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EFFECTS OF ETHNIC MINORITY CULTURE ON ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT. The need for organisational trust as a prerequisite for successful market operation is an area of frequent research today. Our study has examined the thinking and behaviour of organisations operating in minority cultures that live in proximity to the motherland in terms of trust-based organisational functioning, with particular attention to the knowledge management process. The research has tested two neighbouring cultures (Slovak and Romanian) outside their mainland (in Hungary) using a quantitative questionnaire survey. The SPSS 25 program was used to evaluate the results, analysing the connection system within an original model. The evaluation of cultural characteristics was based on the results of Hofstede's research. The results show that representatives of the minority think about the conditions for forming trust and related necessary norms of behaviour in the way that reflects the values of their motherland. However, the manifestations of human behaviour throughout the organisation's operation identify with the given national cultural values.

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Introduction

The success of an organisation's functioning depends on several factors, each of which can be observed from different perspectives. Among these influencing factors, the study focuses on the knowledge management processes, relating them to organisational trust, as it

fundamentally determines the design and operation of knowledge management as well as success in all other organisational processes. The importance of the topic is highlighted in the next section.

From an economic point of view, the success and competitiveness of a country is not primarily determined by natural resources, but rather by population's trust and ability to cooperate, acquire knowledge, learn skills, their mobility and willingness to follow norms, i.e., social capital, which is a part of the national culture (Abdullah et al., 2019; Ahlborg, 2019; Akintimehin, 2019). This fact is still not a generally accepted perspective on the part of economic operators, especially corporate executives. At the same time, it is a recognised fact that the characteristics of the national culture determine the operational characteristics of economic organisations active in the given country. The definition of human capital as well as of invisible assets is one of the most difficult aspects for organisations to identify, but their strategic importance is unquestionable (Pettinger, 2019; EU, 2019). Thus, their central role in research is not surprising. Among the elements of human capital, organisational capital (the quality of management, theories, models, methods, etc.) includes the characteristics and values of organisational culture, but customer capital also builds on the characteristics that are undoubtedly in a close connection with the national culture through the qualification of relationships. The close connection between national culture and organisational culture is indisputable, and trust, as a part of culture, is a most significant parameter for both (Dietz, et al., 2010; Hallikainen & Laukkanen, 2018).

1. Literature review

1.1. Knowledge management and organizational trust

It is not difficult to see that trust is a factor of organisational success that affects processes, performance, common thought, collaboration, the relationship between colleagues and between employees and managers through culture, all of which are determinants of market recognition through the acquisition, sharing and use of the necessary knowledge (Goodell, 2017). The manifestation of organisational trust from culture to the operation of the knowledge management system is shown in Figure 1 below.

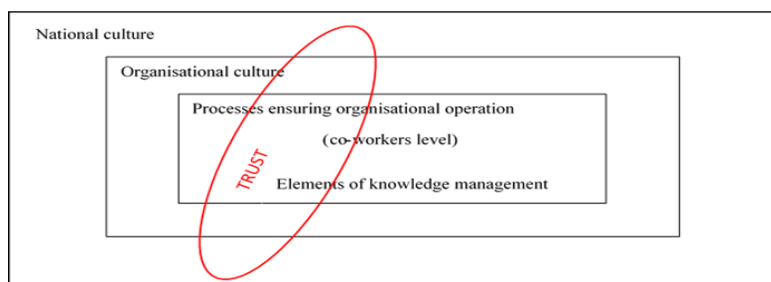


Figure 1. Manifestation of organisation trust

Source: authors' figure

Knowledge management is a recently developed new direction in management sciences, which, based on human capital, is about knowledge, its acquisition, sharing, preservation as well as its integration and utilization in organizational processes. It has been the subject of several studies, in which the issues of knowledge sharing, as the most critical step in the knowledge management process, are of paramount importance (Yasir et al., 2017). Much of the

research in recent years has focused on this phase. In the next section, a brief overview of relevant research results is given.

The fundamental prerequisite for effective knowledge transfer is the existence of trust within the organization, and between organizations (Bencsik et al., 2017; Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Abrams et al., 2003; Zand, 1997; Van Dyne et al., 2000; Nooteboom, 2002). In their study, Staples and Webster (2008) studied this relationship among others. The authors identified trust as a cornerstone of effective social exchange, a possible manifestation of which is knowledge sharing. According to the leader-member exchange theory, trust has positive impact on the amount of information shared, but there is no obligation for the recipient to reciprocate trust. In the case of knowledge sharing, this uncertainty is even more acute because it is two-way. Not only does the party transferring the knowledge have to trust the receiving party, but the party requesting and demanding the knowledge also has to trust the person transferring the knowledge, since, by requesting knowledge, the receiving party acknowledges that it does not possess certain knowledge and therefore becomes vulnerable to some extent. Furthermore, the recipient must also trust the person transferring the knowledge in the sense that, having become vulnerable in the eye of the person possessing the required knowledge, the knowledge coming from the person giving the knowledge will be accurate, credible and useful. Citing a previous study, the authors also state that “ultimately, the single most important prerequisite for knowledge transfer is trust (Rolland & Chauvel, 2000, cited by Staples & Webster, 2008, p. 621).

The relationship between trust and knowledge sharing is also supported by Wu and Lee’s (2006) research. They investigated the impact of managers’ behavior towards subordinates on the extent of knowledge sharing. Their research showed that aggressive managerial behaviours greatly reduce the degree of knowledge sharing and the willingness to share knowledge within the organization.

Bakker et al. (2006) investigated the relationship between trust and knowledge sharing in product development teams with high employee knowledge requirements. According to their hypothesis, the relationship between the above factors is exaggerated in the literature. Indeed, knowledge transfer is strongly influenced by other factors, with trust being the most frequently cited factor. In their research, they examined three dimensions of trust: ability, benevolence and integrity. The results showed that there is no exclusive relationship between the existence of trust and the degree of knowledge sharing, that is, trust alone is not sufficient to increase the degree of knowledge sharing. The main finding is that it is rather the lack of trust that may inhibit knowledge sharing. Other factors cited as increasing knowledge sharing are skill levels and common goals.

It is worth mentioning the study by Wilson (2002), who sharply criticizes the whole concept of knowledge management. According to the author, competition is a fundamental element of human nature. Fenyvesi’s study (2010) uses the prisoner’s dilemma to explain the need for knowledge sharing and the relationship between competition and cooperation, including the impact of trust. According to Fenyvesi, (Ibid) individuals within an organization are at their best when they cooperate unilaterally, i.e. when they adopt the knowledge of others but do not share their own knowledge so that it cannot be incorporated into organizational knowledge. If this is repeated, others will lose trust in the individual and may start to behave similarly. This kind of mistrust is also addressed by Chua & Lam (2005), Singh & Kant (2008), Steyn & Khan (2008). If this happens repeatedly within the organization, it can lead to a chain reaction of diminishing organizational knowledge base, which is reflected in the functioning of other organizational processes, in economic results, and even in the collapse of the organization as a consequence. Obviously, this is not beneficial for individuals either.

Fenyvesi's train of thought provides an excellent illustration of the rationale for the need to share knowledge.

The effect of trust upon organizational operation and knowledge management processes is presented through the analysis of Hungarian, Slovak and Romanian samples. A unique feature of the research is that the influencing effect of cultural differences among the nations under study is presented in a specific way. Namely, in the Slovak and Romanian samples, employees were interviewed who, although living in the countries mentioned, were of Hungarian nationality by origin. This means that their behavior, values and attitudes are affected by a double effect. On the one hand, their (Hungarian) nationality, and on the other hand, the everyday living conditions, environmental influences, Slovak and Romanian national culture and social expectations, social relations.

In the next section of the study, intercultural differences and their significance will be investigated.

1.2. Characteristics of the cultures under study

To compare cultures, Hofstede's (2001) model is presented, then Lewis' (2018). Based on the Hofstede model, the information about the characteristics of the countries studied can be found in Figure 2 below.

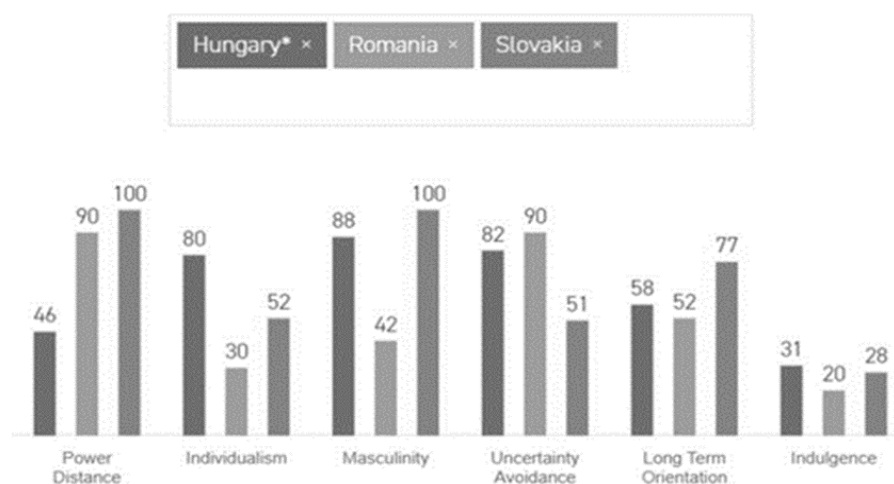


Figure 2. Characteristics of the countries based on Hofstede's model

Source: own compilation

The most striking differences in the figure are in the characteristics of power distance (leader-subordinate distance), individualism (dominance of individual and team work, helpfulness and cooperation), masculinity (leadership behaviour, opportunity to gain position), and uncertainty avoidance (openness to the new ideas, risk taking) (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/romania/>; <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/hungary/>). Each of these can be associated to a greater or lesser extent with trust. Distancing is definitely typical of the Slovaks and Romanians, but their willingness to cooperate is much stronger than in Hungarian culture (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/slovakia/>). In terms of masculinity, Romanians show a greater difference compared to the other two nations. In the case of uncertainty avoidance, the behaviour of Slovaks shows a greater difference (Unesco, 2016). In line with the above, these are the original four dimensions of Hofstede's model under study. Values (based on the intertwining of national and organisational culture) show that

characteristics stemming from social values are a crucial determinant of the employees' values and behaviour in everyday life and at work. In a society with a more open culture, an organisational culture that supports knowledge transfer is more easily accepted by employees. In this light, from a knowledge management perspective, it is preferable to minimise the value of Hofstede's original four indicators.

It is the dimensions of power distance and individualism that have the greatest impact on the willingness of individuals to embrace the concept of knowledge sharing. If the power distance is large, there is a greater chance that employees will tend to see knowledge sharing more as an ideology imposed by managers (Hadas, 2020). In this case, the community may also be much more prone to competition, since in such societies, higher positions bring with them a greater degree of intangible benefits. The individualism dimension plays a similarly prominent role. In individualistic cultures, the success achieved by the individual is more valuable than the quality of relationships and cooperation. In contrast, Yoon (1994) argues that in a collectivist society, it is more of a virtue if an individual's relationships are balanced and problem-free.

Hofstede's work has been subject to a number of criticisms, including claims that the dimensions do not provide a true picture of the societies under study for a variety of reasons. It is not considered to be necessary to analyse these in the present study, as final conclusions are not drawn from the data presented by Hofstede, but are merely used as a guiding reference point for setting up the hypotheses.

Given the criticisms, to confirm the theoretical research findings above, another popular culture model will be used (Lewis, 2018) to illustrate the difference between cultures. The model places nations along the sides connecting the vertices of a triangle (Linear-active, Multi-active and Reactive), based on a particular interpretation of the vertices. The categories are defined on the basis of behavioural characteristics, an approach that further supports the validity of the research focus for the present research (given the prominent role of trust). Based on the model, although the nations under study are not fundamentally different from each other (they are relatively close to each other on the same side), their distance from the vertices shows the behavioural differences. In this respect, the behavioural patterns of Romanian and Slovak people fall into the same category, but are a little further away from Hungarian behaviour. In terms of the characteristics of the vertices, this means people-oriented thinking, stronger prevalence of emotions, human relations, strength of trust, punctuality, work ethics, mix of social and work behaviour, etc., most of which are reflected in the original four dimensions of Hofstede's model. Although based on different principles, the two models describe the nations under study using a similar approach.

2. Methodology

Hungary is a Central Eastern European country, its history, traditions, and values are based on European culture, in harmony with the values of the neighbouring countries. The official language is Hungarian and Christian values are dominant. After World War I, its former geographical territory was dismembered and divided among the neighbouring countries. Thus, the country's borders are now surrounded in all directions by a population with an originally Hungarian culture, traditions and values, who have partially or completely adapted to the culture and behaviour patterns of the nation that has dominated their current living space for the past 100 years.

Close ties with the motherland, cultural characteristics and values, a shared historical past, linguistic and ethnic identity are strong bonds. Supposedly, in these communities, trust as an element that builds organisational culture and supports knowledge management has a

different meaning and priority than in Hungarian organisations. Its strengthening, bonding power may be more prevalent, but its absence may even more severely undermine community cooperation.

The research questions formulated on the basis of the above are:

Q1. To what extent do the behavioural characteristics of Hungarians living across the border (in Slovakia and Romania) differ from the behaviour of the respondents in the Hungarian sample in the motherland in terms of trust?

Q2. How differently do they evaluate the impact of trust on workplace processes?

Q3. In what ways and forms do differences in values, behaviour and mindset manifest themselves in the application of the steps of the knowledge management process?

The following hypotheses are analysed in the present study based on the research questions:

Hypotheses

H1. In terms of the characteristics necessary for organisational trust, respondents from mainland organisations have a different opinion than respondents from cross-border organisations on the characteristics required for organisational trust.

H2. In terms of the realisation of the expectations necessary for organisational trust, the opinion of respondents from mainland organisations differs from that of respondents from cross-border organisations.

H3. Organisational trust is a necessary prerequisite for the successful operation of knowledge management processes in organisations.

Between 2016 and 2020, the multi-stage research on organisational trust aimed to explore the functioning and embeddedness of knowledge management processes, the supportive nature of organisational trust, and, in this context, whether companies measure the economic impact as a consequence of the presence or lack of trust. The first studies were conducted in Hungary, followed by Slovakia in the next phase, and later Romania. The respondents from organisation in the neighbouring countries were employees in the Hungarian regions. The initial concept of the research was that the Hungarian communities in the three geographical areas have similar cultures (due to the same roots), but in Slovakia and Romania, for the minority population, trust means different things, and has a different impact on their workplace behaviour, not only in their private lives, but also in the functioning of their organisations.

In the Hungarian sample, 63% of the respondents came from the most economically developed region, in the Slovak sample, from the border region of Upper Hungary, and in the Romanian sample, mainly from Transylvania. The sample size was 706 respondents. The survey participants were asked to fill in an anonymous questionnaire available on the Internet. Enquiries were made in person, by phone, e-mail, and on social media platforms. The response rate was over 85%.

During the pilot survey, respondents had no problems with interpretability, so all questions were included in the questionnaire. Respondents had to answer 35 questions, four of which were open questions, and rest closed questions. Of the responses received, there was no questionnaire that was not interpretable. The structure of the questionnaire is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The structure of the questionnaire

Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Issue 4
Organisational specification	Knowledge characterisation within the organisation	Trust in organisational practice	The functioning and economic impact of a culture of trust
Organisation location, size, ownership	Knowledge and its use, nature of knowledge management. Knowledge management system design and operation characteristics, based on the logic of the Probst-model. The market value of organisational knowledge.	Manifestations of trust in the workplace environment. Characteristics of the system of trust. Tools for building trust.	Causes of trust and mistrust in the organisation. Benefits of the existence of trust. Measuring the consequences of trust and/or mistrust.

Source: authors' table

To evaluate the above hypotheses, the authors used univariate and multivariate statistical methods, such as frequency, mean tests and regression analyses. The evaluation was performed using the SPSS 25 software.

3. Empirical results and discussion

Table 2. Specification of the sample

	Hungarian	Slovak	Romanian
Number of participants	231	235	240
Company size			
Micro	26	60	35
Small	46	74	76
Medium-sized	53	53	102
Large	106	48	27
Ownership			
Domestic only	131	121	175
Mixed	26	53	48
Foreign only	74	61	17
Industrial branch			
Agriculture	3	7	10
Manufacturing	9	18	30
Electricity	3	4	5
Construction	7	23	8
Trade, repair	31	43	35
Accommodation and catering	16	20	11
Transport and storage	15	19	14
Finance	27	18	6
Public administration	33	10	73
Education	13	9	9
Healthcare	15	10	9
Other	59	54	30

Source: authors' table

Qualifying the functioning of their organisations, regarding the importance of knowledge, the following responses were given:

Table 3. Assessing the importance of knowledge in organisational operation

The importance of knowledge in operation	Hungarian	Slovak	Romanian
Knowledge-based	57.6	44.6	70
Labour-intensive	37.6	46.4	28.3
Capital-intensive	4.8	9.0	1.7

Source: authors' table

Respondents in the three countries had different opinions on the answer to the question. (Chi-square test: 35.801, df: 4 sign.: .000 $p < 0.05$). Romanians felt that activities in their organisations require knowledge, while this proportion was lowest among Slovak respondents.

In the questionnaire, the authors gave a preconceived definition of trust: "A very high level of mutual agreement and liking, where we no longer feel the need to check the other party's honesty, good intentions, values and actions, but are confident that they will think and do the best possible things. It is a full understanding of the other party."

Respondents were asked to agree with the given definition on a five-point scale, with 1 indicating disagreement and 5 indicating full agreement. The three samples were nearly similar in their opinions of the given statement. Hungarians accepted it with a mean of 3.68, the Slovaks with a mean of 3.59, and Romanians with a mean of 3.53. The ANOVA test showed no significant differences ($F: 1.469$, $df: 2$, sign.: .231 $p > 0.05$).

Respondents provided responses on what characteristics they believe generally qualify a culture of trust in an organisation and to what extent these can be identified in their own company. Table 4 shows the responses given. Chi-square test analysis was used to assess the significance. A significant relationship is indicated by yes (y) in the cell, where there was no difference, no (n).

According to the results shown in the table, the Hungarian respondents consider teamwork, open communication and staff respect to be the most important factors in creating a culture of trust. For the majority, respect for colleagues, mutual assistance and teamwork can also be identified in their company. The biggest differences between expectations and existing characteristics were observed in the areas of free expression of opinion, open communication, and vertical information flow.

Slovak respondents consider teamwork to be the most important, followed by taking responsibility, free expression of opinion, and respect for colleagues as equally important characteristics for trust to work well within a company. The facts show that flexible regulation of activities, respect for colleagues and teamwork are the most common in companies. The greatest difference between expectations and identifiable characteristics is in flexible regulation of activities, open communication, openly taking conflicts, and taking responsibility.

According to Romanian respondents, free expression of opinion, teamwork and taking responsibility are indispensable conditions for a culture of trust. In reality, teamwork and flexible regulation in the organisation's occupational and activity structure are the most common characteristics in the companies surveyed. The greatest difference between expectations and actual practice was in the latter two characteristics and in exploring the causes of problems.

Table 4. Expectations of the system of trust and the existence of the characteristics in the respective organisations (N)

	Hungarian		Slovak		Romanian		Significant Difference	
	Expectation	Exists	Expectation	Exists	Expectation	Exists	Expectation	Exists
Taking up open conflicts	107	76	103	74	72	45	y	y
Multilateral information flow vertically	124	78	75	51	107	92	y	y
Multilateral information flow horizontally	101	80	68	51	104	93	y	y
Free expression of opinion	130	69	140	122	157	139	n	y
Willingness to compromise	109	78	130	107	134	125	n	y
Identifying the causes of problems	112	86	106	91	65	118	i	y
Taking responsibility	139	105	140	111	171	149	i	y
Open communication	147	86	136	102	145	132	n	y
Looking for causes instead of blame	92	55	75	50	52	94	y	y
Free transfer of knowledge	69	49	60	40	97	91	y	y
Mutual assistance	133	126	122	95	127	114	n	y
Teamwork	143	152	161	143	159	151	n	n
Respect for colleagues	150	119	140	123	139	129	n	n
Free expression of ideas	54	46	57	45	44	21	n	y
Open corporate hierarchy	24	22	24	15	83	74	y	y
Open door policy	91	74	49	41	22	16	y	y
Flexible regulation in the organisation's activity structure	31	17	25	216	92	164	y	y
Flexible regulation in the organisation's employment structure	25	18	27	10	78	168	y	y
Looking for solutions instead of retaliation	111	82	80	53	119	100	y	y

Source: authors' table

The countries therefore differ in several characteristics and have similar approaches. Table 5 shows the similarities and differences between the expectations and the existence of characteristics.

The data show that the three countries did not differ in terms of the organisational characteristics required for trust to be achieved, such as free expression of opinions, willingness to compromise, open communication, mutual assistance, teamwork, respect for colleagues, and the free implementation of ideas.

The only similarities in the implementation of these characteristics were in teamwork and respect for colleagues. Among the characteristics that actually existed, Slovak respondents stood out, for example, in the flexible regulation of activities, the willingness to compromise, open communication, while Hungarian companies stood out in taking up open conflicts, mutual assistance, teamwork, supporting ideas, and the open door policy. According to Romanian respondents, they were stronger than organisations from the other two countries in terms of free knowledge transfer, open corporate hierarchy, flexible regulation of employment, among others. It can be seen that, although respondents had similar views on the interpretation of trust (expected characteristics), they differ in terms of their implementation. On this basis, the first hypothesis cannot be confirmed, but the second hypothesis is accepted by the authors.

Table 5. Expectations of a system of trust and their realisation in organisations

Expected characteristics		Existing characteristics	
Differences	Similarities	Differences	Similarities
Taking up open conflicts	Free expression of opinions	Taking up open conflicts	Teamwork
Multilateral information flow vertically	Willingness to compromise	Multilateral information flow vertically	Respect for colleagues
Multilateral information flow horizontally	Open communication	Multilateral information flow horizontally	
Exploring the causes of problems	Mutual assistance	Free expression of opinions	
Taking responsibility	Teamwork	Willingness to compromise	
Looking for causes instead of blame	Respect for colleagues	Exploring the causes of problems	
Free knowledge transfer	Free implementation of ideas	Taking responsibility	
Open corporate hierarchy		Open communication	
Open door policy		Looking for causes instead of blame	
Flexible regulation in the organisation's activity structure		Free knowledge transfer	
Flexible regulation in the organisation's employment structure		Mutual assistance	
Looking for solutions instead of retaliation		Free implementation of ideas	
		Open corporate hierarchy	
		Open door policy	
		Flexible regulation in the organisation's activity structure	
		Flexible regulation in the organisation's employment structure	
		Looking for solutions instead of retaliation	

Source: authors' table

To prove the third hypothesis, a model by the authors provides the basis for a description of the relationship between trust and some elements of the knowledge management processes. The model is based on three levels: employee, managerial, and corporate. Trust has to operate in all three dimensions, otherwise knowledge management processes will struggle or fail. At the employee level, three key knowledge management elements have been examined: knowledge sharing, knowledge storing, and knowledge utilisation. Previous studies have shown in these activities, organisational trust is the basis for employees to share, use and record their own and their colleagues' knowledge without reservation. At the managerial level, when delegating responsibility for projects and individual tasks, managers make decisions based, among other things, on trust. Managers have a predetermined level of trust in their colleagues and believe that their knowledge is adequate and of a sufficiently high level to complete the project or task. At the corporate level, successful project implementation can only be achieved through teamwork and cooperation. The question of how much knowledge is lost in the course

of knowledge sharing, possibly due to employees leaving the organisation, and why, is not negligible. A quote from the answers to one of the open questions: “I do not leave my knowledge behind, I do not share my knowledge, because I cannot trust others, or even my employer.”

Mistrust can damage the organisation, so it is useful to monitor the positive consequences of trust and the negative consequences of mistrust. Figure 4 shows the network of relationships between organisational trust and knowledge management processes studied. The possible links and interrelations are illustrated by arrows.

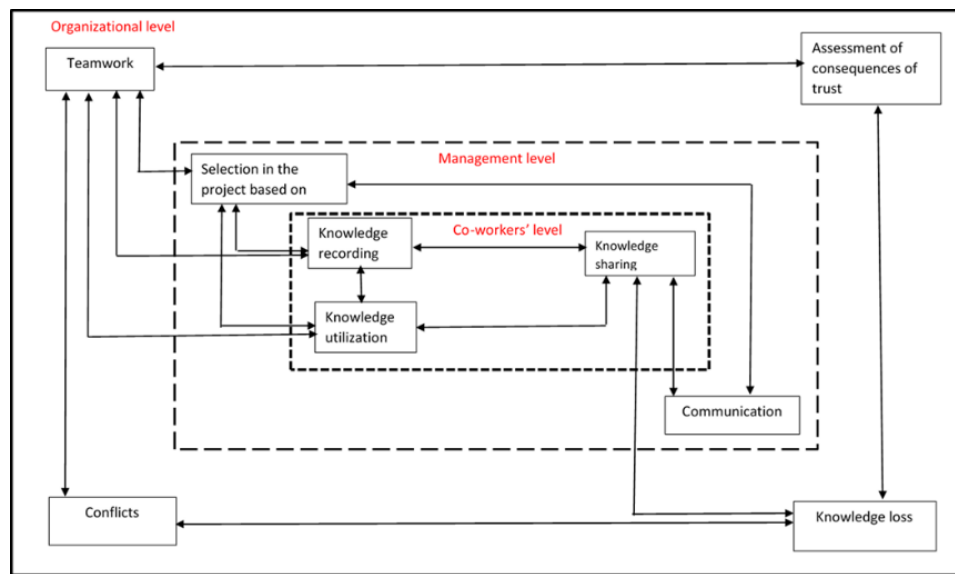


Figure 3. A network of relationships between organisational trust and knowledge
Source: authors' figure

The adequacy of the model has been tested by the authors for all the three countries. The elements in the cells are described by metric variables. The variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represented not at all typical, and 5 represented completely typical. Path analysis was used to investigate whether the linear relationship between each variable could be verified, and if so, how strong was it. The mean and standard deviation of the variables by country are shown in Table 6.

Hungarian respondents rate the culture of trust in the organisation as relatively good. However, it is less justifiable when it comes to managers' confidence in the knowledge of their employees. Systemic management to avoid or mitigate knowledge loss is not common and the economic consequences of the lack of trust are not examined.

Slovak respondents can rely on strong teamwork, which is a key element in building trust. Here it is more evident that managers know and trust the professional skills of their employees. However, at the systemic level, solutions for detecting knowledge loss and effective tools for detecting the economic consequences of mistrust have not yet been developed.

Table 6. The mean and standard deviation of variables by country

Variables	Hungarian		Slovak		Romanian	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
At our place, the system of trust can be built through teamwork.	3.90	1.020	3.81	1.005	3.88	0.862
Applying for projects is voluntary, and managers trust their staff and their skills.	2.61	1.166	2.98	1.158	3.10	0.886
Long-term usability of employee knowledge is ensure by recording it in an information system.	2.89	1.330	2.77	1.342	3.47	1.341
There is a culture of trust in our organisation, information and knowledge transfer works.	3.39	1.156	3.45	1.009	3.75	1.111
The use of employee knowledge is not an issue due to mutual trust, it is natural.	3.21	1.000	3.12	1.091	3.43	0.907
There are systems developed to avoid knowledge loss.	2.61	1.366	2.57	1.250	3.15	1.113
The economic consequences for the organisation of the existence or absence of trust are examined.	1.89	1.041	1.89	1.011	2.44	0.0927

Source: authors' table

It was the Romanian respondents who felt that trust-based corporate culture was the strongest. It may be the reason why they utilise employee knowledge according to the needs of the market and pay attention not only to existing knowledge but also to its preservation. Of the three countries, the consequences of the existence and lack of trust are most examined here. Starting from the above model, linear relationships between variables are analysed. From the table, the squared r is used to test the strength of the relationship, i.e. it can also be interpreted as the percentage of the total variance that the regression line can explain. The standardized coefficients equal to the value of the correlation coefficient in the case of bivariate regression. The results are presented in separate models for each country (Figures 3, 4, 5).

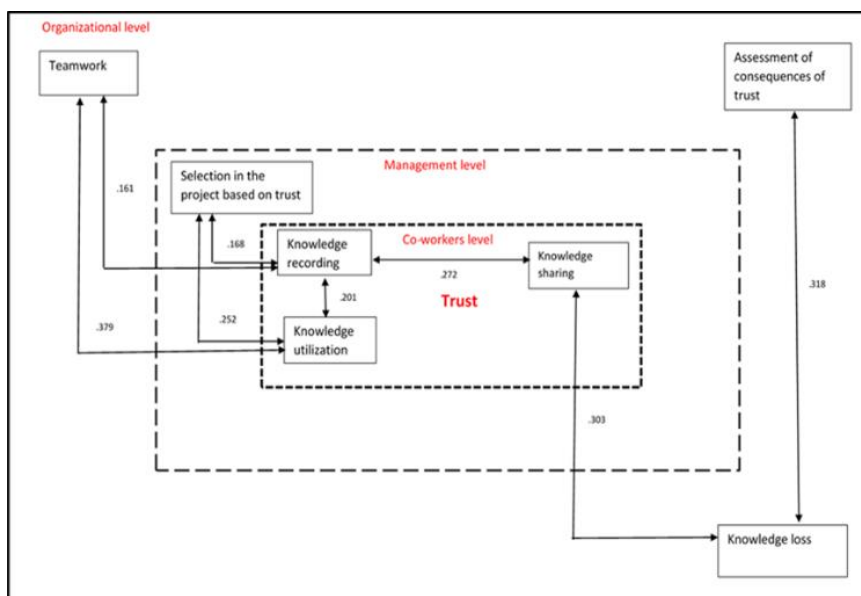


Figure 4. The Hungarian model

Source: authors' figure

Table 7 shows the Hungarian results.

Table 7. The Hungarian model results (p=0.05)

Variable A	Variable B	R square	F	Sig.	Beta
Teamwork	Selection in the project based on trust	0.010	2.38	0.124	0.101
Teamwork	Knowledge recording	0.026	6.101	0.014	0.161
Selection in the project based on trust	Knowledge recording	0.028	6.661	0.010	0.168
Utilisation of knowledge	Selection in the project based on trust	0.063	15.483	0	0.252
Teamwork	Utilisation of knowledge	0.144	38.44	0	0.379
Utilisation of knowledge	Knowledge recording	0.04	9.607	0.002	0.201
Knowledge recording	Knowledge sharing	0.074	18.322	0	0.272
Knowledge sharing	Knowledge loss	0.163	44.532	0	0.303
Consequence assessment	Knowledge loss	0.101	25.724	0	0.318

Source: authors' table

The results of the Hungarian model show that there was no significant relationship between trust-based selection and teamwork (sign.: 0.124). In teamwork, however, a lot of knowledge can be utilised by building on trust (sign.:0) and it is one of the strongest relationships between variables (r^2 : 0.144). It is no coincidence that the former table (Table 3) showed that there was a high level of teamwork, expectation and realisation of mutual assistance. At the same time, thanks to the systems elaborated during knowledge sharing, knowledge loss could be reduced (sign.: 0, r^2 : 0.163). In Hungarian organisations, where attention is paid to the consequences of trust and the lack of trust, efforts are made to reduce knowledge loss and its cause (Figure 4; Table 7). The table also shows that where the relationship between variables is significant, the relationship is relatively weak.

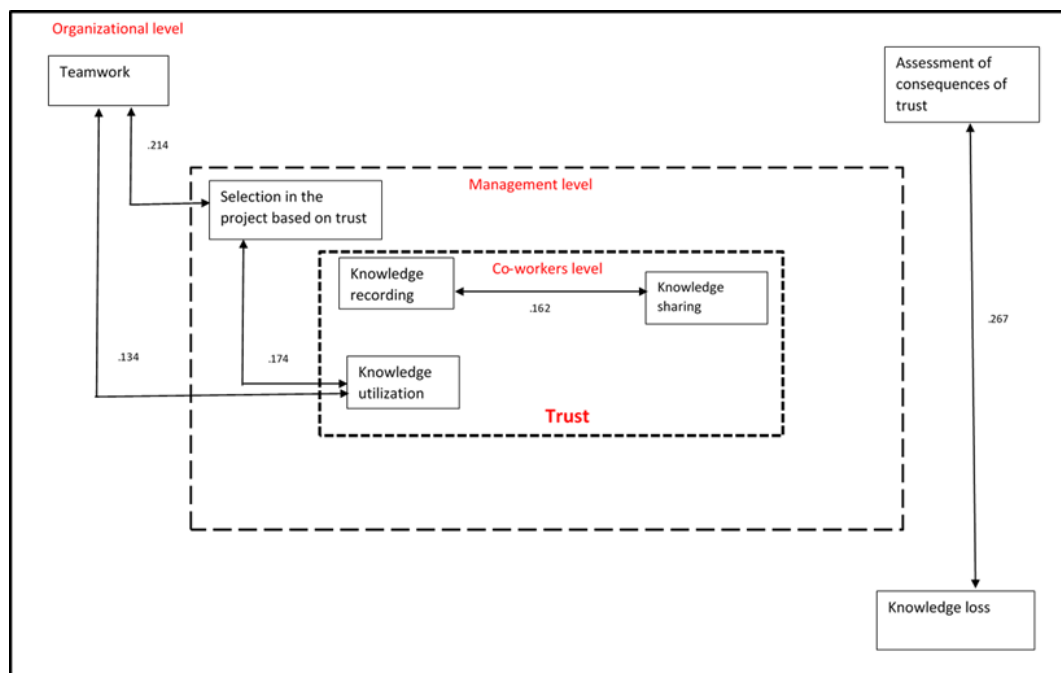


Figure 5. The Slovak model

Source: authors' figure

Table 8. The Slovak model results (p=0.05)

Variable A	Variable B	R square	F	Sig.	Beta
Teamwork	Selection in the project based on trust	0.046	11.158	0.001	0.214
Teamwork	Knowledge recording	0.001	0.250	0.617	0.033
Selection in the project based on trust	Knowledge recording	0.001	0.257	0.613	0.033
Utilisation of knowledge	Selection in the project based on trust	0.030	7.278	0.007	0.174
Teamwork	Utilisation of knowledge	0.018	4.253	0.04	0.134
Utilisation of knowledge	Knowledge recording	0.015	3.627	0.058	0.124
Knowledge recording	Knowledge sharing	0.026	6.285	0.013	0.162
Knowledge sharing	Knowledge loss	0.010	2.452	0.119	0.102
Consequence assessment	Knowledge loss	0.071	17.889	0	0.267

Source: authors' table

When observing the Slovak sample, the initial model has significantly changed. The linear relationship between knowledge recording and teamwork (sign.:0.617), between the utilisation of knowledge and knowledge recording (sign.:.058), between knowledge sharing and knowledge loss (sign.:0.119), and between knowledge recording and trust-based selection (sign.: 0.613) could not be verified. The explanation of correlations is also less strong than in the Hungarian sample. In these organisations, the relationships between trust and successful KM systems based on it are still slightly traceable (very low values of r square). As shown in Table 3, there is a high demand for teamwork, mutual assistance, and free knowledge transfer, which are prerequisites and consequences of trust. These organisations still have a lot to do to achieve these characteristics (Figure 5; Table 8.). In the cases where the relationship was significant, the r-square showed even lower strength than for the Hungarian sample.

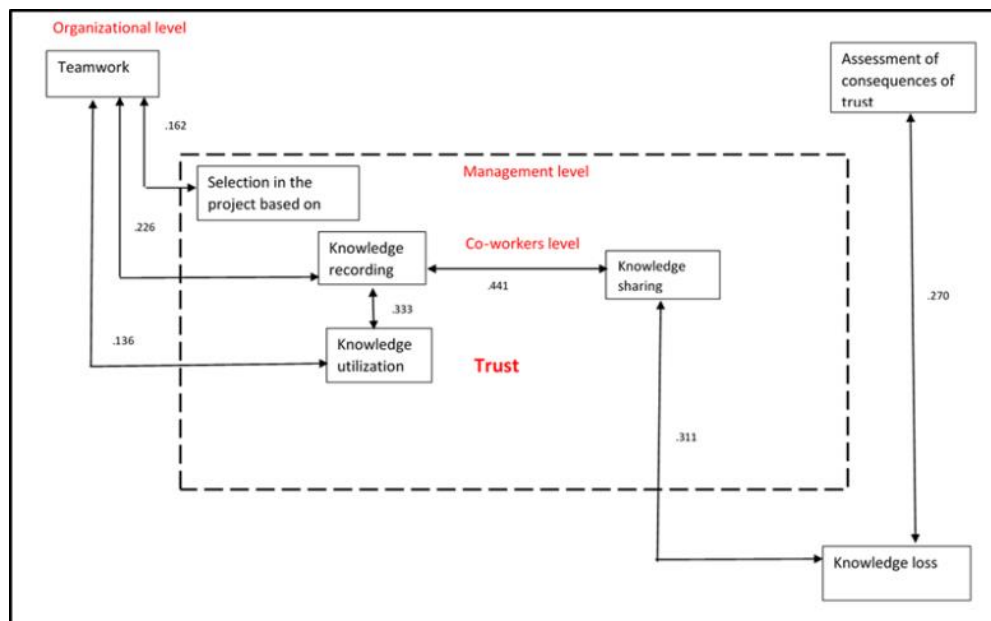


Figure 6. The Romanian model

Source: authors' figure

Table 9. The Romanian model results ($p=0.05$)

Variable A	Variable B	R square	F	Sig.	Beta
Teamwork	Selection in the project based on trust	0.020	4.893	0.028	0.142
Teamwork	Knowledge recording	0.051	12.861	0	0.226
Selection in the project based on trust	Knowledge recording	0.001	0.180	0.672	0.027
Utilisation of knowledge	Selection in the project based on trust	0.004	0.886	0.348	0.061
Teamwork	Utilisation of knowledge	0.019	4.495	0.035	0.136
Utilisation of knowledge	Knowledge recording	0.111	29.748	0	0.333
Knowledge recording	Knowledge sharing	0.194	57.445	0	0.441
Knowledge sharing	Knowledge loss	0.096	25.402	0	0.311
Consequence assessment	Knowledge loss	0.073	18.723	0	0.27

Source: authors' table

The analytical results of the Romanian sample are more similar to those in the Hungarian model than to those in the Slovak one. No linear relationship was found between trust-based selection and knowledge recording (sign.:0.672), or the utilisation of knowledge and trust-based task delegation (sign.:0.348). The latter is also important because knowledge utilisation could be better and more effective if managers paid attention to it. Of the three samples, it was most apparent here that organisations pay attention to knowledge preservation in parallel with knowledge sharing and the utilisation of trust-based, marketable knowledge.

The most typical relationships by country are shown by Table 10.

Table 10. The most typical relationships by country

Hungarian	Slovak	Romanian
Teamwork – the utilisation of knowledge	Teamwork – trust-based selection of project task	Knowledge recording – the utilisation of knowledge
Knowledge sharing – knowledge loss	Consideration of the consequences of trust – knowledge loss	Knowledge recording – knowledge sharing
Consideration of the consequences of trust – knowledge loss	Knowledge recording – knowledge sharing	Knowledge sharing – knowledge loss

Source: authors' table

The results confirm that trust is a prerequisite for a well-functioning KM system. In this respect, respondents had diverging views, and the modes tested suggest that Hungarian organisations in the study are ahead in this area. Based on the results, Hypothesis 3 can be considered to be confirmed.

Conclusion

The research analysed the behaviour of organisations in three nations in terms of trust, which is a prerequisite for the success of knowledge management processes. Respondents from the three neighbouring countries share the same cultural roots but operate under different socio-economic conditions. It was therefore interesting to see whether cultural roots or everyday social impacts have a greater influence on organisation functioning based on trust. The results obtained revealed some interesting correlations.

There is a close correlation between the value judgement of respondents from the motherland (Hungary) and the cross-border respondents (Slovak and Romanian). Their thinking about trust and the necessary conditions for founding cooperation and supporting teamwork and knowledge sharing is almost identical. This fact confirms the existence of shared national-cultural roots (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/hungary,romania/>). At the same time, however, their current perceptions of the fulfilment of the expectations formulated, i.e. the characteristics of the culture of trust influencing organisational functioning, differ widely among organisations of their own nation. This result, in turn, reflects the operating environment of the organisations, that is, the influence of the cross-border national culture, the social and economic conditions prevail. In terms of thinking and value judgements, the attachment to the motherland is dominant, while the general characteristics of behaviour are closer to the culture of countries beyond the borders as a result of the adaptation to the environment. Just as several previous studies have shown the need for trust as a prerequisite for successful knowledge management processes to operate, the present study has confirmed this expectation through the opinions of the respondents (Hadas, 2020; Hallikainen & Laukkanen, 2018; Goodell, 2017). At the same time, the influence of national-cultural characteristics clearly shows – in the case of cross-border samples – the presence of distancing and mistrust, which work against the development of organisational trust. Hofstede's research results suggest that Slovak and Romanian national cultural characteristics are closer to each other in this respect and more distant from Hungarian cultural characteristics. This is reflected in the research results, in the significant relationships between the models. The Hungarian behaviour seems to be the most supportive in terms of operating condition of knowledge management systems, the trust-based culture, which can be seen in the relationships between the individual steps (Yasir, 2017; Alaarj, 2016). The Romanian results are closer to the Hungarian sample than the Slovak ones. This is in line with previous researches in the field of knowledge management, with Hungarian organisations leading the way in this aspect of the three nations, while Slovak organisations are the least open to the knowledge-based management of organisational operation. This pattern can be seen in the relationship systems of the models. The results of the research, which can be considered new, have shown that the values of national culture, their roots are alive in people, (theoretically, their values are the same), but their behaviour in the course of organisational operation is nevertheless in line with the expectations of the national cultural that provides the conditions for their current life. There is not enough strength and determination to assert their intrinsic values if the environmental conditions favour other values.

The research can be extended to test other minority cultures from a similar perspective and to examine other areas of organisational operation, as well as the economic context of trust and knowledge loss.

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