Then the experiment explores forward to look at the employee preference to the evaluation approach if they have to operate in two different kind of work nature of which would be the right kind of approach to yield the best result to their opinion to deliver the outcome. This leads to the second research question with two sub-research questions as follows.

RQ 2: How would employee react to OKRs evaluation?

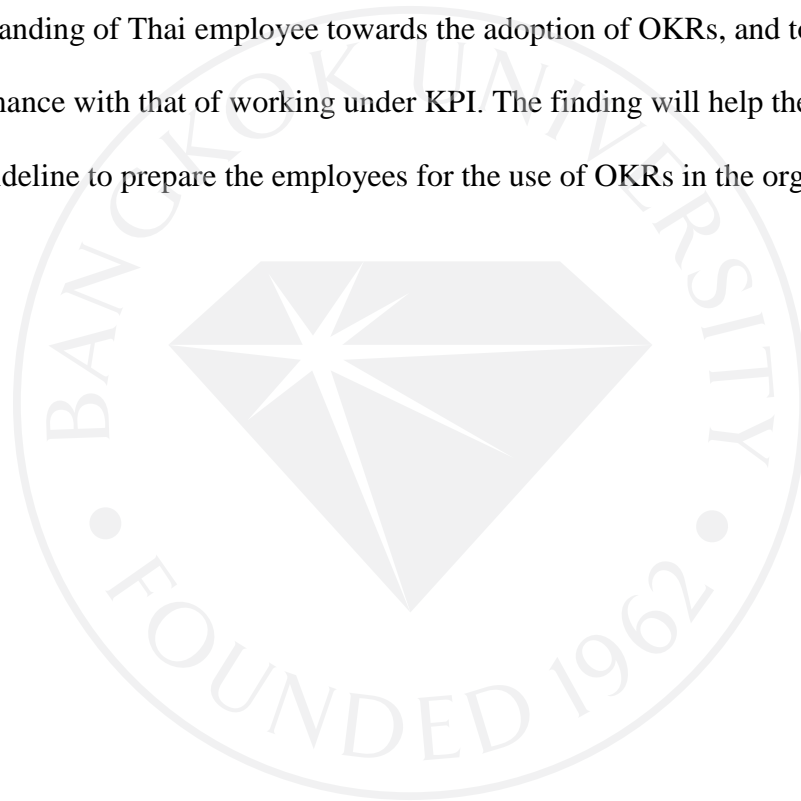
RQ 2a: How would employee of routine workforce react to OKRs evaluation?

RQ 2b: How would knowledge/creative workforce react to OKRs evaluation?

1.4 Significance of the Study

In the context of HRM, performance evaluation is concerned about performance management of employees in the organization, in which the effectiveness of the system relates with another relatives human resource functions exist in the organization. While there are many performance evaluation methods that

have been widely recognized and applied such as the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as a metric-validated performance evaluation for companies, the use of Objectives and Key Results or OKRs is still new in the Thai society. OKRs are a way to set goals and measure progress which have increasingly adopted by effective organizations across the globe such as Google, Intel, LinkedIn, Oracle, Twitter, or others in replacement of traditional KPIs. This study is to investigate the understanding of Thai employee towards the adoption of OKRs, and to compare the performance with that of working under KPI. The finding will help the management as a guideline to prepare the employees for the use of OKRs in the organization.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Performance Review and Performance Management

Robbins, Bergman, Stagg, and Coulter (2000) described performance review as the assessment of individual work performance for arriving at objective personnel decision. According to Lansbury (1988), performance review or appraisal is the process of identifying, assessing and developing the employees' work performance within the organization for tracking the organizational goals and objectives and providing benefits to employees in terms of feedback, recognition, job support, and training and development. Denhardt (1991) described performance review as a particular assessment with respect to a progress of individual employee in completing assigned tasks. Following the explanation of Devries, Morrison, Shillman, and Gerlach (1981), performance review is a process for measuring and evaluating behavior and accomplishments of individual employee for a finite period. Further, Armstrong and Baron (1998) stated that the process of performance review is an essential part of the performance management, which represents an organization's strategic and integrated approach to achieve organizational goals through the improvement of capabilities of both individual employee and teams.

Most recent literature in the context of performance review demonstrates that this process is an essential part of organization's performance management system, in which performance management is explained as a systematic process for the improvement of organizational performance through enhancing the individual and team performance (Armstrong, 2006). As suggested by Walters (1995), performance

management is the process of directing and supporting employees to perform their tasks in the most efficient and effective ways in accordance to the organizational goals. He stated that the notion of performance management is to create a common aims and goals of the organization, and to help each organizational member to clearly understand and recognize their contribution, which in turn to managing and enhancing the performance at the individual, group, and/or organizational level.

According to Fletcher (2002), performance review plays an important role in performance management systems where the organization's objectives and goals are translated into individual's objectives and goals. Performance review is also important in its primary role in discussing and supporting in the development of individual employees.

De Nisi and Griffen (2008) added that performance management is a general set of activities handling by the organization for the development and improvement of individual performance. They explained that performance management depends largely on performance review, but it typically involves with broader scope and process, which is the final outcome of performance review activities. From the management researches, the effectiveness and significance of performance management on the organizational performance have been widely investigated. The study of Fletcher and Williams (2000) in nine organizations in UK revealed that features of performance management contribute to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Lawler, Benson, and McDermott (2012) pointed out that the effectiveness of performance management systems are driven by the goals, which are jointly set and are based on organization's business strategy.

2.2 Methods of Performance Review and Management

Previous researchers revealed that there are various approaches as to engage in reviewing the performance or behavior of employees in relation to their jobs and/or organizational culture. Consequently, various applications of performance review lead to confusion and frustration of managers toward the process of employee performance review (Gurbuz & Dikmenli, 2007). This means that there is no one single best way of performance review. However, there are certain common elements of effective methods for performance review and management. Following the suggestion of Niven and Lamorte (2016), the effective methods of performance review and management are typically associated with clear goals which are attached to some particular performance criteria that are well-recognized and accepted by the management and employees. They further added that effective performance review and management include elements like “linking appraisal to rewards, the supervisor and employee working together to identify goals, performance goals clearly defined, feedback given to the appraiser on their effectiveness and compliance with legal requirements”. This study is to focus on the performance review and management under the concept of Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) method which have been widely recognized and applied in various organizations, particularly those with fast growing.

2.2.1 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

In the practice of performance review and management, the phenomenon performance measurement has been applied by the organizations as to ensure that they are going in the right track, achieving goals in terms of organizational objectives and goals. In doing so, the performance measures are to assess and control the overall

business operations and outcomes, as well as to measure and to compare the performance with different organizations in the industry, units, teams and individuals (Parmenter 2010). This process starts from identifying performance indicators, which in turn will further allow for a detailed specifications of process performance. Previous researches have suggested various categories of performance indicators for different approaches of performance measurement (Mapes, New & Szwejczewski, 1997; Parmenter, 2010).

A Key Performance Indicator or KPI is explained as a quantifiable measure which has been widely applied for gauging or comparing employee performance in accordance to organization's strategic and operational goals. In other words, KPIs are required to align with the organization's strategic and operational goals, in which the appropriate approach in ensuring such alignment is to follow the Critical Success Factors (CSFs), as suggested by Parmenter (2010).

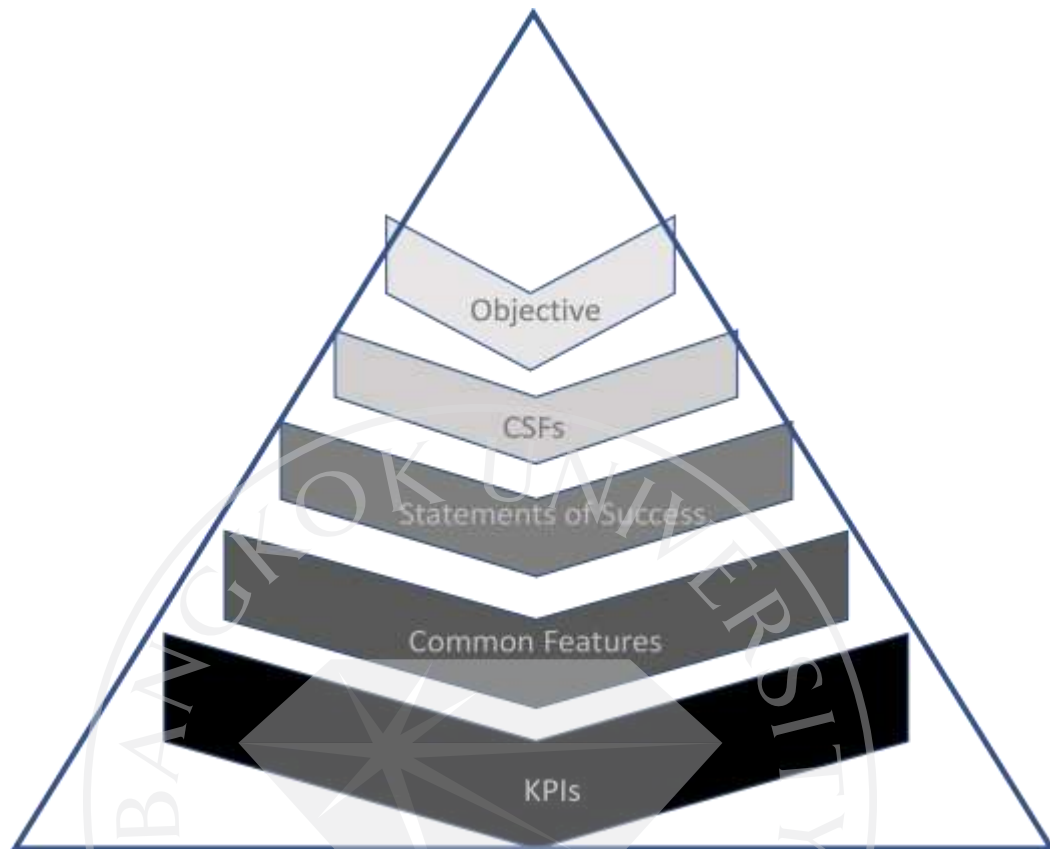


Figure 2.1: KPI's Top-Down Process

Source: Jahangirian, M., Taylor, S., Young, T., & Robinson, S. (2017). Key performance indicators for successful simulation projects. *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, 68(7), 747-765.

As seen from Figure 2.1, Jahangirian, Taylor, Young & Robinson (2017) described that the key element of KPIs is concerned about the identification of KPIs and their association with the CSFs, in which three KPIs are recommended for covering different perspectives of each factor in the best way possible. Then, the whole set of KPIs are used as a method for quantifying the success of work or project

from various aspects. In doing so, it needs some certain steps for enabling a sensible, informed path from transforming CSFs into KPIs. Robinson and Pidd (1998) added that each CSF is required to identify its key characteristics, which in turn are used to inform the development of KPIs. They further suggested that the first step in identifying KPIs involves with defining Statement of Success representing the providers' and customers' perceptions of success factors in their own language, in which each CSF is associated with a set of statement of success (for example; "There will be regular communication between the provider and customer" or "The customer will be constantly informed about progress on the project"). The Statements of Success then provides details about each CSF based on the top-down approach for reaching the KPIs. Further, there is another notion to identify common features (maximum three for the set of success statements related to each CSF), in which these common features are for encapsulating a set of success statements into a manageable set of criteria.

However, Robinson and Pidd (1998) stated that the major limitations of KPIs are that sometime organization's strategic and operational goals cannot be easily measured in regard to their qualitative and non-deterministic nature. However, KPIs are commonly used in measuring process performance such as the success of a process, whereas a certain process quality is not sufficiently addressed. In regard to such limitation of KPIs, there has been growing awareness that Objectives and Key Results can be better way as to address qualitative problems, to assess hidden performance problems, and to reveal additional business process improvement possibilities.

2.2.2 Objectives and Key Results

Doerr (1999) proposed new methodology Objective and Key Results or OKRs in 1970s based on KPI and BSC as a system for managing key objectives (Radonic, 2017). Intel was the first company that adopted the concept of OKRs in making its transition from producing memory chips to producing microprocessors, in which the company required an additional focus on the set of priorities in order to be succeed in the market. Through applying OKRs. Intel was able to achieve its organization's main objective and goals. However, the popularity of OKRs derived from the implementation of OKRs at Google in 1999, where OKR system was the organization's essential management scheme in relation to critical thinking, collaborative efforts and structured objectives. At Google, OKR system was to include management methodology which helps a business to focus on a joint effort to accomplish the organizational objectives and goals. As OKR system was implemented by Google, it was presumed that this system contributed for the company's success as it allowed to company to better focusing on efficiency and effectiveness through 70-20-10 rule as an extension to OKRs. Today, Radonic (2017) observed that a number of other leading tech companies such as Oracle, LinkedIn, and others have applied OKRs in their daily business operations as to highlight the relation between the individual employees' goals s their personal OKRs and the organization's OKRs.

According to Radonic (2017), the 70-20-10 rule suggests that "70% of activities should be related to the main objectives and important projects, while 20% should be related to the supporting activities and second priority objectives, and 10% on the remaining activities as the health metrics or needed tasks that will allow an organization to work operatively without any barriers. In addition, OKR also

involves with a function for enhancing transparency within organization and making a better prioritization.

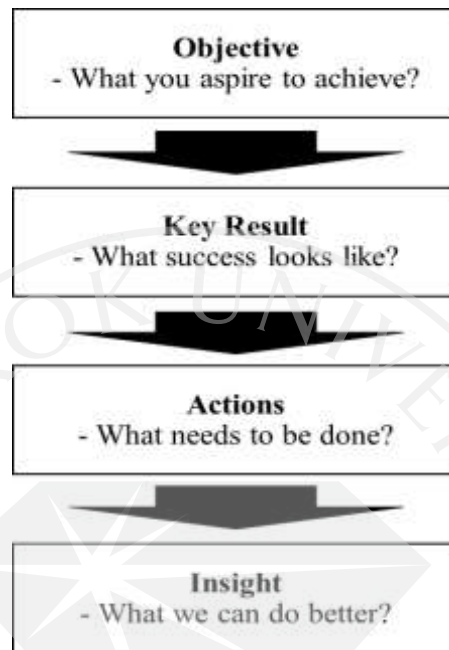


Figure 2.2: OKRs Process

Source: Wodtke, C. (2016). *Radical focus: Achieving your most important goals with objectives and key results*. Oklahoma City: Cucina Media.

As explained by Radonic (2017), OKR system involves with four steps, which are to identify objective, key result, actions, and insight. He added that key objectives should be set quarterly and evaluated quarterly, in which OKRs could be changed from quarter-based setting to six-month period of setting and assessing objectives. He further described 10 major directions when setting OKRs. First, objectives should be inspired and motivated with a clarification. Second, goals should

be ambitious as high as possibility to get accomplished. Third, organizations should stimulate highly productive and effective employees under OKRs. Fourth, it is necessary to have only 4-6 objectives due to the focus factor, and 3-5 key results as a monitoring tool for objectives. Fifth, key results are required to be measurable, time-oriented, and specific. Sixth, it is necessary to determine the responsible unit or person for each of the objectives and key results. Seventh, OKRs should be set quarterly or semi-annual regarding the size of the company. Eighth, it is recommended to set a reward for achieving high performances and to further motivate employees to accomplish higher results each month. Ninth, the goals should be set by a bottom-up concept. Finally, OKRs should be transparent to every organization's hierarchy levels.

Table 2.1: OKRs' Specification

Type of the organization	Specifics of using the OKS
Big Organizations	The biggest challenge during the implementation of OKRs is how to choose a proper communication channel which will be on a high level of transparency. It is suggested to set OKRs by departments. Evaluation should be done quarterly or semiannually;

(Continued)

Table 2.1 (Continued): OKRs' Specification

Type of the organization	Specifics of using the OKS
SME	SME Should evaluate OKRs more often than bigger corporation—on a monthly or quarterly basis;
Organization in the domain of providing services	In service or project oriented companies, objectives set by individuals should be vertically aligned;

From Table 2.1, Radonic (2017) stated that OKR system can be applied within any organizations, but it requires discipline, a lot of pre-training and education about OKR as a management system. He further suggested that proper communication channel, frequency of OKRs assessment, and alignment of individual and organizational objective are the key for the implementation of OKRs for performance management.

2.3 Difference between KPI and OKR

As explained by Radonic (2017), the key characteristics of OKRs that differentiates it from other management methods such as KPIs. First, OKRs are set and assessed more frequently (monthly, quarterly or semi-annually). Second, OKRs are more transparent because of they are completely public to each member on every hierarchy level. Third, setting goals follow the Bottom-up concept which are unlike

KPIs that follow top-down concept, in which OKRs involve every individual goal as part of the company's main objectives. Fourth, OKRs are explained as ambitious with 50% chance of achieving them, but the success is acknowledged after 70% accomplished. However, it does not mean that OKRs treat 70% as a 100% achieved goals in the KPIs, but aiming is to set the higher goals. Finally, Radonic (2017) further added that OKRs involve not directly related compensations, but if the objectives are accomplished, employees should get rewarded as well.

2.4 OKRs and Knowledge Management Practice

It is observed that KM approaches is included in OKRs practices, which in turn makes OKRs a good learning platform for operation excellence improvement. One of major advantages of OKRs compared to traditional methods is that it facilitates knowledge sharing through regular feedback and update. Knowledge sharing is defined as an exchange process of knowledge as to create one's new knowledge (De Vries, Van den Hoff & De Ridder, 2006). Knowledge sharing is also explained as the act of exchanging information among individual persons, groups of people or organizations, or society, in which such knowledge can be procedures, documentations, or know how like intuitive and experience-based. Knowledge could be classified into explicit or tacit knowledge (Nonaka, 1994).

Lin (2007) suggested that knowledge sharing is an intentional process which not only contributes the understanding of individuals, but also helps them to build or further improve an archive of available knowledge for others. From the management perspectives, Lin (2007) pointed out that knowledge sharing is essential in every organizations as it can help employees and organizations to response to the

environmental changes in the timely manner, to ensure the survival in today competitive marketplace, as well as to achieve sustained growth. In aspect of individual, knowledge sharing is a social activity where the best practices, expertise, tricks, or tips are shared through the ages by mouth or face-to-face communication like from father to son, teacher to students, boss to servants, or others. Meanwhile, in aspect of organization, knowledge sharing is one as a way to approach the productivity and knowledgeable workers (Van, 2003). According to Yang (2007), knowledge sharing is considered as a process of information transferring by learning, exchanging, and sharing among employees for the creation or enhancement of one's capability, which in turn further leads to the improvement of functions, operations, and organization's performances.

There are many researchers defined knowledge sharing in various aspects. For example, Alavi and Leidner, (1999) stated that knowledge that is not shared will limit organizational value. They also suggested that the ability in applying and integrating specialized knowledge of organizational members can lead to the organizational capability in developing and sustaining the competitive advantage. In other words, knowledge sharing is far beyond information sharing as to cover the sharing of accumulated ideas, thoughts, and experiences among people over time. Lin and Chen (2008) investigated the types of knowledge sharing within organizations and found that knowledge sharing can be identified into three major types, which are those of internal capabilities, customers or market, and suppliers. They explained that knowledge sharing about internal capabilities involve with the extent of common understanding of internal matters within an organization like management, systems, procedures, and capabilities.

It is obvious that OKRs embedded the practice of knowledge sharing and learning into the practice of performance evaluation process. Employee allow to stop on a periodical basis to learn from what they are doing against the predefined objectives and see if they are on the right path toward achieving the goal or they must adjust their course. This allows team learning to happen.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Approach

Qualitative research paradigm builds on the principle of a critical interpretive approach (Ticehurst & Veal 2000) which is a field of inquiry in its own right (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). A critical interpretive approach is more inclined towards uncovering meanings and understandings of broad interrelationships. It also places more reliance on the population being studied to provide their own explanation of their behavior. Further, the qualitative research paradigm is usually adopted for identification, description and explanation- generation and generally involves the gathering of information from a small number of people (Ticehurst & Veal, 2000). The objective is to understand the meaning of individual experience that are socially and historically constructed, with an intent of developing a theory or pattern" (Creswell, 2003).

In addition, the qualitative research paradigm aims at explaining an observed phenomenon that does not involve any formation of hypotheses. Typically, under this research paradigm, methods of inquiry to gather data include the use of narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies or case studies. Both phenomenologies and ethnographies require researchers to carry out studies over a prolonged period. A phenomenological study requires researchers to 'leave' their own experience in order to understand the experience encountered by the subjects. The research process under ethnographies typically evolves contextually in response to the lived realities encountered in the field setting (Creswell, 2003). In comparison, a

grounded theory study requires multiple stages of data collection and refinement by constantly comparing data of different sample groups in order to maximise the similarities and differences of information gathered. These methods of inquiry (other than case study) require a prolonged period of data gathering.

Given this requirement, a case study was considered a more appropriate option for this research. A case study allows researchers to explore in depth one or more subjects or observations. Data gathered through various procedures and case(s) are bounded by time and activity. Through an inductive approach, a case study aims to discover theory rather than the verification of existing theories (Gillham, 2000; Merriam, 1998). As a result, there is no manipulation of variables and no predetermined outcomes. This does not mean that a researcher should have an 'empty mind' of what to research on. The goal of the experiment as the case study is to analyze the real-world impact of using OKRs. This allowed the researcher to investigate the understanding of Thai employee towards the adoption of OKRs, and to compare the performance with that of working under KPI.

3.2 Research Design

A case study is a detailed research inquiry into a single example or a social unit that can be made up of people or organizations (Payne, 2005). It is a strategy involving empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context and seeks a range of different kinds of evidence to get the best possible answers to the research questions (Gillham, 2000; Yin, 2009, 23). Unlike quantitative research, a qualitative case study permits " ... intensive analysis that does not commit the researcher to a highly limited set of variables and thus increases the

probability that critical variables and relations will be found" (Merriam, 1990, 59)., As such, the interest of a qualitative case study is in the context rather than specific variables, in discovery rather than confirmation (Merriam, 1998, 19). It is also less concerned with generalizability or representative of a sample. However, a single case could be used to disprove a general statement, to challenge any earlier assumption of a theory and to develop fresh insight (Payne, 2005). The case study was chosen for this research as it is able to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies" (Yin, 2003). A case study would be an appropriate research strategy, because it sought to understand the phenomena of single example and also provided opportunities to conduct exploratory research (Ticehurst & Veal, 2000).

3.3 Research Procedure

The researcher made the experimental study with a small group of 10 participants. The participants were randomly divided into two subgroups consisting of 5 participants each. One group worked under the concept and practices of KPI, and another group worked under the concepts and practices of OKRs under the 3-hours work simulation. In the work simulation, both KPI and OKRs Team was required to build a model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge which was required to be concerned about safety and convenience for elders and disabilities for all weather conditions. The model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge was also required to be 100 centimeters in height and 250 centimeters in width. This work was considered as a creative work with no right or wrong answer. Materials for making a model were

prepared by the researcher, including those of paper cartons, sticky tape, rope, glue, cutter, scissors, and other stationery.

The KPI-focused team 3-hour time were divided with the following time allocation. The first hour was for team allocation, operation planning, and individual target outcome and KPI setting. The second hour was for fabrication and manufacturing. The last hour was for construction and assembling. The key operation is that each individual has distinct responsibility, and each receive the assigned responsibility during the planning to carry on the implementation. During the course of operation, each individual has to carry on their task and are not allowed to re-adjust their solution until the end of the work period.

The OKRs-focused team 3-hour time were divided with the following time allocation. The first half hour was for planning and material preparation, define key objective, and define key indicators. The second half hour was to begin the construction and assembling. At the end of the first hour, the team was stopped for revision of how far key indicator is achieved and if key objective can be achieved, re-planning, and re-allocation of resources for 5 minutes, then the construction and assembling were resumed. At the end of 2nd hour, the review was redone to readjust the key indicator and key objective and refine the plan and the operation then resumed. At the end of the hour an Indicative Evaluation Index card as shown in Figure 3.1 was used for evaluation with color coded for how far the indicator was from the target.

OKR for <u>Can be for a person, team , project or company</u>	
Objective 1:	%
Key Result 1.1	Grade
Key Result 1.2	_____
Key Result 1.3	_____
Key Result 1.4	_____
Key Result 1.5	_____
Objective 2:	%
Key Result 2.1	Grade
Key Result 2.2	_____
Key Result 2.3	_____
Key Result 2.4	_____
Key Result 2.5	_____

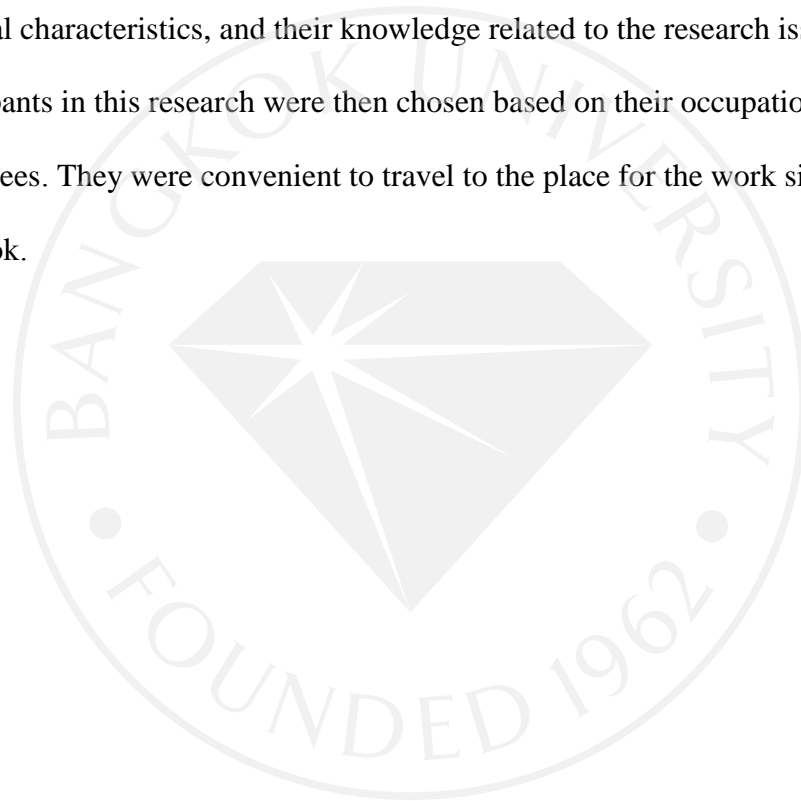
Figure 3.1: Indicative Evaluation Index Evaluation Card

Both teams were asked to stop all the operations at the end of three hours regardless of if the assignment had come to completion. Both teams were asked to provide and update with the completion status and feedback of how the operation proceeded.

While both teams were working, they are observed for their working climate and responsive behaviors. They were photographed and video recorded for their responsive actions for further support the analysis. While they were experimenting, the researcher did not intervene the participation process.

3.4 Team Selection

The selection of team participants followed the suggestion by Hancock and Algozzine (2006) that the identification of participants is a crucial step contributing largely to the data quality and its success that selected participants must be able to contribute their knowledge to the study. It was pointed out that a researcher should consider on three major factors in selecting the participants which are location, personal characteristics, and their knowledge related to the research issue. The participants in this research were then chosen based on their occupations as employees. They were convenient to travel to the place for the work simulation in Bangkok.



CHAPTER 4

FINDING AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Profiles of Participants

The researcher made the experimental research with a small group of participants. There were totally 10 participants in this study, in which they were from different organizations and had never been working together before. Almost all of them were an employee working in a private company in various industries such as food and beverage, service, pharmaceutical & chemical, manufacturing, trading, and telecom; only one participant was working in a non-profit organization. Most participants in this study for 9 of them were female; only 1 participant was male. They were between 30–40 years of age. The majority of them had the educational background for the Bachelor's degree, which accounted for 8 of them. There were 2 participants who had the educational background for the Master's degree. In regard to the participants' fields of working, most of them for 8 participants were working in the field of finance and accounting; one was working in IT; and another one was working as an engineer.

Table 4.1: Summary of Participants' Demographic Profiles

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Organization:		
Private corporation	9	90.0
Non-profit organization	1	10.0
Gender:		
Male	1	10.0
Female	9	90.0
Age (years):		
30	3	30.0
31	1	10.0
32	1	10.0
34	1	10.0
35	1	10.0
37	2	20.0
40	1	10.0
Educational Background		
Bachelor's degree	8	80.0
Master's degree	2	20.0

(Continued)

Table 4.1 (Continued): Summary of Participants' Demographic Profiles

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Field of Working		
Finance & Accounting	8	80.0
IT	1	10.0
Engineer	1	10.0

4.2 Team Characteristics

Under the experimental study, the participants were randomly divided into two subgroups consisting of 5 participants each. One group worked under the concept and practices of KPI, and another group worked under the concepts and practices of OKRs.

4.2.1 KPI Team

This group consisted of five members, in which the team members are demonstrated in Table 4.2.1 below.

Table 4.2: Characteristics of KPI Team

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Organization:		
Private corporation	5	100.0
Gender:		
Female	5	100.0
Age (years):		
30	2	40.0
31	1	20.0
35	1	20.0
37	1	20.0
Educational Background		
Bachelor's degree	3	60.0
Master's degree	2	40.0
Field of Working		
Finance & Accounting	5	100.0

4.2.2 OKRs Team

This group also consisted of five members, in which the team members are demonstrated in Table 4.2.2 below.

Table 4.3: Characteristics of OKRs Team

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Organization:		
Private corporation	4	80.0
Non-profit organization	1	20.0
Gender:		
Male	1	20.0
Female	4	80.0
Age (years):		
30	1	20.0
32	1	20.0
34	1	20.0
37	1	20.0
40	1	20.0
Educational Background		
Bachelor's degree	5	100.0
Field of Working		
Finance & Accounting	3	60.0
IT	1	20.0
Engineer	1	20.0

4.3 Key Results from Observation

In the work experiment of about 3 hours, both KPI and OKRs Team was required to build a model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge which was required to be concerned about safety and convenience for elders and disabilities for all weather conditions. The model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge was also required to be 100 centimeters in height and 250 centimeters in width. This work was considered as a creative work with no right or wrong answer. Materials for making a model were prepared by the researcher, including those of paper cartons, sticky tape, rope, glue, cutter, scissors, and other stationery.

4.3.1 Results from KPI Team

At the beginning, the researcher explained the concepts and practices of KPI to the team members. It seemed that team members were familiar with work procedures under KPI; and thus they seemed to understand the practices clearly.

There were six major procedures involving the work under KPI, which are 1) designing, 2) planning, 3) setting KPI, 4) allocating work, 5) preparing material, and 6) starting the work implementation.

KPI team used about 30 minutes in designing, planning, and setting KPI. All team members participated in the designing and planning through sharing their ideas and opinions. They were all excited with the good cooperation in the team. They used about 15 minutes for the planning and another 15 minutes for joyful chatting. At the end of planning stage, they designed their pedestrian crossing smart bridge with the use of elevator to move the targeted users from the ground to the bridge. Then, they designed to have moving walkway on the bridge from moving the targeted users from one side to another side of the bridge. They seemed to share the ideas and opinions

based on their experiences as seen from other places like airports. After that, they allocated works and helped each other in preparing the materials.

During the work implementation, it was observed that the team used the materials provided with maximum allocation for each group. They made the model based on their design. For the first 60 minutes of work implementation, they encountered with the serious problem as they found that the model was not strong; and thus it could not stand still. For another 60 minutes of work implementation, the group found that they were able to build the model according to their design, but the quality of model looked relatively poor. The model's bridge was not strong enough. Some of them excused that the materials were not enough or even the weather was too hot so that they could not work properly. They tried to make the model's bridge stronger by using all sticky tape provided. During the last 30 minutes, the group tried to claim that their model was workable although some members tried to use their hands to help the model to stand still.

4.3.2 Results from OKRs Team

Similarly, the researcher explained the concepts and practices of OKRs to the team members at the beginning. However, it seemed that team members were not familiar with work procedures under OKRs, in which some of them had never heard about OKRs before. It took a longer time for them to understand the concepts and practices of OKRs as compared to those of KPI group.

There were eight major procedures involving the work under OKRs, which are 1) designing, 2) planning, 3) setting objectives, 4) setting key resources, 5) preparing material, 6) starting the work implementation work, 7) reviewing, and 8) adjusting (process, procedures, or resources as necessary). The first-six procedures

were similar to those of KPI with the additional two procedures for reviewing and adjusting procedure. The group agreed to review their performance for every 1 hour. For the performance review, the red color was used when they could meet 0–30% of key results; the yellow color was used when they could meet 31–70% of key results; and the green color was used when they could meet 70–100% of key results.

Same as that of KPI team, OKRs team also used about 30 minutes in designing, planning, and setting objectives and key resources. All team members of OKRs group also participated in the designing and planning through sharing their ideas and opinions. They used about 30 minutes for serious discussion about the ideas. They came up with the idea to use transparent cable car sky pass with two stations located in one side each. At the station, the targeted users use the transparent elevator to move them from the ground to cable car platform. The station was designed to equip with CCTV, AI for information service, and lighting system.

During the work implementation, it was observed that the work progress of the group was very slow. After the first 60 minutes, they agreed to rate their performance in red, as they assessed that only 25% was met the key results. Then, they made the adjustment in the process through re-allocating works among their team members. For another 60 minutes of work implementation, the group's working progress seemed to meet their plan. The group faced the same problem as another group that the model's bridge was unable to stand still. They adjusted the plan through using one sheet of paper as the model basement with the use of sticky tape for fastening the model with the basement. This tactic was workable that the model's bridge was stronger and stable. At this stage, they agreed to rate their performance in green color, which means that more than 70% of result was met. For the last 30

minutes, the group reviewed their performance once again, in which they remained rating their performance as green color. They further made other finishing work and other decorations such as lighting, CCTV, and others.

4.4 Reflections from the Simulation

In regard to the feedback from KPI team, the participants were familiar with the working practices under the concept of KPI. They engaged in six major procedures involving the work under KPI, which are 1) designing, 2) planning, 3) setting KPI, 4) allocating work, 5) preparing material, and 6) starting the work implementation. At the beginning, all participants in KPI team were exciting about the work simulation. During the designing and planning, they tried to list up the plan by talking about their experiences and discussing about other ideas which sometime would not be realistic. KPI team tried to scope down their work from the limited resources such as time and materials. As compared to that of OKRs team, KPI team used shorter-time in designing and planning phase. Their KPI for the project simulation was too simple as to build a model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge without identifying the specifications. Junior members of KPI team also often followed the idea of senior members in the team. They seemed to have less conflict in working together. During the work implementation, the team members helped each other to complete building the model. They could complete their work in time, but they did not satisfy with the team performance. The model's bridge was not strong enough and was unable to stand still. Some of team members excused that the materials were not enough; and that the weather was too hot so that they could not work properly.

In regard to the feedback from OKRs team, the participants were not familiar with the working practices under the concept of OKRs. This proved that OKRs was still new in the Thai society. After the explanation, however, the team members got better understanding about the concept of OKRs and could follow the work practices under OKRs. They engaged in eight major procedures involving the work under OKRs, which are 1) designing, 2) planning, 3) setting objectives, 4) setting key resources, 5) preparing material, 6) starting the work implementation work, 7) reviewing, and 8) adjusting (process, procedures, or resources as necessary). During the brainstorming, all participants in OKRs team were very active. They shared their ideas and discussed about the other ideas. They seemed to encounter with more conflicts, but was able to conclude the ideas in their list. The team took longer-time in the planning phase than that of KPI team, with most use of the time in discussing and making arguments. This seems to be the good point of OKRs team as they seemed to thoroughly make the plan and design. As a result, they came up with more specific details about the expected results of the model. During the work implementation, OKRs team often reviewed the progress in accordance to its plan. It thus allowed the team to adjust their work and responsibility of its members for the better performance. After the change, the team was able to achieve its performance goal. The model of OKRs team looked better than that of another team in the way that the bridge was stronger and more stable.

4.5 Analysis of Finding

This part is to find out the answer in regard to the research questions.

RQ 1: Which type of work would fit for OKRs evaluation and which type of work would fit for KPI evaluation?

The results from the work simulation suggested that OKRs-based performance evaluation fits the work that is characterized as creative or innovative, more flexible, and fast response. This was proved in the case of building a model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge. This type of work requires additional focus on the set of priorities in order to be succeed with more emphasis on critical thinking, collaborative efforts and structured objectives. In performing work, Radonic (2017) suggested that 70% of work activities should be related to the main objectives and important projects, while 20% should be related to the supporting activities and second priority objectives, and 10% on the remaining activities as the health metrics or needed tasks that will allow an organization to work operatively without any barriers. Further, work with proper communication channel, frequency of OKRs assessment, and alignment of individual and organizational objective are the key for the work under OKRs for performance management.

Meanwhile, the results from the work simulation suggested that KPIs-based performance evaluation fits the work that is characterized as routine work or that with the expectable outcome, ease of measuring, and relatively low risk. The top-down approach of KPIs also suggested that it is more appropriate with strong leader with charismatic leadership.

The leader is required to identify KPIs and their association with the CSFs. Then, the whole set of KPIs are used as a method for quantifying the success of work

or project from various aspects. Further, that KPIs are commonly used in measuring process performance such as the success of a process, with less attention on process quality.

RQ2: How would employee react to OKRs evaluation?; any difference between routine workforce and knowledge/creative workforce reacting to OKRs evaluation.

Based on the observation, both employees who were considered in the group of routine workforce (working in fields of finance and accounting) and those in the group of knowledge/creative workforce (working in fields of engineering and IT) were not familiar with the practice of performance management under OKRs concept at the first time. This proved that OKRs was still new in the Thai society. After some explanation, however, both groups of workforce got better understanding about the concept of OKRs and could follow the work practices for performance management under OKRs. Employees in the group of knowledge/creative workforce seemed to value OKRs system more than those in the group of routine workforce. One participant in the group of routine workforce even mentioned that “OKRs is complicated and time consuming system than that of KPIs” and “without the appropriate training and communication it can lead to a conflict”. One participant in the group of knowledge/creative workforce argued that “a certain level of conflict can lead to better solution through sharing of idea and knowledge”. Overall, both groups of them agreed that OKRs is most appropriate for working in the team where its members have good knowledge or competence so that they can contribute to the team, as well as with the effective communication channel, and discipline to follow the key results. In other words, work practices under OKRs with no leader as the center will

be less effective when team members have less or no competence, lack of effective communication, and no discipline of members.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The core of performance evaluation is that it allows an organization to measure and assess the behavior and accomplishment of individual employee over a particular time frame. Performance evaluation is one of the key functions of HRM practices that aims for assessing the extent to which each individual employee is aligned with the organizational goal. By setting a clear performance goals, organizations tend to increase focus, effort and persistence towards successfully achieved performance goals. Individuals pay more attention to a performance associated with goals than the ones that are not. On the other hand, people feel more energized and eager to put an extra effort if they see the final goal and are more persistent in achieving that goal. However, organizations engage in performance evaluations with a number of different tools and purposes, which in turn often resulting in confusion about the true purpose of performance evaluation. The use of Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) is still new in the Thai society. Therefore, this study is to investigate the understanding of Thai employee towards the adoption of OKRs, and to compare the performance with that of working under Key Performance Indicator (KPI).

The researcher made the experimental study with a small group of 10 participants dividing into two groups with 5 participants each. One group worked under the concept and practices of KPI, and another group worked under the concepts and practices of OKRs under the 3-hours work simulation. Both KPI and OKRs Team

was required to build a model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge which was required to be concerned about safety and convenience for elders and disabilities for all weather conditions. This work was considered as a creative work with no right or wrong answer. The results revealed that Thai employees were familiar with the working practices under the concept of KPI more than OKRs. This proved that OKRs was still new in the Thai society. After the explanation, however, the OKR team was able to follow the work practices for performance review and management under OKRs. It was clear that OKRs facilitates the process of knowledge sharing and exchange of information in the team. In other words, it can be said that OKRs is more appropriate in knowledge/creative workforce rather than routine workforce. In details, OKRs requires a team where its members have good knowledge or competence so that they can contribute to the team, as well as with the effective communication channel, and discipline to follow the key results. In other words, work practices under OKRs with no leader as the center will be less effective when team members have less or no competence, lack of effective communication, and no discipline of members.

5.2 Business Implication

Performance evaluation is concerned about performance management of employees in the organization, in which OKRs are a way to set goals and measure progress which have increasingly adopt by effective organizations across the globe such as Google, Intel, LinkedIn, Oracle, Twitter, or others in replacement of traditional KPIs. This study is to investigate the understanding of Thai employee towards the adoption of OKRs, and to compare the performance with that of working

under KPI. The finding will help the management as a guideline to prepare the employees for the use of OKRs in the organization. The results suggested that OKRs facilitates the process of knowledge sharing and exchange of information in the team, which in turn lead to better organizational performance in term of innovation capabilities, efficiency, and effectiveness in adapting to environmental changes. In other words, it can be said that OKRs is more appropriate in knowledge/creative workforce rather than routine workforce. From the experiment, participants also admitted that they had a problem in planning the work. This could be implied that the work practices under KPI is not appropriate when team members have no experience or knowledge and no leader, which in turn results in inefficient planning and setting the KPI. Through having effective leader who is able to guide the design and setting the appropriate KPI for the performance review, it is expected the performance of KPI team should be better. In other words, it can be concluded that OKRs can lead to better results as it allows for performance review in terms of quality and quantity for the improvement of work results. It is more flexible than KPIs. However, team members working under OKRs should have good knowledge or competence so that they can contribute to the team. In other words, work practices under OKRs with no leader as the center is less appropriate when team members have less or no competence.

To enhance the effectiveness of OKRs in performance review and management, it is suggested that team members need to have good knowledge or competence so that they can contribute to the team, as well as with the effective communication channel, and discipline to follow the key results. The training through

working simulation will help employees to better understand about the concept and process of OKRs and its significance.

5.3 Limitations

This study intends to investigate the understanding of Thai employee towards the adoption of OKRs, and to compare the performance with that of working under KPI through the experiment study. Two experimental groups of employees working under the performance review and management under the concept of KPIs and OKRs engaged in the work of building a model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge. This simulation was considered as a creative work. The results thus may not be applicable to all types of work due to the difference in the nature of work itself. In addition, this study involves with the limitation of qualitative research in the way that the findings were unable to apply with other cases due to few number of participants in this type of study. Further, the participants were selected as a part of routine workforce and knowledge/creative workforce, in which there was no exact definition or criteria in separating these two groups.

5.4 Future Research

In this study, two experimental groups of employees working under the performance review and management under the concept of KPIs and OKRs engaged in the work of building a model of pedestrian crossing smart bridge. The future research is recommended to study the contribution of OKRs in other situations such as more diversity of workforce, difference in the nature of work, and the impact of leader in the team. In regard to the limitation of qualitative research, the future

research is also recommended to apply mixed methodological approach as to avoid the limitations of qualitative research. Further, the participants were selected as a part of routine workforce and knowledge/creative workforce, in which there was no exact definition or criteria in separating these two groups. The future research is also recommended to update the term and definition in identifying workforce into routine workforce and knowledge/creative workforce.



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Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



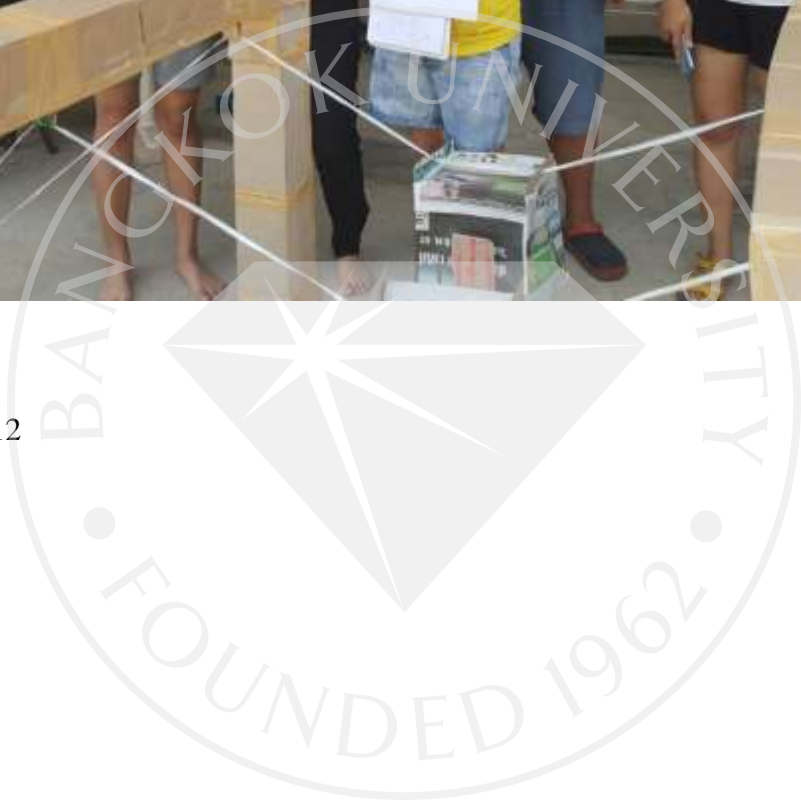
Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



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