



Research Paper

## Determinants of Employees Motivation in Greek Hotel Businesses

Maria Lagou<sup>1</sup>, Panagiotis Arsenos<sup>2</sup>, Alina Hyz<sup>3</sup>, Dimitris Stavroulakis<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD Candidate, Department of Accounting and Finance, University of West Attica, Greece

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Department of Accounting and Finance, University of West Attica, Greece

<sup>3</sup>Professor, Department of Accounting and Finance, University of West Attica, Greece

<sup>4</sup>Professor, Department of Accounting and Finance, University of West Attica, Greece

Corresponding Author: Maria Lagou

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**ABSTRACT:** The enhancement of the quality of the human resources, as well as the fulfilment of their needs and desires, is achieved through the implementation of appropriate motivation methods and the selection of effective human resources management practices that are aligned with the efficiency and profitability of hotel businesses.

The various theoretical approaches developed to date emphasize either the importance of individuals needs as motivation for their actions and consider the process of motivation (process theories), or the effect that the results of individuals past behaviour have on their future behaviour (reinforcement theories).

The objective of this article is to examine the factors that influence the motivation of employees and their contribution to the effective operation of hotel businesses in Greece.

The methodological framework used to investigate motivational factors is factor analysis, which was employed to analyze the primary fieldwork data. The research identified the key factors that influence employees motivation, which can be exploited by hotel management to achieve business objectives.

**KEYWORDS:** Motivation, motivation factors, hotel business, factor analysis

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### I. INTRODUCTION

In the current human resources management (HRM) environment, managers must achieve short-term results through people and systems while developing the business or organization for sustained long-term success. This objective is achieved by establishing a virtuous cycle of leadership, whereby the effective functioning of this depends on the hierarchical level at which each manager is located and the situation/condition at hand. It is therefore necessary to exercise leadership roles such as motivation, employees involvement, team development, partner support, strategy management, innovation management, performance management, project implementation, customer service, and so forth, in order to achieve successful business and effective results [1].

Those engaged in human resource management (HRM) face a multitude of challenges, including the high turnover of the workforce, the legal and institutional framework, the technological revolution, new forms of work (such as flexible employment, multiple careers, teleworking, and multi-skilling), global competition, and so forth. In this context, all HRM functions are highly interrelated, which is why tourism managers consider that employees are essential to achieve high performance [2].

Theoretical approaches to motivation can be classified into four categories: content motivation theories, process motivation theories, job design theories, and empowerment motivation theories [3:492]. However, it is important to note that these categories do not fully capture the complexity of motivating individuals in the workplace and cannot fully explain the phenomenon of motivation. The effectiveness of applying any motivation theory depends, among other factors, on the type of employees it is applied to. There are several factors that influence motivation, such as the willingness of employees to exert all their psychosomatic forces to achieve high performance, which may result in the desired behaviour. Among these are the competence of employees, which relates to the characteristics of those who make them capable of performing a task (such as skills and personality), the differences observed among employees in terms of these characteristics (individual

differences), and the means available to the formal organization (firm or organization) to select employees who possess the necessary competencies, as well as the means available to exploit and improve competencies (selection and training).

The hotel industry is characterized by low remuneration for employees and significant labour market volatility, due to the heterogeneity of the workforce. This reflects high mobility and the use of recruitment policies with a high proportion of temporary and part-time employees. The structural problems of the hotel industry present an obstacle to the application of scientific principles for effective management. These obstacles can be found both within the internal environment of hotel companies, due to the underlying philosophy that characterizes their operation, and in their external environment, due to infrastructure, competition, and regulatory issues.

The employees of tourism enterprises constitute human capital, which refers to the set of skills, knowledge and competences that they can use to create economic value. Therefore, human resource managers in tourism enterprises develop the workforce for their benefit by offering training programmes that improve motivation and increase productivity, thereby helping to achieve strategic business objectives [4].

Consequently, the motivation of employees in the hotel industry represents a significant challenge for management science. In order to achieve both short-term and long-term objectives, as well as gain a competitive advantage in the context of the tourism market economy, it is necessary to adapt knowledge and skills to new conditions.

This article aims to examine the factors that influence employees motivation and contribute to the effective operation of hotel companies in Greece. The concepts of human resource management and employees motivation are explored, followed by a description of the characteristics of the management of Greek hotel enterprises. Thereafter, the methodological framework of the research is presented. Finally, the results of the empirical research, as well as the conclusions and policy recommendations, are presented.

## **II. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES MOTIVATION IN TOURISM ENTERPRISES**

Human resource management may be defined as a function that involves the seeking, acquisition, training, motivation and retention of competent employees who can maintain high levels of performance over an extended period and make a meaningful contribution to the firm's overall objectives and strategic direction [5]. It is an essential process that ensures a steady supply of suitable candidates, matched to specific positions, at the optimal time. The strategic management of human resources and its implementation can be influenced by a variety of external variables, including the number of new entrants to the labour market, the increasing educational attainment of the population, technological change, and new labour legislation. Additionally, internal variables, such as the business philosophy of the organization (e.g., shared vision and common understanding of organizational goals and values), the leadership style (i.e., management style), the strength of the team (i.e., the 'prevailing coalition' effect), and the organizational structure of the company, can also affect the strategic management of human resources.

It can be argued that one of the most crucial challenges facing hotel companies and organizations is the identification of human resources (HR) activities that effectively connect business strategy to employees performance, thereby paving the way for long-term business success. In order to address this issue, managers must take a number of factors into account ([6:230-231]; [7:233-234]).

- The objective of profit maximization, as postulated by the theory of marginal profit, is to determine the optimal price point that offers high occupancy and minimal resistance from customers.
- Psychological motivation, where according to psychological theories, when an employee's desire is satisfied, the motivation to satisfy it ceases to exist. In this case, decisions are not made based on the goal of profit maximization, but through the achievement of the desired goal (e.g. occupancy rate) of the hotel business.
- Happiness, where managers do not always try to maximize profits, but instead try to keep the whole situation at a "pleasant" or "good enough" level. The aim is to maintain a degree of balance without significant turbulence in the workplace.
- Psychological rewards or ego boosting, where the decisions made serve the personal interests of employees and have the ultimate goal of motivating them.

The personal competences of employees relate to the physical and mental characteristics that enable them to perform a task. The factors that determine competence are skills (physical and mental) and personality (inclinations, tendencies, interests, preferences, emotions). These factors also direct human behaviour and influence employees performance [8].

Human Resource Management methods or practices ([9]; [10]; [11]) aim to achieve excellent work performance that contributes to the achievement of the goals and vision of the companies and at the same time

enhance the long-term employment of employees. The practices used in human resource management empower the psychological and work maturity of employees, which in turn leads to high performance in hotel companies.

Human Resource Management practices are the starting point of efforts and, consequently, of business strategies. The most evident means of developing distinctive skills through HRM practices is through personnel selection, employment practices such as training, compensation, and work organization, which cultivate specialized skills and behaviours that assist hotel companies in the creation of distinctive skills [12:253]. Typically, core skills drive operational strategy rather than vice versa. The development of new practices and skills should be accompanied by the formulation of a new business strategy.

According to organizational theory, employees participation encompasses both the decision-making process and the dissemination of information pertaining to the company. During the decision-making process, employees are able to contribute to the determination of their own objectives, the conditions of their employment, and the objectives of the organization as a whole. Hotel management is obliged to provide both shareholders and ordinary employees with updates on matters that concern them.

Productivity is the key to improving living conditions. The key elements of productivity are the people doing the work, the equipment they use and the working methods they follow. Human resources are the most important element in the labour-intensive hotel industry. Motivating employees to increase productivity through financial rewards is just one of the many methods used by managers. Financial rewards have been identified as a motivational tool by management theorists from Adam Smith to Frederick Taylor. However, higher pay is not seen as the only motivation to increase productivity. There are many other factors that can motivate employees, according to theoretical approaches to motivation.

A number of interrelated factors determine how productive an employee is at work [13]. These include the psychological factors affecting him/her (relationships with colleagues, boredom, etc.), the environmental characteristics (temperature, humidity, lighting, etc.), the physiological characteristics of the human anatomy present in his/her job, the time pressure he/she is under, and the equipment and facilities he/she needs to do the job [6:273].

In addition, competence in the workplace depends on the employee's level of education, the intellectual acumen and dexterity required by the job, and the degree of experience in the subject matter of the work being performed.

High-commitment management, through appropriate human resource policies and practices, achieves high levels of trust and leads employees to develop self-commitment to the success of organizational goals.

In today's competitive environment, collaboration and interdependence are critical to business success. Financial rewards are not always the most important factor in attracting, retaining, and motivating human capital. There are other needs such as security, social, self-actualization, esteem according to Maslow's hierarchy formula, achievement, recognition of achievement, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, relationship development, goal achievement, need for power, which employees take into account, and which motivate them to perform better. It has been found that the most important parameter for employees productivity and loyalty is not benefits or work environment, but the quality of the relationship between the employee and his/her immediate supervisor [14: 40].

Therefore, the role of leadership is high involvement management to motivate employees through rewards, incentives and benefits, good communication and participation in decision making, so that employees are satisfied and contribute their physical and mental strengths, i.e. have efficient behaviour to achieve the specific task that meets the objectives of the hotel business.

### **III. THE FEATURES OF THE MANAGEMENT IN HOTEL BUSINESSES IN GREECE**

In The application of best practices of human resource management in service organizations or service firms is referred to as the "new school of service management" [15]. According to this view, the pursuit of high-quality services based on effective management of human resources (mainly expressed through empowerment and teamwork incentives), which depends on the willingness of employers to adopt high cost and high-performance employment strategies, is considered as a source of competitive advantage [16:574].

Good practices in human resource management relate to engagement and flexibility and focus on different forms of rewards and recognition and apply to full-time employees. Meanwhile, good practices related to control focus on forms of technical training and relate to part-time or seasonal workers, such as diversity management practices [17].

In the context of the "new school of service management" approach, the success of the business objectives of hotel companies depends on the creation and delivery of services achieved by quality employees and their effective management. Therefore, hotel companies need to develop human resource management policies and practices aimed at recruiting qualified staff and motivating employees in order to contribute to increasing their work efficiency. Therefore, hotel companies need to develop human resource management policies and practices aimed at recruiting qualified staff and motivating employees to increase their work

efficiency. This orientation will lead to the satisfaction of employees in the hotel market, reduce their mobility and, in the long run, contribute to the satisfaction of the businesses' customers.

There are three different frameworks ([18] & [19]) regarding the contribution of human resource management to organisational performance: the universalistic, contingency and configurational frameworks. In particular:

- The universal framework posits a direct correlation between human resource management practices and organisational performance, thereby enabling the development of universal human resource policies and practices that foster high engagement and flexibility.
- The contingency framework facilitates a robust interconnection between the various components of the business organisation. This does not provide an ideal framework for the comparison and evaluation of policies and practices, as it encompasses a wide range of human resource management options that can be employed on a case-by-case basis.
- The morphological framework posits that the enhanced efficiency of the firm is contingent upon the stability and coherence between the ways of structuring the relevant environmental and organisational factors. Consequently, for an organisation to be effective, its human resource policies must be compatible with other aspects of the organisation and the competitive environment.
- A human needs analysis indicates that the degree of motivation is positively correlated with the degree of satisfaction of employees' needs. Consequently, in order to achieve their goals, hotel companies should understand and respond to employees' individual needs, including financial rewards and skill development.

One of the most significant challenges currently facing the hotel industry is the high level of employee mobility within the sector. This is largely attributed to the low wages, job insecurity, unfavourable working conditions, authoritarian managerial practices and the prevalence of 'peripheral' workers (i.e. women and young people) employed by hotel companies. Those in vulnerable positions, including individuals from ethnic minorities, are often constrained by limited bargaining power in the labour market and are employed on a seasonal or part-time basis with low wages and job insecurity ([20] & [16: 575]).

The hotel market in Greece is characterised by a number of factors, including employers' strategies of low pay and significant labour force instability. This is due to the heterogeneity of the workforce, which reflects high mobility and the use of a high proportion of temporary and part-time workers in recruitment policies. In this context, it is challenging to implement an effective system of motivation, incentives and good practices in hotel businesses. This is due to the existence of differences in occupational specialisations and employment patterns. These differences can be categorised into two main groups: those that operate on a seasonal basis and in unstable environments with changing demand, and those that operate on an annual basis, mainly in urban areas with relatively stable demand, using a high proportion of full-time workers. The latter ensures the provision of high-quality services.

In the context of the specific characteristics of work in hotel enterprises, it can be argued that productivity is contingent upon the human effort and personal abilities of employees. As previously stated, employee mobility represents another distinctive feature of the hotel industry. The specialisations of skilled personnel are becoming increasingly in demand, which in turn is driving up mobility. A significant number of hotel executives frequently change their place of work in order to optimise their financial resources and working conditions. At the same time, the unskilled nature of some roles facilitates the highly professional mobility of the hotel industry.

A further distinctive feature of the hotel industry is that it does not exhibit a consistent and continuous flow, as is the case with manufacturing. The demand for hotel services fluctuates continuously on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Consequently, for employees, this results in an abnormal and unpredictable demand for their work, while for hotel businesses, it presents a challenge in selecting the most suitable and permanent staff.

Another characteristic of the majority of hotel businesses is the absence of organisational charts, particularly in small and medium-sized hotel businesses. These charts would clearly show the object of each employee's work and the power relations (hierarchy) of each employee, as well as the limits of their responsibilities. This suggests that there is a lack of vision of the managers in the hotels, the staff is heterogeneous, and teamwork is underdeveloped.

Another key theme in hotel management is empowerment, which encompasses delegation, employee participation and involvement in decision-making, and the sharing of responsibilities ([21] & [22:176] & [23:597]). Consequently, empowerment is a crucial aspect of front-line management, as it facilitates the enhancement of service quality, the formulation of well-considered decisions and the assumption of responsibilities that are not likely to be regretted subsequently. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity for managers to demonstrate their abilities and to enhance customer satisfaction during the delivery and demand of hotel services.

#### IV. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

To investigate factors of employees motivation on hotel business in Greece, was held primary research in layered sample which consists on 179 hotel managers of luxury hotels. Hotel managers evaluate 13 variables that express the degree (positive or negative) of satisfaction or desire on a 5-point scale.

The methodological framework used in this study was factor analysis. To ensure the effectiveness and reliability of the factor analysis, it was tested using the technique of Principal Components Analysis (PCA).

For the final solution to determine the component factors, the Rotated Component Matrix was chosen, which shows the two factors with the respective loadings of the variable, after orthogonal rotation.

#### V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Table 1 presents the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistical index and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

Table 1: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's global test on employee motivation in hotel enterprises in Greece

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.846
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3297.553
	df	67
	Sig.	.000

From the data in Table 1, it was found that the Keiser-Meyer-Olkin Index assessing the adequacy of our sample is (0.846>.50), indicating that there is a satisfactory pattern of correlations between the variables that allows us to proceed to establish reliable factors, while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Index is 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and indicates that there are statistically significant correlations between variables, which are not homogeneous with each other which allows us to apply factor analysis.

Table 2 displays the adjustment coefficients (communalities), which indicate the percentage of each variable that is accounted for by other factors that impact employee motivation in hotel businesses.

Table 2: Adjustment coefficients (communalities) of each factor affecting the motivation of employees in hotel businesses in Greece.

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
D1. Recognition	1.000	.800
D2. Human relations	1.000	.776
D3. Accomplishments	1.000	.700
D4. Security	1.000	.691
D5. Establishment of incentives for cooperation	1.000	.725
D6. Interdependence, common interest	1.000	.717
D7. Formation of cooperation processes	1.000	.824
D8. Mutual trust	1.000	.672
D9. Ability to consent	1.000	.456
D10. Relationships, positive climate	1.000	.470
D11. Expectations for high performance	1.000	.682
D12. Encouragement and rewarding of behaviours that lead to cooperation	1.000	.803
D13. Formation and use of continuous improvement and learning mechanisms	1.000	.845

The analysis of adjustment coefficients (communalities) demonstrates the significance of each factor. For instance, the factor “recognition” (D1) had an initial value of 1, which after factor analysis became 0.800 (80.0%). Similarly, the factor “human relations” (D2) had an initial value of 1, which after factor analysis became 0.776 (77.6%), and so on. Therefore, the first four factors are important, namely the "formation and use of continuous improvement and learning mechanisms" (D13), the "formation of cooperation processes" (D7), the "encouragement and rewarding of behaviours that lead to cooperation" (D12) and "recognition" (D1). The analysis proceeds by using principal component analysis to determine the total variance of the main factors that can be extracted from the 13 variables/questions of the survey questionnaire, using the eigenvalues criterion (see Table 3).

**Table 3:** Total variance of factors affecting employee motivation in Greek hotel enterprises

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.037	61.821	61.821	5.037	61.821	61.821	7.722	59.398	59.398
2	2.125	8.655	70.476	2.125	8.655	70.476	1.440	11.078	70.476
3	1.125	5.991	76.467	1.125	3.68	73.58	1.12	9.08	73.57
4	.88	5.154	81.621	.88	2.88	73.58	1.09	4.08	78.67
5	.540	4.158	85.778						
6	.384	2.953	88.732						
7	.321	2.469	91.201						
8	.293	2.254	93.454						
9	.259	1.995	95.449						
10	.208	1.597	97.046						
11	.199	1.528	98.575						
12	.132	1.018	99.592						
13	.053	.408	100.000						

Table 3 shows that there are four main factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. These factors indicate the proportion of variance explained by each factor and contribute to the total variance. The percentages for the factors identified in the study are as follows: 59,398% for the “formation and use of continuous improvement and learning mechanisms” (D13), 11,078% for the “formation of collaboration processes” (D7), 9,08% for the “encouragement and rewarding of behaviours that lead to collaboration” (D12), and 4,08% for “recognition” (D1). Based on the respondents' answers, it can be concluded that the first two factors, namely the “formation and use of continuous improvement mechanisms and learning” and the “formation of collaboration processes”, account for at least 60% of the total variance in the 13 variables/questions related to employee motivation in hotel companies. This conclusion is drawn using the eigenvalue criterion ( $\geq 1$ ) and the principal components analysis method.

Figure 1 shows a scree plot representing the factors with eigenvalues  $\geq 1$ . The point where the curve first begins to horizontalize indicates the maximum number of factors to extract. In this case, the optimal number of factors to extract is 2. The important factors identified in the study include the "formation and use of continuous improvement and learning mechanisms" (D13), the "formation of cooperation processes" (D7), the "encouragement and rewarding of behaviours that lead to cooperation" (D12) and "recognition" (D1).

**Figure 1:** Scree plot of the motivational factors of employees in the hotel sector in Greece

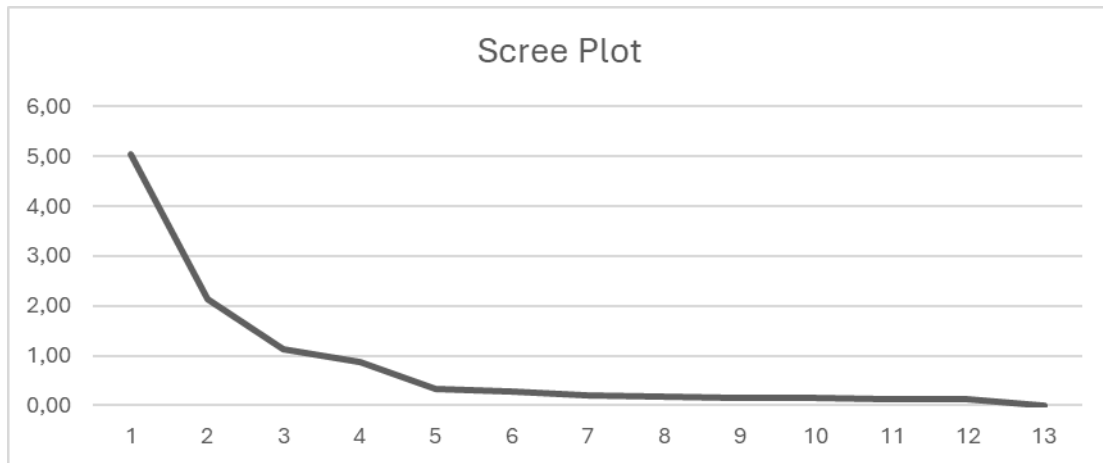


Table 4 (Component Matrix) presents the two factors and the corresponding loadings of the other variables on these two factors that influence employee motivation in Greek hotel companies. The values of the factors range from -1 to 1.

Table 4: *Component matrix for the variables of employee motivation questions in Greek hotel businesses*

**Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>Component 1</i>	<i>Component 2</i>
D13. Formation and use of continuous improvement and learning mechanisms	.905	-.161
D1. Recognition	.882	-.150
D12. Encouragement and rewarding of behaviours that lead to cooperation	.876	-.191
D2. Human relations	.865	-.166
D5. Establishment of incentives for cooperation	.847	
D3. Accomplishments	.837	
D4. Security	.826	
D11. Expectations for high performance	.804	-.199
D8. Mutual trust	.794	.204
D6. Interdependence, common interest	.774	.344
D10. Relationships, positive climate	.684	
D9. Ability to consent	.673	
D7. Formation of cooperation processes	.172	-.891

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
a. 2 components extracted

Table 5 presents the rotated component matrix, displaying the two factors and their respective variable loadings after orthogonal rotation. The purpose of the rotation is to increase the larger loadings and decrease the smaller ones, making the results easier to interpret.

Table 5: Rotated component matrix for the variables of the questions of employee motivation in hotel businesses in Greece

<b>Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>		
	Component 1	Component 2
D13. Formation and use of continuous improvement and learning mechanisms	.918	
D12. Encouragement and rewarding of behaviours that lead to cooperation	.896	
D1. Recognition	.893	
D2. Human relations	.881	
D11. Expectations for high performance	.825	
D3. Accomplishments	.818	.179
D5. Establishment of incentives for cooperation	.807	.271
D4. Security	.787	.270
D8. Mutual trust	.732	.369
D6. Interdependence, common interest	.682	.502
D10. Relationships, positive climate	.678	.101
D9. Ability to consent	.647	.191
D7. Formation of cooperation processes		.908
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser		
Normalization. <sup>a</sup>		
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.2 components extracted		

Table 5 shows that variables D13 (formation and use of continuous improvement and learning mechanisms), D12 (encouragement and rewarding of behaviours that lead to cooperation), D1 (recognition), D11 (expectations for high performance) and D2 (human relations) belong to the first factor, which can be referred to as 'Factors affecting the motivation of employees in hotel companies'. The remaining variables with lower scores belong to the second factor, which can be referred to as 'Factors limiting the motivation of employees in hotel enterprises'.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The motivation of employees in the hotel business is an important issue, which is related to the human behaviour, performance, and attitude of employees towards work and their commitment.

In this study, it was revealed from the factor analysis that the variables of “formation and use of continuous improvement and learning mechanisms”, “encouragement and rewarding of behaviours that lead to cooperation”, “recognition”, “expectations for high performance” and “human relations” are the factors that influence the motivation of employees in hotel companies. These characteristics influence employee behaviour and contribute to the achievement of business objectives.

In order to ensure that the hotel market operates effectively, it is necessary to promptly redefine the Greek tourism policy in the light of the new data, so that tourism can increase its competitiveness in the international tourism markets by diversifying the tourist offer and by renewing, improving the quality of its activities and increasing the added value of the tourist product which is being offered. This can be achieved by improving the management skills of managers, the ability of hotel companies to adopt new forms of internal organisation and the implementation of yield management strategies in tourism companies.

To improve organizational performance and increase the efficiency of hotel companies, the following practices are proposed for better human resource management, based on the factors that influence motivation:

- Training and development aimed at providing the workforce of enterprises with the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil individual and corporate objectives.
- Teamwork aimed at building effective work teams with self-awareness and self-management skills in order to ensure the smooth execution of the operational tasks of the business.



- The evaluation of employee performance, which through the appropriate indicators used, aims to improve the performance of organizational objectives and business processes of businesses, as well as to achieve the personal aspirations of employees.
- Effective reward strategies aim to induce high commitment and flexibility using material rewards and additional resources.
- Communication aimed at providing appropriate information on the behaviour, responsibilities, and performance of employees.

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