

## Motivation to Work in the Context of COVID-19 Impact on Tourism Industry Enterprises

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** To explore the work motivation of managers of tourism enterprises during the COVID-19 period.

**Design/methodology:** Qualitative research conducted from April to May 2021 in a form of semi-structured interviews with twelve tourist entrepreneurs from the Silesian region.

**Findings:** The COVID-19 caused changes in work performance, including a decrease of work motivation, in the tourism industry. However, at the same time, it stimulated the appearance of new sources of work motivation like, e.g., a desire to overcome the crisis, survival on the market, caring for the staff, a sense of professional passion or concern for the development of the branch or region. Several sources of work motivation were identified that were divided into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of people managing tourism enterprises in the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Research limitations/implications:** Research findings are not representative and cannot be generalized. It would be worthwhile to undertake future research on: how – over time – the pandemic and its course changed the attitudes of tourism entrepreneurs, including their motivation to work; whether this motivation differs when different: types of enterprises (e.g. catering and MICE), enterprise location (e.g. seaside/mountain), segment of tourists (e.g. holiday/business tourists) are considered; a larger sample of respondents with the use of a quantitative approach.

**Originality/value:** COVID-19 caused not only a decrease in motivation to work, which is more often stressed in the literature, but also became an impulse to the emergence of new sources of managers' work motivation that are completely different than before the pandemic. The identification and exploration of those sources, divided into intrinsic and extrinsic work motivation, create an added value of the paper.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 pandemic, work motivation, tourism industry, entrepreneurs, employees.

**JEL:** M21; Z30, M54

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## Motywacja do pracy w kontekście wpływu COVID-19 na przedsiębiorstwa branży turystycznej

### Streszczenie

**Cel:** ocena motywacji do pracy menedżerów przedsiębiorstw turystycznych w okresie COVID-19.

**Metodyka:** badania jakościowe prowadzone od kwietnia do maja 2021 r. w formie wywiadów pół-strukturyzowanych z dwunastoma przedsiębiorcami turystycznymi z województwa śląskiego.

**Rezultaty badawcze:** COVID-19 spowodował zmiany w wydajności pracy, w tym spadek motywacji do pracy w branży turystycznej. Jednocześnie jednak stymulowało to pojawienie się nowych źródeł motywacji do pracy, takich jak np. chęć wyjścia z kryzysu, przetrwanie na rynku, dbałość o personel, poczucie pasji zawodowej czy troska o rozwój branży lub regionu. Zidentyfikowano kilka źródeł motywacji do pracy, które podzielono na motywację wewnętrzną i zewnętrzną osób zarządzających przedsiębiorstwami turystycznymi w pandemii COVID-19.

**Ograniczenia/implikacje badawcze:** wyniki badań nie są reprezentatywne i nie można ich uogólniać. Warto byłoby w przyszłości podjąć badania nad następującymi kwestiami: jak z biegiem czasu pandemia i jej przebieg zmieniły postawy przedsiębiorców turystycznych, w tym ich motywację do pracy; czy ta motywacja różni się, gdy uwzględnimy: rodzaj przedsiębiorstw (np. catering i MICE), ich lokalizację (np. region nadmorski/górski), segment turystów (np. turyści wakacyjni/biznesowi) na większej próbie respondentów z zastosowaniem podejścia ilościowego.

**Oryginalność/wartość dodana:** COVID-19 spowodował nie tylko spadek motywacji do pracy, co jest coraz częściej podkreślane w literaturze, lecz także stał się impulsem do pojawienia się nowych, zupełnie innych niż przed pandemią, źródeł motywacji do pracy menedżerów. Identyfikacja i eksploracja tych źródeł, z podziałem na motywację wewnętrzną i zewnętrzną, stanowi wartość dodaną artykułu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** pandemia COVID-19, motywacja do pracy, branża turystyczna, przedsiębiorcy, pracownicy.

### 1. Introduction

The effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic have affected many different businesses. The tourism industry has been hit particularly hard. Limited travel on a global scale resulted in the lack of opportunities or a significantly limited possibility of running a business, e.g. in accommodation (Baum & Hai, 2020), catering (Harms, Alfert, Cheng, & Kraus, 2021), travel agencies (Celik & Atac, 2021), transport (Dong, Ma, Jia, & Tian, 2021) and many other industries related to tourism. According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (May 2021), arrivals of international tourists in 2020 fell by 73%. It was the worst year for international tourism as the number of travelers returned to the level of 30 years ago. Despite the ongoing measures to counteract the negative effects of the pandemic due to the emergence of new COVID-19 variants, travel restrictions and uneven vaccination of the public, uncertainty among tourism entrepreneurs remains high. This also applies to tourism entrepreneurs in Poland, which is confirmed by the data published by the Central Statistical Office (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2020). According to it, in the last two months of 2020, enterprises (93.5% of respondents in November and 84.7% in December)

assessed their situation related to the spread of the coronavirus as serious or threatening the functioning of the company, and none of the companies described their situation as stable.

As a result of these negative effects, both employees and entrepreneurs have lost their motivation to work. At the same time, however, research results show that COVID-19 has also caused changes that could be perceived as positive. For example, the pandemic situation can stimulate the innovation or creativity of entrepreneurs and may constitute “an opportunity for a renewed commitment to supporting worker well-being” (Autin, Blustein, & Garriott, 2020, p. 487). It is also said that “an emerging sense of hope centers on the belief that our society can reinvent itself to be more caring, just, and equitable” (Autin et al., 2020, p. 492). Therefore, the crisis may act as a stimulus, especially for people managing companies who feel responsible for their employees. All this may, paradoxically, favor the development of new opportunities and generate benefits – both economic and, more broadly, social ones (Lee, Xu, & Yang, 2021).

In the literature, including Polish, there is a lack of research that indicates whether, and above all how, COVID-19 changed work motivation in the tourism industry. There are studies in international literature on the perception of professional career and motivation to work as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Autin, et al., 2020; Baum & Hai, 2020; Lee, et al., 2021), but these are mainly the results of quantitative research and they concern employees. With this type of subject, often related to the strong emotions of tourism industry entrepreneurs, as well as taking into account the importance and multifaceted nature of the issues raised, qualitative research may be particularly valuable. On the other hand, in Polish literature, the focus is mainly on the tourism sector and its general condition as a result of COVID-19 (Stojczew, 2021a) or the impact of the pandemic on the assessment of professional work performed remotely (Dolot, 2020; Sliż, 2020) more often in industries other than tourism (Stojczew, 2021b). This issue is therefore a research gap that should be filled.

The aim of this paper is to explore the work motivation of managers of tourism enterprises during the COVID-19 period. To achieve this aim, from April to May 2021 semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve tourist entrepreneurs from the Silesian region.

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1. Motivation to Work and Its Intrinsic and Extrinsic Sources

Motivation is one of the most important functions of management. It is understood as a force affecting the adoption and orientation of behavior in a specific way (Xanhtakis, 2019). It is motivation which, having its source in meeting specific needs, often determines the decisions and actions taken by

members of the organization (Tovmasyan & Minasyan, 2020). It is because performance arises when people want to and can perform a task. It is “a function of motivation and ability – if either is missing, performance will not occur” [thus] “motivation arouses, directs, and sustains behavior” (Tovmasyan & Minasyan, 2020, p. 26). For example, if employees feel that their work is properly appreciated in the organization, then they work better, which may also result in an increase in the level of their work effectiveness, and thus, in positive effects for the organization as a whole. Very important is also the motivation of people managing organization – i.e. owners, presidents, directors and managers. Analyses of managers’ work motivation are in line with the trend of recent management research literature (Czakoń, 2015; Wójcik & Klimas, 2016) on antecedencies considered at the individual level (microfoundations). Indeed, it is increasingly recognized that “research at the microfoundations level will [fully] understand the decisions and behaviors of people in an organization” (Czakoń, 2015, p. 798) that result in specific outcomes at the level of the organization, network or sector. For instance, whether and how much organizations’ managers are motivated to work determines the next steps in running the business, including a possible decision to keep it open or close it. Such important decisions are made especially in times of difficult and uncertain conditions, an example of which is the current situation caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Why people want to take certain action and are prone to certain behaviors, including taking up or continuing work, is explained by various theories of motivation. There are many theories of motivation in the literature, examples include Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Herzberg’s two-factor theory, goal-setting theory, reinforcement theory, or expectancy theory. At the same time, the literature indicates various sources or factors of motivation. Generally, they can be divided into two groups, which allows us to talk about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation originates from sources inside a person and extrinsic one – from the outside. Intrinsic sources of motivation are, for example: individual goals, enjoyment, pride, interest, knowledge, and self-worth, while extrinsic are money, rewards, deadlines, and punishment (Lai, 2011). Various sources of motivation, broken down into intrinsic and extrinsic ones and in relation to e.g. characteristics of a given person (employee), such as age or gender or the employment sector represented (public vs. private), have been previously studied in the literature (e.g. Boumans, Jong, & Janssen, 2012; Mahmoud et al., 2020; Bezzina, Azzopardi, & Vella, 2013; Chen, 2012). However, there is still little research on the sources of motivation for the work of organization managers in the new conditions in which these organizations currently operate, i.e. the global COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2.2. Performing Work in COVID-19 Conditions – The Results of the Literature Review

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in major changes in the way people work. Thus, some recent literature studies started the discussion on the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the motivation of people to work (Spurk & Straub, 2020). Changes in performing work are related to, e.g.: 1) losing job (unemployment) or changing working conditions, 2) work-life balance problems or 3) owners and employees' mental and physical health problems (Autin et al., 2020). These changes strongly affected decisions and activities of people running or working in tourism enterprises.

Regarding unemployment, many people lost their jobs almost overnight as a result of the pandemic (WTTC, 2021). This was especially the case of those industries related to tourism, where – due to suddenly restrictions, which were then maintained for a long time – it was forbidden to conduct business (e.g. hotel or catering). Moreover, many people were forced to take holidays or worked for lower salaries – this also affected the financial situation of owners and employees in the tourism industry. Regarding work-life balance, many people had to switch to remote work. Working from home, in turn, is associated with disruptions, it can not only make it difficult to perform work, but also increase the feeling of isolation (*Reimagining Work in the Era of COVID-19*, 2020). For instance, the recent research done by Tovmasyan and Minasyan (2020) reveals that people are most motivated when they are in the workplace, and for only 12% of respondents remote work is motivating. This isolation, in turn, negatively affects the next of the mentioned elements – i.e. health, especially mental one (Noguchi, 2020). It is not only the result of remote work, but also the need to fulfill all sanitary requirements, e.g. maintain physical distance or wear a mask. Many people performing their work also risked their physical health, especially those in areas directly exposed to the disease. In addition, both mental and physical health is affected by job insecurity (Soomro, Kundi, & Kamran, 2019) caused by COVID-19 or the need to redefine the career path (Autin et al., 2020).

All the indicated factors may lead to a decrease in motivation to work in both managers of tourism enterprises and their employees as well (Autin et al. 2020; Filimonau, Derqui, & Matute, 2020). However, there are no studies that would indicate whether the COVID-19 pandemic is connected to only a decrease in this motivation – by the occurrence of the negative effects described – or in some way may also stimulate work motivation, for example, through the emergence of its new sources in the existing circumstances, namely intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones. This research takes up this thread, but – due to the type of entities covered by the study – only in relation to the motivations of managers of organizations, not employees.

### 3. Method

The study uses qualitative research carried out in accordance with the interpretative paradigm, assuming that reality is how the interviewees see it, hence – in the case of specific research problems – it is worth giving a voice to them and showing their subjective perception of given issues (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Additionally, qualitative research is justified when the research problems are new, socially important, and also of a complex nature (Glinka & Czakon, 2021). This concerns also the issue of exploring work motivation in the COVID-19 pandemic, which is new, complex (e.g. due to the diversity of potential sources of motivation) and important from the social point of view.

To achieve this aim, from April to May 2021 semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve tourist entrepreneurs from the Silesian region in Poland. All interviews, because of safety reasons, were conducted online using Google meet or Zoom platform. The choice of interviewees was purposeful, combined with the snowball technique – the president of the Polish Chamber of Tourism (PCT), who was one of interviewees and knew the community very well, was asked to recommend more interviewees for the research. The interviewees were owners and managers of various types of tourism industry enterprises, i.e. tourist attractions (3 interlocutors) – two museums and a mine adapted for tourist purposes, tourist intermediaries – i.e. travel agencies (also 4 interlocutors, including a PCT representative also running travel agency), representatives of accommodation facilities (3 interviewees) and MICE companies (2 entities). Regarding the criteria of purposeful sample selection, it was assumed that the interviewees must: 1) represent various types of enterprises related to the tourism industry, in order to ensure a variety of identified attitudes and behaviors in terms of work motivation, 2) have knowledge about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on a given enterprise and on their work motivation, 3) represent enterprises operating in one area – the Silesian Voivodeship – in order to limit the possible various views on the analyzed issues resulting from COVID-19 restrictions in other Polish voivodships, 4) be entities of different legal form and size in order to assure diversity, which is very important in qualitative research (Glinka & Czakon, 2021; Czakon & Czernek-Marszałek, 2021), 5) be interlocutors willing to share their thoughts on how COVID-19, for being a very difficult experience, has influenced the company they represent – see Table 1.

It was assumed that the above-mentioned criteria would allow to: solve the research problem posed; assure that the studied phenomenon would occur both in the region selected and in enterprises; create reliable descriptions and explanations reflecting the reality under study, selection of a sample that was feasible (reachability, time, financial resources, etc.) (Miles & Huberman, 2000).

Table 1  
Interviewee characteristics

| Interv. code | Type of activity   | Function in the company | Year of establishment | Legal form                  | Size   | Location        | Range of activity |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------|-------------------|
| E1           | Accommodation      | Owner                   | 2006                  | Private sole proprietorship | Micro  | Żarki           | national          |
| E2           | Travel agency      | Owner                   | 1991                  | Private sole proprietorship | Micro  | Bielsko-Biała   | regional          |
| E3           | Travel agency      | Director                | 1992                  | General partnership         | Small  | Bielsko-Biała   | regional          |
| E4           | MICE               | Owner                   | 2010                  | Private sole proprietorship | Micro  | Katowice        | regional          |
| E5           | Travel agency      | Owner                   | 1997                  | Limited liability company   | Small  | Żory            | national          |
| E6           | Accommodation      | Director                | 2001                  | Limited liability company   | Medium | Zawiercie       | national          |
| E7           | Travel agency PCT  | Owner                   | 1991                  | Civil partnership           | Micro  | Gliwice         | regional          |
| E8           | Tourist attraction | Office manager          | 1953                  | Association                 | Small  | Tarnowskie Góry | global            |
| E9           | MICE               | Owner                   | 1991                  | Private sole proprietorship | Micro  | Katowice        | European          |
| E10          | Tourist attraction | Director                | 1970                  | Public institution          | Small  | Chorzów         | regional          |
| E11          | Tourist attraction | Director                | 2004                  | Public institution          | Small  | Tychy           | national          |
| E12          | Accommodation      | Manager                 | 2015                  | Private sole proprietorship | Small  | Ustroń          | national          |

Source: Interviews conducted by the author.

The interview consisted of three parts. The first concerned the entity's activities in the field of providing services/selling products (whether anything changed in this respect in the COVID-19 pandemic and what), the second concerned relations with employees and other companies in the time of the pandemic, and the third related to the assessment of one's own professional work (including motivation to work in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic). The questionnaire consisted of a total of 14 open questions and interviewees' characteristics.

The shortest interview lasted less than one hour (54 minutes), the longest one was nearly 3 hours (174 minutes), and the average was almost 2 hours (108 minutes). All interviews were recorded, then each of them was transcribed and coded using the abduction – first, deductive codes were used relating to: 1. the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of work performance, 2. and 3. – sources of decrease/increase in managers' motivation to work (in division into: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation). These codes were then detailed by inductive codes emerging while reading and analyzing the transcription – see Table 2.

Table 2  
Codes used in abductive analysis

| Code no.    | Name (characteristics)  | Type of code |
|-------------|---|--------------|
| <b>1.</b>   | <b>NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF THE PANDEMIC IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK PERFORMANCE</b>                                | D            |
| 1.1.        | Loss of job or fear of it   | D            |
| 1.2.        | Change or fear of changing working conditions   | D            |
| 1.3.        | Work-life balance problem   | D            |
| 1.4.        | Isolation   | D            |
| 1.5.        | Physical and mental health problems   | D            |
| <b>2.</b>   | <b>SOURCES OF DECREASE IN MANAGERS' MOTIVATION TO WORK IN EFFECT OF COVID-19</b>                          | D            |
| <b>2.1.</b> | <b><i>Extrinsic motivation</i></b>  | D            |
| 2.1.1.      | Uncertainty if and when it will be possible to conduct business   | I            |
| 2.1.2.      | Uncertainty whether you will receive financial aid – the attitudes of the government (anti-crisis shield) | I            |
| 2.1.3.      | Rising operating costs with declining revenues or zero revenues   | I            |
| <b>2.2.</b> | <b><i>Intrinsic motivation</i></b>  | D            |
| 2.2.1.      | Discouragement from work – internal demotivation (not finding joy in running a business)                  | I            |
| <b>3.</b>   | <b>SOURCES OF INCREASE IN MANAGERS' MOTIVATION TO WORK IN EFFECT OF COVID-19</b>                          | D            |
| <b>3.1.</b> | <b><i>Extrinsic motivation</i></b>  | D            |
| 3.1.1.      | Necessity to perform statutory obligations – as a public entity   | I            |
| <b>3.2.</b> | <b><i>Intrinsic motivation</i></b>  | D            |
| 3.2.1.      | Believing that the crisis will pass and the situation will stabilize                                      | I            |



Tab. 2 – continued

| Code no. | Name (characteristics)   | Type of code |
|----------|--|--------------|
| 3.2.2.   | Strong determination for the enterprise to survive   | I            |
| 3.2.3.   | Satisfaction that there is still a place to work   | I            |
| 3.2.4.   | Satisfaction with any success of the company in a difficult situation  | I            |
| 3.2.5.   | Willingness to support employees   | I            |
| 3.2.5.1. | The need to act as a psychologist – increasing the morale of the team  | I            |
| 3.2.5.2. | The need to help the employee in everyday life   | I            |
| 3.2.6.   | Action of the manager for the common (the team) good   | I            |
| 3.2.7.   | Tightening the ties between employees and the desire to maintain these ties, satisfaction that the team members support each other | I            |
| 3.2.8.   | The possibility of using new, creative solutions in the enterprise   | I            |
| 3.2.9.   | The need to act for the benefit of the industry  | I            |
| 3.2.10.  | The need to act for the region   | I            |
| 3.2.11.  | Gratitude to the environment (external co-workers) for their understanding and help  | I            |
| 3.2.12.  | Passion for work in tourism  | I            |

D – deductive, I – inductive

Source: The author's work.

Abduction (combining deduction and induction) was used in the form of flexible pattern matching (Bouncken et al., 2021). It means continuous iterative matching between theoretical patterns derived from the literature (deduction) and observed patterns emerging from empirical data (induction). Using flexible pattern matching allows, for example, for: strengthening the internal validity of a study, effective capturing categories for analysis, providing a researcher with a structure for theorizing about findings, and finally it allows the readers to follow the researcher's thought process from conceptualization to interpretation, thus, provides a clear rationale and logic for data collection and analysis (Bouncken et al., 2021). Flexible pattern matching proceeded in the following stages: 1) Formulating the research problem, 2) Generating theoretical patterns (deductive codes from the literature – see Table 2), 3) Sample selection and collection, 4) Analyzing and matching data (iterative moving back and forth between theoretical patterns and the empirical data and identification of inconsistencies or the emergence of unexpected patterns until new insights stop appearing – inductive codes (Table 2), 5) Interpreting and theorizing – comparison what

is consistent, what is inconsistent, in which way, and why, 6) Presenting data with the use of narration with quotations (allowing for giving the floor to the interviewees themselves and validate the conclusions drawn) and tables (with interviewee characteristics and a structure of codes – Tables 1 and 2).

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. The Decrease in Motivation to Work as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic – Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

The conducted research allowed for claiming that among tourist enterprises, the COVID-19 pandemic caused changes, already described in the literature, in the provision of work in enterprises managed by the interviewees:

Here, different people had different kinds of ailments. Someone was on a demurrage, someone was on sick leave, someone... well, he had no contact with another person, someone was on this care allowance, on remote work, right? Some people were there too. It also has the effect that we get, in fact, this job... Some people learn from scratch how to work. Well, because everyone just got lazy (...). So it's very hard here, these effects. Some people had COVID, some didn't, some were afraid, and so on, these rules of contacts and all this strongly influenced, for sure [the motivation]. [E8]

Some managers claimed that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic their motivation to work and to run the business decreased. But in the case of most entrepreneurs, according to their declarations, this motivation even increased. Various sources of the increase or decrease of motivation to work were indicated by interviewees.

Referring firstly to the decrease in their motivation, the interviewees indicated three extrinsic factors leading to such a result, i.e.: uncertainty of doing business; not clear government policy (also regarding the state aid during pandemic); and higher costs of running business next to lower income at the same time. They also mentioned one intrinsic source of motivation decrease – discouragement from work being a result of not finding joy in running a business:

This strong uncertainty that at some point it stops making you happy, because whatever we introduce [activity], we meet up with some wall. And when it seems to us that we have caught up with the bunny, it is running away, because now it looks a bit like the fight against the pandemic when it comes to the hospitality industry. We thought so already, "oh, Easter, they will open", puff, they closed, right? "Oh, May weekend holiday" Oh, puff, they closed. This is what it looks like. Also this great uncertainty, that, I'm saying, is that ... when a person hears "anti-crisis shield", "oh, we are not entitled", no? (laughs) Well, that's just a little bit ... It stops making me happy. Well, undoubtedly, the higher costs associated with running this activity, and therefore lower profit, for sure this motivation drops, it drops enormously, right? [E1]

On the one hand, there was this motivation for us to just act, to make something happen, to look for these groups, to look for some options somewhere and to... let these rooms be occupied (...). On the other hand, it is certainly such a demotivation that ... the greatest demotivation is that we don't know what will happen. And the government didn't make it easier for us. [E12]

#### **4.2. Increase in Motivation to Work as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic – Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation**

Interestingly, most of the interviewees in their declarations did not stress a decrease in motivation, but its increase during the COVID-19 period. This was due to different intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Regarding the first group, twelve sources of the increase of motivation to run a business during the COVID-19 pandemic were identified. All of them are presented in Table 2 showing codes of research analysis. The first such source of the work motivation increase was the belief that the crisis would pass, the situation would return to normal, and the organization would survive:

Well, we are optimists all the time, we live all the time that it will return to normal – it gives us motivation. [E5]

Another interviewee, representing a company providing tourist attractions, said that the motivation to work for him was the will for the company to survive, the fact that he still had a job, and also small successes that the company achieved despite the difficult situation. These are the next three intrinsic sources of the increase of work motivation during the COVID-19 time. He also emphasized that this motivation changed during the pandemic:

The motivation to work a little for two and save it [the job] is overwhelming, right? It has changed a bit in the last year, like a sine wave, because we have a subsidy here, but we can't [use it], because there is no money, right? Well, as if it was a decline ... Morale was dropping a bit or we were sluggish, something we didn't manage. On the other hand, the more such small successes we have, the greater this motivation to work is, because it is also a tribute to the organization and the fact that it must survive at any cost. [E8]

A very strong factor motivating managers of tourist enterprises to work in the pandemic era was their declared willingness to provide support to the company's employees. Two important sources of internal motivation of managers can be identified here. The first was the need and willingness to change the function of the leader of the organization who does not focus only on managing the current spheres of activity in the company, but has to act as a psychologist who mentally supports his or her employees. This support often went beyond the formal support options offered by the supervisor to the employee:

Honestly, throughout the pandemic, I didn't think about looking for another job. I was thinking more about all of us just ... about the [other] owners and permanent employees, just act and do something, just to make something happen and as much of this work as possible. [E12]

Researcher: Has your level of motivation to work changed due to the pandemic? Has it fallen or has it grown?

Interviewee: I mean the pandemic has caused my work to change a bit. I had to focus more on work, more on a psychologist than on the work of the president, unfortunately this is how it looks. Because it was necessary to support employees at such a level of readiness to work all the time. Well, you had to talk to the agents and also keep their spirits up, so I did this. [E5]

I had to combine this strategic element, new strategies, new, such simply developmental elements with, well, calming down employees, right? Because there are two different fronts, right? Because normally a person should be motivated, have a calm head and have time to grow and develop the company, right? And here it was necessary (...) first, so to speak, to give oxygen to the employee, only in the second phase, well, to motivate him to join this ... creative team. So it was such a mix, but for me personally, it was ... Well, it was also a time to climb to such heights of different management. Not so operational, not so control, but more psychological, plus strategic when it comes to building a kind of competitive advantage for the future, i.e. inventing new things. So here I even have to say that it was interesting. [E6]

The second factor related to the support provided to employees, motivating managers of enterprises to work, was the willingness to help an employee not only at the workplace, but also to combine work and private life in the new conditions caused by the pandemic. One of the interviewees described the help provided by the company she runs and its employees to one of the employees who found herself in a difficult life situation caused by the pandemic:

Our human resources employee who got COVID is a lonely person, she has lived with her partner for many years and this partner has passed away. And it's also like ... Well, we all experience these new things and this ... It also kind of opened us up to all these relationships. Well, it suddenly turned out that we don't know Ms. Ewa, who has been working with us for 20 years (...). She had time, we gave her time to mourn, but after that mourning, it turned out that she just ... normally has to go back to work. We bring her to work that she doesn't have to drive and it could also be arranged, there are company cars, so it is not a problem (...). Well, you know, as if we live other things have priorities, don't they? Well, times will change, but ... I guess I'm more into this than in such corporate [management]. [E9]

Another, sixth, source of internal motivation to work for the managers of the analyzed companies was to support the morale of the team, showing positive thinking as an example, stimulating to action:

Well, it must be a reevaluation and as if ... I had to quickly motivate myself to ... think positively, right? Bearing in mind that my attitude will affect these dozen people, you know. So that, it was a big change, because I just couldn't sit like eve-

rybody else (...). Well, it was my choice, of course. But I decided that I wouldn't sit in the cottage and look at TVP1 and wonder what the next wave will be there or what will happen (...). So I had to give up thinking that it was bad very quickly, well. Even though, well, it was quite ... very bad. [E9]

As another, seventh, source of the increase in motivation to work, the managers of enterprises indicated the tightening of ties with and between employees in the pandemic era and the willingness to maintain such ties in the enterprise. They stressed great satisfaction with cooperating with their team, which motivated them to work and gave them strength:

I have become more open to many issues, to the industry. To people, to staff (...). I'm very happy that I work in this industry, I love this job. I feel stronger for sure. More motivated after all (...). I have a lot of satisfaction from the fact that we operate in such a team (...). So it is as if the world of such employer-employee relations had been reevaluated in general. Definitely. And I am happy ... I come here with great pleasure (...). Because, you know, regulations [do exist], but the employer always has something in the back of the head. No, they don't come to work on time here. It stopped annoying me at all. I mean, I've never been particularly inflexible in that direction, but now that perspective has changed, yeah. And I'm glad that everyone in the team was like that, well, they opened up a bit to each other. [E9]

The eighth source of managers' intrinsic work motivation was also the willingness to take advantage of the new opportunities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic – new opportunities for the development of the company:

[COVID-19] rather motivated me to look for new solutions. [E7]

The willingness to search for and implement new solutions was conducive to innovation and creativity, despite the existing uncertainty, often emphasized by the interlocutors:

Everywhere there is a need for new initiatives and looking for new ideas, and I think that some people will also look at this, probably at diversification, because please see (...) now some aid measures were also shaped in such a way that not necessarily anyone who has these PKDs [Polish Classification of Activities] from the tourism industry got it. But you could invent this additional activity in a different industry. I also think it was very cool, but to make people think that if you can't be here, let's try to be there. [E7]

I even have to say (smile) that ... I had to activate additional such creative elements. Because if everything works, if everything sells, if we have a team that handles it reasonably well, then in fact, in a way, a human ... well, he is a little asleep. Maybe not even asleep – in fact, 80–90% of his activity seems to focus on serving the guest well (...). And I must admit that during this time we have made a new restaurant strategy, a new menu, a new card, a new decor. Completely rebuilding the SPA strategy, as well as new cosmetic brands, new treatments, experimenting with such combined treatments that ... There was simply no time for that. So I even have to say that in terms of some kind of creativity, creative motivation, even that was a good time. [E6]

Another interviewee, as the ninth internal source leading to the increase of work motivation during the pandemic time, mentioned a sense of responsibility of the whole branch, not only the museum she represented:

Certainly, as if having such a feeling, I don't know, mission, strength and this... the necessity to create a pattern, we felt... I felt good. I mean, as if I felt ... because I am the oldest director in this group in Tychy. I mean, the oldest in terms of age. And I felt like a person being listened to. And it really mattered. [E11]

The next source of intrinsic motivation encouraging entrepreneurs to continue their business and work was the willingness to undertake activities for the municipality or region, because of a strong sense of local/regional identity:

Personally, for me it is a great sense of value, because I have been working here since 2013, and previously, as a native of Tarnowskie Góry, I was completely not interested in it. I knew little about the mine, I didn't attach any importance to what was going on. To put it bluntly, I just ignored it a bit, right? This has changed (...). Today I am 39 years old, for my actions I have 2 state decorations, the bronze cross of merit and a silver badge for merits for the Silesian Voivodeship. So it is a great honor for me and it is an amazing motivation to work (...). And I think that here, regarding the question, defining the career path, I think that today I would be in a completely different place with these papers. Well, I just don't want to move, because I feel that I'm just needed here. [E8]

A representative of one of the museums indicated – as the eleventh source of work motivation increase in the COVID-19 time (see Table 2) – the gratitude to partners from the environment for their understanding and support, which stimulated the interviewee to work:

It was certainly motivating that we saw that it is possible to get along, colloquially saying that the other party is aware that we all operate in a previously unknown reality. [E10]

Another factor increasing the motivation of the interviewees to run a business and to work was the passion that characterizes employees of the tourism industry – the fact that they like this job and for them it is not only a source of income, but also a way of life:

I really like my industry and, and ... I like people, I like to work with people, I like to host people and really ... Well, it's a kind of more character ... So really ... in terms of my kind of motivation and my value, no, nothing has changed. [E6]

It's not that I lost this motivation and I still have motivation, and somehow ... this is a job that gives me pleasure, so I think it also results from it. [E3]

Finally, the interviewees emphasized one more factor that increased their motivation to work during the pandemic. It was, however, an external factor, not an internal one (see Table 2). It was the legal obligation to perform the tasks entrusted to the public museum as an institution:

But it is an institution that simply has to do certain things. The motivation for us was that we just have to do it plus those external projects that we modify in some way there. [E10]

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

As a result of the research, firstly, it has been shown that tourism enterprises experienced, as already indicated in the literature (Autin et al., 2020; Noguchi, 2020; Filimonau et al., 2020), negative effects of the pandemic in the context of work performance, i.e. concerns for job loss or actual loss of job, change in working conditions, problems with work-life balance, social isolation and physical and mental health problems of owners and employees, all of which, according to the interviewees, made work difficult or even impossible.

Secondly, as a result of the inductive codes emerging during the analysis of the data, four sources of a managers' work motivation decrease in COVID-19 conditions were identified. These were three sources relating to extrinsic motivation (concerning the uncertainty of running a business and increasing operating costs with decreasing revenues) and one source of intrinsic motivation, i.e. discouragement from work – not finding joy in running a business in difficult pandemic conditions and uncertainty related to the state aid as part of the fight against the effects of the pandemic.

Thirdly, as many as thirteen factors contributing to the increase in managers' work motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic were also identified. One factor related to extrinsic motivation – i.e. the necessity to work in a public museum, due to statutory obligations, and the other twelve to intrinsic motivation. Some factors causing an increase in intrinsic motivation to work were also identified, for example: strong determination of the management to make the company survive on the market, satisfaction with any, even the smallest, successes of the company achieved despite operating in difficult conditions of the pandemic, a strong need to support employees, including a change in the role of the organization leader (a manager who focuses first on the psycho-physical condition of employees, and only then on the operational activity of the enterprise), the need to act for the common good – i.e. the entire team, industry or region, and passion for working in tourism. Interestingly, in this research, support for employees does not necessarily appear as a factor motivating employees themselves to work, as in other empirical studies (e.g. Peng & Zeng, 2017; Lee et al., 2021), but mainly as a factor motivating employers themselves – managers of tourism enterprises. They emphasized that they felt the need and willingness to help employees in a difficult COVID-19 situation, this motivated them to continue their business activities.

Therefore, the contribution of this research is the identification of the sources of growth (13 such factors) and decrease (3) of intrinsic and

extrinsic motivation of people managing the analyzed tourism enterprises in the pandemic era. So far, they have not been the subject of in-depth analyses, especially in the form of qualitative research, including individual interviews. What has been researched so far were, for example, changes in work efficiency, job satisfaction, commitment to work, or possibly also motivation to work, but not broken down into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and most often it was done with the use of quantitative research.

Fourthly, the research findings showed that some entrepreneurs experienced a decrease in motivation to work – including a lack of willingness to continue business activities, while in the case of others the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the emergence of new needs – such as a strong determination that the company would survive and employees would retain their jobs, which, in turn, motivated them to continue business activity. Additionally, it happened that the same entrepreneurs mentioned factors (internal and external) that could cause both an increase and a decrease in motivation. However, what should be emphasized, based on the interviews conducted, is that the overall picture of tourism managers' work motivation during COVID-19 is rather positive. Much more often and more willingly, when asked if and how their motivation to work had changed as a result of the pandemic, they talked about sources favoring growth, rather than a decrease in intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Interestingly, internal sources of motivation to work were indicated much more often than external ones. Only one representative of a public institution (museum) indicated an external source of motivation in the form of the need to carry out the tasks entrusted by law to this institution. This is in line with the results of the study by Chen (2012) according to which people engaged in working in the public sector have more substantial extrinsic motivation and more fragile intrinsic motivation.

As a result of the conducted research, it is also possible to point to some practical recommendations. At the same time, it should be remembered that the research was not conclusive, hence the implications based on the presented qualitative research findings must be carefully formulated. First, the research has shown that, among other things, very important is the support from superiors towards subordinates – both with the use of formal tools/solutions (e.g. flexible working hours) and informal relationships (care for employees who have found themselves in a difficult life situation). Such assistance may build in employees a sense of bond with the company in the future and reduce their willingness to change jobs. Although it had been previously shown by the results of other empirical research (Lee et al., 2021; Tovmasyan & Minasyan, 2020), the findings of this research show that the need to provide such support turns out to be – as already mentioned – also an important internal motivator to work for managers of enterprises themselves, hence its role is doubly important.



Secondly, state aid to fight the effects of the pandemic was of great importance to the interviewees and their motivation to work. As the research findings show, it is good for state aid to be predictable, with clear rules for entrepreneurs. This help was assessed differently by the interviewees, but many of them were critical of it. As a result, their motivation was limited primarily by uncertainty, not only related to how the pandemic will develop, but what restrictions may be introduced by the government. Perhaps the formulation of even possible scenarios of the government's actions/help, depending on the development of the epidemic situation, would to some extent reduce this uncertainty.

Finally, the findings also allow for indicating the directions of future research. The research showed that the motivation of business managers changed over time – depending on the stage of the pandemic. It would be worthwhile to undertake research on how the pandemic and its course changed the attitudes of tourism entrepreneurs, including their motivation to work, over time. This motivation was also different for different types of enterprises (e.g. catering and MICE), therefore it would be worth carrying out research, taking into account changes in motivation regarding various types of tourism enterprises. These differences should refer not only to the type of activity but also the location (e.g. seaside vs mountain area) or segment of tourists (e.g. leisure vs business tourism). For this, quantitative research, on a larger sample, can be highly recommended.

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