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Application of agile management methods in companies operating in Slovakia and the Czech Republic

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ABSTRACT
The current pandemic situation has forced organisations to adapt quickly and change processes through digital transformation. Businesses began to interact with consumers online and generally had to adjust existing processes and develop or improve the products and services offered. The agile transformation as part of Industry 4.0 started several years ago and in the current situation can be considered the best starting point for ongoing changes. The agile approach is mostly used in the field of IT, where it has penetrated mainly into software solutions and project management. Later, this concept began to penetrate deeper into several areas of the organisation, today we can talk about the company-wide transformation into an agile platform. While agility was initially perceived as a benefit, especially for software solutions, today it helps in successful business mainly by penetrating the organisational culture in which organisations define the desired values, ideas and procedures of employee behaviour in the organisation and is able to implement agile management principles. In the presented article, we present the results of research focussed on the analysis of the current state of application of agile management methods in companies operating in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The aim of this paper is to identify the approach to building an agile culture as a basic prerequisite for their effective implementation. The contribution of this article to agile management research is to identify specific aspects of agile culture that support agile management functioning. The size of the examined sample and the comparison of the results between the group of companies in the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic provide findings with a high degree of reliability.

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Introduction

In connection with the ever-increasing rate of globalisation and the impact of the rate of economic mobility caused by the pandemic situation that has affected the whole world, the implementation rate of new technologies (Industry 4.0) is increasing

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in all spheres of society. Consumers have moved into the online world, and organisations have been forced to respond quickly. The changes that have taken place not only in the improvement of products and services but also in the organisational environment. The crisis has accelerated not only customer-focussed operating models but also internal operations (back-office processes, manufacturing, research and development) and supply chain interactions. According to respondents to a McKinsey survey of executives (899), many of the changes were 20 to 25 times faster than expected. In the case of telework, the changes were up to 40 times faster than expected, and in the pre-crisis period, this transformation would take more than a year (Mckinsey & Company, 2020). In connection with the above, there is a growing need for effective management of virtual teams (Haron et al., 2019; Nordbäck & Espinosa, 2019), with a constant emphasis on maintaining or increasing flexibility (Clark et al., 2019; Kilcullen et al., 2021). In this context, the topic of organisational agility and trends in the application of agile team management methods used to increase flexibility and thus the competitiveness of companies is becoming a much-discussed topic.

Holbeche (2015) argues that if organisations and the people working in them thrive in today's environment, they are likely to have adopted agile practices and the thinking that supports them. He adds that agility does not exist on its own. It is also associated with organisational resilience, the ability to learn and learn from failure. The essence of agile management is the focus on employees and teams that create added value for the customer (Linke, 2019). Agility in the organisation takes place in the form of self-management. Working agile means dividing work into short cycles, also called 'sprints'. At the end of each cycle, the customer is shown a preview of the output so that the team working on the project can get feedback. Such an approach is used to make it easier to implement changes that arise from changing customer needs (Gustavsson, 2013).

This approach is not only applied to the production of a product or service to the customer. organisations use it in almost all areas (research and development, marketing, business strategy, etc.) (Rigby et al., 2016). Agile organisations thrive better in a complex environment (as opposed to non-responsive organisations) because they have the ability to detect emerging opportunities and threats in a timely manner and to respond quickly to them by implementing change (Holbeche, 2018). As the Fourth Industrial Revolution is a new era in human development and causing changes in the economic field, agile management is emerging as a suitable management model that can help prevent emerging problems with the advent of Industry 4.0, such as uncertainty and rapid changes in the business environment. We assume this based on the fact that the agile methodology first proved itself in the field of information technology. (Gromova, 2018). In 2001, Sutherland, Schwaber and 15 other software revolutionaries met and formulated the Agile Manifesto. A movement began that caused a revolution in software development (Hesselberg, 2019). Over the last 25 to 30 years, agile methodologies have transformed the software industry. Software plays a crucial role in almost all business areas, and its development is a challenging innovation, as technologies and customer requirements change very quickly. An agile approach is a well-developed holistic system designed to overcome several obstacles to successful

innovation. Agile methods have increased success rates in tens of thousands of software development projects from 11% to 39%. At present, agile thinking is beginning to radically change the way organisations are run and managed (Rigby et al., 2016).

The processing of literature survey was carried out within scientific databases, based on the paper keywords, while the selection of sources themselves was realised based on the analysis of entire contributions and their entire contents.

Organisational culture supporting agile management methods

Despite the fact that innovation is often understood as the domain of specialists in research and development, marketing, design or information technology, the primary creative skills are owned by each of the company's employees. The resulting innovation potential can be enormous if we find a mechanism that can 'target' such skills in the right direction (regularly and across the enterprise). Although individual workers may be able to generate only limited, incremental innovations, the sum of these activities can have far-reaching consequences (Bessant, 2003). Every year since 2006, the State of Agile survey provides information on the implementation of agile practices in various areas of the organisation, with more than 40,000 agile leaders, experts and consultants. A survey in 2019 found that the biggest challenges for organisations are the general resistance of employees to change, insufficient participation of leaders and inconsistency of processes and procedures in teams. The key to addressing these challenges is an appropriate set organisational culture, which can significantly facilitate the management of innovation processes in the organisation (Wei et al., 2013). Since the content of organisational culture has a double effect on the performance of the company, namely to activate or deactivate employees, depending on the set specific values and standards of behaviour that it involves, and also direct employees to meet the set values and goals that are inherent in the culture of the content (Lukášová, 2010). If managers want to purposefully create an innovative culture, they need to create a pro-creative and pro-innovative atmosphere (Chandler et al., 2000). Innovative organisations that develop key aspects of organisational culture provide excellent performance in developing and implementing innovation (Quandt et al., 2015).

The task for business management in this regard is to create an environment in which there is room for the development of new ideas. This means providing employees with work inputs (time, material, information, etc.) to such an extent that they have sufficient space for innovative behaviour (Stacho & Stachová, 2017). It is the trust that employees receive from managers in this approach that motivates them to take a significant degree of risk, without fear of unfair punishment for possible mistakes or failures that always accompany the creation of innovations (Franková, 2003).

Capgemini Consulting (Forbach & Wähler, 2018) states that in a digital transformation, a key factor is an organisational culture in which companies give their employees the freedom to work through flexible work models that employees use to choose when and where they want to work with digital tools. In carrying out their work, they have a high degree of autonomy, are able to manage themselves, and have certain decision-making skills. Organisations promote interdisciplinary exchanges between their employees. Knowledge and information are collected, shared, and

structured, and employees support each other (between departments and hierarchical boundaries). In such a culture, a high level of participation, an open approach, and team spirit are required. Subramaniam and Hunt (2005) argue that agility uses feedback to constantly adapt in a highly collaborative environment, which is a fundamental variable for such a culture.

Dove (2001) looks at agility, which is based on the physical ability to act (ability to react) and intellectual ability to be able to find suitable things to respond to (knowledge management). In his understanding, agility is expressed as the ability to effectively manage and apply knowledge so that an organisation has the potential to prosper in an ever-changing and unpredictable environment. Responsiveness comes from two sources: an organisational structure that allows for change and an organisational culture that facilitates change.

In organisations applying agile methodologies, tasks are performed through teamwork, with human resources at the forefront. The principles are built in such a way as to increase communication, cooperation and respect for the basic agile truth – transparency, trust, respect and commitment (CGI, 2017). The principles aim to build and support a customer-centric work environment aligned with business goals and able to respond quickly to changes in an ever-changing environment. This capability should be a priority for agile workers (Pratt, 2020).

Organisations that apply agile methods should incorporate the following four values into their organisational culture, based on the Agile Manifesto (Agile Manifesto, 2001; Grispos et al., 2014; Robert & Micah, 2006):

1. *People are the most important component of success*. A good process will not save a project from failure unless it has a team of strong members. They don't have to be programming aces, but someone who can work well and communicate with others. Choosing the right tools is also important for the proper functioning of the team, and larger and better tools are not a prerequisite for the team to work better automatically. Managers often make the mistake of creating an environment first and expect the team to be born alone in the environment. A team should be created first, and the team should configure the environment itself as needed.
2. Tasks should be *clear, concise and described in a way that justifies decisions on proposals*. Bureaucratic rules should be completely eliminated under this point.
3. Successful projects are based on *regular customer feedback*. Interaction should take place between the customer, developers and stakeholders to ensure that the product being developed meets the customer's needs.
4. When drawing up plans, you need to make sure that they are *flexible and ready to adapt to change*. The ability to react quickly to changes is considered a great advantage in the agile process.

The importance of organisational culture is often underestimated, although it is one of the most important aspects of competitiveness. This is precisely because the organisational culture shapes the behaviour of employees, gives them a sense of the purpose of the organisation, and increases their involvement. Without a solid

foundation of culture, it is difficult for organisations to build any transformation. Employees who are essential in changing the organisation's culture are often not involved in the collaboration process. This fact destroys organisations' chances of lasting success (Buvat, 2017).

The latest published knowledge primarily focuses on the issue of dependence, namely the dependence in the context of performance and increased competitiveness with the use of agile management methods (e.g., Gromova, 2018; Holbeche, 2015; Rigby et al., 2016); furthermore it also reveals their interconnections and influence on organisational culture (Forbach & Wähler, 2018.; Quandt et al., 2015; Wei et al., 2013). However, there have been still missing a survey on the recent application of agile management methods in organisations, as well as their implementation linked with practice in the context of company life cycle stages. The research presented in the paper expands the knowledge base, mainly the demonstration of extent and implementation of agile management methods in companies operating in the Czech Republic and Slovakia related to their individual life cycle phases.

Characteristics of the phases of the company's life cycle in relation to agility

Each of the phases of the company's life cycle is specific, and the goals and the way to achieve them require different approaches (Wang, 2005).

The first phase of the life cycle is the establishment of a company, which ends with its creation. This phase represents a complex purposeful decision-making process performed by the entrepreneur, in which it is a matter of creating key preconditions for the fulfilment of the company's functions (Sedlák, 2010). This phase requires a vast amount of creativity and flexibility (Pramono et al., 2021). The advent of new technologies, digitisation, automation, robotics, and changes in consumer behaviour is leading to a trend where businesses need to develop a strategy to help them adapt to these changes. Although technologies are the main engine of Industry 4.0, it is precisely the processes and the entire organisation that must change in order for a company to be able to compete in the market (Kohnová et al., 2019). The company's activity begins only after the end of this initial phase, and the authors of this article drew attention to it.

After its establishment, the young company begins to assert itself on the market and the source of its growth can be various activities leading to increasing production volume, growth in market share, diversification of production, or expansion of its activities, assets, number of employees, etc., (Bielik, 2008). The aim is to achieve sustainable growth. Strategies for working towards this goal can be very different. However, one factor unites them all, namely the acceleration of environmental dynamics, which also requires the acceleration of the innovation process. The use of agility in management may be a suitable solution for accelerating innovation processes (Brand et al., 2019). Goldman et al. (1994) define agility as 'a comprehensive response to business challenges that benefit from rapidly changing, ever-fragmenting global markets for high-quality, high-performance customer-tailored goods and services.' The agile approach is dynamic, specific, and aggressively focussed on change and growth. It is not about improving efficiency, reducing costs or suppressing

competition but about success and victory. About success in emerging competitive arenas, gaining profit, gaining market share and customers.

If the company manages its growth, no less important phase begins, which is its stabilisation – a period of a certain maturity, maturity, in which the company prospers, in which it has reached the optimal size with regard to market opportunities and the exploitation of production factors (Bielik, 2008). The prosperous company in the stabilisation phase is taking several measures to prevent the transition to the crisis phase. These measures include a continuous analysis of the company's market position, economic results, through indicators of economy, productivity, labour, profitability, and other factors that are a manifestation of competitiveness (e.g., quality, prices, brand and others). As this period of the company's life cycle is mainly aimed at stabilising the favourable situation, there is a presumption that the application of the principles of agile management, which increases the innovation potential, in particular, will be at a lower level than in the previous phase of its life cycle.

The aim of the research, the partial results of which are presented in this paper, is to examine the current state of application of agile management methods in companies and to identify the approach to building an agile culture as a basic prerequisite for their effective implementation. The paper aims to present the results of findings in the field of application of the principles of agile management in the context of the stages of the company's life cycle in the environment of business practice in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Methodology

Data for the research part were obtained in two ways, namely by collecting secondary data from professional publications and already published research, and by collecting primary data through our own research.

Secondary data were obtained from research conducted by consulting firms Capgemini and McKinsey. These secondary data cover the population for which we need to obtain data and will enable us to meet our goals. The data are reliable as they have been obtained from well-known and large consulting companies dedicated to the field of agile management. We have verified the validity of the data by taking measures of copyright and those responsible for the collection of data specified in the examined documents.

Secondary data compared to alternative sources have save costs and are benefit the results (Saunders et al., 2009).

Data obtained through primary research were obtained using electronic questionnaires. Electronic questionnaires were sent to Slovak and Czech companies in order to obtain a sufficient number of respondents to evaluate and compare the results. The purpose was to compare Slovak and Czech companies based on the obtained data according to the characteristics (size of the company, stage of the life cycle, type of company, industry). The research and the data collection took place from March 2021 to April 2021, and the respondents of selected countries were contacted by e-mail with a link to the website www.emanager.sk, where there was an electronic questionnaire, which was translated into the language of the country. A questionnaire was provided in Slovak, Czech and English. The timing of the distribution of

questionnaires was influenced by the current COVID-19 crisis, as we expected at that time that organisations would already have changes implemented as a result of the situation. A short two months research period was set to avoid changes during the study. Potential respondents were motivated by the possibility of obtaining research results. The questionnaire was sent to employees, owners and managers of companies, then it was possible to distinguish between owners and employees through one of the questions in the questionnaire.

For sample selection, we chose stratified random sampling, which is a sampling method in which we divide the population into smaller groups that are created based on common attributes. We divided the population into smaller groups, based on the size of enterprises according to the number of employees (micro enterprises 0–9 employees, small enterprises 10–49 employees, medium-sized enterprises 50–249 employees, large enterprises with more than 250 employees). Quota 100, in each layer (sample group), was determined based on the assumption of higher response variability. The total number of respondents (sum of individual layers) greater than 400 will ensure reliability at the level of 95% (Stankovičová & Frankovič, 2020). The purpose is not to comment on the characteristics of the whole population, but to analyse the characteristics and compare the differences between the individual layers of the stratified random sample. A total of 1,147 respondents were involved in the research.

In the breakdown of enterprises, according to the stage of maturity, the largest share was held by stable enterprises −80.2%, 16.9% of the research sample were growing and developing enterprises and the rest −3% were start-ups, young and start-up enterprises; 2.3% of companies from the research sample from Slovakia were identified as starting, young and emerging, 18.2% as growing and developing, and 79.4% were mature and stable companies. From the research sample in the Czech Republic, 3.6% of respondents stated that they operate as start-up, young and start-up companies, 15.6% as growing and developing and 80.9% as mature and stable companies. According to this division, we can point to approximately the same representation of the stage of maturity of companies from each country.

The results presented in the paper represent partial results of larger research focussed on the fourth industrial revolution, which is part of the research project APVV-17-0656: Transformation of the organisational management paradigm in the context of Industry 4.0 and for the purposes of the paper, selected six questions were evaluated. Five questions, in which respondents had to indicate only one option, focussed on the categorisation of respondents and the position of respondents in the company. The last question was focussed on the evaluation of organisational culture from various perspectives. In the question, we chose a scale of 1–4, in which it was not possible to choose a neutral answer and the respondents had to decide whether or not they agreed with the statement. The multi-level scale allows to get slight differences and insight into participants' opinions. The data are quantitative and can be statistically analysed. For questions related to agile culture, we relied on secondary research and key characteristics of agile management theory.

The research hypotheses were determined on the basis of the identified goals, based on the knowledge gained from the literature and the results of the authors'

research in the field of the fourth industrial revolution and agile approaches. The hypotheses will be verified in the researched Czech and Slovak companies.

The characteristics of companies in the growth phase of their life cycle predict that they are more adaptable and can respond more quickly to emerging changes in the environment. Thus, there is a presumption that growing businesses tend to create an agile environment more than mature ones. Based on this assumption, Hypotheses H0 and the alternative H1 were formulated

Hypothesis H0: Growing organisations are significantly more agile than mature organisations.

Hypothesis H1: Growing organisations are not significantly more agile than mature organisations.

Research results

In a sample of 1,147 respondents, the level of culture in organisations, in the current environment of the fourth industrial revolution, was analysed from various perspectives. Respondents commented on individual statements on a scale from 1 to 4 (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – partially disagree, 3 – partially agree, 4 – strongly agree).

The following six statements have been incorporated into the field of organisational culture: *there is a creative culture in our organisation* (employees set their roles and performance goals); *information is openly and regularly shared in our organisation* (e.g., about the company's results, goals, etc.); *we create an environment in which failure is allowed* (we support the sharing of failures among employees/leaders as an opportunity to learn); *employees are encouraged to look for the best possible ways to do the job*; *Team performance is more important than individual performance*, and *in our organisation we respect individuals who question the status quo*.

Respondents from the whole research sample agreed most with the statements – team performance is more important than individual (83%), employees are encouraged to look for the best ways to do work (82.2%) and open and regularly shared information in the organisation (78 7%). Slovak companies support a creative culture (57.5%), create an environment where failure is allowed (66.7%), encourage employees to look for the best possible ways to do work (84.5%), team performance is more important than individual (83.1%) and respect individuals questioning the current situation (60.5%) to a greater extent than Czech companies. On the other hand, in Czech companies information is openly and regularly shared (80%) to a greater extent than in Slovak companies. Based on these values, we can state that Slovak companies have a better established agile culture than Czech companies. As the companies previously agreed with the given statements, we can say that agile culture is applied in Slovak and Czech companies. In addition, when asked whether organisations consider themselves agile, 64.4% of respondents gave a positive answer, while Slovak respondents were 66.5% and Czech 62.4%, from which we can conclude that companies perceive their agility and how much they build culture based on agile principles (Figure 1). The values of the descriptive statistics of the individual responses are recorded in Table 1.

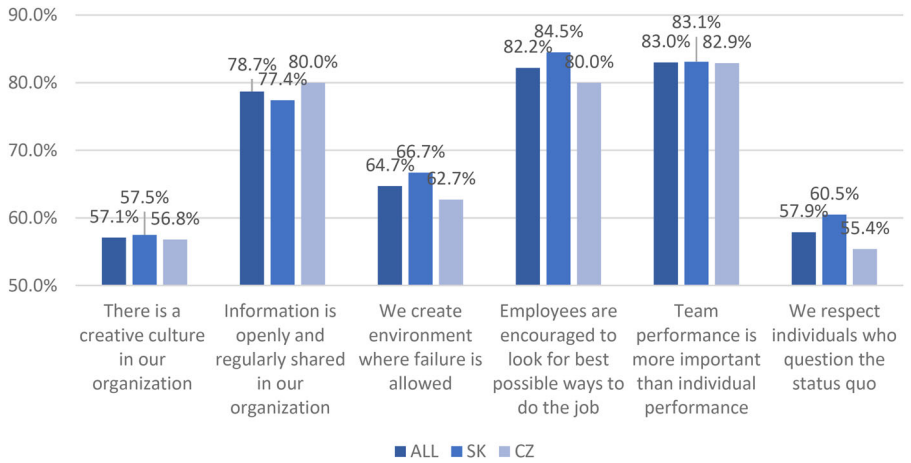

Figure 1. Comparison of the perception of agile culture in organisations between countries ($n = 1{,}147$).
Source: Authors own productions.

Table 1. Agile culture in organisations.

	There is a creative culture in our organisation	Information is openly and regularly shared in our organisation	We create environment where failure is allowed	Employees are encouraged to look for best possible ways to do the job	Team performance is more important than individual performance	There is a creative culture in our organisation
Arithmetic mean	2.64	3.12	2.77	3.18	3.21	2.61
Standard deviation	0.90	0.86	0.88	0.84	0.83	0.87
Median	3	3	3	3	3	3
Mode	3	3	3	3	4	3
Sharpness	−0.74	−0.18	−0.59	0.17	0.22	−0.62
Slopingness	−0.13	−0.73	−0.30	−0.86	−0.89	−0.20

Source: Authors own productions.

Based on the stage of maturity, we noted that in both countries, respondents agreed more with the claims in growing companies than in mature ones. Within the internal structure of Czech companies, we found a significant difference in almost all statements, except teamwork, which we can understand as a trend to which companies respond, regardless of what stage they are at. We have noticed a significant difference within Slovak companies between growing and mature companies only in the creation of an environment in which failure is allowed. Within the differences between the countries, we can state that Slovak mature companies agreed to a greater extent with the claims than Czech mature companies. On the contrary, Czech growing companies agreed more to the claims than Slovak growing companies. Within mature companies, we recorded a significant difference between Slovak and Czech companies in encouraging employees (SK – 83%, CZ – 77.6%) and respect for individuals questioning the current situation (SK – 59.9%, CZ – 52.9%) (Figure 2), while Slovak mature companies agreed significantly more with the statements. Differences were determined based on the chi-square of the test, and statistically significant p values are shown in Table 2.

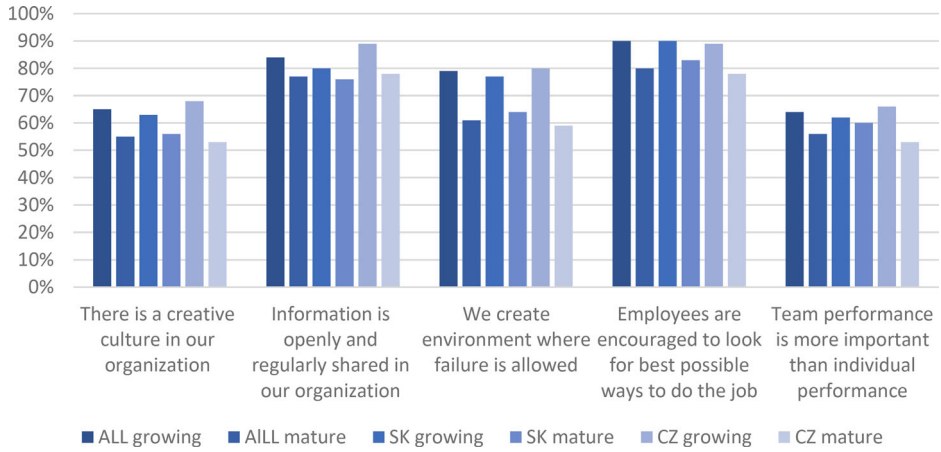

Figure 2. Comparison of the significance of differences based on the stage of maturity (growing vs. mature) in the field of agile culture on the whole sample, in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Source: Authors own productions.

Table 2. Chi-square test, statistically significant *p* values.

	There is a creative culture in our organisation	Information is openly and regularly shared in our organisation	We create environment where failure is allowed	Employees are encouraged to look for best possible ways to do the job	Team performance is more important than individual performance	We respect individuals who question the status quo
ALL – growing vs. mature businesses	0.01	0.03	0	No sig.	No sig.	No sig.
SK – growing vs. mature businesses	No sig.	No sig.	0.01	No sig.	No sig.	No sig.
CZ – growing vs. mature businesses	0	0.02	0	0.01	No sig.	0.02
SK–CZ mature businesses	No sig.	No sig.	No sig.	0.04	No sig.	0.03

Source: Authors own productions.

In the self-assessment of whether companies are described as agile, more growing companies in Czech Republic (83.5%) and more mature companies (64.8%) in Slovakia agreed. The difference between growing businesses ($p = 0.048$) in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as well as between mature ones in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, was significant ($p = 0.03$). In growing companies, more Czech growing companies were identified as agile than Slovak growing companies and, conversely, more Slovak mature companies than Czech mature companies (Figure 3).

Hypothesis verification

The research hypotheses were determined on the basis of the identified goals, based on the knowledge gained from the literature and the results of the authors' research

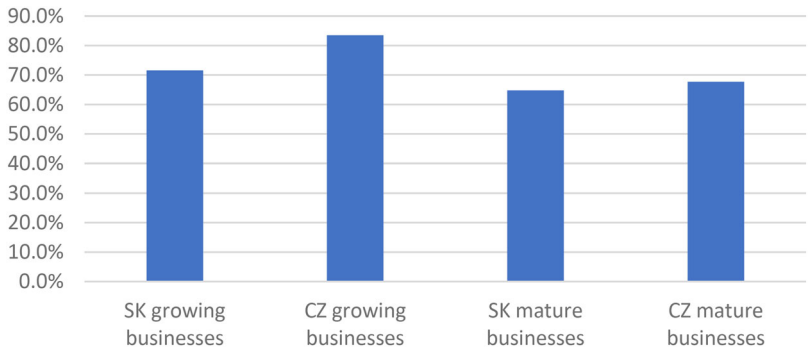

Figure 3. Agile organisation in Slovakia and in the Czech Republic based on stages of maturity. Source: Authors own productions.

Table 3. Comparison of percentages of businesses by stage of maturity that are agile.

Our organisation is agile	Growing businesses	Mature businesses	Chi-square test – *p* value
SK	71.6%	65.8%	0.26
CZ	83.5%	57.7%	<0.00

Source: Authors own productions.

in the field of the fourth industrial revolution and agile approaches. The hypotheses were verified in the researched Czech and Slovak companies.

Hypothesis H0 was established as follows: Growing organisations are significantly more agile than mature organisations.

The hypothesis was tested for each country separately. We determined the significance level of the test $\alpha = 0.05$. To prove the hypothesis, we used the nonparametric chi-square test method. The individual significances are shown in Table 3.

A significant statistical difference was confirmed only in Czech companies, we did not notice a statistically significant difference in Slovak companies. As the situation in Czech and Slovak companies is not the same, we accept the alternative hypothesis H1: Growing organisations are not significantly more agile than mature organisations.

Discussion and conclusion

When managing innovation processes, it is necessary to focus on people whom many current authors consider to be the most important source of the company as bearers of skills, experience, knowledge and abilities (Fila et al., 2020; Hitka et al., 2020; Kamodyová et al., 2020; Tidd et al., 2007; Ulrich & Smallwood, 2009; Urbancová & Vrabcová, 2020; and others). Most of the current authors dealing with the issue of innovation management (innovation processes) state that the existence of specific human resources does not in itself give the company a competitive advantage. The organisational culture promoted in the company plays an important role in its effective use and in the effort to achieve corporate goals (Franková, 2003; Lizbetinova et al., 2021; Kucharčíková & Mičiak 2018; Taha et al., 2020). Because it is the values and rules that are used in the company's management that determine both the way decisions are made and the rewarded way of behaving of employees. Organisations that want to effectively apply agile methods should therefore incorporate into their

organisational culture the values of primary people orientation, simplicity and conciseness of task assignment, openness and regular communication with customers, and high flexibility of plans that encourage agility (Agile Manifesto, 2001; Grispos et al., 2014; Robert & Micah, 2006). Our survey showed that the addressed Slovak and Czech organisations are aware of the need to share information in the organisation, as 78% of Slovak and 80% of Czech organisations answered positively to this question. We consider this to be an important finding to support the functioning the agile management. Suppose we assume that agile management is about involving people through trust and teamwork aimed at achieving the desired performance. In that case, the provision of the necessary information is necessary and crucial. If we talk about agile organisational culture, this finding points to one element of organisational culture that is changing slowly, even in organisations that are interested in the evolution towards agile management. Therefore, from the point of view of building agile management, it is not only important to seek support in an agile culture, but to pay attention to the key characteristics that distinguish the classical approach to management from agile.

Unfortunately, organisations often underestimate the importance of culture, as confirmed by Capgemini's 2017 survey of 1,700 respondents from 340 organisations; 56% of leaders said their culture was based on agility and flexibility. However, only 40% of employees agreed with this statement. This may be due to the fact that management does not communicate changes with employees, or it is not monitored whether the changes are understood and implemented. It is the sharing of information focussed on the values, norms, and assumptions on the basis of which the desired organisational culture is created in the organisation that belongs to the 0 key factors that most influence the assumptions of success and failure to create the desired organisational culture (Lukášová & Nový 2004) and its subsequent adoption, sharing and living by employees in the organisation. Another claim stemming from Capgemini's research in 2017 again revealed a discrepancy between the perception of employees and management; 95% of leaders said that the organisational culture is based on cooperation and the exchange of ideas between different departments and functions. Only 52% of employees agreed with this statement. Apparently, employees who are important in changing the culture of the organisation are not involved in the collaboration process (Buvat, 2017). The organisations we contacted also focus only on approximately 57% of the creation of a creative culture, which we consider to be close in creating and providing an agile environment.

In today's world, people in organisations need not only oversight of their performance but also a human approach. Poor relationships with superiors mainly cause employee dissatisfaction. A survey conducted by the American Psychological Association found that employees are satisfied and trust their employer thanks to the support concept of their superior. The employees rated the following statement on the Likert scale (I strongly agree to very much disagree): 'My superior supports and stimulates my career development'. It turned out that employees who felt supported by their superiors were satisfied with their work and were willing to recommend their organisation as suitable for work. Almost 80% of respondents who cited support from a superior further claimed to trust their employer. On the contrary, 56% of respondents who did not feel supported by their superior reported a lack of confidence in their employer. As part of our survey, we analysed the feeling of trust on the part of employees and superiors with the question

focussed on the fear of failure – fear of error, as these variables directly declare mutual trust. On average, 62% of the organisations surveyed declared that they were actively trying to create an environment in which failure is allowed.

Based on our research, the life cycle stage of a company does not affect the company's approach to agility (we have adopted alternative hypothesis H1: Growing organisations are not significantly more agile than mature organisations). And it is, therefore, possible to implement and develop agile management principles regardless of this stage. In the self-assessment of organisations within our research, companies were identified as agile, in the Czech Republic more growing (83.5%) and in Slovakia more mature (64.8%) companies. It follows that if the management manages to create a pro-innovative environment, it is able to make innovative decisions very quickly which is considered in today's hyper turbulent environment as an important factor of competitiveness (Stacho et al., 2016). Every successful change is led by a leader, which is why we encourage organisations to incorporate agile methodologies into leadership roles. An agile leader creates an environment of trust, transparency, and creativity in the organisation, enables teams to work autonomously, creates suitable working conditions for their employees, and provides them with feedback.

Based on our research, we see potential research space in the topic of performance evaluation, performance measurement and in setting performance indicators in terms of agile principles. There may be a possible source of the problem identified. If employees and teams receive information through defined goals and set performance indicators that do not reflect management through short cycles, non-compliance can occur. The performance management process is linked to time slots, corresponding to other processes in the organisation in terms of planning and control. If these time slots are longer and do not correspond to an agile approach and team work, employees do not have the required information. In the following research, we plan to examine these aspects of agile management practice and the bottlenecks resulting from the alignment of agile management and other aspects of communication in the organisation.

Although a certain limit of this research was the specific time when the environment in companies was affected by the ongoing pandemic of COVID-19, we believe that the dynamics of the environment will continue to bring changes that will need to be ensured. The main findings, therefore, need to be further verified in order to continue to examine the organisational aspects of agility in management. Organisations will remain in dealing with the dynamics of the environment and the many challenges that lie ahead.

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