

## **Commercialization and Collaboration as Smart-KPIs of a Performance Measurement Framework to Assess Research on the Commercial Agriculture Sector in Sri Lanka**

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Unending pressures on the research institutions by regulators to alter their research agenda to guarantee “more quality food from fewer resources” is ‘justified’ on the grounds of an ever-increasing population, emerging environmental challenges, and numerous other socio-economic situations faced by the nation. In the context of the commercial agriculture (CA) sector, these warrants ‘commercialization of research’ to induce more ‘collaborations’ between the institutes and industry to produce more society-friendly agriculture technologies. Thus, this research was directed, first, to determine how terms such as commercialization and collaboration were characterized by these CA-based research institutes, and then, to establish a performance measurement framework (PMF) that defines a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) to work in these regards. A systematic literature review facilitated the identification and collation of the information on PMF and KPIs (Phase I) followed by contact of the leaders in upper echelons (n=32) affiliated with leading research institutes work on CA by way of in-person interviews facilitated by a pre-piloted interview guide comprised of 15 probing questions (Phase II). Thematic Models produced through the MAXQDA Software were employed to converge leaders' perspectives into five major themes, namely 1. Research commercialization (R-Com), 2. Research collaboration (R-Col), 3. Research for society, 4. Institutional management and 5. Technology-integrated systems. The organizational benefits gained from a well-thought-out PMF comprised of smart KPIs (e.g., R-Com and R-Col) and their interactive effects were well accentuated. The analytical tools provided by the software (e.g., Code-Maps) were methodically used to build up these frameworks. The research outputs generated using real-time data-driven performance management based on KPIs will inevitably help to work out those modifications made to the research agenda in CA effectively.

**Keywords:** Collaboration, Commercial agriculture, Commercialization, KPI, Research management

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