

# EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

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## *Abstract*

*The study examines the relationship of motivation with different factors at the workplace. An empirical survey was conducted through structured questionnaires using a dichotomous scale that addressed that how different factors affect employee motivation. Four Hypotheses were designed to verify the relationship between motivation; with Job security, Job enrichment, Setting & Communicating goals and employee involvement in decision making. It is verified that these factors have a positive association with employee motivation.*

**Keywords:** Employee Motivation, Job Security, Job enrichment & Motivation Theory

## Evolutionary Background

The evolution of motivation consists of centuries of literature, and in its earliest approaches dates from the time of Greek philosophers, focusing on the concept of "Hedonism" (Steers et al, 2004). This describes the individuals who were seen as focusing their efforts for seeking pleasure and avoiding pains. This principle was later developed by Bentham, Mill and Helvetius in the 17th and 18th centuries and criticized by Vroom (1995). In 1911, Fredrick Winslow Taylor and his associates brought scientific rules of management to increase both efficiency and production. In the 1930's, social scientists and managers started to consider the role of social influence on behavior. The role of group dynamics and the need to view employees as complex beings along with multiple motivational influences were recognized as powerful influences on performance. Several models of work motivation emerged, including Maslow's Need Theory of 1954, McClelland's model, and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (Kahle et al. 1986).

In the 1960's, a new approach of work motivation emerged, which focused on delineating the processes underlying work motivation (Steers et al, 2004). These process theories sharply contrasted with the earlier content theories which focused more on identifying factors associated with motivation in a relatively static environment. Central to the process theory genre is a service of cognitive theories of motivation that collectively attempt to understand the thought process that people go through in determining how to behave in the workplace.

Expectancy theory is the best known cognitive theory, deriving itself from the early work of Lewins (1938) and Tolman (1959), who saw behavior as purposeful, goal directed and largely based on conscious intentions. Some other researchers contributed in expanding the expectancy theory such as Vroom (1964), Porter and Lawler (1968), Kanfer (1990), and Mitchell (1997) etc.

Goal setting theory also emerged in the late 1960s, as researchers began to discover that the simple act of specifying, goal difficulty and goal commitment each served to enhance task performance.

Porter and Lawler incorporated a feedback loop to recognize learning by employees about past relationships. That is, if superior performance in the past failed to lead to superior rewards, future employee efforts may suffer, since incentives and the reward system loses credibility in the eyes of the employees.

Other significant developments by Bandura (1982) on the role of social cognition and self-efficacy on behavior and performance, proposed a social cognition theory, suggesting that self-confidence lies at the heart of an individuals incentives to act or to be proactive. Later, Stajkovic and Luthams (2001) found considerable support for the role of self-efficacy in determining work related performance, particularly as moderated by task complexity and locus of control.

## Recent Developments

In recent years researchers worked on the extension and refinement of existing theories (Steers et al, 2004), but did not produce any significant new information. However by the 1990s intellectuals had lost interest in work motivation theory. As evidence, the only few articles have been published in leading journals that focus on the genuine theoretical developments in this area over the past decade. At the same time recent editions of textbooks of management and organization behavior reveal that most of the theories discussed from 1960s and 1970s with only passing references to more recent work. Thus we can say that the research work on motivation was not carried on into the mid 20th century.

## Reasons

We found two reasons for the lack of empirical research; either researchers have lost interest in this subject altogether (probably because they think that it is not a pressing issue in organizations), or that work-motivation issues have been resolved, and no further work is required.

## Future Prospect

In 2001, the Academy of Management Researchers issued a call for papers on "The Future Work



Motivation". In response to the call fifty-six papers were submitted by researchers, six of which appear to offer useful ideas and new insight into future directions for the theoretical development of the topic.

The first paper, by Edwin A. Locke and Gary P. Latham (2002), focuses on the development of meta-theories on work motivation. They make six recommendations for developing complex theories of work motivation. In the second, Yitzhal Fried and Linda Haynes Slowik (2004) examine ways in which time factors can influence employee motivation in organizations. In the third, Myeong-Gu Seo, Lisa Feldman Barrett, and Jean M. Bartunak (2004) draw upon both psychological and neurobiological theories of core effective experiences to identify a set of direct and indirect paths through which work related effective feelings can influence the three dimensions of behavioral outcomes: direction, intensity, and persistence. Ruth Kanfer and Philip L. Acakerman (1984), then use life span and adult development theories to facilitate an understanding of the implications of aging on workplace motivation. Following this, other researchers use the self-categorization theory and social identity process to examine the ways in which individual and group processes interact to determine work motivation. Finally, Hugo M. Kehr synthesizes several lines of research on motivation by examining the influences of explicit and implicit motives and perceived abilities on motivation in the workplace using a compensatory model.

### What is Motivation?

The term motivation derives from the Latin word for movement "movere". It is an important part of management and for managers it is an integral part of performance equation (Kreps.1997). The word "motivation" is often used to describe certain sorts of behavior. A student who studies hard and tries for better grades may be described as being "highly motivated", while his friend may say that he is "finding it hard to get motivated" to study for an exam, or to start an assignment. Such statements imply that motivation is a major influence on our behavior, but

they don't really tell us how. The definition of motivation is different for different people, but all agree that it is goal-directed behavior (Lindner, 1998).

### Types of Motivation

There are two kinds of motivation (Lindner, 1998):

1. Intrinsic motivation occurs when people are internally motivated to do something because it either brings them pleasure, they think it is important, or they feel that what they are learning is morally significant.
2. Extrinsic motivation comes into play when an individual is compelled to do something or act a certain way because of factors external to him or her (like money or good grades).

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### The Concern of Motivation

According to Ryan and Edward (2000), motivation has an important concern for the people who are involved in mobilizing others to act, such as team leaders, teachers, military commanders etc, because of the result it produces. Bessell et al (2002) writes about the importance of understanding motivation for managers to motivate their subordinates and the workforce. Motivational tools are often under-utilized by managers, generally due to lack of knowledge of successful application of motivational programs. The ultimate goal of every manager is to increase production and efficiency to reach maximum results for the organization. Managers must be able to implement motivational programs successfully to gain the desired outcome. Bessell et al (2002) goes on to say that motivation can be highly result-oriented, if used properly and proper motivation cannot be done unless managers know that what motivates their workforce to produce better results.

### What motivates people?

According to Ryan and Edward (2000), it is really complicated to answer this question. Generally people are motivated to act because they value that action or



because of external coercion, personal interest or bribes. Thus we can say that there are two things that motivate the people, either the person is self-motivated to act or external forces coerce him. These factors are called intrinsic and extrinsic motivation respectively.

### Human Nature and Motivation

Ryan and Deci (2000) continue to say that people are generally self-motivated and want to learn and master new skills, and apply their talent. For all this they show commitment. However, it should be kept in mind that the human spirit can be diminished and a person can refuse to fulfill responsibilities, regardless of his culture. People have differences that go beyond their biological endowments and they can be active or passive, constructive or indolent. In some situations some people are more motivated than others.

### Motivation and Human Needs

When we talk about different motivational theories that lead to desired outcomes, we need to address the question of why certain outcomes are desired in the first place. The self-determination theory (Deci et al, 1991) addresses the answer to this question by relating it with basic psychological needs, which are inherent in human life. These three needs are competence, autonomy and relatedness. These needs induce towards producing desired outcomes. It is proven that satisfaction of basic psychological needs leads towards health and well-being (Ryan and Deci, 2000), which in turn leads to enhancement of performance. However, if these are not satisfied performance invariably suffers.

Social context and relatedness effectively contribute towards enhance intrinsic motivation. Positive feedback and positive competitive environment leads to a positive effect on competence, accompanied by autonomously supported behavior, whereas negative feedback undermines intrinsic motivation. For example, if parents and teachers take interest in a child's academic performance and positively respond, they would induce the enhancement of competencies and initiatives.

### Why Motivated Employees?

When we talk about motivation, many questions come

to mind, but the most important question is why do we only need to motivate employees? The working environment is rapidly changing across the world, and motivated employees adjust their work behaviors and attitudes according to the changing work environment (Lindner, 1998). They help organization survive when they are more productive. Following are the reasons why we need motivated employees:

### Competitiveness

A motivated workforce is frequently cited (Steers et al, 2004) as the hallmark of competitive advantage. The economist Lester Thurow in 1992 observed that over a decade ago "... successful companies and countries will compete in the future based principally on the quality of both their technology and their human resources. A motivated work force becomes a critical strategic asset in such competition". Every organization must sustain a competitive advantage to prosper and survive (Hays and Arthur, 1999). This advantage can be achieved by offering superior service quality in service industry. This superior service quality can be achieved only through a motivated workforce.

### The Changing Environment

Great workplace changes have taken place in the last decade in the global work environment, changing it dramatically. Globalization and management challenges across borders are now norms instead of the exception (Steers et al, 2004). These changes have influenced organizations on how they attract, retain and motivate employees. Since we lack new models for guiding to managers, this has become a problem; as Cappelli et. al. (1991) note that "... most observers of the corporate world believe that the traditional relationship between employer and employee is gone, but there is little understanding of why it ended and even less about what is replacing that relationship". The time has come to convert intellectual energies into discovering new models of motivation.

### Motivation in Service Industry

Motivation in service industry is as important as in the manufacturing industry. Employee motivation can

provide competitive advantage to the firm in collaboration with vision; mediate the relationship between organizational learning and perceived service quality (Hays and Hill, 1999). It can also mediate the relationship between employee capabilities and competencies. Practitioners and academics alike agree that the following factors lead to service quality and customer satisfaction and loyalty; Employee Motivation, Vision and Organizational Learning. It is difficult to assure quality in service industry if compared to the manufacturing industry. Quality judgments of an intangible service are determined by individual customers perception and expectation. Thus, for the service industry, employee motivation, vision and the organizational learning ability play important role in achieving superior quality.

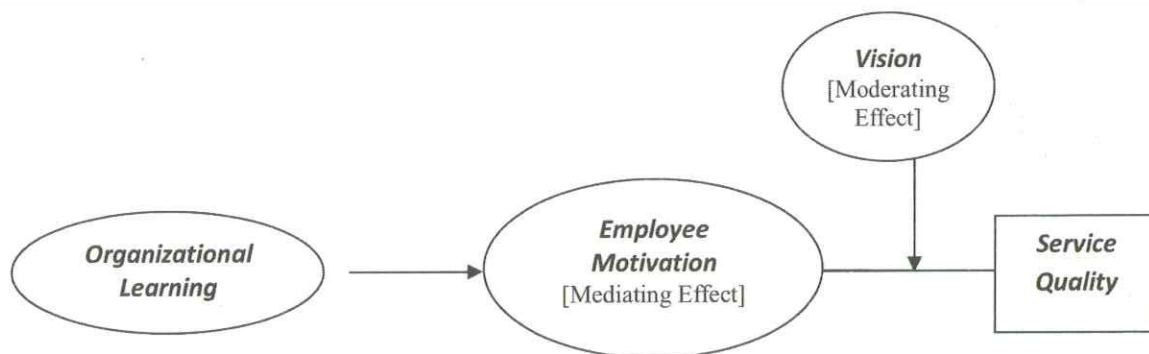
### Vision, Motivation and Service Quality

Perceptions of service quality are shaped by customer expectation (Hays and Hill, 1999). The feelings of employees about their jobs are directly linked with the customers feeling about the service they get. Only motivated and empowered employees with vision of service quality can provide superior quality, and this can be observed by ensuring greater customer satisfaction. Employee motivation and vision can be viewed as valuable resources, which support distinctive quality competence and have significant positive effect on perceived service quality. On the other hand, organizational learning has a significant positive impact on employee motivation, vision and perceived service quality.

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**Fig. 1:** Service Quality Formative Index



**Fig. 2:** Service Quality and Employee Motivation Relationship



### Motivational Differences

Motivational factors differ from person to person. Therefore managers need to identify which factor motivates their specific workforce (Bessell et al, 2002). Managers must keep in mind different factors when recognizing and rewarding individuals. It is challenging to motivating people, because it is not necessary that the same technique of motivation works on everyone. Every individual has a different attitude, behavior, goal and expectations.

### Monetary or Non-Monetary Rewards: A Misconception

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Managers have always misunderstood the concept that only monetary rewards and incentives motivate people. As we have already established that motivation varies from individual to individual, some people also expect “thank you” or a “pat on the back” besides monetary rewards from their bosses in front of their colleagues. It must be kept in mind that both monetary and non-monetary rewards and incentives are equally important, because any type of reward repeated over time will lose its effectiveness. The Hawthorne studies conducted by Elton Mayo from 1924 to 1932, found that employees are not motivated solely by money, and employee behavior is linked to their attitude (Lindner, 1998).

### Motivational Factors

People work their best work when they are in an environment that makes them feel valued. However, managers should not assume that people feel valued simply because they continue to be productive, but they focus on what works for them, especially in terms of employee recognition and reward.

Following are the motivating factors that have an established effectiveness (Lindner, 1998): Interesting work, good wages, full appreciation of the work done, job security, good working conditions, promotions and growth in the organization, feelings of being in touch with the senior management, boss's personal loyalty to employees, and tactful discipline and sympathetic help with personal problems. However, there is a disagreement among researchers about which

one of these is the most important motivational factor. Some researchers consider interesting work as most important and some make say it is secondary. Dynamically, money plays an important role in motivating employees. Some people may disagree, but in fact no one can deny the importance of money, the degree of importance may vary from person to person. Examples are in countries where the distribution of wealth is transparent, people are well off, they might choose work with less pay and more personal satisfaction. These might include first world countries. On the other hand in countries where the distribution of wealth is not transparent, people prefer the jobs with higher financial incentives. These might be second or third world countries.

### Job Security

Pay and job security are extrinsic factors that produce job satisfaction. The ranked order (Lindner, 1998) of motivating factors are (a) interesting work, (b) good wages, (c) full appreciation of work done, (d) job security, (e) good working conditions, (f) promotions and growth in the organization, (g) feeling of being in on things, (h) personal loyalty to employees, (i) tactful discipline, and (j) sympathetic help with personal problems.

### Appreciation

The third highest ranked motivational factor is full appreciation of work. If an employee at the center feels that there is lack of appreciation for work done compared to another employee, an inequity may be created and the employee will be de-motivated. Furthermore, if all employees at the center feel that there is a lack of appreciation for work done, a large gap may be created between expected and actual appreciation. In this case employees will attempt to restore equity through various means, some of which may be counterproductive to organizational goals and objectives. If employees who feel that their work is not being appreciated work less or undervalue the work of other employees, overall organizational performance will fall. Full appreciation of work done was not ranked as the most important motivational factor by Harpaz (1990), but was ranked second in by



Kovach (1987). The discrepancies in these research findings supports the idea that what motivates employees differs given the context in which the employee works. What is clear, however, is that employees rank interesting work as the most important motivational factor.

### Personal Associations

In most employment situations where intrinsic motivation is meant to be high, the employee usually desires continued employment (Kreps, 1997). Employees form personal associations with co-workers and develop capital specific to their particular jobs and employers.

### Employer-Employee Relation

Employee and employer relations strengthen when they respect each other and the employee receives incentives as recognition of work done (Kreps, 1997).

### Working Environment

A good professional environment, where employees are fairly given promotional opportunities, boosts organizational performance, and grooms the personality and skills of employees (Lindner, 1998).

### Conditions for Intrinsic Motivation

Since every person has a tendency toward some extra activity, such as education, hobbies, sports etc. it is clear that to enhance intrinsic motivation a supportive culture is required (Ryan and Deci, 2000). If the culture is supportive, intrinsic motivation will flourish. On the other hand, it can be disrupted by non-supportive conditions.

### Supportive and Non-Supportive Conditions

There are certain factors that describe supportive and non-supportive conditions, including autonomy, competence and relatedness. The first two, i.e., competence and autonomy, are integrated (Ryan and Deci, 2000). A person who accepts challenges and gains success, has competence to be successful in challenges, positive feedback will increase his intrinsic motivation. But the use of competence requires

autonomy. The third factor, i.e., relatedness also plays an important role in terms of developing a secure and satisfying connection with others in society. For example, if a student knows that the teacher will respond to his question positively and not scold him, it will enhance the intrinsic motivation of the student to ask further questions.

### Autonomy versus Control

Choice and acknowledgement of feelings and opportunities for self-direction enhance intrinsic motivation, because they give people a sense of autonomy (Ryan and Deci, 2000). People with autonomy are curious, creative and desire to accept challenges. On the other hand, people who are directed with a control approach not only lose initiative, but also learn less, especially when the task requires creativity and conceptual learning. For example, children whose parents are 'autonomous supportive' are more confident, creative and good decision makers as compare to children whose parents are 'control supportive'. However, people will only get motivated for such work in which they have vested interests. Autonomy does not refer to be being independent, detached or selfish.

### Criticism on Incentives

#### External Effects on Intrinsic Motivation

It is argued that rewards, threatened punishments and deadlines decline intrinsic motivation. The common theme is that these events pressurize a person to think, feel or behave in a specific way and tells the person that he or she is being controlled by external contingencies that negatively affect the individual sense of autonomy (Deci et al, 1991). The issue of how extrinsic rewards effect intrinsic motivation has been hotly debated. Many researchers have agreed that extrinsic rewards undermine intrinsic motivation but they also add threats, deadlines, directions, pressure evaluations and imposed goals.

### Counter Productivity in Employees

Incentives can be counterproductive for workers and the degree of intrinsic motivation can decline. This



leads to poor quality of work and reduces the profit for the employer (Kreps, 1997). However, this is not to say that intrinsic motivation is always superior to extrinsic incentives. In well documented cases the presence of extrinsic incentives enhances the performance of workers and increases employer's profit. This question is, how can greater incentives lead to the decrease of workers performance, making the principle worse off? The answer exists in Carrot and Stick theory, and in the simple model of agency theory. Considering extrinsic incentive cannot lower effort levels, the effort level is obviously at the lowest possible level in the absence of extrinsic incentives. One important question is that why would a worker expend any efforts in the absence of extrinsic incentives? Furthermore, in this knowledge-based compensation environment, it is hard to imagine an employment situation without incentives.

### **Saving the Job (A Paradigm)**

The question arises, when an employee receives pay and incentive from the job (Kreps, 1997), how would he be intrinsically motivated? There are two ways to explain this concept. Firstly, if an employee gets sufficient compensation in terms of tangible and intangible benefits, and higher wages from the market, the threat of dismissal provides motivation to the employee. Secondly, when promotion is possible and depends on a reading of the quality of one's work and peer pressure of professional competition.

### **Poor Performance Evaluation Criteria**

A moral problem arises with ambiguous evaluation criteria; the evaluation system of an organization is not generally shared with the employees, because there is misconception that the employees will only put their efforts when their jobs are safe (Kreps, 1997). The other point of view is that if you don't share evaluation criteria, employees may neither feel a sense of achievement nor get confidence for future endeavors (Kreps, 1997).

### **Deception for Incentives**

When benefits are involved, needless to say generalized corruption is inevitably invited (Kreps, 1997).

Individuals often try to influence their superiors, spending valuable time in politics. When job tasks are ambiguous, incentive formulas may invite efforts to corrupt the objective measures.

### **For Incentives or For Enjoyment**

The critics of the incentives support their views that when a person performs some act, he looks for a rationale that justifies his actions, and since he enjoys it, he works harder in that search. However, if extrinsic incentives are put in place, he will attribute his efforts to those incentives, developing distaste for required efforts (Kreps, 1997). This is the only misconception of the critics, because people work for the money that satisfies their needs. The employees may enjoy their work, but at some stage they will expect some sort of appreciation and incentives that retain their level of enjoyment, leading to motivation for better performance.

### **Mitigating Problems**

There are certain solutions suggested to mitigate moral-hazard problems. One, the evaluation criteria must be shared with employees, letting them know how they can get incentives. Secondly, the evaluator must fairly evaluate the performance (Kreps, 1997).

### **Implications for Managers**

Managers must understand their work force. What motivates them? If they do, then managers can carefully utilize the motivation tools (Lindner, 1998).

### **Managers Attitude**

Managers, supervisors and leaders must have enthusiastic and positive attitudes that extend the same spirit in other team members. They also need to delegate the work as per individual attitudes (Bessell et al, 2002). For example, people nearing the end of their career might appreciate being given mentoring responsibilities.

### **Methodology**

The research design for this study employed a descriptive survey method. The target population of



this study included employees, managers & supervisors working in different private sector organizations, both local and multinational. The sample size included 60 employees from 20 different target organizations selected on the basis of availability. Four Hypotheses were designed. Data was collected through structured questionnaires with nominal dichotomous scale. Correlation analysis carried out with chi-square test.

## Data Analysis, Findings & Discussion

### Proposition 1:

Job security plays an important role in employee motivation.

[Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Preference for Job Security

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.388

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & org., Preference for Job Security

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.142]

In both the cases, chi calculated value is greater than critical value which shows the correlation between the variables. Employee motivation is measured with two variables i.e. "Willingness to Stay" & "Satisf. with cur. Job & org". If an employee is satisfied with current situation and also willing to go along with the same conditions just because of his or her job is secure some how. So Job security plays an important role in motivating the employee.

### Proposition 2:

Job enrichment is an important source of employee motivation.

[Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Preference for Learning W/O Pay

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.691

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & , Preference for Learning W/O Pay

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.744

Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Evaluation &

Feedback

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.180

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & org., Evaluation & Feedback

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.224]

In all the four cases, chi calculated value is greater than critical value which indicates correlation between the variables. Job Enrichment is measured through "Preference for Learning W/O Pay", provisioning for "Evaluation & Feedback". If an employee has preference for learning with out an additional pay and consider evaluation & feedback phenomenon is helpful mean for personal development, so the employee is considerably motivated in case of job to be enriched with out an additional benefits.

### Proposition 3:

Setting and communicating goals are powerful motivators.

[Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Goal Communication

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.124

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & org., Goal Communication

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.146

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & , Employee Invo. in settin

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value i.e. P-Value = 0.886

Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Employee Invo. in setting Goals

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.811

Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Information sharing

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.305

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & org., Information sharing

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.775]



In all the six cases, chi calculated value is greater than critical value which indicates correlation between the variables. "Goal Communication", "Employee Invo. in setting Goals" and "Information sharing" are cross-tabulated with motivation. Correlation of all these variables indicates that employee involvement in setting and communicating goals is a powerful motivator

#### Proposition 4:

Employee participation in decision making leads to motivation.

[Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Emp. Participation in D. Making

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.646

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & , Emp. Participation in D.

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.550

Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Prov. for sense of ownership

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.729

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & , Prov. for sense of owner

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.835

Tabulated statistics: Willingness to Stay, Regular Comm. with Top Mgmt

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.348

Tabulated statistics: Satisf. with cur. Job & org., Regular Comm. with Top Mgmt

Result; Chi Critical Value is .004 at 1 DF. The calculated value is P-Value = 0.464]

In all the six cases, chi calculated value is greater than critical value and found correlation between the variables. "Emp. Participation in D. Making", "Prov. for sense of ownership" and "Regular Comm. with Top Mgmt" are cross-tabulated with motivation. Correlation of all these variables indicates that if an employee participate in decision making, organization creates conditions that has provisioning for 'sense of ownership' and has regular communication with top

management then an employee will be motivated towards organization and job.

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