

## **DO EXTRINSIC MOTIVATORS MOTIVATE HOUSEKEEPING EMPLOYEES IN LUXURY HOTELS?**

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### **Abstract**

Effective Human Resource Management policies are the key to motivation and need to be adopted by the management of the various segments of Luxury hotels to improve employee productivity.

The study aims to identify and assess the various extrinsic motivators for housekeeping employees in Luxury hotels, such as, Salary, financial incentives, lunch breaks, rest breaks, leave, physical working conditions, support from the HR department and participation in various cultural and sports activities conducted by the organization.

A descriptive and exploratory design was used for this study. The sample was selected on the basis of Quota sampling technique. A sample survey was conducted with a population of 254 housekeeping employees in luxury five, four and three-star hotels in Pune, at various levels in the housekeeping department. The study sample included 175 housekeeping employees from five-star, 44 from four-star and 35 from three-star hotels.

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The study revealed that a majority of the housekeeping employees of four and five-star hotels are adequately motivated by extrinsic factors, whereas, those from three-star hotels need to be extrinsically motivated by implementing appropriate Human Resource Management policies.

**Keywords: Motivation; Job commitment; Job satisfaction; Human resource management practices; Employee productivity; Extrinsic motivators.**

## **1. Introduction**

The housekeeping department in a Luxury hotel is a back-of-the-house, yet a crucial department as its primary role in a hotel is to ensure cleanliness, maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of the hotel, including guest rooms and public areas, as well as provision of laundry services. The housekeeping department is considered to be a hotel's ambassador as it helps to maintain the hotel's image and reputation in the competitive hospitality market.

Around 20% of the employees of a Luxury hotel work in the housekeeping department. They are either on the payroll of the company or are appointed on contractual basis. There is a general perception that housekeeping is a thankless job, as it is a back-of-the-house position in a hotel.

Motivation is a concept used to describe the factors within an individual which arouse, maintain and channelize behavior towards a goal. It is essential for the management of Luxury hotels to keep their housekeeping employees motivated in the workplace and formulate appropriate policies for motivation. Motivated staff will offer better standards of service to guests in the hotel, which in turn, will lead to customer satisfaction and retention. Hotels can do better business due to motivated employees. The services offered by an employee reflect his motivation levels, his job commitment and job satisfaction.

The unique aspect about the hotel industry is that it is the lowest paid worker who is responsible for ensuring customer satisfaction in most departments, especially in the housekeeping department. The entry-level staff is paid minimum wages and they are expected to offer the highest standards of service. Thus, it is essential that the management of the hotel should motivate the housekeeping employees.

**Review of Literature:**

To obtain a reliable picture of the most relevant attributes of motivation of housekeeping employees in hotels, a review of literature pertaining to the works of researchers and philosophers was undertaken.

Douangphichit, N. (2015) identified the HRM functions that help to improve business and employee performance, profitability and productivity and help the hotel to maintain its competitive advantage in the hotel business in Laos. Amongst the motivation and job satisfaction factors, results from the survey showed that money, opportunity for growth and fairness are most influential in motivating employees to work and satisfying them at the workplace.

Du Plessis, A J., Douangphichit, N., & Dodd, P. (2015) stated that most of the employees felt that their organizations create work conditions whereby they are motivated to work harder and recognize the importance of training to help them work better. But the main factor that brings about high level of job satisfaction and motivation is salary.

Frederick Herzberg (1968) has advocated the motivation–hygiene theory of job attitudes, which states that there are two types of factors, Motivators, which motivate the employee with their presence and Hygiene factors, which cause dissatisfaction with their absence. [Motivators](#) are Intrinsic factors, like, challenging work, recognition for achievements, responsibility, opportunity to do something meaningful, involvement in decision making, sense of importance to an organization; that result in positive job satisfaction, recognition, achievement or personal growth. Hygiene/ Maintenance factors, like, status, [job security](#), [salary](#), [fringe benefits](#), work conditions, good wages, paid insurance, vacations; do not give positive satisfaction or lead to higher motivation, though dissatisfaction results from their absence. This two-factor theory has important applications in designing job-enrichment programs for the employee.

Kenneth Kovach (1986) made an investigative study about what job factors motivate employees, and concluded that the employees of an organization value these job factors differently and rank them accordingly. Interesting work and good wages were important to them. Kovach suggested that companies should periodically administer attitude surveys to understand what motivates

employees. Cathy A. Enz and Tony Simons (1995) conducted a study with 278 U.S. and Canadian hotel employees and ranked them on Kovach's Motivation factors. The housekeeping staff marked job security as the most important, money as second and good working conditions as the third priority. Vickie Siu, Nelson Tsang, Simon Wong (1997) ranked hotel employees on their expectations from their job. The housekeeping staff ranked job security, loyalty to employees and good wages, as important. They stated that employee motivation is greater if the managers find out what their employees want from their jobs. PattarineePetcharak (2002) carried out an assessment of the motivation factors of 365 employees in the Saint Paul Hotel, Minnesota. The motivation requirements of the employees were wages, job security, and an interesting job.

Wynter-Palmer (2011) carried out an exploratory study on the use of incentives in Jamaica's Hotel Industry, in which 907 employees of 50 hotels in Jamaica were studied. 78% employees said they would leave the hotel industry for better pay! This suggests that wages are an important motivator for employees to remain in the job. Jeffery Pfeiffer (1998) studied the reasons for which people work and discovered six dangerous myths about Pay. He discovered that it's a myth that people work for money. They work even more for meaning in their lives and to have fun. Sturman, Ford (2011) has advocated ways to motivate staff to provide outstanding service: Make the job fun, allocate rewards fairly, respect, reward and recognize the employee.

Alfie Kohn (1993) studied both Extrinsic and Intrinsic motivators and the reason why Incentive plans cannot work. He stated that extrinsic motivators are a poor substitute for genuine interest in one's job. Candice Prendergast (2008) stated that if extrinsic motivators, like money and incentives do not work in motivating employees, then intrinsic motivators should be used to keep them motivated.

Ukandu, Ukpere (2011) have suggested strategies to improve the level of employee motivation in the fast food outlets in Cape Town, South Africa. The researchers suggest proper training and development of workers, reduction of work load, incentive programs and retention strategy as important.

Monica Nyamusa Tembi (1991) studied Employee turnover in the Housekeeping Department of Rochester Hotels. She stated that employee turnover is caused due to certain factors which cause dissatisfaction. Most housekeeping employees left their job due to poor wages.

**Research Objectives:**

1. To identify the vital extrinsic motivation factors for employees of the housekeeping department in luxury hotels in Pune.
2. To assess the motivation of housekeeping employees in Luxury hotels with respect to extrinsic motivators.
3. To suggest measures pertaining to extrinsic motivators to keep housekeeping staff motivated.

**2. Research Method**

A descriptive and exploratory design was used for this study. The sample was selected on the basis of Quota sampling technique.

A sample survey was conducted with a population of 254 housekeeping employees in luxury five, four and three-star hotels in Pune, at various levels in the housekeeping department. The study sample included 175 housekeeping employees from five-star, 44 from four-star and 35 from three-star hotels.

**Methods of data collection:**

**Questionnaire Survey:** The data was collected using a structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale to assess the motivation factors of the respondents.

**Personal interviews:** were conducted to explore work motives of employees, to identify the issues that can be regarded as critical variables in the current dynamics of motivation of housekeeping employees in the hospitality sector. Qualitative interviews with industry experts and employees helped to obtain accurate information to clarify the issues under discussion.

**Data analysis:**

As this research study is a descriptive, cross-sectional study design, data summarization was done using simple statistical tools, such as average, standard deviation and percentages. Standard

normal test (z-test) was used to compare difference of total satisfaction scores of housekeeping employees of five –star, four-star and three-star hotels. Chi-square tests were conducted to assess each parameter of motivation. The analysis of the survey results combined with statistical applications helped the researcher to draw conclusions regarding the objectives of the study.

### 3. Results and Analysis

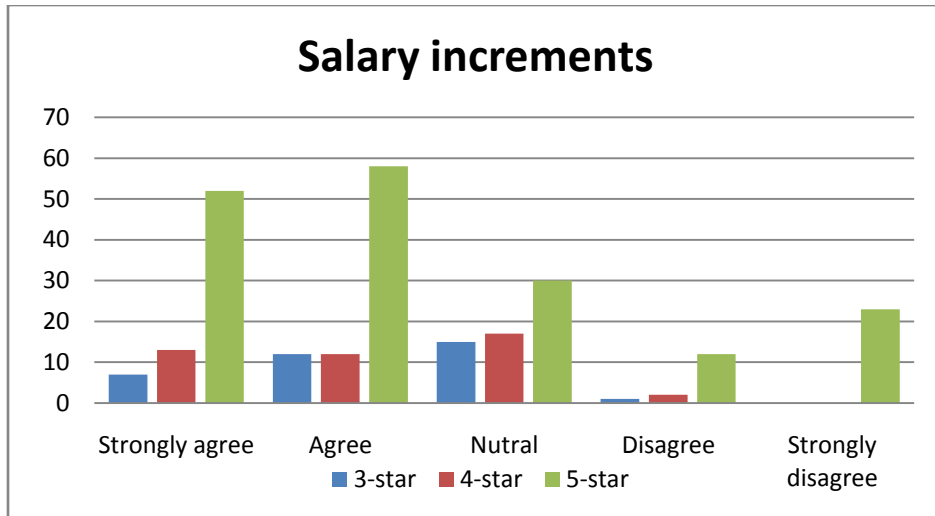
Demographic Profile of Housekeeping employees:

- i) It was observed that a majority of the housekeeping employees are male rather than females, which is contrary to the perception that housekeeping is traditionally a female domain.
- ii) It was observed that most of the housekeeping employees in Luxury hotels are from a younger age group of 18 to 25 years.
- iii) It was observed that more than half the housekeeping employees were unmarried.
- iv) Almost half of the housekeeping employees are graduates in the age group of 18-25 years, which is contrary to the perception that housekeeping employees are uneducated. The housekeeping employees of three-star hotels were found to be less educated.
- v) It was observed that more than half of the housekeeping employees have a working experience of less than 5 years.

Motivation of housekeeping employees was studied with respect to extrinsic motivation factors, like, Salary increments and financial incentives, lunch breaks, rest breaks and leave, provision of good physical working conditions, support from the HR department and participation in Cultural and Sports activities conducted by the organization.

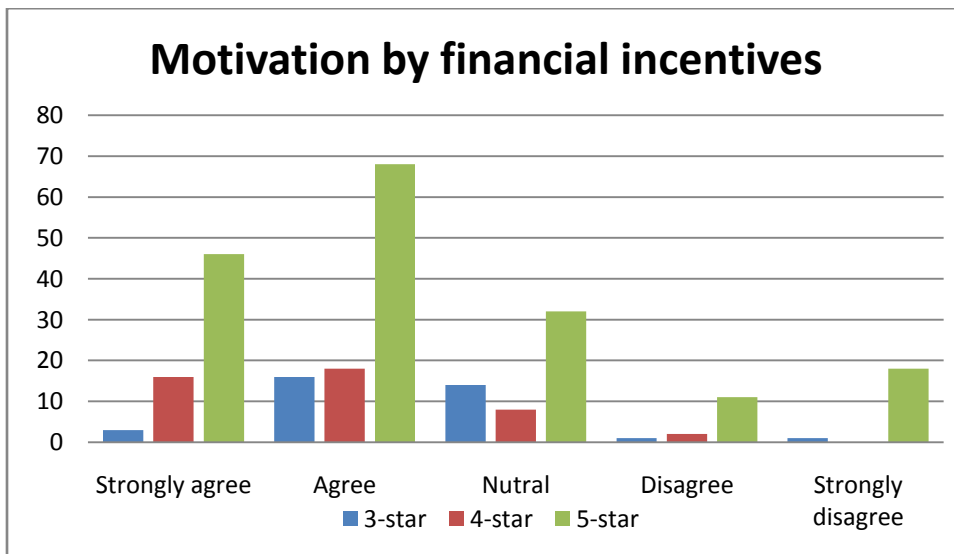
1. Salary increments:

Fig.1: Distribution of opinions of housekeeping employees with respect to salary increments.



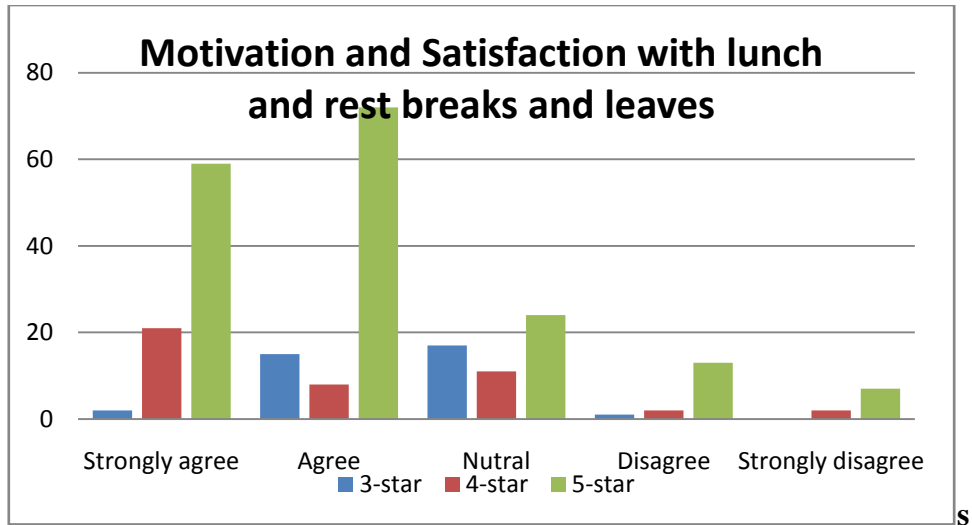
2. Motivation by financial incentives:

Fig 2: Distribution of opinions of housekeeping employees with respect to motivation by financial incentives.



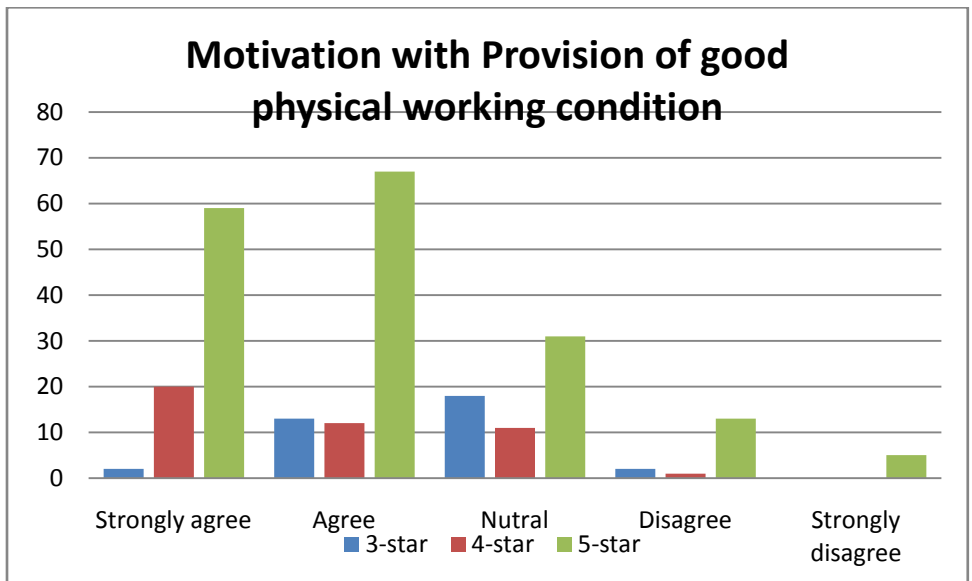
3. Motivation and satisfaction with lunch and rest breaks and leave:

Fig.3: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to motivation and satisfaction with lunch, rest breaks and leaves.



4. Motivation with provision of good physical working conditions:

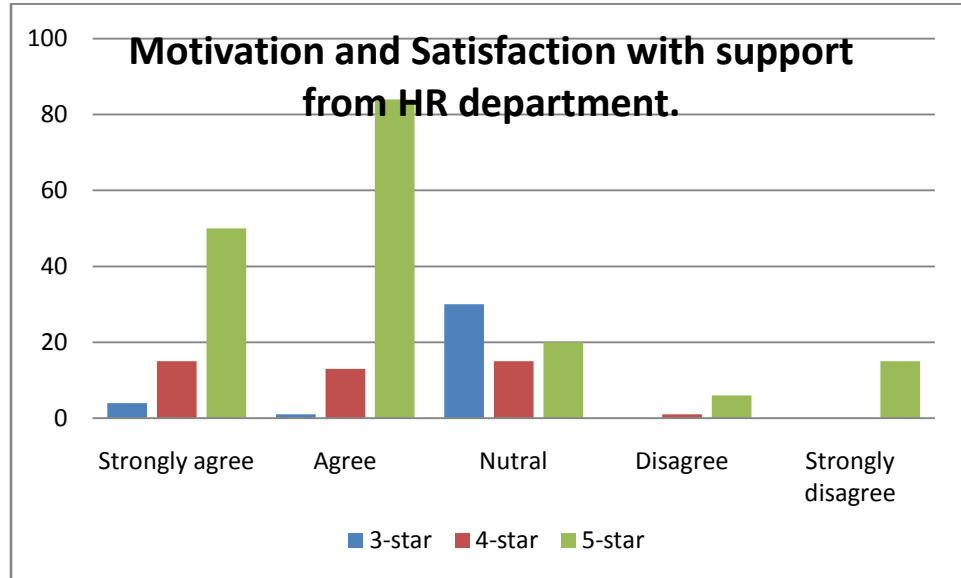
Fig. 4: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to motivation with provision of good physical working conditions.





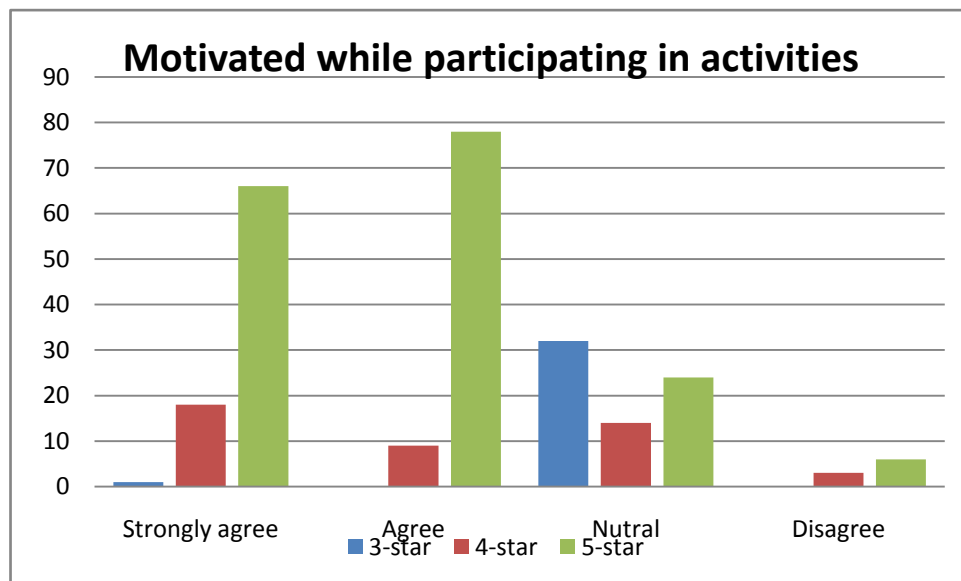
### 5. Motivation and satisfaction with support from the HR department.

Fig.5: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to Motivation and satisfaction with support from the HR department.



### 6. Motivation while participating in Cultural and Sports activities conducted.

Fig.6: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to Motivation while participating in Cultural and Sports activities conducted.



The results of the assessment of extrinsic factors that act as motivators for the housekeeping employees across all the segments of Luxury hotel are discussed below:

- Salary increments are a motivator for 54%, 57% and 63% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but there is a need for three-star hotels to motivate 43% of their housekeeping employees by having this practice in place.
- Financial incentives are a motivator for 54%, 77% and 65% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but the three-star hotels need to motivate 40% of their housekeeping employees by offering better financial incentives.
- Lunch and rest breaks and leave are a motivator for 50%, 66% and 75% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but the three-star hotels need to motivate 50% of their housekeeping employees by offering adequate lunch and rest breaks and leaves.
- 50% of the housekeeping employees of three-star hotels need to be motivated by offering them better physical working conditions.
- 50% of the housekeeping employees of three-star hotels need to be motivated by offering them better support from the HR department.
- 92% of the housekeeping employees of three-star hotels need to be motivated by offering them their housekeeping employees by offering more opportunities for participation in Cultural and Sports activities.

#### **4. Conclusions**

- i) The Managements of luxury hotels should evaluate the motivations and needs of the housekeeping employees annually, as money is a basic motivator for productivity.
- ii) The three-star hotel segment needs to offer competitive salaries and increments which are fair and commensurate with the skills and expectations of the housekeeping employees.
- iii) Three-star hotels management should develop a clearly outlined Incentive program for the staff, including financial incentives, fringe benefits, Health insurance, vacations with pay, pension, free meals, etc. which will help to complement the salary of the employee and motivate them.

vi) Three-star hotels need to motivate their housekeeping employees by offering adequate lunch breaks, rest breaks and leaves, better physical working conditions and support from the HR department.

vii) The employees can be motivated better by offering them more opportunities for recreation by participation in Cultural and Sports activities, like, staff parties, picnics, games, etc.

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