



DO INTRINSIC FACTORS MOTIVATE HOUSEKEEPING EMPLOYEES IN LUXURY HOTELS?

Prof. Lalita S. Chirmulay*

Prof. Dr. Kirti S. Gupta**

*Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University, Research Scholar, Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University – IMED, Vice-Principal, Institute of Hotel Management & Catering Technology, Pune.

**Professor, Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University
Institute of Management & Entrepreneurship Development, Pune.

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 intrinsic motivators for housekeeping employees in Luxury hotels, such as, Recognition of work done by the Supervisor, Good job status, Satisfaction with the responsibilities and role in the work, Scheduling own work and making job-related decisions with minimum supervision, Finding opportunities for advancement in the organization and Realizing one's ultimate potential.

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.

The study revealed that a majority of the housekeeping

Keywords:

Motivation;
Recognition;
Job status;
Scheduling;
Human resource management practices;
Employee productivity;
Intrinsic motivators.

employees of four and five-star hotels are adequately motivated by intrinsic factors, whereas, those from three-star hotels need to be intrinsically motivated by implementing appropriate Human Resource Management policies.

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.

Arash, Daskin, Saydam, (2014), studied the impact of Polychronicity and Intrinsic motivation as dispositional determinants on hotel frontline employees' job satisfaction levels. Polychronicity is the ability of the employee to carry out more than one job. This gives the employee a sense of achievement, which is intrinsically motivating for him and gives him a feeling of being satisfied in his job. The study concludes that a positive significant relationship exists between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction of a front line employee in a hotel.

Becky Rader, (2012), conducted a research study to identify some Non-Monetary strategies to retain key employees in an organization, which are as follows: The management should adopt practices like, maintaining clear and precise communication with the employees, providing feedback to the employees on their role and performance, offering training opportunities to the employees and recognizing their work by giving praise.

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.

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.

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.

Pattarinee Petcharak (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.

Jeffery Pfeffer (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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the vital intrinsic 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 intrinsic motivators.
3. To suggest measures pertaining to intrinsic 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 intrinsic motivation factors, like, , Recognition of work done by the Supervisor, Good status given by the job, Satisfaction with the responsibilities and role in the work, Scheduling own work and making job-related decisions with minimum supervision, Finding opportunities for advancement in the organization and Realizing one’s ultimate potential.

1. Superior always recognizes the work done:

Fig. 1: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to recognition of the work done by superior.

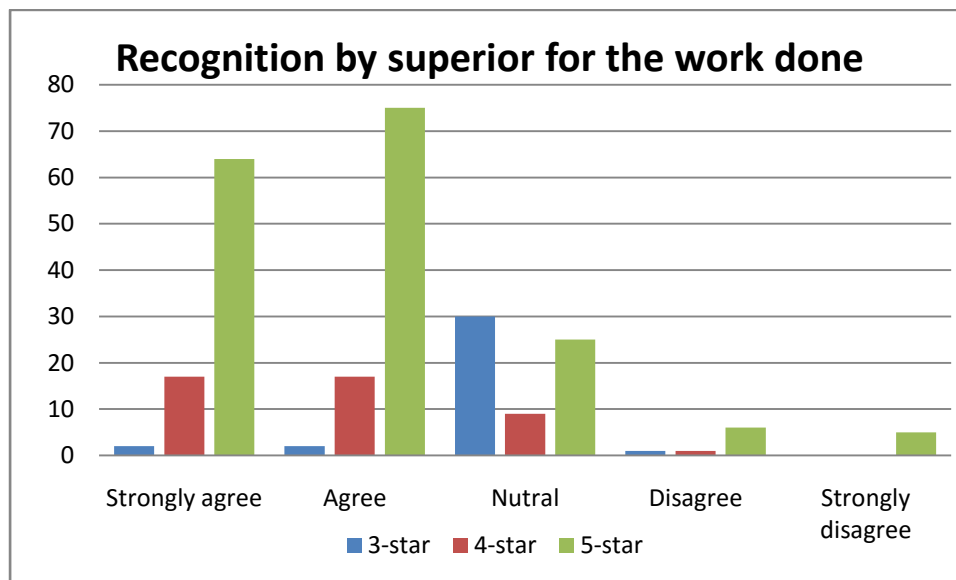


Table 1: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to recognition for the work done by superior.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
3-star	2	2	30	1	0	35
4-star	17	17	9	1	0	44
5-star	64	75	25	6	5	175
Total	83	94	64	8	5	254
%	32.68	37.01	25.20	3.15	1.97	100.00

2. Job gives a good status:

Fig. 2: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to good status given by job.

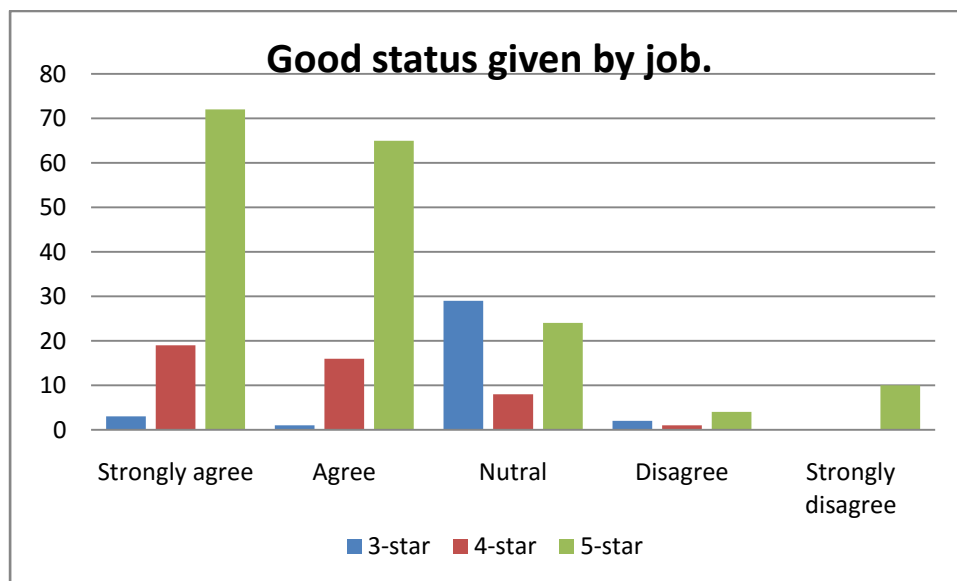


Table 2: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to good status given by job.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
3-star	3	1	29	2	0	35
4-star	19	16	8	1	0	44
5-star	72	65	24	4	10	175
Total	94	82	61	7	10	254
%	37.01	32.28	24.02	2.76	3.94	100.00

3. Satisfaction with responsibilities and role in work:

Fig. 3: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to Satisfaction with responsibilities and role in work.

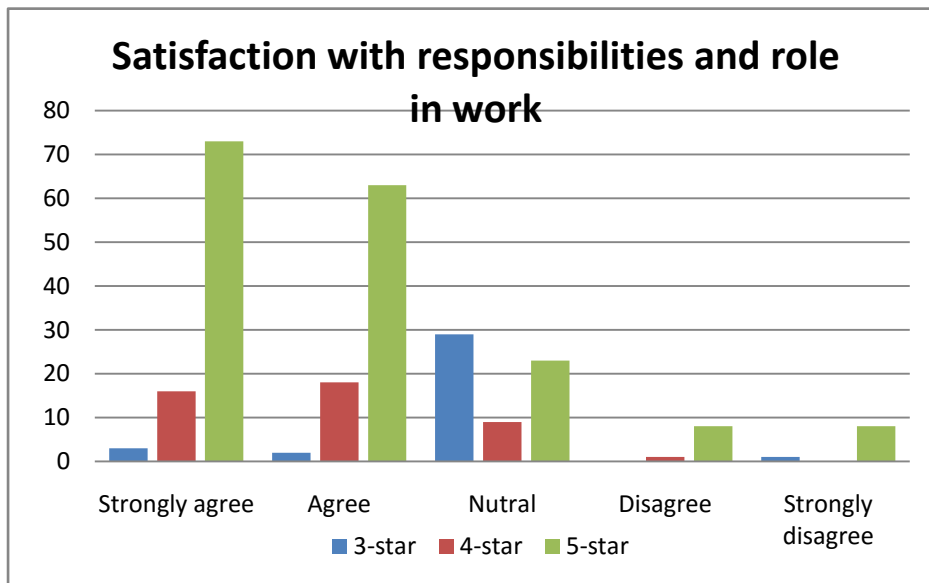


Table3: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to Satisfaction with responsibilities and role in work.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
3-star	3	2	29	0	1	35
4-star	16	18	9	1	0	44
5-star	73	63	23	8	8	175
Total	92	83	61	9	9	254
%	36.22	32.68	24.02	3.54	3.54	100.00

4. Scheduling own work and making job related decisions with minimum supervision:

Fig. 4: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to scheduling own work and making job related decisions with minimum supervision.

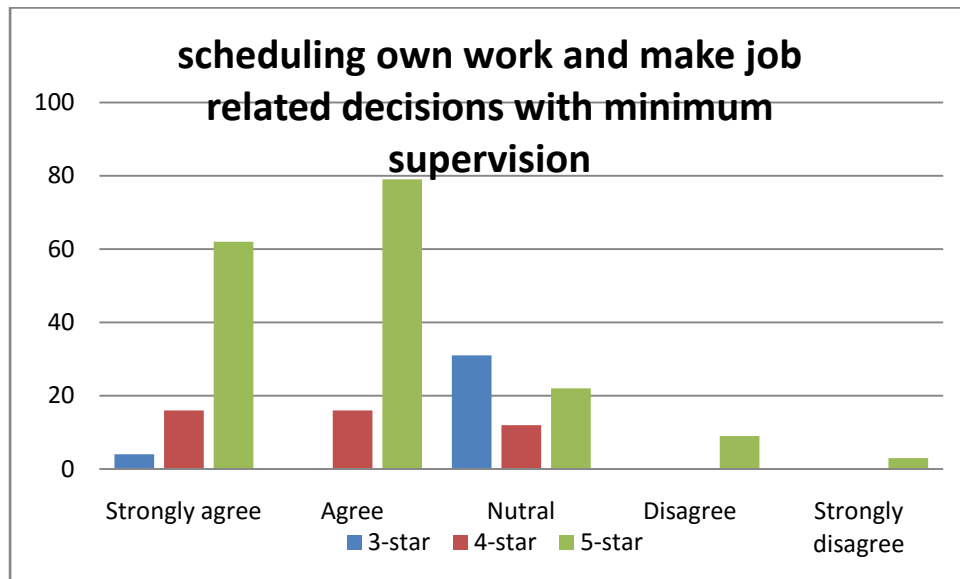


Table4: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to scheduling own work and making job related decisions with minimum supervision.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	total
3-star	4	0	31	0	0	35
4-star	16	16	12	0	0	44
5-star	62	79	22	9	3	175
Total	82	95	65	9	3	254
%	32.28	37.40	25.59	3.54	1.18	100.00

5. Finding opportunities for advancement in the organization:

Fig.5: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to finding opportunities for advancement in the organization.

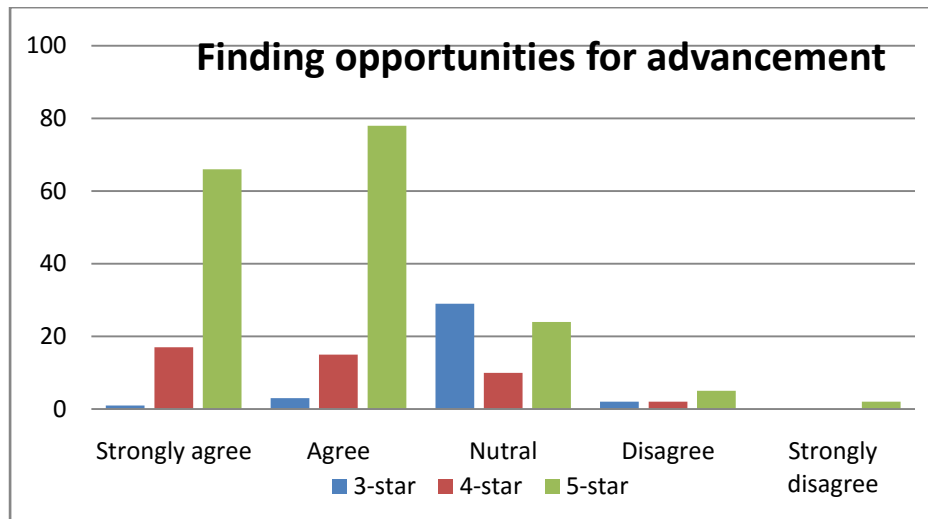


Table5: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to finding opportunities for advancement in the organization.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
3-star	1	3	29	2	0	35
4-star	17	15	10	2	0	44
5-star	66	78	24	5	2	175
Total	84	96	63	9	2	254
%	33.07	37.80	24.80	3.54	0.79	100.00

6. Realizing one's ultimate potential:

Fig. 6: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to realizing one's ultimate potential.

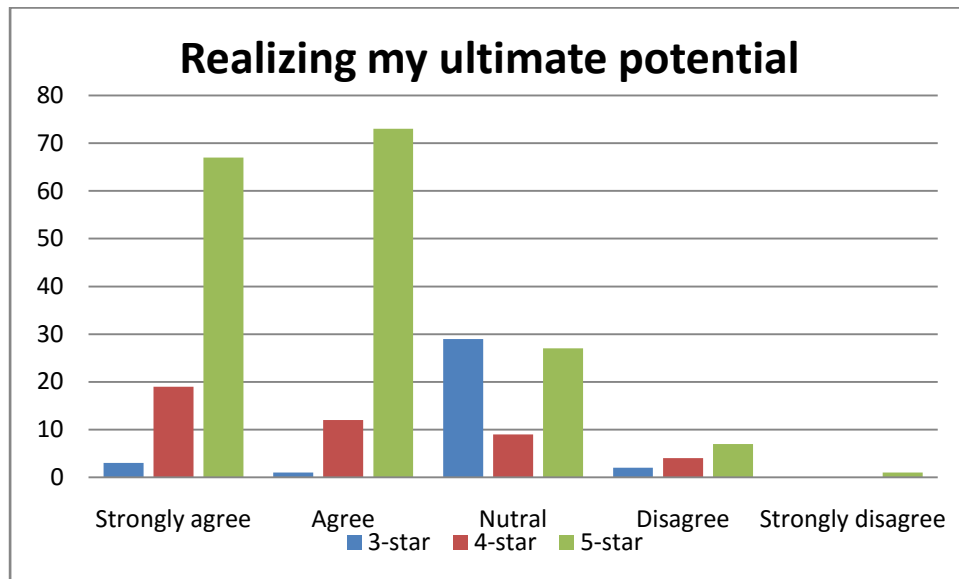


Table6: Distribution of opinions of HK employees with respect to realizing one's ultimate potential.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	total
3-star	3	1	29	2	0	35
4-star	19	12	9	4	0	44
5-star	67	73	27	7	1	175
Total	89	86	65	13	1	254
%	35.04	33.86	25.59	5.12	0.39	100

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

- Recognition by the superior for the work done is a motivator for 11%, 77% and 79% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but there is a need for three-star hotels to motivate 86% of their housekeeping employees by having this practice in place.
- Good status given by the job is a motivator for 11%, 80% and 78% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but the three-star hotels need to motivate 86% of their housekeeping employees by offering better job status.

- Responsibilities and role in the work is a motivator for 14%, 77% and 78% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but the three-star hotels need to motivate 86% of their housekeeping employees by offering better satisfaction in this regard.

- Scheduling own work and making job-related decisions with minimum supervision motivates 11%, 73% and 81% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but 89% of the housekeeping employees of three-star hotels need to be motivated by offering them more opportunities with respect to this practice.

- Finding opportunities for advancement in the organization motivates 11%, 73% and 82% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but 83% of the housekeeping employees of three-star hotels need to be motivated by offering them better opportunities in this regard.

- Realizing one's own potential motivates 11%, 70% and 80% of the housekeeping employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels, but 83% of the housekeeping employees of three-star hotels need to be motivated by offering them opportunities in this regard.

4. Conclusions

i) The Managements of luxury hotels should evaluate and provide opportunities for realization of the intrinsic motivations and needs of housekeeping employees.

ii) The management of three-star hotels needs to offer recognition to the housekeeping employees for the work done by them.

iii) Three-star hotels management should provide for a good status in the housekeeping job and motivate the employees.

iv) The housekeeping employees of three-star hotels can be motivated better by offering them more responsibilities and role in their work.

v) Three-star hotels need to motivate their housekeeping employees by offering more autonomy and freedom in scheduling work and making job-related decisions with minimum supervision.

vi) The housekeeping employees of three-star hotels can be motivated better by offering them more opportunities for advancement in the organization.

vii) The housekeeping employees of three-star hotels can be motivated better by offering them more opportunities for realizing their own potential.

The provision of the above intrinsic motivations of a job will help the housekeeping employees in Luxury hotels to improve their self-esteem levels and motivation to perform their jobs in a more productive manner, which in turn, will help them to achieve personal as well as organizational goals.

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