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EDUCATION OF MANAGERS USING MANAGEMENT GAMES IN COMPANIES: A CASE OF SLOVAKIA*

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Abstract. Developing human capital through education and motivation is key to company success in a rapidly evolving business environment. However, only a few studies have dealt with using management games in Central and Eastern European companies, including Slovakia. This article examines the current state of using management games and simulations for manager education in Slovakia, focusing on their adoption by Slovak companies. The research aims to identify which tools and techniques are used by Slovak companies to train managers, specifically looking at the use of management games, the reasons for their adoption or lack thereof, and the perceived benefits. A questionnaire survey was conducted with 300 companies from various competitive sectors, resulting in 60 valid responses. The findings reveal that while a few companies use management games, the overall adoption rate in Slovakia is low, primarily due to a lack of awareness and knowledge of such educational methods. However, companies implementing these games report significant improvements in creativity, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork among managers. The article concludes that while traditional training methods dominate, there is a growing interest and willingness among Slovak companies to invest in more active, experiential learning tools like management games to enhance managerial capabilities. The findings of this study have practical implications for a wide range of fields, such as education, sports management, manufacturing, and services, where they can support efforts to enhance organisational performance.

Keywords: management games; education process; managers; companies; Slovakia

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JEL Classifications: M15, M21, M53

1. Introduction

Every successful company must have educated, motivated employees in today's rapidly developing world. Therefore, companies must invest in their employees and managers' growth and education (Al-Dosari, 2024; Sorensen & Lindholst, 2024).

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For a company, this means that it can expect efficiency and sufficient performance from its employees, which ultimately leads to achieving and fulfilling company goals. Sustainable management is then crucial for both public and private sectors (Fuka & Bat'a, 2022). The competitive advantage for companies in a wide range of activities, from non-profit sectors and sports organisations to manufacturing or service providers, is no longer only machines, technologies, know-how, and innovations but, above all, their people. Human capital is the most valuable asset of a company. Therefore, a company must train and support its human capital, as managers serve as representatives of the organisation, interacting with competitors and all other stakeholders (Varmus et al., 2018).

According to Striteská & Jelínková (2015), the issue of defining performance indicators in the area of employees also remains problematic, even though previous research has shown that one of the most common reasons for performance management is influencing employee behavior, motivation, and remuneration. Motivating individuals to pursue personal growth and education has become increasingly challenging. To address this, companies must embrace innovative and engaging educational strategies that inspire their workforce and deliver lasting impact. One such modern approach, both today and in recent years, involves using management games. These tools allow individuals to test, practice, and enhance their skills in a risk-free environment without disrupting real business operations or processes. Managerial decision-making is becoming increasingly challenging today. An example of this can be the issue of corporate behavior when making decisions about capital structure (Heckenbergerova & Honkova, 2023), questions related to the financial health of the company, financial analysis and its complexity (Kubenka, 2015) and others.

In today's world, it is evident that many modern managers lack practical experience upon graduation. The rising importance of management simulation games underscores the need to incorporate them not only within companies to enhance the education of current managers but also in schools to equip students with practical skills before assuming such demanding roles. Applying theoretical knowledge in practice during school years can serve as a strong foundation for greater success in securing employment. Emerging trends in education highlight the growing adoption of management games in corporate and educational institutions (Bach et al., 2023; Nosková & Jelínková, 2023; Lean et al., 2023; Bach et al., 2025).

This article focuses on the current state of utilising manager games in the educational process for managers in Slovakia.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 The educational process

Education plays an essential role in human development and involves various activities related to the process of education, character development, or discipline of the mind to influence the behaviour of the educated person. Education deals with activities aimed at human learning, imparting knowledge, training ability, and developing skills. It is a framework for formal school education and extends to non-formal and informal learning. Education goes beyond the acquisition of information to include the development and nurturing of critical thinking, as well as creativity, problem-solving, and ethical decision-making skills. Education is acquiring knowledge through study or transferring knowledge through particular instructions or other practical means. It also brings about a natural and permanent change in the abilities of individuals to achieve their goals. The educational process not only fulfils the goals of education, but also has an impact on the overall development of personality, abilities, qualities, attitudes, behaviours, values, etc. (Shevtsova et al., 2024)

Education and the educational process are mostly associated with educational institutions. The importance and influence of educational institutions in the educational process are confirmed. However, education is not only the dominant feature of schools, educational facilities, or specialised institutions but is also becoming an increasingly important part of corporations. In the context of corporate learning, it is a fundamental process for any company aiming to enhance prosperity, maintain competitiveness, and aspire to market leadership. Implementing employee training, education, and employee development serves to achieve a wide range of goals for both employees and the business. Brush et al. (2024) reveal the important role of entrepreneurship educators in the educational process. However, corporate learning is not a short-term effort. Instead, it is a long-term

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process that requires careful implementation in well-defined stages to ensure effectiveness and sustainability. An organisation that seeks to increase its competitiveness is an organisation that can train its employees in the most effective and efficient ways (Brabete et al. 2024). Training and employee development programs thus represent key organisational growth and employee retention tools by increasing job satisfaction and performance. (Gebrehiwot & Elantheraiyan, 2023; Kanuto, 2024) Companies may use various training methods and tools; previous research has shown that these methods improve employee engagement (Alhowaish, 2024).

Education is a structured system of teaching and learning activities to achieve educational goals. Education methods can be either active or passive (traditional) (Kooloos et al., 2019). The primary distinction between these methods lies in employee involvement – whether they actively engage in learning or act as passive recipients of information. Previous research showed that traditional and active learning methods can produce different outcomes, and the most effective is a combination of these approaches. (Yu & Zin, 2023)

2.1.1 Traditional methods of education

Traditional teaching methods are still used in schools, where students mostly listen to the teacher's explanation. The teacher can be seen as an instructor responsible for conducting lectures. Students are considered "objects" that need to be filled with information. Technology's constant development is also changing how information is received today. Traditional teaching methods are gradually being replaced by digitalisation. Traditional methods include lectures, seatwork, listening and observation, and many others.

Lectures are a basic educational method of traditional methods. Lectures are associated with didactic teaching, where we can talk about an authoritative approach, where employees or students are passive. While there is an option to ask questions to the lecturer, the approach is typically one-sided, with information flowing primarily from the lecturer to employees or students. Lecturing is the most effective teaching method (Georgieva, 2022), mainly due to the ability to convey concepts and knowledge and allow them to utilise the human ability to learn from the spoken word.

Another traditional method of learning is mentoring. Companies use mentoring for its benefits; effective mentoring is seen as an avenue for workforce development, skills transfer and continuous training. Mentoring encourages and supports employees' self-development and increases their performance and potential (Chen, 2013). It is described as a slow process, but it can improve the abilities and skills of employees. A relationship between the mentor and the employee must be based on trust and respect. The mentor helps the employee find the right direction, helps him with his career problems, does not provide answers to problems, and shows him ways to work towards the answers. The employee perceives the mentor as a source of information, wisdom, inspiration, and expertise in the given field. A mentor is an individual who has extensive experience and knowledge in a particular field and seeks to help the mentee achieve goals (Sarabipour et al., 2021). A mentor also teaches the employee how to act professionally, treat others, or admit his own mistakes. He also performs various tasks based on the requirements of the employee. A mentor must possess specific competencies, with the key being communication, responsibility, and independence. Additionally, the mentor should be capable of evaluating the employees they are mentoring. Mentors and mentoring are key to stimulating the growth and success of entrepreneurial activities (Yani et al., 2024).

The advantages of traditional methods include obtaining formal education and focusing on specific subjects. Today's technologies are making education more interactive and fun. Therefore, it is also possible to talk about the disadvantages arising from technological advancement. The disadvantages include that traditional methods are limited, focused only on the teacher and his lectures and not on ensuring students have sufficient interaction. Students only obtain information on a theoretical level and are subsequently tested. Since traditional methods have advantages and disadvantages, even with increasing technological progress, it is impossible to talk about completely eliminating these methods. It is necessary to enrich them with active ones (Yu & Zin, 2023).

2.1.2 Active learning methods

Active learning is an approach to education involving employees or students' or students' active involvement in learning through various methods. Great emphasis is placed on the responsibility of each participant in the learning process using an active method (Mondragon et al., 2023). Active learning helps to support thinking

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and analysis and, most importantly, helps to transform their knowledge into practice; this makes students more effective thinkers and better arguers.

Active learning can be defined as any educational activity in which the employee interacts with the learning process, unlike traditional forms where they only receive information. Active learning stimulates the brain, as multiple sensory and neural networks are activated, which helps to process and work with information more effectively. Active learning strategies must be designed to stimulate and engage students' thinking.

The advantages offered by active learning methods include the development of teamwork, communication development, long-term memorisation of information and, above all, they are effective because they require active participation and involvement of all participants. This active participation of students in the learning process is the most critical indicator of success (Verdiyeva, 2021). Many other active learning methods are already widely implemented, whether in companies or schools. Active learning methods include mind maps, role-playing, jigsaw techniques, game-based learning, and virtual classrooms. An active learning method that is currently gaining more and more importance is management games and simulations. (Maurya et al., 2024)

2.2 Management games and simulations

According to Stan (2024), a game cannot be strictly defined, any attempt to define a game is only partial and also requires further explanation, but the game can be analysed. Management games simulate strategic thinking (Ghasemi et al., 2024; Langley, 2024). They facilitate active social interaction among players, creating conditions that closely resemble real-life scenarios. Management games are used to develop managerial abilities, skills, and knowledge. The core of these games lies in creating an environment that closely mirrors real-life situations. In this setting, managers gain valuable experience, enabling them to respond flexibly to various future changes and challenges within companies. They help develop all the qualities of managers. Such a development of experience is very effective because managers learn from practical problem situations, allowing managers to make decisions under pressure (Mohammed et al., 2022).

Management games also support entrepreneurship by developing competencies, creativity, competitiveness, cooperation and communication. They can teach game participants self-control and leadership. Damastuti et al. (2024) cite the challenge of using management games to maintain player engagement over a more extended period. In management games, a referee is used to interpret the rules and evaluate the results achieved based on the alternative solutions proposed by the participants. The essence of the game lies in the discussion, where each team must defend, justify, and critically assess their approaches, as well as the reasons for choosing a particular variant. However, the use of management games has drawbacks from an educational perspective, as players make decisions that are limited by the number of options they can make in the game; some decisions are rewarded more than others (Czauderna & Budke, 2020).

Business simulations offer an interactive learning experience that challenges participants to apply their training in a risk-free environment. These simulations help build specific skills, enhance conceptual knowledge, and allow participants to evaluate different strategies better. As a result, they can lead to an overall improvement in performance. Interpretive simulations, in particular, bridge theoretical learning and real-world experiences, providing a valuable transition from study to practice (Singh-Pillay, 2024).

There are numerous benefits and barriers associated with using management games and simulations. (Almohaini, 2016) the following advantages can be pointed out:

- A large number of participants can be involved, who cooperate in making decisions,
- Learning creates cohesion,
- Abstraction of reality,
- Growth of participants,
- Preparation of students for the real world (when used in schools),
- Rich discussions in teams,
- Creation of good relationships.

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Other reasons or benefits that arise from the use of management games and simulations are (StratXsimulations, 2024):

- Imitation of learning in the workplace,
- Risk-free decision-making,
- Realistic conditions,
- Timing,
- Teamwork,
- The Big Picture means that participants make their own decisions in a team, and their task is to read and analyse information and see the results in the end.

The above shows numerous benefits and compelling reasons for using management games and simulations in companies or schools. It is important to emphasise that this active educational method can effectively prepare future managers for real-world situations they will encounter. When used within companies, it tests and refines the experience and skills of managers and executives, helping them develop the expertise needed to navigate complex challenges in their roles.

Through such an educational process, they can increase their performance, make better decisions, analyse the necessary information more effectively, and reduce the risk of decisions. An active educational method, such as management games and simulations, is suitable for forming future managers and current ones.

So, what methods or tools do current managers in Slovakia use in their education? What is the current state of management games used by companies in Slovakia? Do managers use these games for their further development and education? What specific games do they use? What benefits do they experience when using them? How much do they invest in education through these active methods?

3. Research objective and methodology

The aim of the questionnaire survey, which targeted companies, was to determine what specific tools or techniques are currently used by companies in Slovakia to train their managers. The research focused on whether companies use management games with simulations, why some do not, and conversely, the benefits observed while using this active educational method. The research was conducted in several steps.

In the first step, a basic set of companies needed to be created, consisting of all companies from the Slovak Republic. Given that specific selection criteria were applied, purposive selection was used, meaning companies were carefully chosen based on these criteria. Companies were identified online, primarily through portals that provide information about the financial status of Slovak companies, with the Finstat.sk website being the main source. The companies were selected to meet the established criteria, including the number of employees, annual turnover, and the industry in which they operate.

The target group consisted of companies within the Slovak Republic operating in specific industries, including automotive, mechanical engineering, wholesale, electrical engineering, chemistry and plastics, metal production and metallurgy, IT, and transport and logistics. These companies were selected based on their annual turnover, categorised into two intervals (up to 50 million euros and over 50 million euros) and their number of employees, with two groups (50-249 employees and 250 or more employees). The sectors were selected based on the most competitive industries in Slovakia. The criterion of the number of employees was chosen because larger companies typically have more developed departments, particularly the education department, making them better employers. The annual turnover was selected to ensure that the companies are financially stable, not loss-making, and capable of allocating funds to implement management games and simulations.

After characterising the target group, the second step was determining the sample set. The sample set consisted of 300 companies from the Slovak Republic. It was impossible to confirm whether these companies use management games and simulations as part of their educational methods. These were only preliminary estimates suggesting that these companies may have incorporated such educational tools into the training process for their employees and managers.

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After specifying the sample, it was possible to conduct a primary survey. Before collecting data in the questionnaire survey, a pilot study was carried out on a sample of 10 companies to determine the questions' comprehensibility. The questionnaire survey was conducted from March to June 2020 and was created electronically using the Google form application. It consisted of 16 questions, divided into two sections. The first section aimed to gather information on why certain companies do not use management games and simulations. The second section focused on companies that use them, aiming to identify the observed benefits of these educational methods. The return rate of the questionnaires reached only 20%, i.e. 60 companies were willing to participate in the survey. This is a very low return rate, but certain conclusions can be drawn even with a given return rate.

Respondents/companies that participated in the survey are from the following areas: automotive, electrical engineering, IT, mechanical engineering, chemistry and plastics, transport and logistics, wholesale, metalworking and metallurgy. The most respondents were from the IT sector (29), followed by electrical engineering (8), automotive (7), chemistry and plastics (6), transport and logistics (5), mechanical engineering (4), metalworking (1) and wholesale (0). The highest number of respondents was from the Žilina region (28), from the Bratislava region (15), from the Trenčín region (7), from the Trnava region (4), from Banská Bystrica (2), from Prešov (2) and from Košice and Nitra (1) each came with (1) answer. More than half of the respondents (39) achieved an annual turnover of up to 50 million Euros. The rest of the respondents (19) achieved an annual turnover of over 50 million Euros, and 2 companies did not state an annual turnover. As for the number of employees, more than half of the respondents (32) have 250 or more employees (large company), (28) companies have 50-249 employees (medium-sized company).

4. Analysis and results

A questionnaire survey of Slovak companies revealed that training and workshops are the most commonly used traditional educational methods for training managers. In contrast, the least used methods are lectures and case studies. Respondents selected from four offered specific options: case studies, lectures, training, and workshops. They rated these methods on a scale from 0 to 5, where 0 meant “not used” and 5 meant “most used.” Detailed results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Training techniques/methods

Educational methods	0 - they do not use	1	2	3	4	5 - they use the most
Case studies	18	16	4	10	5	7
Lectures	9	14	13	10	7	7
Trainings	4	1	4	11	16	24
Workshops	9	6	6	7	14	18

Source: Authors' own creation

Another option was the “others” option with an open answer. Only 9 of the surveyed companies mentioned other educational methods or specific tools, including:

- E-learning, bar camps, coaching, micro-learning
- Games based on an experiential form for soft skills development
- Personal consultations
- Coaching, mock training, leadership development, rotation programs
- E-learning, language courses, conferences
- Brainstorming sessions
- Self-education for managers
- Webinars, video and traditional conferences, self-study, benchmarking
- Visits to other companies, various courses (aside from regular training)

Based on the findings, companies in Slovakia are relatively selective and deliberate in choosing the training methods they adopt. They also show creativity, as evidenced by a company that trains its managers using the

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form of experiential games. However, these innovative practices are still relatively rare among businesses in Slovakia.

As for modern active education methods, specifically management games and simulations, only 11 out of the 60 surveyed companies use them to educate their managers. Although this is a relatively small number, it is evident that companies are gradually becoming more aware of how to utilise their employees' potential better and improve their education. This reflects the understanding that relying solely on knowledge or expertise from one department is insufficient, especially when employees work in teams on diverse projects. Companies are beginning to see the value of cross-departmental collaboration and broader skill development. With this active method of games/testing themselves, they can also strengthen relationships in the team, improve communication, etc.

Companies recognise several benefits associated with the use of management games and simulations. Those who utilise these tools observe significant improvements in their managers. The following Figure 1 presents that most respondents (11) indicated that their managers are better equipped to handle problem situations and do so more effectively. Additionally, the quality of work, analytical skills, and overall performance show notable improvement. However, companies report the least progress in team dynamics, skill development, communication, and management.

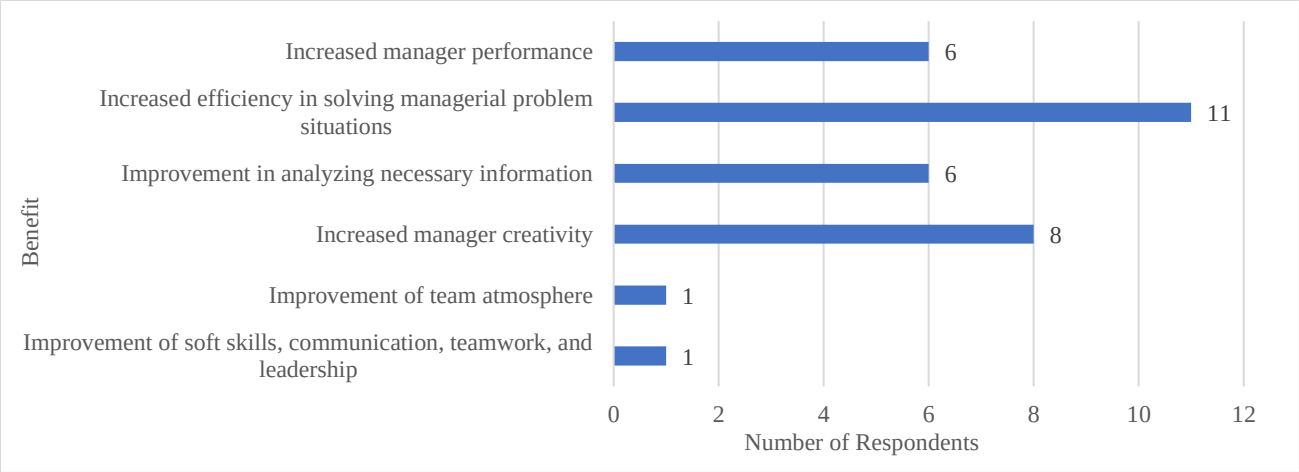

Figure 1. Benefits of using management games and simulations

Source: Authors' own creation

Based on the above data, it is crucial to focus the educational process on management games and simulations that are more comprehensive. These should emphasise teamwork, communication, management, role distribution, and other key areas supporting team collaboration and leadership. The implementation of more comprehensively focused management games and simulation improvements are likely to be seen in the two places where the least progress was reported.

The most frequently cited reasons why companies do not use management games and simulations are presented in Figure 2.

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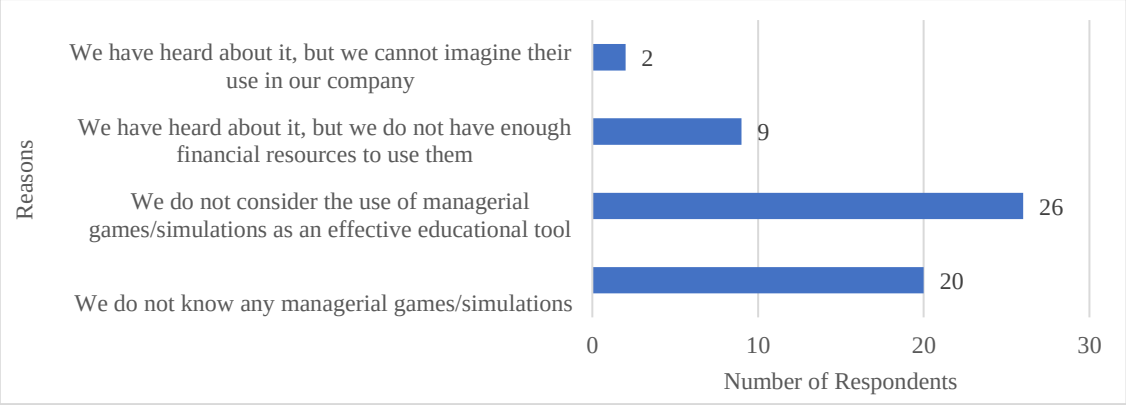

Figure 2. Reasons for not using management games and simulations

Source: Authors' own creation

Almost half of the surveyed companies (26) cannot imagine how they would use the given management game in their company. On the other hand, many companies (20) are still unfamiliar with management games or simulations. Additionally, fewer companies (9) cited a lack of funds as the reason for not using these tools. We can link this to the fact that the company has no reference to the management game (1) and also that the company management does not have time to think about the given training method (1). Another answer (1) was that the training concept is not set up appropriately, followed by the answer that there are other training priorities for managers, mainly focused on soft skills (1).

The response is, "There is no time for fun in practice, and we have to focus on work to survive; we have no time for games" (1). This answer suggests that the respondent may not fully grasp the value of management games and simulations. It's possible they did not carefully read the accompanying text in the questionnaire, which clearly defines the purpose and benefits of management games and simulations. This highlights the need for better communication about the importance of such educational tools and their role in enhancing real-world managerial skills. It is, therefore, possible to state that the respondent does not strive at all to diversify the educational process of the company and educate its managers or executives with an active educational method and not a "game".

Based on the responses collected, a recommendation could be made to appoint a responsible person with dedicated time to analyse the issue. This person could develop several options, such as purchasing a license or establishing cooperation with a university. Afterwards, they would submit proposals to top management, who would review the results and select the most suitable option for implementation. Responsibility for overseeing the entire process could remain with the designated individual, ensuring accountability and a clear path forward for introducing management games and simulations.

The additional reasons indicated by respondents not included in the questions were: "We have no references to any management game" and "The management does not have time to consider the proposals." These responses suggest that a lack of familiarity with management games and time constraints within the management team are significant barriers to adopting these tools in some companies.

Among the companies that use management games and simulations, 6 out of 11 stated that they use their management games and simulations combined with external ones, i.e. those created by a third party (purchase of a license). Three companies use only existing external management games, and only two use their own. The management games reported as being used by companies include Manahra and Stratis Game and other training methods classified as management games.
These are the following forms, tools, and methods of education:

- E-learning,
- Team educational games, role-playing,

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- Focusing on individual needs through an external company, in the case of development centres, they are focused on difficult conversations with employees (target group = junior superiors),
- Brainstorming activities, presentations, case studies, team building activities, charity events, lectures, physical activities,
- Own improvisation – "They are not games in the true sense of the word"; these are workshops and valuable conversations among themselves,
- Solving logical tasks simulating a particular situation, psychological and sociological games, various scenes with later analysis, group activities and team building,
- Leadership competencies, production situations (quality, technology),
- Prioritisation, teamwork.

This indicates that, while these companies may be using specific games, their understanding of what constitutes a "management game" could be broader and encompass various training tools beyond traditional simulations. Some companies use only two types of management games, namely Manahra and Stratis. These two games fall within the realms of research and strategic management. However, they are not comprehensively focused management games, meaning they cannot involve all managers or employees. Despite this, it was found that these active methods provide better employee benefits than traditional training methods.

The other respondents who listed different forms of training cannot be considered management games or simulations but rather "team building" methods. These methods help strengthen relationships, promote logical thinking, and improve communication. However, they do not integrate the theoretical knowledge across all departments or replicate decision-making processes like those in real corporate settings. As a result, while they offer valuable benefits, they do not provide the same comprehensive educational experience as management games and simulations.

Multiple factors influence the use of management games and simulations. The survey included companies that have implemented management games (Table 2) and those that have not (Table 3). This approach aims to gather insights from a broad range of companies to understand better the decision-making process and the factors that impact their choice of educational tools. The response options were structured on a scale, where 1 indicated minimal influence and 5 represented maximum influence on selecting or using a specific management game or simulation.

Factors influencing the choice of management games and simulations in companies that do not use management games are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Factors influencing the choice of management games and simulations (companies do not use games)

Factors	Number of Respondents				
	1 Minimal Impact	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 Maximum Impact**
Price	5	6	19	10	9
Quality of the game	4	2	12	10	21
Interest from managers	4	7	9	14	15
Time demand	4	5	12	14	14
Difficulty of the game itself	10	10	19	4	6
Choice of the game focus on a specific industry	4	3	13	13	16
Complexity of game focus (multiple industries together)	6	12	16	10	5

Source: Authors' own creation.

Based on the above data, companies that do not use management games and simulations have very different attitudes towards the factors that influence the choice of management games and simulations. The most important criterion for companies when choosing a management game and simulation, if they were to use them,

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is the quality of the game (21 respondents). Other significant factors with medium influence are the price and difficulty of the game. 19 respondents chose both options. These three initial factors greatly influence the choice of management games and simulations. There seems to be a contradiction. The most influential criterion for selecting a game is the quality of the game itself. However, if companies are unfamiliar with games, this creates a contradiction between their priorities and their experience or knowledge of available options. Companies might be prioritising a quality they haven't yet had the opportunity to assess, which presents a barrier to adoption. This means they cannot evaluate quality since they do not have sufficient knowledge and references in this area. The criteria related to the game's complexity and focus on the industry achieved higher values. Companies are looking for games tailored to specific industries and designed for particular managers rather than one-size-fits-all solutions. The aim is to align the games with the unique needs of different managerial roles and departments, allowing participants to integrate their knowledge and utilise their skills for success and self-improvement.

Factors influencing the choice of management games and simulations in companies that use management games are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Factors influencing the choice of management games and simulations (companies use games)

Factors	Number of Respondents				
	1 Minimum Impact	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 Maximum Impact**
Price	1	2	6	2	0
Quality of the game	0	0	1	5	5
Interest from managers	0	0	1	3	7
Time demand	0	0	3	6	2
Difficulty of the game itself	1	4	2	4	0
Choice of game focus on a specific industry	0	0	1	7	3
Complexity of game focus (multiple industries together)	1	1	5	3	1

Source: Authors' own creation

The findings showed that companies that use management games generally agreed on most of the criteria. Price is not a decisive factor for them; instead, those with expertise in the relevant educational area place greater emphasis on the quality of the game, the level of interest it generates among their managers, the time required, and the overall complexity of the game. They are also focused on a specific industry and place a lower priority on the education of their managers in a comprehensive focus. Companies want to educate managers in particular areas of the company more than whether they can connect knowledge from all areas.

Table 4. Annual costs of management games and simulations

Annual costs in Euros	Number of respondents
< 5 000	3
5 000 – 10 000	2
10 000 – 20 000	3
> 20 000	3

Source: Authors' own creation

Companies that use management games invest considerable amounts in them. The costs associated with purchasing management games and simulations vary, depending on factors such as the game's focus, complexity, and difficulty in terms of content and time required. Table 5 presents the annual costs related to purchasing and maintaining management games in companies that use them.

Management games and simulations have been used to train company managers for many years, especially abroad in developed countries. Company management quickly understood that training through this active method is effective; it trains employees in every business area and teaches teamwork, openness in

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communication and complex thinking. The result is an increased performance for employees and the entire company.

The main identified deficiency in the use of management games and simulations for the training of managers in companies in Slovakia is primarily low awareness and lack of knowledge about this active educational training method. Based on a questionnaire survey, it was found that the number of companies in Slovakia that use management games is very low. Out of 60 companies that participated in the questionnaire survey, only 11 companies use management games.

On the other hand, companies that use management games or are thinking about implementing them see fundamental benefits in their use, such as increasing the manager's creativity, the effectiveness of solving problem situations, increasing their performance, improving communication, teamwork, etc.

Unfortunately, companies in Slovakia still mostly use traditional educational methods, such as training and workshops, where employees are only passive listeners. The positive thing is that at least nine companies stated they also use other methods to educate employees, such as e-learning, brainstorming, coaching, and conferences. However, it is still impossible to consider these as purely active education methods.

Only two companies in the questionnaire survey wrote that they use a specific management game, namely the Manahra game and the Stratis game. The remaining companies listed more or less traditional methods they consider management games. On the other hand, some companies are attempting to create their active methods, which is a very positive development. These companies identified various forms of role-playing, soft skills training through experiential methods, and production simulations as examples of these approaches. Another positive finding is that companies are willing to invest considerable funds in management games and simulations, with investments ranging from 5,000 to over 20,000 Euros.

Conclusions

In conclusion, while management games and simulations have proven to be effective tools for training and developing managers globally, their adoption in Slovakia remains limited. The survey findings indicate a lack of awareness and understanding of these innovative educational methods among Slovak companies. However, the benefits observed by the few companies that do implement such methods as enhanced creativity, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork highlight their potential to improve managerial performance and contribute to organisational success significantly. The application of management games and simulations has been proven to be valuable tools for organisations operating in diverse sectors, such as non-profit, sports management, or manufacturing. While traditional training methods still dominate in Slovakia, there is a growing recognition of the value of active, experiential learning. With increased awareness and investment, management games and simulations could play a pivotal role in the future development of Slovak companies, fostering a more dynamic and capable workforce. Moreover, according to Koman et al. (2024), the use of modern technologies can significantly contribute to the creation of sustainable and effective personnel management.

The research was constrained by the lack of information obtained through the survey. On the one hand, few companies participated in the survey; therefore, acquiring more detailed information from individual companies would be appropriate. Future research should aim for a more thorough exploration of this issue, using qualitative data from interviews with managers, such as semi-structured interviews. Topics for further research should be, for example, a deeper examination of the benefits of management games for the educational process of managers, specific measurement of benefits over time, identification of factors influencing these benefits, etc.

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