Motivational Hypnosis as a Tool to Eliminate the Effects of Covid-19 Perception on Employee Motivation

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Abstract

Covid-19's emergence has significantly impacted the world, its workplaces and the motivation of employees. This study aims to determine the impact of how Covid-19 is perceived on employees' intrinsic motivation. It also aims to discover whether a motivational hypnosis session may influence the pandemic's effects, given that hypnosis is a well-known mental intervention that has been used for centuries to treat and help people in domains as varied as therapy, sports, education, and more recently, business. A three-step qualitative experimental study took place, involving ten employee volunteers. The first step was a first questionnaire exploring the effect of their perceptions of Covid-19 on their motivation. A motivational hypnosis session (written to increase employees' intrinsic motivation from the emotional intelligence framework) took place afterwards; the last step was a second questionnaire answered by the workers 48 hours after the session. Results showed that Covid-19 had slightly less of a negative effect on managers' motivation, which was 79% compared to non-executive employees' 87%. The motivational hypnosis session helped only two out of the ten employees to reduce the effects of the way they perceived the pandemic. However, it did have positive impact as it increased employees' intrinsic motivation. Future research on using hypnosis for the benefit of employees should therefore be conducted.

Keywords

hypnosis, motivation, Covid-19, workplace

1 Introduction and literature review

Covid-19 is a pandemic that has disrupted everyone's life. It started in December 2019 and caused a global panic. Research on this new pandemic effect is still ongoing. However, what is clear is that the virus changed many people's lives. For people's safety, remote work was proposed and strongly encouraged even among healthcare professionals (Lee and Lee, 2021). General studies on the outcome of this method and the pandemic were conducted, researching the impact on employees' well-being and mental health. Despite the already acknowledged importance of motivation at work, it is interesting that only a few studies focused on the pandemic's cause and possible effects.

In an advanced search for keywords related to the pandemic, covid19, covid-19, workplace, and motivation, only 10 articles emerged on sciencedirect.com (Aliabadi et al., 2021; Brooks et al., 2022; Marinho et al., 2021; Martínez Beltrán et al., 2021; Menon et al., 2022; Niklas et al.,

2022; Nordhagen et al., 2021; Samir AlKudsi et al., 2022; Schmitz et al., 2022; Strömberg and Wallgren, 2022). To the best of our knowledge, the only article which specifically linked these three keywords was Mahmoud et al. (2022), which used workplace motivation as one of the factors that may determine how the way Covid-19 is perceived affects customer orientation (Mahmoud et al., 2022).

There are several possible ways to enhance the motivation of employees. One approach involves implementing a motivational strategy like a reward system and social support in the workplace (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Another recent approach uses neurolinguistic programming (NLP) techniques derived from hypnosis. Hypnosis is a well-known mental intervention that has been used for centuries to treat and help people in different fields such as therapy, sports, education, and, more recently, business. Only a few studies have explored the use of hypnosis in the workplace.

This research is part of a broader research effort that investigates the possibility of using hypnosis to enhance intrinsic motivation from the emotional intelligence framework (Khefacha, 2021). If we take into consideration the environmental changes that have taken place globally due to the emergence of Covid-19, the fact that history shows that pandemics, in general, stay for some time and then disappear, bringing with them both negative and positive effects and changes, and the manifest lack of research into the motivation of employees in these extraordinary times, these factors arguably combine to make our research important, valuable, and innovative.

This paper focuses on Covid-19's effect on employees' motivation and whether a motivational hypnosis session would change the way they perceive Covid-19. The outcome of this study could provide helpful information and insights to managers, human resource professionals, and even the public on the benefits of using hypnosis in the workplace.

1.1 Effects of Covid-19
The Covid-19 pandemic hit the world in March 2020, affecting every organisation and aspect of life. Our society witnessed a drastic change due to its emergence. The economy was in a state of uncertainty. Everything came to a halt. The pandemic challenged the world to show how solution-oriented they were when facing a crisis. Decisions became urgent; changes had to be made to adapt to the new situation.

To keep up with the changes, several organisations and corporations had to alter how they usually operate. Many small businesses needed a way to survive (Bartik et al., 2020). In America, employment was reduced by 40%, and 43% of companies temporarily closed due to the explosive outbreak of Covid-19 (Bartik et al., 2020).

In this context, travel restrictions were implemented, drastically stopping flights and tourism. Schools, restaurants, transport, and public places, in general, got closed to avoid spreading the virus.

Some measures that were implemented in response to Covid-19, such as the lockdown and social distancing, resulted in the closure of some businesses (Karim et al., 2020). Taking into consideration the social distancing rule that took place worldwide, remote work for all employees for whom it is possible to work from home was introduced by several companies (Prasad et al., 2020).

Even before this extraordinary episode, remote work had been studied. Research showed that there were advantages to this solution (Madsen, 2003; Pérez Pérez et al., 2003) but also disadvantages (Diab-Bahman and Al-Enzi, 2020, Mostafa, 2021). While companies stood to save money and would be granting flexibility to the employees, it might also give rise to difficulty connecting with team members and potentially, also an inability to stay motivated (Mostafa, 2021).

George and Jones (2006) affirm that, in general, while an organisation may have appropriate strategies and administrative structure in place, it does not mean in and of itself that the organisation will be productive unless the workers are reasonably motivated to provide their best performance.

1.2 Individual level of Covid-19
In addition to the potential shock effect of a pandemic on organisations and society (MacIntyre, 2020; Shigemura et al., 2020), it has undoubtedly caused employee concern.

Covid-19 induced organisational changes in different businesses, and changes in general cause fear among employees because of the uncertainty that hovers over them (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). One of change's consequences is reduced job satisfaction and employee motivation (Schouteten and van der Vleuten, 2013). Following the onset of the pandemic, new processes started to emerge in companies. The impact of the pandemic on different sectors, such as hospitality and transport, where things had to stop due to lockdown, meant that millions of employees in the hospitality sector, for example, found themselves being laid off (Jones and Comfort, 2020), or forced into paid and unpaid leave (Foo et al., 2021).

The effect of downsizing during a crisis, such as the pandemic, leads to income loss which causes individuals feel a negative impact on their financial condition (Zhou et al., 2020). It also serves to generate lower motivation and job satisfaction among employees, who worry about facing the same fate as their former colleagues who have been laid off (Markovits et al., 2014). As some businesses had to shut down and fear of the possible effects of the pandemic on health, plus the visible impact on economies, made its presence felt, feelings of insecurity among employees started to rise. Recent results of Demirović Bajrami et al. (2021) showed that in times of crisis, employees' motivation level changes due to job insecurity. It is also interesting to note that when the world went through the 2008–2009 financial crisis, there was a significant change in employee motivation (Hitka and Sirotiaková, 2011).

Covid-19, in general, had a significant negative impact on individuals' mental health at work (Hamouche, 2020).

One of the reasons was the fact that overexposure to social media, which is not always a trusted source of information for updates about the pandemic (Gao et al., 2020), led to an intensification of the perception of the danger that the pandemic represents and increased anxiety (Shigemura et al., 2020). Due to the frequent use of social media during the epidemic, mental health issues like depression and anxiety became prevalent (Gao et al., 2020).

On the other hand, the lack of information on Covid-19 regarding the necessity of quarantine has been recognised as a significant source of stress for individuals (Brooks et al., 2020). Also, there is growing evidence is that living in a quarantine environment can harm mental health (Brooks et al., 2020, Rubin and Wessely, 2020).

1.3 Effects of remote work during and after a pandemic

Companies had no choice but to adapt to the situation, often switching to remote work. Research on this unique way of working has been conducted even before the emergence of Covid-19 and gained popularity during and following the crisis (Shareena and Shahid, 2020).

Remote work means that employees have to adjust their lives and find a way to separate personal and working lives. Those with families and children may find it more difficult to set such boundaries, which could hurt general well-being. In some cases, workers might try to increase their workload, which makes remote work unfavourable (Charalampous et al., 2019). By overworking, they are also attempting to get their supervisors attention as they would be worried about losing their job to the economic crisis (Delfino and van der Kolk, 2021). It also may induce a fear of being left aside and becoming invisible to the supervisors. Employees might observe to avoid such feelings and to gain recognition and feel connected, gain recognition, and feel related to others (Hafermalz, 2021).

It is essential to highlight that remote work can negatively affect employees' mental health due to the social isolation that working from home can cause (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Henke et al., 2016; Tavares, 2017). The research of Demirović Bajrami, conducted in 2021, during the pandemic, showed that isolation led to adverse mental and physical problems such as depression, tiredness, problems with sleeping, and headaches (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021). While previous and recent studies pointed out that remote work might hurt employees' well-being, other research showed that it might also positively affect and provide a better work-life balance. For example, it is an opportunity for employees to save on travel expenses (Tremblay

and Genin, 2007) while keeping the commuting time they used to spend from home to the workplace. This makes it more possible to practice their hobbies or spend more time with their families. This allows them to manage family issues better (Johnson et al., 2007). Working from home in case of sickness, like having a broken leg, might lead to less stress for those under any conditions.

Diab-Bahman and Al-Enzi's research findings point to the fact that remote work brought on by Covid-19 helped employees to increase their concentration and find a comfortable place in their home suitable for doing their job. Thus, most reported that they prefer working from home to the office. As some of them felt less resourceful at home, the majority confirmed that they could efficiently conduct at least 80% of their work expectations with a hybrid model of work, meaning to have the possibility of working partly at home and partly in the workplace (Diab-Bahman and Al-Enzi, 2020).

1.4 Covid-19 and motivation of employees

Motivation's importance in the workplace cannot be overstated. Besides its significant impact on organisations and work processes, Covid-19 also had a substantial effect on the motivation of employees.

Randa Diab-Bahman said based on Ekerman's idea, (Ekerman, 2006) that motivation also increases worker productivity and performance (Diab-Bahman, 2020; Kamery, 2004) and positively correlates with organisational effectiveness (Malik et al, 2011). When employees have the chance to be inspired by their work, they look forward to accomplishing corporate goals; those who perceive their work as a source of learning and progress and are motivated to perform their duties are negatively associated with turnover intentions (Cimbaljević et al., 2020; Mijatov et al., 2018).

In response to the crisis, changes such as the switch to remote work were implemented. In some cases, remote work positively correlates to women's motivation (Lim and Teo, 2000) and employees in general (Madsen, 2003). A more recent study on Covid-19 time found that an increase in intrinsic motivation could be observed when employees have flexibility over their job and autonomy (Delfino and van der Kolk, 2021). Another research finding was that remote work makes it more challenging to stay motivated (Mostafa, 2021). Other studies point out that changes in general can lead to a decrease in the level of workers' motivation (Schouteten and van der Vleuten, 2013), and that changes due to the pandemic will have

a negative effect on the job motivation level of employees (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021).

In the hospitality industry, some employees in Serbia who did not lose their jobs in this crisis reported feeling uncertain as to whether they would still be motivated to work after the end of Covid-19 (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021). However, in the healthcare sector, despite the pandemic, the motivation of nurses in Israel was found to be high as they were committed to helping patients (Sperling, 2021).

1.5 Influencing the motivation of employees

Motivation varies between no motivation at all, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation focuses on rewards, punishments, and working conditions. Intrinsic motivation concentrates on achievements, recognition, and what inspires people to do a task (Herzberg et al., 1959).

One example of enhancing extrinsic motivation is monetary incentives and task-contingent rewards (Bock et al., 2005). Other studies showed that motivation is correlated with non-monetary incentives, organisational culture, and ways of leading (Bassous, 2015), such as appreciation, recognition, and feedback (Kovach, 1995; Rai, 2004). Numerous factors can affect employee motivation, as shown in, for example, a recent study which used 30 elements to establish the factors impacting the motivation of Hungarian and Slovak employees (Hitka et al., 2017). Some standard methods are praising employees for their hard work and effort, providing positive feedback on a good performance, and providing a feeling of autonomy in the workplace by giving employees more control over their work and tasks (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

On the other hand, Goleman's definition of the components that constitute emotional intelligence (EI) includes motivation as the intrinsic type of motivation (Goleman, 2011). Emotional intelligence, according to him, represents interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. He also confirmed that EI could be learned and enhanced with different tools and wrote a book about how to do so with Cary Cherniss (Cherniss and Goleman, 2001), which confirms that there are tools that can develop employees' intrinsic motivation.

One of the new tools introduced to enhance emotional intelligence nowadays is neuro-linguistic programming (bin Ahmad, 2019), also called NLP. Even though hypnosis is the origin of NLP, there is no research about hypnosis as a tool to enhance EI. At the same time, despite the lack of research on the topic, hypnosis has been shown to have a positive impact on the improvement of organisational performance (Hejase, 2015). NLP has been used in the business arena and has been shown to enhance the motivation of sales staff, customer service teams (Joey and Yazdanifard, 2015), and employees in general, besides being effective at improving work engagement and job engagement performance (Opfer and Abrams, 2004).

A recent study with experienced Japanese managers showed that NLP enhances workplace mental health competencies like autonomous motivation and trust (Kotera and Van Gordon, 2019). It has also been found that hypnosis is a technique that can enable internal motivation and goal setting and gives more control over emotions (Brann et al., 2015). Milton Erickson's research on hypnosis was done weekly, depending on the problem to be treated (Chapman, 2005).

1.6 Research questions

If we consider the pandemic and all the changes that came with it, it remains essential to point out that intrinsic motivation helps people deal better with challenging situations (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Despite the importance of motivation in the workplace, especially in these extraordinary times, a lack of research on the direct effects of Covid-19 on it can be observed. In an advanced search for the pandemic, covid19, covid-19, workplace, and motivation keywords, only 10 articles emerged on sciencedirect.com (Aliabadi et al., 2021; Brooks et al., 2022; Marinho et al., 2021; Martínez Beltrán et al., 2021; Menon et al., 2022; Niklas et al., 2022; Nordhagen et al., 2021; Samir AlKudsi et al., 2022; Schmitz et al., 2022; Strömberg and Wallgren, 2022). To the best of our knowledge, the only research that links these three categories is research focused on making a generational study of employees' customer orientation. They used workplace motivation as one of the factors in their research. One of their results was that Covid-19 has an adverse effect on workplace motivation (Mahmoud et al., 2022).

In this study, we checked the results before and after administering a motivational hypnosis session on our sample. As there was no scientific mention of how long to wait before checking the results of a hypnosis session in general, the duration required to examine the outcome of the hypnosis session was confirmed by two hypnotherapists to be 48 hours.

As more research investigates the effect of this extraordinary crisis of Covid-19, many questions have emerged based on the literature review. In this paper, we have focused on answering the following two questions:

1. Does Covid-19 have a negative effect on the motivation of employees?
2. Does a motivational hypnosis session influence the way Covid-19 is perceived?

2 Methodology

This study is part of a qualitative experimental research investigation titled "Motivation of employees in Covid-19 times and hypnosis effect", carried out as part of a master's thesis in 2021. A motivational hypnosis session was specially written for the research (Khefacha, 2021). The basis of the master's research was a study of the motivation of employees from the perspective of the emotional intelligence framework associated with hypnosis and the Covid-19 pandemic. This paper focuses on the Covid-19 effect on the motivation of employees in general, before and after a motivational hypnosis session. Fig. 1 shows the overall research design.

The pandemic situation and the research novelty implied using a qualitative exploratory design. A focus group of 10 colleagues agreed to participate in this study and meet face-to-face in their workplace for the hypnosis experiment. Five were working at the manager level, and 5 as non-executive employees. The experiment took place in the second half of March 2021. The company's human resources, which operates in the business support market, approved the research. The anonymity of the company and the volunteers were promised.

To be able to take part in the research, the volunteers confirmed not having a diagnosis of bipolarity, schizophrenia,

or depression, as hypnosis is not recommended for these pathologies (Walker, 2016). It is important to explain that despite a test to check if someone can be put under hypnosis, we based the experiment on the fact that everyone is hypnotisable (Hawkins and Wenzel, 1999).

As part of a three-part study, the first stage of our research was a questionnaire with 5 demographic questions and 3 questions assessing Covid-19 perception at the workplace. Two of them were taken from a recent article where a part of their research focused on the possible effect of Covid-19 perceptions on the motivation of employees (Mahmoud et al., 2022). The third question was designed for this study, considering specific information about the company where participants worked. A link to the first questionnaire was shared with each participant just before the hypnosis session. In this third part of the experiment, only one statement was shared to study the effect of the motivational hypnosis session on employees' Covid-19 perception, "The coronavirus pandemic is no more making me feel discomfort". The first questionnaire in the research was a 5-point Likert-type question (1 = strongly disagree', 5 = 'strongly agree'), while the second one was to be assessed with a yes/no answer.

Once filled, a 40-minute motivational hypnosis session, the second part of the research, took place. Having a certification as a technician in hypnosis allows using hypnosis for motivational purposes and personal development in general. The researcher wrote the session and checked it with two hypnotherapists. Participants could choose the session's language; some preferred having it in French and others in English.

As explained in the literature review, 48 hours was the waiting time before sharing the second questionnaire. Two hypnotherapists confirmed the timeframe.

3 Results

3.1 Sample

Demographic questions encompassed nationality, age group, educational level, job position, and the number of years working in the company, as shown in Table 1. The job position of the volunteers and their number of years working in the company showed the emergence of two groups based on managers, those with six years' or more experience, and non-executive employees with less than five years of experience with the company.

Before discussing the outcome of the questionnaire, it is also essential to emphasise that all the volunteers successfully underwent hypnosis, meaning that they all fell
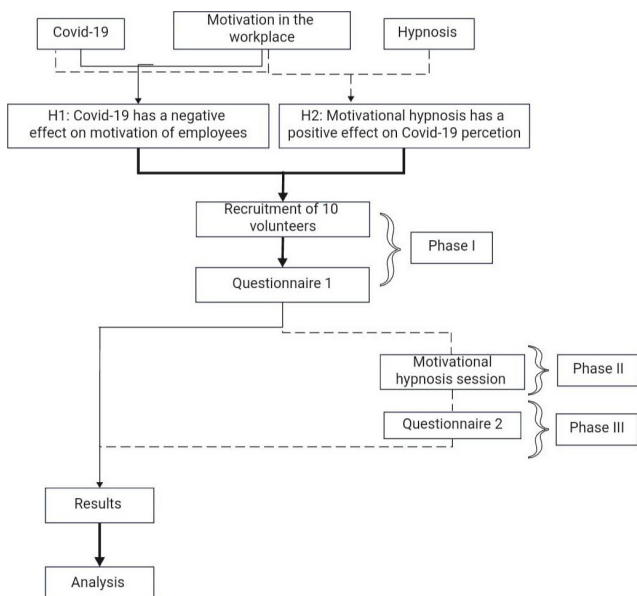

Fig. 1 Research design

Table 1 Description of the sample

		Age	Education	Nationality	Experience
Managers	V1	23–40	MSc/MA	Hungarian	12
	V2	23–40	MSc/MA	Cameroun	9
	V3	23–40	MSc/MA	Tunisian	8
	V4	> 40	BSc/BA	Hungarian	7
	V5	23–40	MSc/MA	Cameroun	6
Non-executive	V6	23–40	MSc/MA	Tunisian	3
	V7	23–40	MSc/MA	Hungarian	2
	V8	23–40	MSc/MA	Moroccan	2
	V9	23–40	MSc/MA	French	1
	V10	23–40	MSc/MA	Hungarian	1

into a deep trance and showed acceptance of the hypnosis suggestions.

3.2 Results regarding the hypotheses

Results from both questionnaires were converted into percentages, as shown in Table 2. The calculus is the sum of the answers to all questions for each participant divided by the total number of questions, making it that (1 = 'strongly disagree', 5 = 'strongly agree') and (yes = 1, no = 0).

Determining Covid-19 perception of employees on their motivation was assessed by answering the three statements Q1: "I believe Covid-19 has hurt the motivation of employees"; Q2: "The corona pandemic is making me feel discomfort"; and Q3: "Downsizing in time of Covid-19 had a negative effect on my work motivation". The last question was deemed crucial because the company in question had to downsize in the previous year owing to Covid-19. Fig. 2 shows that downsizing harmed all 10 volunteers in our study.

Fig. 2 Covid-19 perception on the motivation of employees

The X-axis in Fig. 2 represents each participant answers on the 3 questions. The answers were following a Likert scale from 1 = 'strongly disagree' to 5 = 'strongly agree', which represents the Y-axis.

The manager's group volunteer number 5 experienced the least overall impact from the Covid-19. Since March 2020, all staff has worked remotely due to the epidemic. Only that employee from our sample started attending work every day at the workplace again a few months before our study. He confirmed that this had improved his perception of the impact of Covid-19 and the company's downsizing.

Verifying the first hypotheses, participants' answers on the first questionnaire showed that Covid-19 did have a negative effect on the motivation of employees in general, with a score of 83%, as shown in Table 2. Compared to non-executive employees, managers were less impacted by Covid-19, with 79% versus 87%.

Following the second part of the experience, all employees confirmed an increase in their motivation level of over

Table 2 Frequencies of the answers

		Years of work	Covid-19 perception before hypnosis	Effect of motivational hypnosis on motivation	Effect of motivational hypnosis on covid-19 perception
Managers	V1	12	87%	80%	0%
	V2	9	73%	60%	0%
	V3	8	87%	60%	0%
	V4	7	87%	40%	100%
	V5	6	60%	100%	100%
	Total		79%	68%	40%
Non-executive	V6	3	73%	90%	0%
	V7	2	100%	40%	0%
	V8	2	93%	40%	0%
	V9	1	87%	70%	0%
	V10	1	80%	60%	0%
	Total		87%	60%	0%
Summarized			83%	64%	20%

50% compared to before the hypnosis session. Only two employees verified experiencing a favourable shift in their view of the influence of Covid-19 on their motivation, according to data gathered from the second questionnaire in Table 2. The effect of the motivational hypnosis session on the motivation of employees was determined by answering another set of questions that were used in the broader research of Khefacha (2021).

4 Discussion

In the present study, we explored the pandemic effect on employees' motivation and the impact of a motivational hypnosis session on their perception of Covid-19. We experimented starting with a first questionnaire, a hypnosis session, and finishing with a second questionnaire. The first questionnaire confirms the first question in this research, which is about if the pandemic has a negative effect on the motivation of employees. Our findings show that its negative effect reached 83% over the motivation of employees. While the motivation of employees in a business support centre was negatively affected by Covid-19, we can see a difference in the healthcare industry, where nurses in Israel were highly motivated to do their job despite the pandemic situation (Sperling, 2021).

The only work from the manager's group, whose report indicated an effect of 60%, confirmed that he has been going to the office for the last few months. He was the only one in our sample who took advantage of the company's hybrid mode for the employees. That volunteer confirmed that going to the office positively affected his perception of the pandemic. He confirmed that the pandemic had a less negative effect on him than in the past.

It is interesting to notice that the effect of Covid-19 on the motivation of the managers is lower than on the rest of the employees, with an impact of 79% versus 87%. So, despite the harmful effect the pandemic has had on employees in general, managers were less impacted than non-executive employees. This leads to the possibility that the number of years working in the company or the employee's position makes a difference to the pandemic's level of effect on workers.

The research of Mahmoud et al. (2022) found that the way Covid-19 is perceived has an effect that is less favourable on the motivation of the younger generation, which represents Generations Y and Z, than Generation X. Our sample is constituted of 1 person from Generation X who belongs to managers group and 9 volunteers from generation Y who belongs to both groups of managers and non-executive employees. Generation X constitutes people older than 40 years old, and Generation Y employees are those between 23 and 40 years old. Our study's results showed that the employee's age did not matter. Each worker's position in the company made a significant difference between the impact of managers and the rest of the employees.

A reported downsizing in the company automatically led to job insecurity as employees were uncertain if there would be more downsizing due to the pandemic. Our results confirm that downsizing hurts the motivation of employees, and so a change in their cause to the recent developments of Demirović Bajrami et al. (2021).

Analysing the results of the second questionnaire of the third phase of our experiment showed that the motivational hypnosis session did not positively affect the way Covid-19 was perceived by employees. However, if the matter is consider from a broader research perspective, we must recall that the hypnosis session was created in the first instance to boost workers' intrinsic motivation, a goal which was met. The session did not focus on the pandemic, which might very well account for why it did not positively affect the way the pandemic was perceived. Based on the results, hypnosis might positively affect motivation, so further research must focus on this.

4.1 Limitation

Limitations of this study include that generalisation is not possible due to the small sample of volunteers and the fact that they were employees from the same company. Given the Covid-19 situation, the curfew, and the fact that this study was a part of a master's thesis, finding volunteers who would accept to do the hypnosis session face to face and agree to doing it at a given time was a challenge. It would be interesting to do quantitative research with a more significant sample. Also, the lack of research on the time needed to check the hypnosis session's outcome suggests that a longitudinal study could be considered for future research.

5 Conclusion

Covid-19 abruptly disrupted many lives. This global shock encouraged transformation and forced firms to adopt new business practices. With remote employment and education, it was possible to be flexible and adapt to the pandemic. Studies about the pandemic started to emerge. Employees' motivation at the workplace had already been studied many times, but what about the effect of this crisis?

On the other hand, despite the lack of scientific research, hypnosis is being used in different fields besides medicine

as a personal development tool, to handle issues such as self-confidence, stress management, and motivation.

This research is the first to study how the way the pandemic is perceived affects the motivation of employees, as well as the impact of a motivational hypnosis session. This makes it an essential addition to the scientific literature dealing with motivation, the pandemic, and hypnosis. Due to its originality, a qualitative experimental methodology was employed.

From the conducted study, regardless of nationality or gender, it can be inferred that the Covid-19 pandemic had less of an impact on the motivation of employees with more experience or occupying a higher position. We could see a difference in the results between managers

and non-executive employees. Due to the small sample size examined, a more solid conclusion is needed. It has been confirmed that the pandemic hurt employees' motivation. However, after the motivational hypnosis session, only two employees out of the ten volunteers in our sample experienced a positive effect on the way they viewed Covid-19. Nevertheless, the session positively affected the employees' intrinsic motivation and improved it. This implies that hypnosis might effectively enhance employees' intrinsic motivation as part of an emotional intelligence framework.

This research contributes to the still scarce studies on the direct effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the motivation of employees. It also opens the door for further studies investigating the possibility of using hypnosis in the workplace.

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