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HUMAN RESOURCE AND CORPORATE CULTURE: GENDER-BASED DIFFERENCES IN THE ASSESSMENT

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Abstract

Within the different concepts of the business efficiency growth, now the corporate culture is part of a modern enterprise management. Managers start to consider the corporate culture as an important factor in successful business especially in the area of human resource management. Corporate culture research was conducted through questionnaires based on the Cameron and Quinn methodology. The questionnaires were distributed in 2017 to employees working in companies operating in Slovakia. The sampling unit consisted of 3,750 respondents. The aim of the research was to identify gender-based differences in the assessment of corporate culture in enterprises in Slovakia. Based on the results, we can state that there exist no differences in assessment of corporate culture based on gender.

Key words

human resource management, corporate culture, gender-based differences, Slovakia

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O15, J24, M14

Introduction

The main aim of each business is to achieve success and prosperity. From the main aim the overall corporate strategy, decisions, and specific business activities are developed (Carreras, Arroyo, & Blanco, 2018; Caha, 2017; Straková, Pártlová, & Váchal, 2017; Diaz-Fernandez, Bornay-Barrachina, & Lopez-Cabrales, 2015; Demir, Demir, & Nield, 2015; Korcsmáros, & Seres Huszárík, 2015; Mura & Machová, 2015; Poliačiková, 2015). Increasingly, in this context, the concept of 'corporate culture' is used. Managers are beginning to realize that corporate culture can be a source of competitive advantage, especially if it is considered as valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and if it is embedded in strategic management (Matraeva, Belyak, & Konov, 2018; Olšovská, Mura, Švec, 2016; Llorente-Galera, & Martos-Calpena, 2014; Graham, Harvey, & Puri, 2013). Subsequently, a corporate culture represents a combination of a strategic business perspective with human resources management which results in a positive behavior of managers and employees (Prange & Pinho, 2017).

The employees are proprietors of corporate culture. Corporate culture is a reflection of the human dispositions, thinking, and behaviour in the enterprise. It is recognizable, it acts on human consciousness and subconsciousness and in both, it manifests, too (Guiso, Sapienza, & Zingales, 2015b; Fernandez & Fogli, 2009; Beckmann, Menkhoff, & Suto, 2008). Corporate culture influences the management processes (Guiso, Sapienza, & Zingales, 2006). Corporate culture is extremely inertial and therefore, it is difficult to change it in the long term (Minárová, 2015; Kachaňáková, 2008). Each company has a dominant culture that is unique to this company. It provides its members the boundaries and guidelines that shape their behavior.

Theoretical background

A strong corporate culture positively influences decision-making, collaboration, communication, motivation, problem-solving and its implementation. The strong corporate culture facilitates the progress and implementation of management processes (Pan, Siegel, & Wang, 2017). Corporate culture gives individuals the ability to justify their behaviour in line with the values preferred in the company. On the other hand, managers can use corporate culture to support the activities of interest (Denison, Haaland, & Goelzer, 2003).

Figure 1 The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI)

		Flexibility and Discretion			
		CLAN		ADHOCRACY	
Internal Focus and Integrations		Extended family		Dynamic	External Focus and Differentiation
		Mentoring		Entrepreneurial	
		Nurturing		Risk-taking	
		Participation		Values innovation	
		HIERARCHY		MARKET	
		Structure		Results oriented	
		Control		Gets the job done	
		Coordination		Values competition	
		Efficiency		Achievement	
		stability			
		Stability and Control			

Source: Cameron and Quinn (2006).

Each company is different. A unique corporate culture is typical for each company (Guiso, Sapienza, & Zingales, 2015a). However, each company joins a combination of four different types of corporate culture within a single cultural style leader (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). The authors cited have developed an Organizational Culture Assessment Tool (OCAI). It is a

validated research method for assessing of existing and preferred level of corporate cultures. The OCAI model is based on a model of company competitive values.

The framework explains how four corporate cultures compete with each other. Four frame parameters include internal focusing and integration vs. external focus and differentiation and stability and control vs. flexibility and discretion. Based on these parameters, the framework breaks corporate cultures into four different quadrants or cultural types: clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, and hierarchy culture.

Clan culture has roots in co-operation. Members share common views and see themselves as part of a large family that is active and committed. Management has the form of mentoring, and the organization is bound by commitments and traditions. The core values are rooted in teamwork, communication, and consensus.

Adhocracy culture is based on energy and creativity. Employees are encouraged to take risks, and leaders are considered to be innovators or entrepreneurs. The organization combines experimentation with an emphasis on individual ingenuity and freedom. Basic values are based on change and agility. The market corporate culture is built on the dynamics of competition where concrete results are achieved.

Market culture is focused on goals, as leaders are demanding. The main aim of succeeding and defeating all opponents combines the company. Market share and profitability are the main values.

A hierarchy corporate culture is based on structure and control. The working environment is formal, with strict institutional procedures. Management is based on organized coordination and monitoring, with culture emphasizing efficiency and predictability. Values include consistency and consistency (Teravainen, Junnonen, & Ali-Loytty, 2018; Jaeger, Yu, & Adair, 2017; Demski, van Ackeren, & Clausen Moraga, 2016).

The OCAI methodology reveals that it is rare for companies to share the same characteristics of all four cultural types. Quinn and Cameron (2006) found that flexible companies are more successful than rigid because the best companies can manage intercultural competition while activating each of the four value sets when needed.

Material and methods

Research of corporate culture was realized in 2017. Questionnaires were distributed to employees working in companies operating in Slovakia. To calculate the minimum sampling unit size following mathematical relation was used (Mason et al. 1990):

$$n = \frac{z_{0.025}^2 * \sigma_x^2}{\Delta x} \quad (1)$$

Total of 154 returned questionnaires were the minimum necessary to meet the pre-defined accuracy and confidence requirements. The aim of the research was to identify gender-based differences in the assessment of corporate culture in enterprises in Slovakia, therefore the total sampling unit of 3,750 respondents was divided into men and women. 1,876 men and 1,874 women participated in the research. Comparison of sampling units is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Sampling units

Data to identify respondents		Men		Women	
		Absolute frequency	Relative frequency	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Age	Up to 30 years	520	27.72	383	20.44
	31-40 years	591	31.50	553	29.51
	41-50 years	525	27.99	567	30.26
	51 years and more	240	12.79	371	19.79
Completed education	Primary	44	2.35	10	0.53
	Lower secondary	352	18.76	147	7.84
	Upper secondary	1,025	54.64	954	50.91
	Higher	455	24.25	763	40.72
Seniority	Less than 1 year	181	9.65	149	7.95
	1-3 years	489	26.07	690	36.82
	4-6 years	423	22.55	389	20.76
	7-9 years	354	18.87	312	16.65
	10 years and more	429	22.86	334	17.82
Working position	Managers	225	11.99	184	9.82
	Blue-collar workers	595	31.72	504	26.89
	White-collar workers	1,056	56.29	1,186	63.29

Source: Own research.

The role of the respondents was to divide 100 points between several statements corresponding to four types of corporate culture. This method evaluates the combination of four types of cultures that dominate to the current level of corporate culture. By answering the questionnaire for the second time, respondents divided 100 points according to what respondents preferred for the future. Respondents assessed six key aspects of corporate culture (dominant characteristics, organizational leadership, management of employees, organization glue, strategic emphases and criteria of success). By averaging all individual scores, the overall corporate culture profile was calculated.

Gender-based differences observed were tested using Student two-sample t-test. The null hypothesis of equal averages of corporate culture in terms of belonging to the gender was used. Testing the null hypothesis was performed at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$.

Results and discussion

The research of corporate culture examined a total of six key aspects: dominant characteristics, organizational leadership, management of employees, organization glue, strategic emphases and criteria of success. The area of dominant characteristics was the first research area. 100 points were assigned among the following four statements:

- Alternative A – The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of personal information and features.
- Alternative B – The organization is a very dynamic entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick out their necks and take risks.
- Alternative C – The organization is very results-oriented. A major concern is getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement-oriented.
- Alternative D – The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.

The results of the research are presented in Table 2 and Figure 2. Alternative A achieved the highest average values. At the present time, the both groups studied considered the organization as a very personal place, similar to a multiple family where people are often in touch with each other and have a lot in common. Alternative A was preferred by both genders in the future.

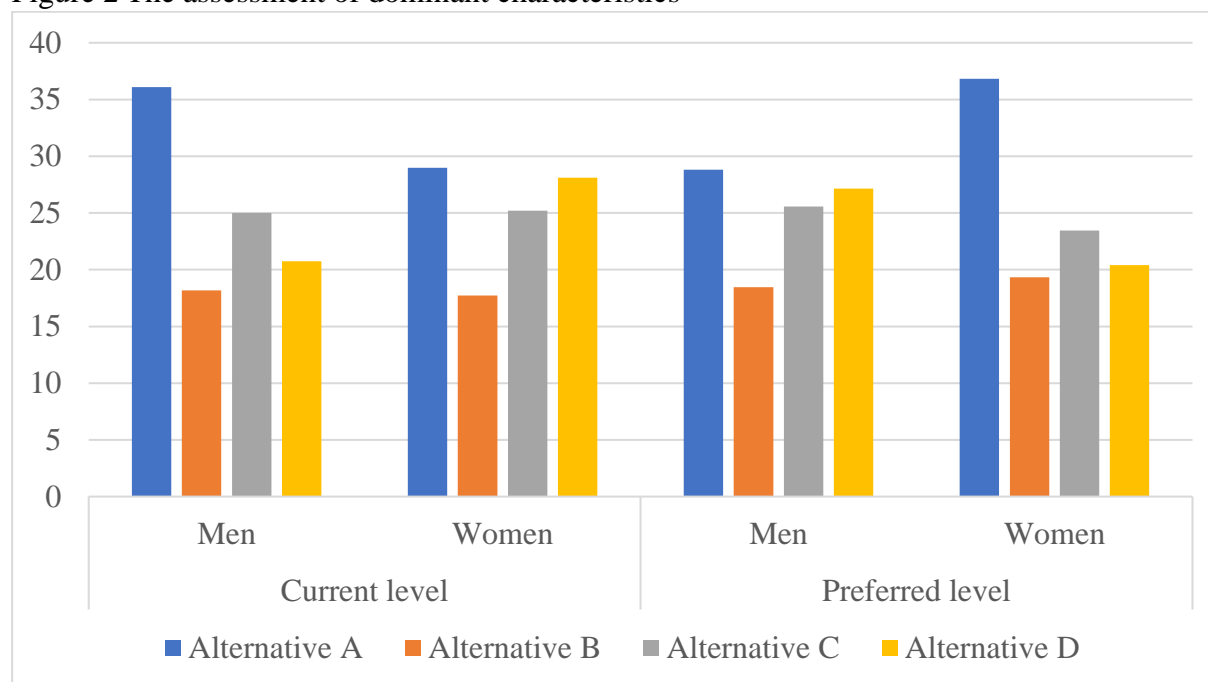
Table 2 The assessment of dominant characteristics

Level of corporate culture	Gender	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Current level	Men	36.09	18.17	25.00	20.75
	Women	28.98	17.71	25.21	28.10
Preferred level	Men	28.80	18.47	25.57	27.16
	Women	36.82	19.32	23.45	20.41

Note: The highest average values are highlighted in bold.

Source: Own research.

Figure 2 The assessment of dominant characteristics



Source: Own research.

Organizational leadership was the second area studied. Respondents divided points between the following statements:

- Alternative A – The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing.
- Alternative B – The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify entrepreneurship, innovation, or risk taking.
- Alternative C – The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify a no-nonsense, aggressive, results-oriented focus.
- Alternative D – The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency.

The results shown in Table 3 and Figure 3 indicate that organizational leadership is represented by alternative D, both by men and women. Currently, the respondents consider company as a controlled and structured place. People are governed by formal methods.

Differences occurred in the future direction of organizational leadership. According to men's opinion, in the next five years, alternative A should dominate the organizational leadership where leadership is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing. On the contrary, women's view of the future in the area of organizational leadership is leading for alternative D, where leadership is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency.

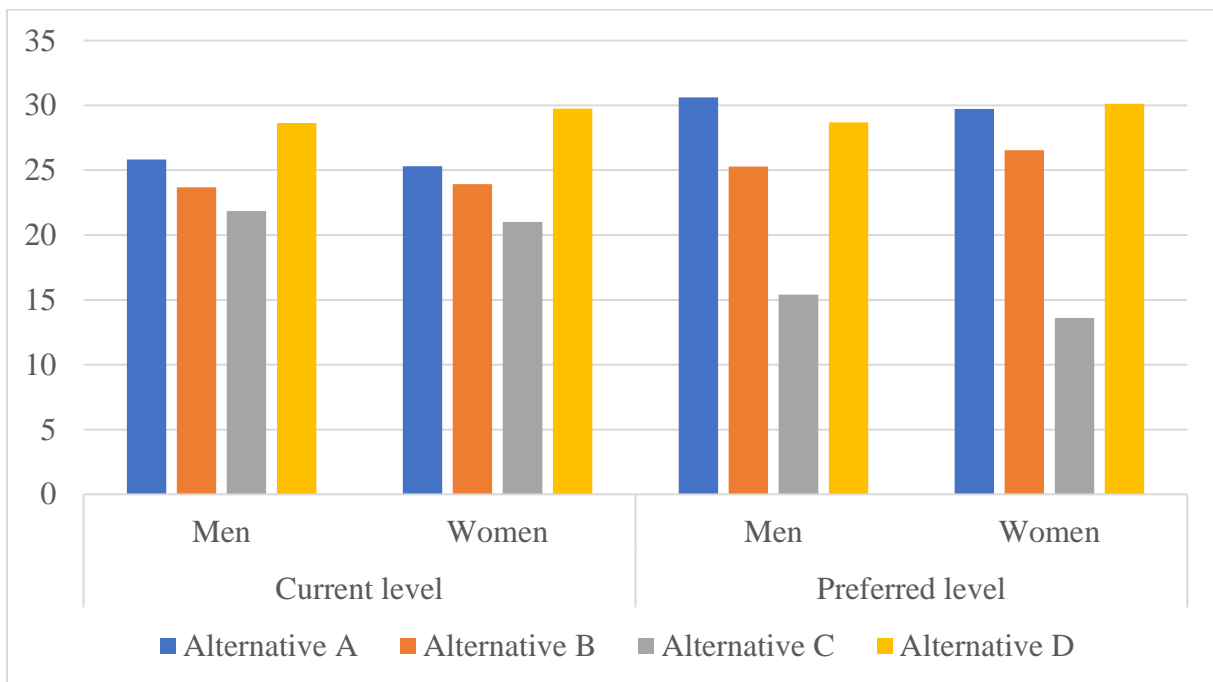
Table 3 The assessment of organizational leadership

Level of corporate culture	Gender	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Current level	Men	25.83	23.68	21.85	28.63
	Women	25.31	23.92	21.02	29.76
Preferred level	Men	30.62	25.29	15.40	28.70
	Women	29.73	26.54	13.61	30.12

Note: The highest average values are highlighted in bold.

Source: Own research.

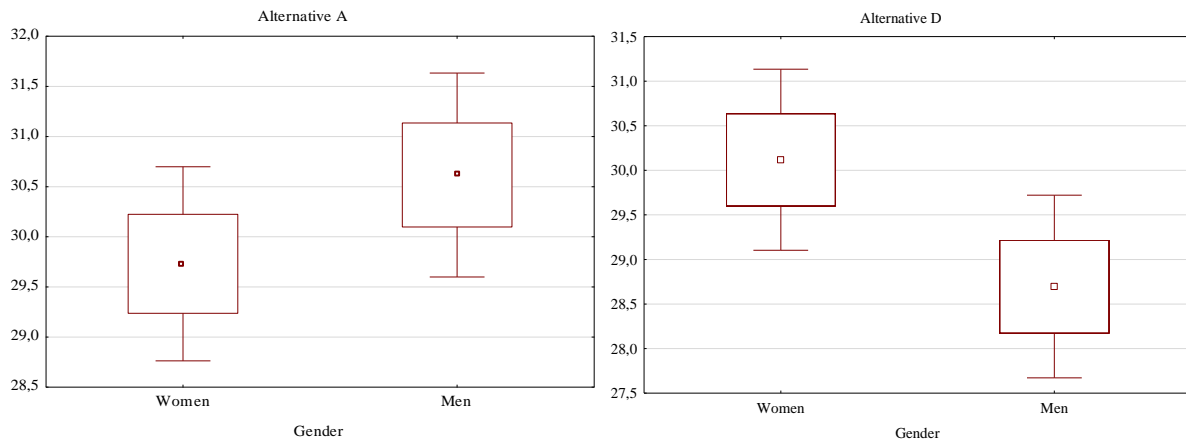
Figure 3 The assessment of organizational leadership



Source: Own research.

In the following step, significant differences in the opinions of men and women in the future direction of organizational leadership in alternative A and alternative D were investigated. Results are presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4 Statistical testing of gender-based differences in the area of organizational leadership



Source: Own research.

Significant differences in the respondents' opinions in alternative A ($p = 0.217$) and alternative D ($p = 0.053$) were not confirmed by Student two-sample t-test.

In the third area researched (management of employees) presented in Table 4 and Figure 5, respondents assessed the level of corporate culture through the following statements:

- Alternative A – The management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation.
- Alternative B – The management style in the organization is characterized by individual risk taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.
- Alternative C – The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement.
- Alternative D – The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships.

Table 4 The assessment of management of employees

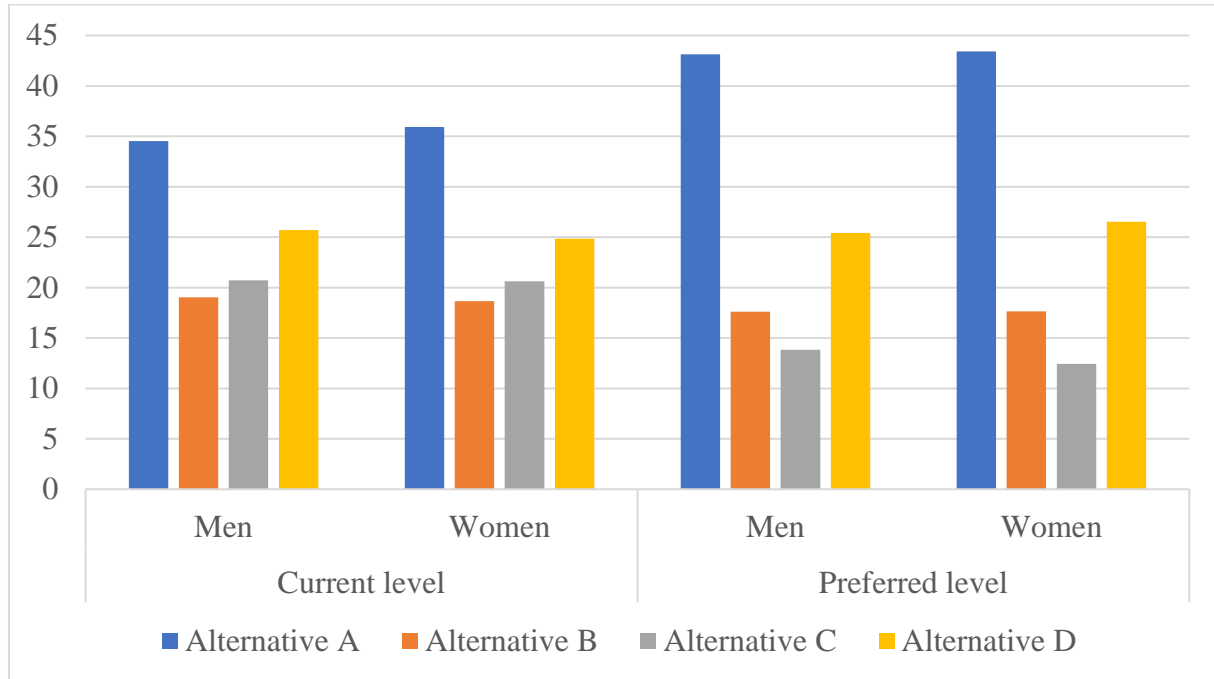
Level of corporate culture	Gender	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Current level	Men	34.53	19.04	20.73	25.70
	Women	35.91	18.64	20.61	24.84
Preferred level	Men	43.12	17.60	13.84	25.43
	Women	43.42	17.64	12.43	26.52

Note: The highest average values are highlighted in bold.

Source: Own research.

Table 4 and Figure 5 presents the same opinion of men and women on the current and future direction of corporate culture in the field of management of employees. All respondents agreed that the alternative A is dominant. In the opinion of all respondents, the teamwork and cooperation are used in companies operating in Slovakia.

Figure 5 The assessment of management of employees



Source: Own research.

The opinion of what joins the company was examined in the fourth area researched. Respondents assigned 100 points to the following statements:

- Alternative A – The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organization runs high.
- Alternative B – The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge.
- Alternative C – The glue that holds the organization together is an emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment.
- Alternative D – The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.

Based on the results presented in Table 5 and Figure 6, we can state that gender-based differences were observed in the current level of organization glue. According to the men, alternative A achieved the highest average values. In men's view, loyalty, mutual trust and high loyalty to the company are factors connecting employees. According to women, employees are

currently linking by formal rules and business policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.

The opinions of men and women on the future direction of corporate culture in the area of organization glue are identical. Both men and women prefer loyalty, mutual trust and high loyalty as crucial factors connecting the company's employees.

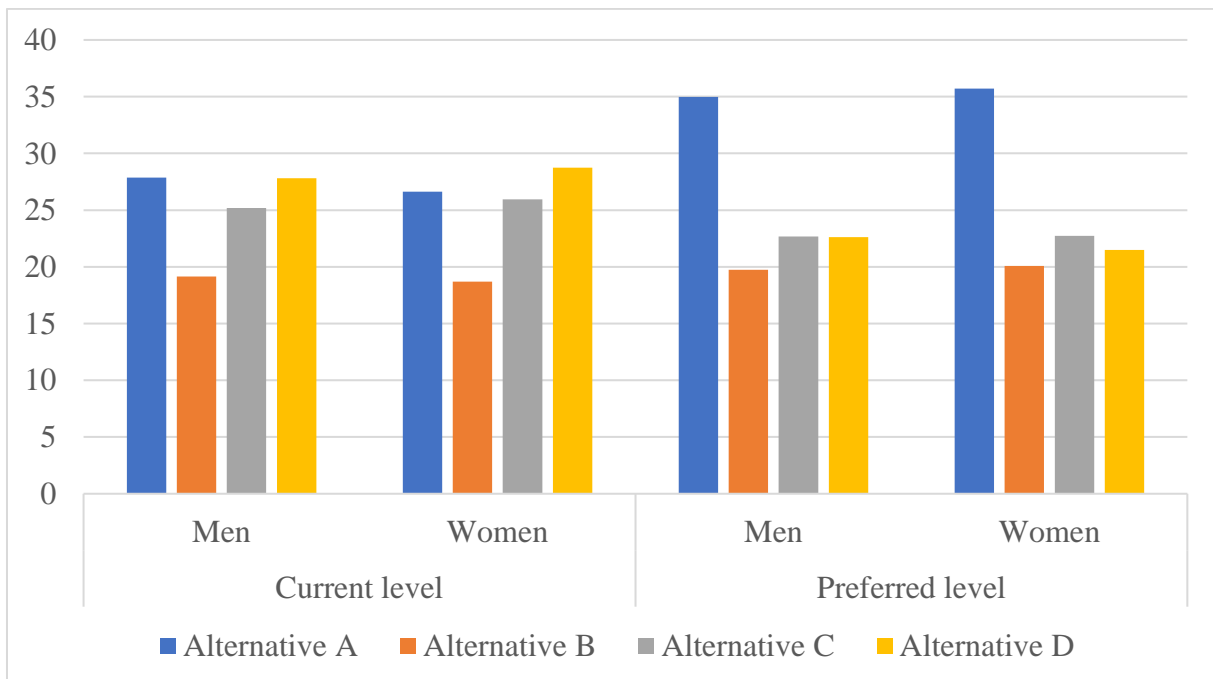
Table 5 The assessment of organization glue

Level of corporate culture	Gender	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Current level	Men	27.88	19.14	25.18	27.80
	Women	26.62	18.70	25.96	28.73
Preferred level	Men	34.98	19.74	22.67	22.61
	Women	35.70	20.07	22.73	21.49

Note: The highest average values are highlighted in bold.

Source: Own research.

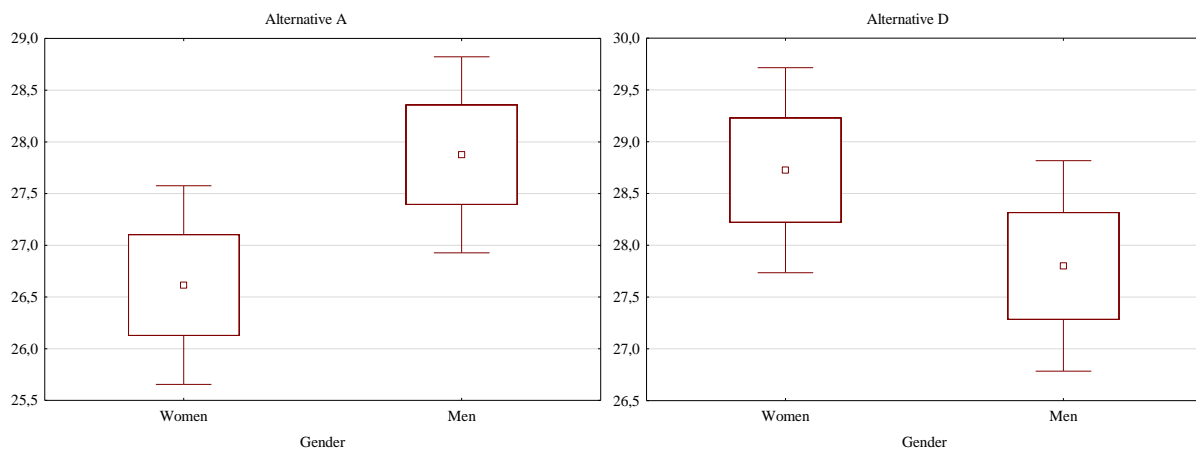
Figure 6 The assessment of organization glue



Source: Own research.

Gender-based differences observed in the area of organization glue in the current level were tested by Student T-test. Results are presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7 Statistical testing of gender-based differences in the area of organization glue



Source: Own research.

Significant differences in the respondents' opinions in alternative A ($p = 0.067$) and alternative D ($p = 0.201$) were not confirmed by Student two-sample t-test.

In the next area researched, the OCAI methodology examines the respondents' view on the strategy used in the company. The respondents were asked to assess the following statements:

- Alternative A – The organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist.
- Alternative B – The organization emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued.
- Alternative C – The organization emphasizes competitive actions and achievement. Hitting stretch targets and winning in the marketplace are dominant.
- Alternative D – The organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control and smooth operations are important.

Based on the results shown in Table 6 and Figure 8, differences in gender were observed in the current level of strategic emphases. In the opinion of men, business strategies are focused on stability, efficiency, and control. The highest average was achieved by alternative D. In the area analysed, women have a different opinion. Alternate A achieved the highest average values. The results show that according to women's opinions, human development, high trust, and openness are dominant in strategies.

Opinions of respondents of both genders are identical in the area of the future direction of corporate strategies. All respondents believe that factors such as human development, high trust, and openness should dominate in the future. Alternative A is preferred in the future.

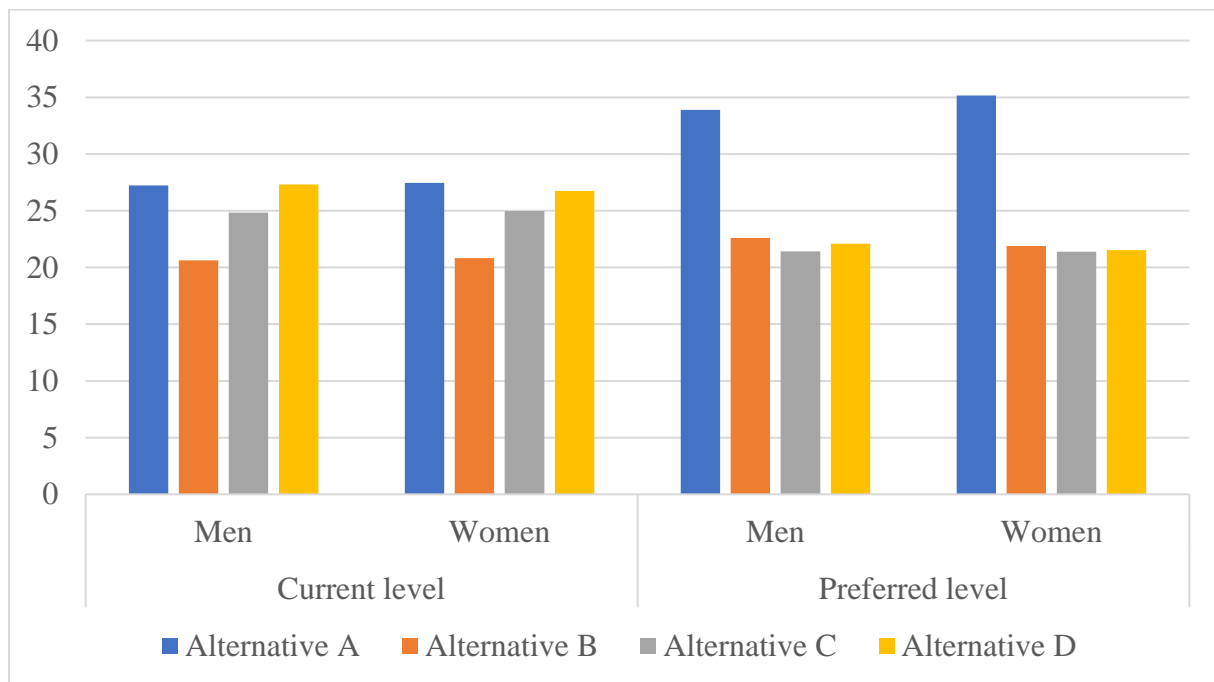
Table 6 The assessment of strategic emphases

Level of corporate culture	Gender	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Current level	Men	27.23	20.63	24.82	27.32
	Women	27.47	20.82	24.97	26.74
Preferred level	Men	33.89	22.60	21.43	22.09
	Women	35.16	21.91	21.39	21.54

Note: The highest average values are highlighted in bold.

Source: Own research.

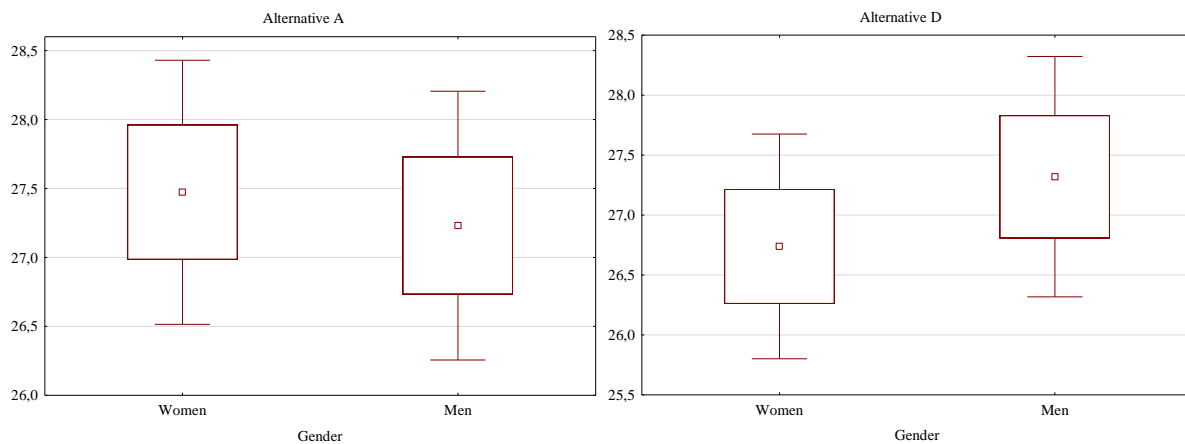
Figure 8 The assessment of strategic emphases



Source: Own research.

Significant differences in the opinions of men and women in the future direction of strategic emphasis in alternative A and alternative D were investigated in the following step. Results are presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9 Statistical testing of gender-based differences in the area of strategic emphases



Source: Own research.

Based on the results presented in Figure 9, significant differences in alternative A ($p = 0.729$) and alternative D ($p = 0.407$) were not confirmed.

The area of criteria of success was the last examined by the OCAI methodology. Respondents allocated 100 points among the four statements, depending on the experience from the company they work in:

- Alternative A – The organization defines success on the basis of development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.
- Alternative B – The organization defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.
- Alternative C – The organization defines success on the basis of winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is a key.
- Alternative D – The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low-cost production are critical.

Table 7 and Figure 10 show the highest average values in alternative A. Both men and women agreed in the current and future direction of corporate culture in the area of criteria of success. In the opinion of all respondents, the company defines success on the basis of development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.

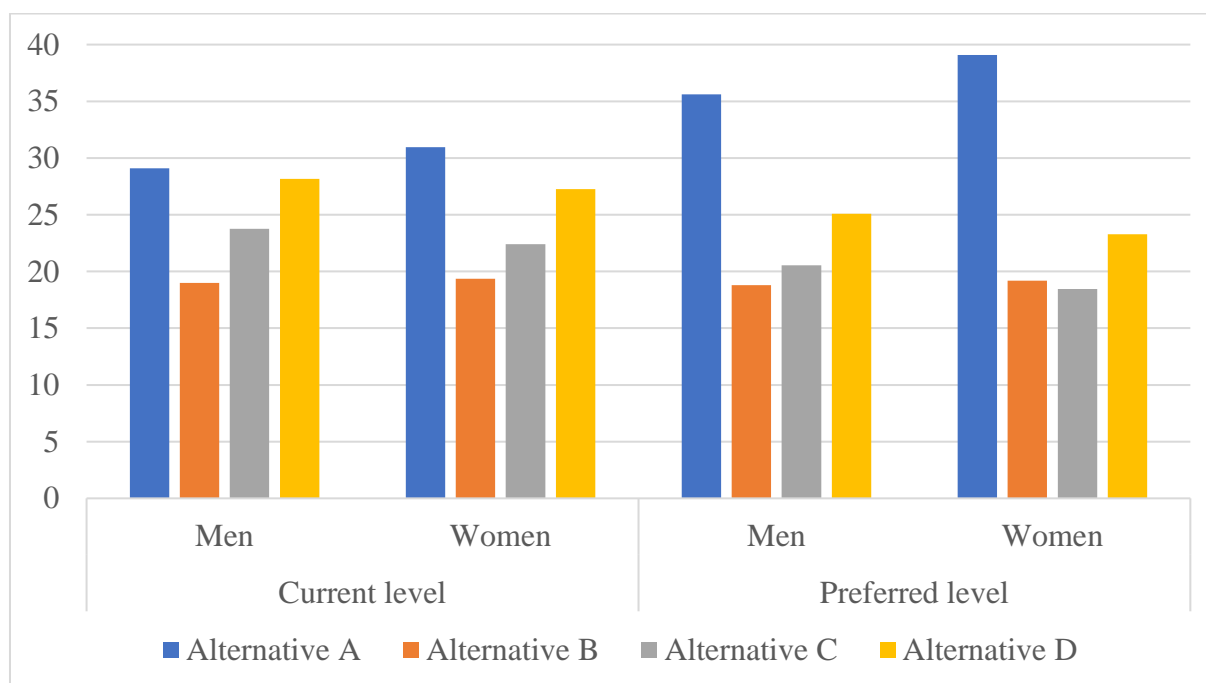
Table 7 The assessment of criteria of success

Level of corporate culture	Gender	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Current level	Men	29.10	18.99	23.75	28.17
	Women	30.96	19.37	22.40	27.27
Preferred level	Men	35.61	18.78	20.54	25.08
	Women	39.09	19.19	18.45	23.28

Note: The highest average values are highlighted in bold.

Source: Own research.

Figure 10 The assessment of criteria of success



Source: Own research.

Based on the Cameron and Quinn methodology, the overall corporate culture profile was calculated by averaging all individual scores. The results are presented in Table 8 and Figure 10. Men and women agreed that clan corporate culture is currently dominated in companies operating in Slovakia. It focuses on creating of a very nice place for work where people share a lot of personal information, like a multiple family. Leaders are considered mentors and parents. Loyalty and tradition are dominant as well as teamwork and collaboration. Men's and women's views are identical in the future direction of corporate culture in companies operating in Slovakia. Respondents of both gender demand that tools typical for clan corporate culture should be used in future.

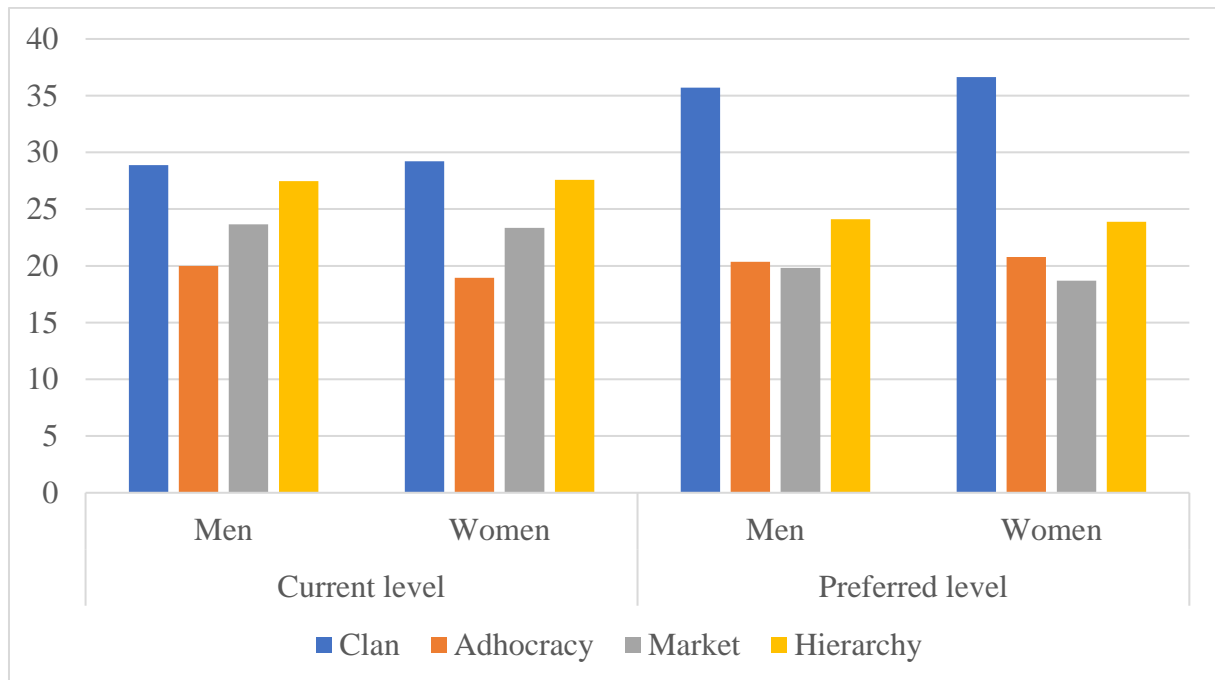
Table 8 The assessment of corporate culture profile

Level of corporate culture	Gender	Clan corporate culture	Adhocracy corporate culture	Market corporate culture	Hierarchy corporate culture
Current level	Men	28.89	19.99	23.65	27.46
	Women	29.21	18.96	23.36	27.57
Preferred level	Men	35.72	20.36	19.81	24.11
	Women	36.65	20.78	18.68	23.89

Note: The highest average values are highlighted in bold.

Source: Own research.

Figure 11 The assessment of corporate culture profile



Source: Own research.

Conclusion

In the area of human research management, corporate culture is a central theme now. Many researchers consider corporate culture as an important factor affecting the success of the company (Matraeva, Belyak, & Konov, 2018; Pesämaa, & Svensson, 2018; Sánchez-Sellero, Sánchez-Sellero, Cruz-González, & Sánchez-Sellero, 2018; Yao & Wang, 2014). Its goal is to ensure that employees are personally identified with an organization's activity which result in company success. In order to achieve the success, managers are supposed to design and maintain a positive corporate culture.

The research aimed at identifying gender-based differences in assessment of corporate culture in enterprises in Slovakia was conducted in 2017. Based on the results, gender-based differences were observed.

The first difference is evident in the assessment of the future direction of organizational leadership. For the future, men prefer applying tools such as mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing. According to women, the leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency. However, statistically significant differences were not confirmed by Student two-sample t-test.

Another difference was observed in the current level of organization glue. In the opinion of men, loyalty and mutual trust bring employees together. Commitment to this organization runs high. According to women, formal rules, policies, and maintaining a smooth-running organization are important. Differences were tested by Student T-test. Based on the results, there exist no statistically significant differences in the assessment of corporate culture in the area of organization glue.

The area of strategic emphases was the last area where gender-based differences were observed. At present, in the opinion of men, the organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control and smooth operations are important. According to women, the organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist. After testing, we can conclude that statistically significant differences were not confirmed. There were no differences in the other areas studied.

Corporate culture becomes an integral part of modern enterprise management, abroad (Machova, Bencsik, & Simonova, 2018; Singh & Sadri, 2015; Llorente-Galera & Martos-Calpena, 2014). A strong corporate culture enhances co-ownership, identifies employees with the organization, gives clear guidance on employee behaviour even in difficult situations, accelerates decision-making and implementation of plans and projects, increases participative internal management of the company, improves communication, reduces conflicts, reduces control demands, improves motivation and loyalty, increases the organization's competitiveness by clearly presenting it externally, increases stability and reliability. Emphasizing the corporate culture in Slovak companies, regardless of gender, will lead the company to gain a competitive advantage and to overall company success in the time of tough competition.

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