

Name: Kelly Harrington  
Program: Doctoral Program in Organizational Leadership  
Dissertation Title: Impact of Employee Recognition Programs on Motivation and Job Satisfaction of Employees in Assisted Living Communities  
Committee Chair: Anita Jose, Ph.D.  
Program Director: Kathleen Bands, Ph.D.

### **Statement of Academic Integrity**

I certify that I am the author of the work contained in this dissertation and that it represents my original research and conclusions. I pledge that apart from my committee, faculty, and other authorized support personnel and resources, I have received no assistance in developing the research, analysis, conclusions, or text contained in this document, nor has anyone written or provided any element of this work to me.

Signed:

*Kelly A. Harrington*

Kelly Harrington

07/05/2021

Date

HOOD COLLEGE



Impact of Employee Recognition Programs on Motivation and Job Satisfaction of Employees in  
Assisted Living Communities

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate School of Hood College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Organizational Leadership

by  
Kelly A. Harrington

Frederick, Maryland

2021

©  
Copyright  
2021

by

Kelly Ann Harrington  
All Rights Reserved

## DOCTORAL COMMITTEE

The members of the committee appointed to examine the dissertation of Kelly A. Harrington find that this dissertation fulfills the requirements and meets the standards of the Hood College Doctoral Program in Organizational Leadership and recommend that it be approved.

---

Anita Jose, Ph.D., Chair	Date
--------------------------	------

---

Kathleen Bands, Ph.D., Member	Date
-------------------------------	------

---

Peggy Dufour, DBA, Member	Date
---------------------------	------

---

Amanda Gill, M.S., CDAL, Member	Date
---------------------------------	------

©  
Copyright  
2021

by

Kelly Ann Harrington  
All Rights Reserved

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	ix
DEDICATION .....	x
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	xi
ABSTRACT.....	xii
FOREWORD .....	xiv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose of the Study .....	6
Research Questions .....	7
Conceptual Framework.....	7
Theoretical Framework.....	8
Overview of Methodology.....	11
Limitations .....	15
Significance of the Study .....	18
Definitions of Key Terms.....	18
Summary .....	20
Organization of This Dissertation .....	21
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	24
Introduction.....	24
Sources and Methods.....	26
Population Studied .....	27

Theoretical Framework .....	27
Motivation .....	28
Job Satisfaction.....	33
Employee Recognition Programs .....	35
Employee Recognition Programs and Motivation .....	38
Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction.....	40
Employee Recognition Programs, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction .....	44
Employee Recognition Programs in Related Fields.....	48
Detriments to Employee Recognition .....	51
Summary .....	54
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	56
Research Purpose .....	56
Research Questions and Hypotheses .....	57
Key Variables and Measurement Model .....	58
Key Variables.....	58
Measurement Model.....	59
Research Design.....	61
Population and Sample .....	61
Informed Consent .....	62
Data Collection .....	63
Instruments .....	63

Data Qualification for Inferential Statistical Analysis .....	66
Data Analysis .....	67
Reliability, Validity, and Limitations .....	68
Reliability Challenges .....	68
Validity .....	70
Limitations .....	73
Summary .....	73
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS .....	75
Research Questions and Hypotheses .....	75
Key Variables Used in This Study .....	76
Demographics .....	77
Participant Demographics .....	77
Age/Generation .....	77
Gender .....	77
Education .....	77
Race/Ethnicity .....	78
Job Level .....	79
Department .....	79
Length of Time in Current Profession .....	81
Length of Time in Current Organization .....	81
Employment Related Perceptions .....	81



Opportunity for Advancement.....	81
Maintaining Employment.....	82
Summary of Participant Demographic and Employment-Related Perceptions .....	82
Employee Recognition Programs Being Implemented (Research Question 1) .....	82
Personal Recognition Programs .....	83
Work Practice Recognition Programs .....	84
Job Dedication Recognition Programs .....	85
Results Recognition Programs .....	85
Most Important Form of Recognition .....	86
Inferential Statistics and Analysis (Research Question 2) .....	88
Scale Variables.....	88
Correlational Analysis .....	94
Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs .....	94
Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction .....	95
Assumptions of Multiple Regression.....	97
Mediation Analysis .....	99
Summary .....	101
Research Question 1 .....	102
Most Prevalent Employee Recognition Programs .....	102
Least Prevalent Employee Recognition Programs.....	103

Research Question 2 .....	104
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS .....	106
Discussion .....	106
Participant Demographics .....	106
Employment-Related Perceptions .....	107
Employee Recognition Programs Being Implemented (Research Question 1) .....	107
Most Prevalent Employee Recognition Programs.....	108
Least Prevalent Employee Recognition Programs .....	108
Interpretation of Inferential Statistics and Analysis (Research Question 2) .....	110
Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs and Motivation.....	111
Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction .....	112
Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction .....	113
Mediating Effects of Motivation on the Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction .....	114
Limitations .....	116
Implications of the Findings .....	119
Implications for Practice .....	120
Implications for Future Research .....	122
Conclusions.....	124
EPILOGUE.....	126

References .....	128
APPENDIX A: Welcome Letter, Informed Consent Form, Survey Questionnaire .....	135
APPENDIX B: Institutional Review Board Application and Authorization .....	147

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1.1. Key Terms and Definitions.....	19
1.2 Research Overview and Chapter 1 Summary.....	22
2.1 Factors in the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory.....	30
2.2 Brun & Dugas (2008) Interaction Levels and Recognition Practices .....	46
2.3 Selected Major Works That Influenced This Study.....	54
3.1 Study Variables, Measures, and Statistical Tests.....	68
4.1 Summary of Variables Used in Statistical Analysis .....	76
4.2 Levels of Education.....	78
4.3 Race/Ethnicity .....	78
4.4 Current Job Level .....	79
4.5 Current Department.....	80
4.6 Levels of Time in Current Organization.....	81
4.7 Personal Recognition Programs .....	83
4.8 Work Practice Recognition Programs.....	84
4.9 Job Dedication Recognition Programs .....	85
4.10 Results Recognition Programs .....	86
4.11 Single Most Important Form of Employee Recognition.....	87
4.12 Scale Variables: Reliability and Descriptive Statistics .....	89
4.13 Personal Recognition Program (PRP) Responses .....	89
4.14 Work Practice Recognition Program (WPRP) Responses.....	90
4.15 Job Dedication Recognition Program (JDRP) Responses.....	90

4.16 Recognition of Results Program (RRP) Responses .....	91
4.17 Job Satisfaction Scale (JOBSAT) Responses .....	92
4.18 Motivation Scale (MOTIVATE) Responses .....	93
4.19 Correlation Between Employee Recognition Programs.....	94
4.20 Correlation Between Employee Recognition, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction .....	96
4.21 Tests of IV Distribution Normality.....	97
4.22 Mediation Effects of Motivation on Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction.....	100
4.23 Summary of Findings: Results of Hypothesis Testing .....	105
5.1 Most Prevalent Recognition Program Activities .....	108
5.2 Least Prevalent Recognition Program Activities.....	108

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1.1 Conceptual Framework Showing Mediation Effect of Motivation Between Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction.....	8
3.1 Conceptual Framework Identifying the Key Variables of This Study .....	59
3.2 Measurement Model: Original Configuration .....	60
3.3 Final Measurement Model After Correlation Analysis, with JDRP as the Sole IV .....	60
4.1 Simple Mediation Effect of Motivation on Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction.....	100

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the amazing healthcare heroes in assisted living who worked around the clock to provide the best quality care to their residents when the odds were against them throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to the amazing residents and families who made coming to work everyday so rewarding and mean so much especially during such trying times.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and thank all my professors who contributed to my body of knowledge in making my dream come to life. I would like to acknowledge my Doctoral Committee members – Dr. Anita Jose, Dr. Kathleen Bands, Dr. Peggy Dufour, and Ms. Amanda Gill who aided in my successfully accomplishing my goal through their extraordinary efforts and support throughout my doctoral journey. I would like to acknowledge my cohort members who gave me their support when I needed it most, especially Vera Kurdian and Michael Weyand, and my mentor, Chris Currens, who prepared me for all that was to come throughout my doctoral journey. I would also like to acknowledge my family, friends, and boyfriend who cheered me on while supporting me in achieving this goal. And finally, I want to acknowledge the organizations and individuals who participated in my study – without your participation I would not have had such a successful study.



# Impact of Employee Recognition Programs on Motivation and Job Satisfaction of Employees in Assisted Living Communities

Kelly A. Harrington, DOL

Committee Chair: Anita Jose, Ph.D.

## ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationship between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities. Conducted to answer two major research questions – the types of employee recognition programs prevalent in assisted living communities, and the relationship between such programs, motivation, and job satisfaction – this quantitative study used a cross-sectional survey of employees in three assisted living communities in the Mid-Atlantic region. Results indicated that while all four types of recognition programs studied, personal, work practice, job dedication, and results, were present in the communities, the most prevalent were the personal recognition programs. Consultative communication, flexible scheduling, orienting new employees, and professional development opportunities topped the most prevalent practices found in the studied communities. A mediation analysis, run to test the relationships among the variables, found that employee recognition programs directly influenced motivation ( $p < .01$ ). It also found that while employee recognition programs directly influenced job satisfaction ( $p < .001$ ), motivation did not mediate this relationship. The main significance of this research is its setting; although the topics of motivation and job satisfaction have been studied in different settings by many theorists, there has been a paucity of research in assisted living communities. This research also provides a unique window into what motivates the employees studied. This research offers several important practical implications for motivating employees, and keeping them satisfied, in care-

giving settings. As the aging of America continues and more people are projected to live in assisted living communities, what motivates and satisfies the employees assumes special significance.

## FOREWORD

I have worked in assisted living communities for the past 6.5 years. It is a job that I know well and love. When I began my dissertation journey, I was the Resident Program Manager in my assisted living community. I provided the residents with daily activities that met their physical, emotional, purposeful, social, spiritual, and intellectual needs. In doing so, I became their confidant regarding any concerns and their advocate among the management team when it pertained to their mental and emotional well-being. I formed strong relationships with my residents, which allowed me to gain their trust. My lived experience provided the impetus to study the types of employee recognition programs in such settings and relate this to the topics of motivation and job satisfaction of employees.

In 2020, COVID-19 posed a massive challenge for those of us who work in assisted living communities. Everyone, myself included, rose to the challenge and went above and beyond to continue to bring quality care to our residents. The day-to-day lives of our residents changed drastically in the blink of an eye. We went from normal operations to daily changes in operations, to a quarantine with no end date. Wearing masks, having to social distance, and lacking the ability to see their family and friends impacted our residents' physical, mental and emotional well-being. Navigating all the changes from the county, state, and corporate levels made my job even more difficult as I had to deliver the news of all these changes to our residents in addition to my regular job duties.

COVID-19 first hit our community in April 2020, resulting in the death of one of our residents. In May, when tests became available, we began testing staff and residents according to state guidelines. Those tests delivered a seemingly endless stream of positive COVID test results for many staff and residents. Those positive results came with significant impacts: Staff had to

self-isolate at home, residents had to be transported to special isolation units (SIU), and staff had to erect our own SIU to care for residents in-house, all of which proved to be no easy task. Weekly COVID testing, working long hours and sometimes weeks with no day off, constantly being exposed to COVID-positive residents, and being the only member of the management team who interacted one-on-one daily with both positive and negative residents proved to be physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausting. As there seemed to be no foreseeable end of the COVID-19 pandemic when I began my research, I could only hope and pray that I, my staff, and my residents remained safe and healthy. While normal operations have changed and will continue to do so, COVID-19 would not dim my spirits, or my passion, for my residents and my staff.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

Imagine your aging loved one can no longer live alone unassisted due to various health conditions, and as a family, you decide that moving to assisted living is the best option. On your journey to find the best assisted living community for your loved one, you schedule tours and visit local assisted living communities. You know you want to move your loved one to a community where the staff can meet your loved one's needs and where your loved one will be safe and happy. You also want them to be well cared for and to be surrounded by individuals who enjoy the work they are doing. You want to move your loved one to a community where the employees are motivated to be there and satisfied with their jobs because that motivation and job satisfaction can directly impact the care that your loved one will receive.

According to the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), there are 28,900 assisted living communities with a combined 996,100 total licensed beds in the United States (U.S.) today (American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living, 2020). Purk and Lindsay (2006) projected that by 2030 "the projected population over 65 will be 70 million, or 20 percent of the U.S. population" (p. 118). As of January 2019, within U.S. assisted living communities, there were 435,000 employees in the assisted living profession (American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living, 2020). With any profession, decreased employee motivation and lack of employee job satisfaction are two overarching issues that employers face within their organizations (Danish & Usman, 2010). In the world of senior living, specifically assisted living communities, employee motivation and job satisfaction can greatly impact the quality-of-care that residents receive from front-line employees in the nursing department, as they can provide up to 90% of the assessed care that residents will need (Liu, 2006; Purk & Lindsay, 2006).

Employee motivation can be viewed through two different lenses: intrinsic or extrinsic (Deci, 1975; Deci & Ryan, 1980, 1985, 2008). Intrinsic motivation often consists of behaviors that are motivated by internal desires of self-determination and personal satisfaction and are performed in the absence of external rewards. Extrinsic motivation is often associated with behaviors linked to rewards that are received after completing the behavior. In other words, intrinsic motivation can be influenced by personalized recognition and appreciation and extrinsic motivation is influenced by rewards such as bonus and raises (Hansen et al., 2002). Job satisfaction is the positive emotional state that one experiences when receiving positive appraisal for their performance (Abdullah & Wan, 2013; Locke, 1976). If employees experience positive emotional states while at work, they will experience greater job satisfaction (Locke, 1976). On the other hand, if they experience negative emotional states while at work, they will experience decreased job satisfaction according to Abdullah and Wan (2013). Optimally, if employees are performing their job duties well, they will be recognized for their performance, thereby increasing their motivation to continue to perform well, which will impact their overall job satisfaction.

Employers in assisted living seek employees who are motivated and satisfied with their job because that positivity will show in the quality-of-care employees give to residents, as well as their desire to work hard. According to the Assisted Living Workgroup (ALW), and as quoted by Lepore (2008), assisted living is defined as

a state regulated and monitored residential long-term care option. Assisted living provides or coordinates oversight and services to meet the residents' individualized scheduled needs, based on the residents' assessments and service plans and their unscheduled needs

as they arise. Services that are required by state law and regulation to be provided or coordinated must include but are not limited to:

- 24-hour awake staff to provide oversight and meet scheduled and unscheduled needs
- Provision and oversight of personal care and supportive services
- Health related services (e.g., medication management services)
- Meals, housekeeping, and laundry
- Recreational activities
- Transportation and social services

These services are disclosed and agreed to in the contract between the provider and resident. Assisted living does not generally provide ongoing, 24-hour skilled nursing. It is distinguished from other residential long-term care options by the types of services that it is licensed to perform in accordance with a philosophy of service delivery that is designed to maximize individual choice, dignity, autonomy, independence, and quality of life (ALW, 2013; Lepore, 2008, p. 15).

The ALWs definition has been adopted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Alzheimer's Association, and defined in the landmark report by the Assisted Living Workgroup presented to the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging (ALW, 2003)

In assisted living communities, residents receive personalized care from the care staff in accordance with their needs. If associates (i.e., care staff members) are not motivated or satisfied with their jobs or their organizations, this will affect how they carry out their job duties. As a direct result, employee dissatisfaction can lead to decreased quality-of-care for residents.

One way that organizations can positively impact employee motivation and job satisfaction is by implementing employee recognition programs. As stated by Hansen et al. (2002), “a recognition program is more likely to have an impact on the bond the employee has with the organization. The organization could well expect to see a greater aspiration for excellence and continuous improvement in its employees with an appropriate recognition program” (p. 68). Employee recognition programs can be easily implemented and can not only affect the motivation and satisfaction of employees but also lead to increased organizational performance. If employees are neither motivated nor satisfied, then their job performance reflects this and affects the overall performance of their organization. “Organizations are under constant pressure to enhance and improve their performance and are realizing that an interdependent relationship exists between organizational performance and employee performance” (Ali & Ahmed, 2009, p. 272). In essence, employee dissatisfaction affects not only individual performance but also the performance of the overall organization.

The lack of employee recognition programs poses a problem for organizations, especially those who are senior care providers. With senior living being a highly person-centered profession, those who work in the field want to feel as if their hard work and contributions to their residents are not going unnoticed. The sense of feeling valued and appreciated by one’s peers and supervisors allows employees to experience a sense of belonging, that they are contributing to the organization, and that their good deeds are recognized (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Too often, employers neglect to recognize their employees for their hard work and contributions to their organizations. This lack of recognition leads to decreased motivation and job satisfaction. Decreases in both areas can lead to increased turnover and decreased job



performance. Studies have shown that organizations that implement employee recognition programs have more motivated and satisfied employees (Ali & Ahmed, 2009; Danish & Usman, 2010; and Luthans, 2000). While significant amounts of research have been conducted on motivation and job satisfaction, comparatively few studies have linked these factors to employee recognition programs, and even fewer have focused on assisted living communities.

Having worked in assisted living for more than 6 years, I have witnessed the impact that employee recognition programs can have on the motivation and job satisfaction of employees. Working at a community that implemented employee recognition programs, I found that employees were satisfied with their jobs because they felt valued and appreciated. Those same employees were more motivated as well because they looked forward to being recognized by their peers. The recognition was a driving force in their motivation and that motivation contributed to their job satisfaction. While I witnessed the positive impacts that employee recognition programs can have, I also witnessed the negative effects that having no form of recognition had on motivation and job satisfaction. My organization had a shift in management and when that occurred, the employee recognition program disappeared. The lack of employee recognition led to job dissatisfaction and our employees were less motivated to do their jobs and to do them well. Many staff ended up leaving as they felt undervalued and not appreciated for their hard work. Those who chose to stay did not perform as they had before because they felt as if it did not matter whether they did or not. Because assisted living is a very person-centered job, studying the impact that employee recognition programs can have on motivation and job satisfaction may greatly impact the quality care that employees are giving to residents. If assisted living community employees are motivated and satisfied with their jobs, it not only benefits them but also could potentially benefit those for whom they are providing care.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction in assisted living community employees. The impact that employee recognition programs can have on motivation and job satisfaction has not only been found to be positive, it also indicates that a positive relationship exists between employee recognition programs, motivation and job satisfaction (Daniel & Metcalf, 2005; Hansen et al., 2002; and Luthans, 2000). What has been lacking was research highlighting the correlation and relationship that employee recognition can have on individuals who work in assisted living communities. Assisted living communities require person-centered care and individuals who work one-on-one with residents. If associates do not feel as if they are valued and appreciated, that can negatively impact their motivation and job satisfaction and thus affect the quality-of-care the residents are receiving. In assisted living communities, there is often a trickle-down effect; so, if staff are happy and satisfied, then residents will be happy and satisfied. If residents are happy and satisfied, then their families will be happy and satisfied as well.

I have seen first-hand in my current assisted living community how much employee recognition impacted motivation and job satisfaction. We were a community that participated in almost daily recognition of associates and saw that associates were motivated and satisfied with high morale and associate retention. When there was a turnover in management and employee recognition was at a standstill, we saw a shift in motivation and job satisfaction. What I am seeking to do in this study is show that this is not just an isolated incident, that assisted living communities that lack employee recognition programs will see negative impacts on employee motivation and job satisfaction, while those who implement these programs will see positive impacts in both areas. As a scholar-practitioner, and as a leader, being mindful of the relationship

between recognition and motivation and job satisfaction has allowed me to evaluate the role that I play in implementing such programs within my department and among my employees. I have been able to develop and strengthen my recognition skills and be mindful that a small gesture can have a huge impact on an individual.

### **Research Questions**

Conducting research on the relationship between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction in assisted living communities created a need to determine which programs were being implemented in these communities. The need to identify such programs led me to my first research question:

**RQ1** What are the various employee recognition programs that are prevalent and being implemented in assisted living communities?

To answer this research question, I employed descriptive statistics; therefore, this research question did not have a hypothesis associated with it. Considering the influential relationship employee recognition programs can have led me to my second research question:

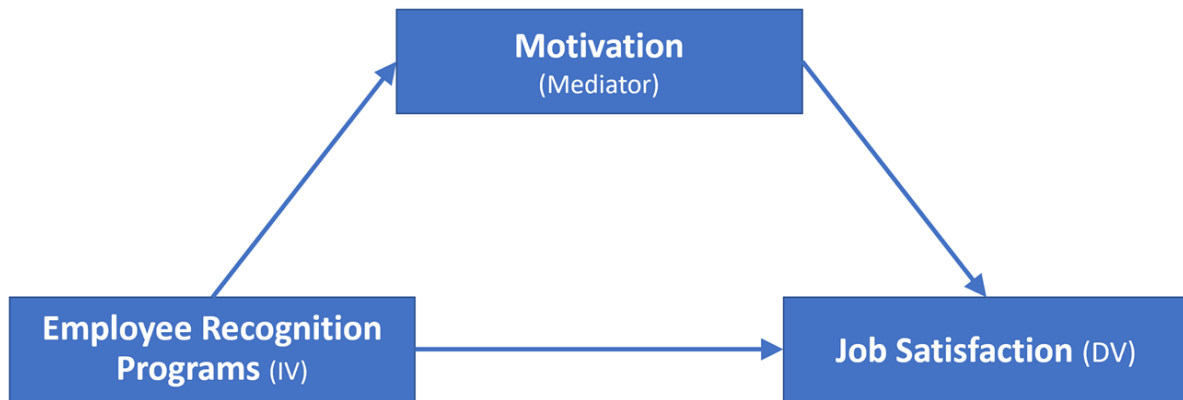
**RQ2:** Does implementation of employee recognition programs positively impact employee motivation and job satisfaction of employees in an assisted living community?

### **Conceptual Framework**

As mentioned above, the goals of this research were to determine whether a positive relationship exists between employee recognition programs and employee motivation and job satisfaction among employees in assisted living and to determine if motivation was a mediating variable between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. Figure 1.1 is a conceptual framework of this research.

**Figure 1.1**

*Conceptual Framework Showing the Mediation Effect of Motivation Between Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction*



This conceptual framework is based on three major variables: employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction. Employee recognition programs are the independent variable, job satisfaction is the dependent variable, and motivation is a mediating variable between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. This conceptual framework illustrates the potential relationship between the variables. Specifically, it indicates that implementation of employee recognition programs can directly impact employee job satisfaction. This conceptual framework further indicates that employee recognition programs can directly impact employee motivation and as a result of that increased motivation, employees experience increased job satisfaction.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Three theories are often mentioned regarding motivation – Maslow’s Need Hierarchy Theory (1943), Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1959), and Deci’s Self-determination Theory (1980). In 1943, Maslow introduced his hierarchy of needs. He described five basic needs: psychological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization, and stated that people,

“including employees at organizations, are motivated by the desire to achieve or maintain the various conditions upon which these basic satisfactions rest and by certain more intellectual desires. Humans are a perpetually wanting group” (Ramlall, 2004, p. 52). Maslow (1943) was correct: Humans are always seeking something and within their job, it is often praise and recognition for a job well done. As managers, to fulfill the basic need of safety and security we should provide praise and recognition for a job well done to create a climate in which employees can develop to their fullest potential. As employers, we have a responsibility to create this climate for our employees and foster motivation.

Herzberg, who was influenced by Maslow’s (1943) theory, developed his Motivation-Hygiene Theory (also known as the Two-Factor Theory) in 1959. Herzberg et al. (1959) identified two factors behind work motivation: hygiene factors and motivating factors. Hygiene factors are extrinsic factors such as salary, policies, or working conditions, that operate to decrease job satisfaction, or as Herzberg et al. (1959) referred to it, create job dissatisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Hansen et al., 2002). Motivation factors are intrinsic factors such as recognition, responsibility, or the work itself that increase job satisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Hansen et al., 2002). When looking closer at what a motivation factor would entail, Herzberg et al. (1959) identified that recognition was a factor that was intrinsic to job satisfaction (Hansen et al., 2002; Herzberg et al., 1959). In other words, employee recognition increases motivation and job satisfaction and will positively impact job performance.

Decades later, Deci (1980) developed his Self-determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980, 2008; Deci et al., 1999). The main construct in this theory is the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Regarding intrinsic motivation, Deci (1975) said “intrinsically motivated behaviors are those behaviors that are motivated by the underlying need for competence and self-

determination...We operationally define intrinsically motivated behaviors as those that are performed in the absence of any apparent external contingency” (p. 43). Essentially, if employees are intrinsically motivated, they are not driven to perform tasks in return for a reward. However, when it comes to extrinsic motivation, Deci (1975) felt that “each person is also conceptualized as having an extrinsic motivational subsystem, which is more oriented toward rewards, is more concerned with control, is less supportive and less concerned with autonomy, involves lower self-esteem and so on” (p. 74). Within Deci’s theoretical framework, recognition is seen as an intrinsic motivator. If the recognition is seen as an attempt to control the employee, then it is considered to be extrinsic motivation; however, if the recognition is viewed as positive and genuine, then it intrinsically motivates the employee (Hansen et al., 2002). If employees receive recognition from their organization, they will be intrinsically motivated, and this will lead to increased job satisfaction. The theoretical framework behind motivation shows us that motivation is important, not only to the individual, but also to the organization as well and can have positive impacts on employee job satisfaction.

Together, Maslow (1943), Herzberg et al. (1959), and Deci (1975) not only established the theoretical framework for motivation, but also identified the impact that recognition programs have on an individual’s motivation in the workplace. Recognition programs can impact the relationship between the organization and its employees, resulting in employees being more motivated and their job performance increasing because of the impact the recognition program has on their behavior (Hansen et al., 2002). Because these theorists identified the impact of motivation on the individual and its link to employee recognition programs, their theories formed the basis of my theoretical framework and laid the groundwork for my research. They enabled me to examine their applicability to employees within assisted living communities as well as

identify first-hand the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation and job satisfaction in this population.

### **Overview of Methodology**

This research study was conducted within three assisted living communities in the Mid-Atlantic region. I sought to identify communities that had a variety of employee recognition programs already in place. Depending on the size of each community, the number of front-line associates could range from 100 to 150 people. My sample consisted of all individuals who were employed at each community. The tenure of the individuals at each community varied so there was a mix of newer hires and those with longevity in the community. I hoped to administer surveys to all employees at each location, with initial estimates to administer to a minimum of 300 employees. My sample was a non-probability convenience sample, as it consisted of all employees within the three assisted living communities where I administered my survey. While this sample was not a true random sample, it was as good as a random sample because every individual in the sampled population had a known probability of being included. What was not known was if the responses would render it being a representative sample or not.

A survey comprising 30 questions was administered to staff at each community (see Appendix A). The survey was designed to collect data to answer both research questions and included four sections. Section 1 consisted of questions about employee recognition programs. These questions were converted from the “Interaction Levels and Recognition Practices” table in the Brun and Dugas (2008) study of employee recognition programs (p. 726). To answer RQ1, respondents were asked which programs were present in their organization. Brun and Dugas’ (2008) table captured so many different forms of employee recognition that I felt if converted into a survey instrument it would be able to accurately identify the employee recognition

programs prevalent in assisted living communities. In consultation with my dissertation committee chairperson, I converted their table into a 62-item, nominal scale survey with possible responses ranging from *(yes)*, *(no)*, or *(not sure)*. This section of the survey was further divided into four questions focused on existential recognition, recognition of work practices, recognition of job dedication, and recognition of results. The subsection focusing on existential recognition was replaced with the language “personal recognition” to make this section less confusing, so respondents could more easily understand that it was focused on the ways peers and employers recognized them as a person. After each part of Section 1, there were three additional questions regarding respondents’ feelings on the policies and programs referred to in each section. These questions added an additional 12 questions to the survey designed to provide data applicable to RQ2. These 12-items used a 5-point Likert scale with possible responses ranging from 1 *(strongly disagree)* to 5 *(strongly agree)*. The Likert scale questions under each of the four types of employee recognition programs measured employee satisfaction with those programs. The addition of these questions brought the total number of questions in section one of the survey to 16 questions to measure the various employee recognition programs being implemented at assisted living communities. Because this section of my survey is using two different scale structures it is important to reinforce that the nominal scale questions pertain to RQ1 and those using the Likert scale pertain to RQ2. These questions can be found in Appendix A under Section 1 of the survey.

Employee job satisfaction was measured and operationalized using the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) created by Paul E. Spector (1985) in his research on human service staff satisfaction. Spector (1985) designed the JSS to “fill the need for an instrument for human services” (Spector, 1985, p. 694). “This scale measures nine aspects of job satisfaction, which



were chosen from a review of the literature on job satisfaction dimensions. It was designed specifically for human service, public, and nonprofit sector organizations, although it may be applicable to others as well” (Spector, 1985, p. 694). When researching for job satisfaction surveys, Spector’s (1985) JSS continued to show up in search engines. It was found to be cited in a variety of studies, I think in part to its applicability, reliability, and the various subscales to job satisfaction that it can capture. The JSS is a 36-item, 6-point Likert scale survey with a total Cronbach’s alpha of .91 and a test-retest reliability estimate with a Cronbach’s alpha of .71 for the entire scale. This scale has since been vetted and tested multiple times rendering it as a reliable scale. In consultation with my dissertation committee chairperson, I used 16-items from the JSS instead of the full 36-item scale. This decision was made in the interest of brevity and to ensure that my survey captured exactly what I wanted it to, because some of the JSS subscales were not applicable to my study. The resulting items can be found in Appendix A under Section 2 of the survey instrument.

Employee motivation was measured and operationalized using the Work Preference Inventory (WPI) created by Teresa M. Amabile, Karl G. Hill, Beth A. Hennessey, and Elizabeth M. Tighe (1994) in their research on assessing the extrinsic and intrinsic motivational orientations.

The Work Preference Inventory (WPI) is designed to assess individual differences in intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations. Both the college student and the working adult versions aim to capture the major elements of intrinsic motivation (self-determination, competence, task involvement, curiosity, enjoyment, and interest) and extrinsic motivation (concerns with competition, evaluation, recognition, money or other tangible incentives, and constraint by others) (Amabile et. al., 1994, p. 950).

When researching for survey instruments measuring motivation, I determined that the Amabile et al. (1994) WPI was another instrument that had been used in numerous studies due to its applicability and reliability. I felt that the WPI was best suited for my study because it focused on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and because there was a version geared towards working adults. Finding a survey instrument designed for the working adult made it appealing because I felt it would be able to best capture employee motivation within an organization. This research focused on the working adult version of their survey. This version uses a 30-item, 4-point Likert scale with a Cronbach's alpha of .82 for the intrinsic motivation scale and .76 for the extrinsic motivation scale. This scale has since been vetted and tested multiple times rendering it a highly reliable scale. Again, in consultation with my committee chairperson, I used 12-items from the WPI instead of the full 30-item scale. As before, this decision was made in the interest of brevity and so that my survey captured only the most highly relevant and useful data, as all of the WPI subscales were not applicable to my study. The Likert scale was also changed from a 4-point scale to a 5-point Likert scale with possible responses ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items can be found in Appendix A under Section 3 of the survey.

The final section of my survey consisted of 12 demographic questions. Demographic questions were a combination of self-generated and those from the 2017 Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) annual job satisfaction survey. Using some demographic questions from the SHRM survey allowed for better demographic data, as the SHRM questions were already vetted and found to be reliable on a national level. The demographic questions included questions regarding a respondent's generation/age, gender, race/ethnicity, job tenure, job level, level of education, perceived opportunity for advancement, intent to stay, department associated under, length of time in current career field, single most important form of employee

recognition, and optional open-ended question about employee recognition. These demographic questions can be found in Appendix A under Section 4 of the survey.

Research was conducted using a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional design. A cross-sectional design allowed for data collection from participants within a concentrated period of time. I sought out three different assisted living communities with a variety of employee recognition programs. This study was designed to span a 2-week period, but due to COVID-19 restrictions, spanned 2.5 months. The assisted living employees who volunteered were administered the combined survey consisting of questions about employee recognition programs, a selection of questions from the WPI and JSS surveys, demographic questionnaire, and one optional open-ended question pertaining to employee recognition programs. The surveys were administered via a link from SurveyMonkey, and employees were asked to complete them as soon as possible. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I allowed for the additional 2 months to complete the survey and consulted with the Executive Directors (ED) from each community on multiple occasions in hopes of garnering additional employee responses. The goal of using this research design was that it was non-threatening to employers or employees and allowed for more candid responses to the survey questions. The other goal of this research design was that it would show that regardless of the extent of the communities' employee recognition programs, the implementation of any form of employee recognition program can positively impact employee motivation and job satisfaction.

### **Limitations**

This study posed multiple limitations. One limitation was that this study did not use a true random sample thus affecting the generalizability of the data and leading to potential sampling bias. If I had been able to reach out to more than three assisted living communities, I would have

been able to generate a larger sample size and thus render my results more generalizable. Because resources and time were limited and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was not able to conduct research in a greater number of communities. I relied on the help of others to gain access to these communities, which limited my sample. My sample was a non-probability convenience sample, as it was a sample consisting of all employees within the assisted living communities used in this study. While this sample is not a true random sample, I did not know if the responses would render it being a representative sample or not. To avoid the potential sampling bias, I administered my survey to all employees within each community regardless of their position or tenure within the company.

Another possible limitation was survey instrument limitations. These limitations considered whether the survey was the appropriate length, asked the right questions, had clear instructions, and used an online format that was engaging. To detect and address survey instrument limitations, I conducted a pilot study, among peers within assisted living communities to gauge for clarity and length of survey. In addition, I used instruments that were vetted and proven to be reliable and I sought input from multiple reviewers.

The possibility of researcher bias was another potential limitation to my study. I needed to be aware of the possibility that I could inject my beliefs into the questions through topic selection or wording. To minimize this bias, I avoided speaking to my study participants about my experiences as I did not want them to use those stories to shape their responses. I also used survey instrument tools that were well vetted and shown to be reliable, conducted a pilot study, and sought input from multiple reviewers. Taking these steps helped me to prevent imposing my own biases in this study.

Non-response bias posed another limitation to my study, namely that the survey would not generate enough responses for valid analysis. To avoid this bias, I administered my survey to all employees within each community to capture as many potential responses as possible.

A major limitation to my study was that it was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Isolation requirements impacted my ability to visit the assisted living communities to meet with staff and administer my survey in person. I therefore used Zoom technology and e-mail to communicate with the ED and staff at each community. Because my survey was administered via SurveyMonkey, the pandemic did not impact my ability to send it to participants and collect my data. The primary impact the pandemic had was on my ability to physically visit communities to explain the research purpose and generate interest; however, employing an alternate option for meeting with participants and collecting data helped to reduce the potential impact of this limitation.

A final limitation was that I was not randomly assigning participants and this study was not conducted in a controlled lab environment. Because I administered my survey to all employees, there was no way to randomly assign participants or minimize the effects of this limitation. If time and money were of no concern, conducting my study in a controlled lab environment may have been feasible, but that was not realistic within this study. Administering the survey in the employees' work setting was not ideal and could have led participants to be untruthful in their responses for fear of backlash or negative impact on their jobs. I assured all participants that while the study was not administered in a controlled setting, their responses were confidential and would not be discussed with management. Including management employees in the respondent pool should have eased the minds of front-line staff, as every employee in the community was asked to participate and the survey was not restricted to

employees in specific departments or those holding specific job titles. I also administered consent forms as part of the electronic survey to all employees who wished to complete the survey and participate in the study.

### **Significance of the Study**

Organizations, specifically assisted living communities, want their associates to be motivated and satisfied with their jobs. They also want their associates to feel that they are appreciated and valued members of the organization. The significance of this research contributed to the body of knowledge and research revolving around employee motivation and job satisfaction in assisted living communities. The impact that employee recognition programs can have on motivation and job satisfaction can change the way that organizations and assisted living communities recognize their employees' hard work. This study was important because it provided insights to management within organizations to not only understand but also highlight areas where they needed to increase training and resources to better recognize their employees. This dissertation could benefit employees, employers, and above all the residents within assisted living communities. Its findings could provide assisted living communities the knowledge and resources needed to positively impact the day-to-day operations of their communities, resulting in more satisfied employees, residents, and family members.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

While vocabulary within this dissertation is familiar, definitions may differ based on their context. Table 1.1 provides key terms and the definitions used in this study.

**Table 1.1***Key Terms and Definitions*

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<i>Motivation</i>	Internal driving force that urges individuals to both pursue and achieve personal and professional goals (Ali & Ahmed, 2009).
<i>Recognition</i>	Form of appreciation that recognizes and honors the efforts put forth by an individual without establishing instrumentality (Hansen et al., 2002).
<i>Reward</i>	Form of compensation given in return for a job well done that establishes instrumentality (Hansen et al., 2002).
<i>Job performance</i>	What an employee does and does not do. This involves their attendance at work, the quality and quantity of their production, cooperative and helpful nature and timeliness of job duties (Shahzadi et al., 2014)
<i>Job Satisfaction</i>	Positive emotional state that one experiences when receiving positive appraisal for their performance (Abdullah & Wan, 2013).
<i>Person-centered care</i>	Care that incorporates the resident and the resident actively participates in their own care with the staff at the assisted living community.
<i>Assisted Living Community</i>	Organization that provides assisted living and memory care services to individuals who are aged 62 and older.
<i>Associate</i>	Individuals who are employed by an assisted living facility.
<i>Residents</i>	Individuals who are 62 years of age or older who live within an assisted living community.
<i>Front-Line Associates</i>	Individuals whose positions are not classified as managerial or supervisory positions. These associates are typically caregivers, nurses, dining servers, concierge, activity assistants, and housekeeping employees.
<i>Memory Care Services</i>	Personal care services that are provided to individuals living in an assisted living community who have been diagnosed with dementia or other cognitive impairment diseases that impact their memory and cognition.

## **Summary**

Chapter 1 of this dissertation provided the background and introduction to this research study. There were several key aspects to this chapter. First, the goal of the research was identified. The goal of this research was to support the hypotheses and show that employee recognition programs have a positive impact on employee motivation and job satisfaction of employees who work within assisted living communities. Once I had stated the problem that was the backdrop for my research, I identified the purpose of my study. Next, I introduced the research questions and their accompanying hypotheses. Following that, my conceptual framework was introduced to show the relationship between my variables. Once that relationship was discussed, the theoretical framework backing this research was identified. The theories of Maslow (1943), Herzberg et al. (1959), and Deci (1980) surrounding motivation and job satisfaction were explored in relation to employee recognition. These theoretical frameworks provided the blueprints for this research study and led to its hypotheses. Then, the overview of the methodology was introduced.

This research study used a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional design to examine perceptions and practices at three assisted living communities in the Mid-Atlantic region. Surveys were administered to all employees in three communities to gauge the employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction within their community. The goal was to show that communities that implemented employee recognition programs displayed higher levels of motivation and job satisfaction than those that did not implement such programs. Finally, this chapter discussed the significance of this study and those who it can potentially benefit. This study has the ability to impact how assisted living communities recognize their employees and can show that once employees feel valued and appreciated, they will be more motivated and



satisfied with their jobs. When providing person-centered care, you want to do your best as a leader to have satisfied employees who provide the best possible care to those with whom you are entrusted.

### **Organization of This Dissertation**

This dissertation is organized into five distinct chapters. Chapter 1 consisted of the background and introduction to this research endeavor. A summary of my research objectives as outlined in this chapter is listed in Table 1.2. Chapter 2 consists of the literature review of this dissertation. That chapter highlights the previous literature on the topics of employee recognition programs, employee motivation, and employee job satisfaction. Reviewing the literature gives the reader a better understanding of the previous knowledge generated on these topics and provides the basis for my hypotheses. Chapter 2 also highlights literature with opposing viewpoints, suggesting that employee recognition programs do not have positive impacts on employee motivation and job satisfaction. It was important to acknowledge the opposing side of the argument as no research is ever without consideration of the opposition. Chapter 3 expands upon the methodology of this quantitative research. This chapter examines the methodology, the survey used to conduct the research, and the statistical tests used to analyze the data. Chapter 4 discusses the research findings. This chapter looks in depth at the data to determine whether they supported the hypotheses and answered the research questions. Finally, Chapter 5 is an overall summary of the research and its findings, as well as the impact this research could have on future research and practice.

**Table 1.2***Research Overview and Chapter 1 Summary*

Element	Summary
Purpose of the Study	To identify the impact that employee recognition programs can have on employee motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities.
Justification	Employee motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities is missing from the literature. Employee recognition programs have been shown to positively impact both motivation and job satisfaction. With assisted living being such a person-centered field, the motivation and job satisfaction of employees can impact quality-of-care residents receive. Implementation of employee recognition programs has the ability to positively impact motivation and job satisfaction.
Methodology	This study is quantitative by design and employed a cross-sectional survey
Scope	This study examines assisted living employee perceptions through a survey administered using SHRM (2017) questions, questions from the WPI (1994) and JSS (1985), and questions generated from a Brun & Dugas (2008) chart, with data collected from three assisted living communities in the Mid-Atlantic region
Theoretical Framework	Over 70 years of research has established a theoretical framework for motivation and job satisfaction by examining issues of importance to individual interactions as they relate to motivation and job satisfaction. The resultant framework includes the works of Maslow (1943), Herzberg et al. (1959), and Deci (1975). The addition of employee recognition programs areas was examined in relation to motivation and job satisfaction.
Limitations	Limitations include population (sampled through three assisted living communities); social desirability bias (respondents were aware that this was a self-report survey); survey instrument limitations; nonresponse bias (COVID-19 and lack of access to communities impacts this); researcher bias (I can be biased towards the responses I am seeking); COVID-19 (pandemic has limited my sample and accessibility to communities).
Contribution to the Fields of Motivation and Job Satisfaction	<p>This paper contributes to prior research by adding a population that is both impactful and limited in prior research. It also attempts to address gaps in the literature, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examining motivation and job satisfaction within the context of assisted living communities and the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory</li> <li>▪ Affirming the importance of employee recognition programs</li> <li>▪ Determining the role of motivation as a mediator between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction</li> <li>▪ Examining the effects of employee recognition programs on motivation and job satisfaction of assisted living community employees</li> <li>▪ Presenting a descriptive view of a limited employee population</li> </ul>

Element	Summary
Contribution to Practice	<p>Employee recognition program practice may be improved by implementing such programs to positively influence employees, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Actively implementing employee recognition programs to the workplace</li> <li>▪ Providing recognition program training that is relevant to address the impacts it can have on employee's motivation and job satisfaction; providing managers and department heads supplemental training for how to implement recognition programs.</li> <li>▪ Ensuring that assisted living communities have a greater understanding of the importance of employee recognition programs on their employees</li> </ul>

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study focused on the impact that employee recognition programs had on the motivation and job satisfaction of employees working in assisted living communities. It examined how the implementation of employee recognition programs in assisted living communities could positively impact the motivation of its employees and how their increased levels of motivation led to greater job satisfaction. A large body of research existed on the impact of employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction; however, little research has been identified showing the impact that employee recognition programs have on employee's motivation and job satisfaction in assisted living communities. This research investigated the population of assisted living employees to shed light on the impact such programs had on employee motivation and job satisfaction in an assisted living community.

### **Introduction**

This chapter contains a review of the literature in relation to the theoretical areas of motivation and job satisfaction. To explain the theoretical context behind motivation I looked at Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory, and Deci's (1980) Self-Determination Theory. The review of these theories gave historical context to the importance of motivation and how increased motivation in a workplace setting can lead to increased job satisfaction. This seminal literature shows that through the evolution of time, the topic of motivation is still relevant to the workplace. Special attention was paid to the link between motivation and job satisfaction as employee motivation is often a mediating factor to job satisfaction. The Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory was explored in relation to job satisfaction as well. The review of these theories gives context to the various factors that contribute to job satisfaction and identifies the link between job satisfaction and

motivation. While research has been conducted on motivation and job satisfaction in a variety of organizations and settings, few studies have been conducted within my study population.

Therefore, I researched motivation and job satisfaction among occupationally related healthcare workers, such as nurses and direct care workers, as they had a larger presence in the literature.

Next, literature involving the impact of employee recognition programs on employees was reviewed. There was a large amount of literature looking at the impact and importance that employee recognition programs had on job performance, but I focused on the impact such programs had on employee motivation and job satisfaction. I identified literature that found both positive and negative impacts of those recognition programs, but for the purposes of my study, I focused on those that showed a positive impact on motivation and job satisfaction. As with motivation and job satisfaction, there was little literature looking at employee recognition programs in assisted living communities; therefore, I focused on employee recognition programs in various other healthcare settings such as hospitals and other long-term care facilities. The impact of employee recognition programs in non-healthcare organizations was reviewed as well for context and to show that these programs are widely used and applicable across many fields.

In summary, the purpose of this literature review was to identify the seminal research behind motivation and job satisfaction, show the relationship between the two theoretical frameworks, and identify motivation as a mediating factor for job satisfaction. While there was little research showing the impact that employee recognition programs had in assisted living communities, this review shows how those programs impacted the motivation and job satisfaction of healthcare workers in other settings. The lack of literature focusing on the impact of employee recognition programs on motivation and job satisfaction in assisted living communities was a principal reason behind this research endeavor.

## Sources and Methods

In reviewing the literature, I made use of a variety of sources, including Google Scholar, ProQuest, APA PsychNet, JSTOR, and Research Gate. Literature on the topics of motivation, job satisfaction, employee recognition programs, Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory, and Deci's (1980) Self-Determination Theory was reviewed. I searched for literature involving assisted living communities and employee recognition programs but was unable to identify any such studies. Literature that looked at healthcare professionals in other settings and direct care workers, as they were the closest to assisted living employees, was identified. My committee chair conducted her own review of the literature and confirmed an absence of literature on the impact of employee recognition programs on motivation and job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

I looked primarily at online peer reviewed journals for my literature as it was more accessible, more readily available, and I could search a wider range of years. I chose not to review any books as the time available to do so was limited and to cover a wider range of literature I felt the online peer reviewed journals would allow for more information to be reviewed. Peer reviewed journals that were cited often in other works were used and for the purpose of this study, I narrowed my search to research that was conducted on organizations mostly in the United States. A limited number of studies from other countries were reviewed to establish the impact that employee recognition programs can have on motivation and job satisfaction in a broad sense and to provide context of the importance of such programs. Websites that pertained to the assisted living communities from my study population were used to gather information on the three sites and to identify any employee recognition programs currently being implemented in their organizations. Seminal research, like that of Maslow

(1943), Herzberg et al. (1959), and Deci (1980), was reviewed in conjunction with more recent studies to determine whether their theories were still applicable today. Most of the literature is from the past 20 years, with some exception if the findings and the content were broadly used and referred to in more recent literature.

### **Population Studied**

While I had hoped to find a larger body of literature on employee recognition programs, motivation and job satisfaction linked to assisted living communities, I was able to identify almost none. With the prevalence of assisted living communities in the United States, it was a surprise to note that no prior research on these topics had been conducted in such settings. To establish a population as close to that of employees in assisted living communities, research on populations of employees in various other healthcare and direct care work was also reviewed. Some studies conducted outside of the United States were included as they establish context regarding direct care staff in healthcare settings. Most of the literature examined employee recognition programs in a variety of organizations in the United States. The effects that employee recognition programs can have on motivation and job satisfaction are somewhat universal; therefore, to establish context on their importance and impact, studies from a variety of organizations were included in this literature review.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Within this section, I will review the literature on motivation and job satisfaction. This review will identify the main theories and seminal research associated with motivation. Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory, and Deci's (1980) Self-Determination Theory are the main theories associated with motivation. The applicability of those theories on modern society was reviewed as well. Because these

classic theories are fairly dated, research examining their application to current day environments is important for the purposes of this research. The duality of the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory helped to identify the relationship between the motivation and job satisfaction and is why the theory was reviewed in relation to both constructs. This literature review will show the evolution of motivation theory and job satisfaction theory. It will also show how the theories are still applicable today and how they can be used in a variety of organizations and settings.

While my focus of this theoretical framework is motivation theory, it was important to review the theories revolving around job satisfaction as they are equally important. For this study, while I reviewed both motivation and job satisfaction theories, I built my theoretical framework around motivation theory because motivation is often a mediating factor to job satisfaction. Because the duality of the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory identifies a link between motivation and job satisfaction, I made the decision to use this theory as the main backdrop for both motivation and job satisfaction in my theoretical framework.

## **Motivation**

Motivation can be defined as the internal driving force that urges individuals to both pursue and achieve personal and professional goals (Ali & Ahmed, 2009). The notion of motivation and its impact on individuals and their actions has been studied a multitude of times over the years. Abraham Maslow studied motivation and became a pioneer on the topic in 1943 with the publication of his theory of human motivation in *Psychological Review*. This publication was an attempt to identify a positive theory of motivation that met a series of theoretical demands he had previously identified (Maslow, 1943). He stated that “motivation theory is not synonymous with behavior theory. The motivations are only one class of



determinants of behavior. While behavior is almost always motivated, it is also almost always biologically, culturally and situationally determined as well” (Maslow, 1943, p. 371).

Differentiating between motivation and behavior theory allowed for the study of motivation to stand on its own and for Maslow (1943) to pave the way for future theorists. Within his 1943 work, Maslow identified the five “basic needs” that he felt defined human motivation:

1. The physiological needs – food, water, shelter, sex
2. The safety needs – protection from threats, danger, pain, fear, or loss
3. The love needs (sometimes referred to as the social needs as well) – friendship, affection, giving and receiving love
4. The esteem needs – personally experiencing strength, achievement, adequacy, independence within oneself; receiving respect, recognition, appreciation and attention from others
5. The need for self-actualization – desire to achieve everything one can achieve, the desire for self-development to become more of what one is meant to be (Maslow, 1943; Pardee, 1990)

Along with his hierarchy of basic needs, Maslow (1943) identified two distinct motivational subsystems: the coping mode and the expressive mode. The coping mode is behavior that is determined by more external factors and is an attempt to make up for internal deficiencies. The expressive mode is behavior that is more determined by personal growth motivation; it is not dependent on external factors.

The coping-expressive distinction maps quite clearly on to the reward-recognition distinction. Reward, like coping, represents a ‘deficiency motivation’ involving ‘external determinants’ whereby the individual strives for ‘external satisfiers.’ Recognition, on the

other hand, aligns with the expressive mode. The act of courage under fire represents a ‘character expression,’ not a striving for external satisfiers (Hansen et al., 2002, p. 65). Maslow (1943) was able to identify the two different mechanisms of motivation and Hansen et al. (2002) were able to identify the distinction that reward, and recognition has on both coping and expressive motivation. When looking at Maslow’s (1943) motivational subsystems, it is easy to identify that as leaders we want to tap into the expressive motivation of our employees.

Years later, in 1959, Frederick Herzberg, who was influenced by Maslow’s (1943) work, introduced his Motivation-Hygiene Theory (sometimes referred to as the Two-Factor Theory or Dual Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction). What Herzberg et al. (1959) created were two-dimensional factors that were able to influence an individual’s attitude toward work (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Their subsequent research led to the development of the motivation and hygiene factors. Motivation factors were linked to satisfaction with one’s work, while hygiene factors were linked to dissatisfaction. Herzberg et al. (1959) identified six motivation factors and eight hygiene factors, as shown in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1**

*Factors in the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory<sup>1</sup>*

Motivation Factors	Hygiene Factors
Achievement	Company Policy
Recognition	Supervision
Work Itself	Working Conditions
Responsibility	Interpersonal Relationships
Advancement	Salary
Growth	Status
	Job Security
	Personal Life

<sup>1</sup>Alshmemri et al., 2017; Herzberg et al., 1959

The motivation and hygiene factors have many dynamics imbedded within them. The most important to note is that increases or improvements in hygiene factors produce short-term effects, while increases or improvements in motivation factors produce more long-term effects (Pardee, 1990). While the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory serves a dual purpose in identifying what factors effect motivation and job satisfaction, it is also important to recognize how his motivational subsystems, hygiene and motivation factors, impact motivation. The Herzberg et al. (1959) motivational subsystem distinguished between hygiene and motivator factors. Hygiene factors align with reward as this is when the organization tells the employee to do something in return for some type of reward. They are completing a task and receiving a form of payment in return. If we look at his motivational factors, “he identified ‘recognition for achievement’ as one of the ‘growth or motivator factors that are intrinsic to the job.’ In other words, reward represents the application of hygiene factors, and recognition represents the application of motivator factors” (Hansen et al., 2002, p. 66). When looking at Herzberg’s (1959) motivational subsystems, it is easy to identify that as leaders we want to understand and implement motivation factors with our employees. Not only will this spark more intrinsic motivation, but it will also produce more long-term effects (Pardee, 1990).

Following Herzberg et al. (1959), years later in 1975, Edward Deci began researching intrinsic motivation. His research led to his collaboration with Richard Ryan and the development of the Self-Determination Theory of motivation in 1980. This theory is empirically based and examines the theory of motivation, wellness, and development (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Through their research, Deci and Ryan (2000) identified that, “in the real world, motivation is highly valued because of its consequences: Motivation produces. It is therefore of preeminent concern to those in roles such as manager, teacher, religious leader, coach, health care provider,

and parent that involve mobilizing others to act” (p. 69). The primary outcome from Self-Determination Theory was that Deci (1980) identified the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. According to Deci and Ryan (1980), intrinsic behaviors are motivated by self-determination and a need for competence, whereas extrinsic behaviors are motivated by control and the need for rewards. Deci et al. (1999) further examined the impact of extrinsic rewards (i.e., monetary incentives) on intrinsic motivation. Essentially, they set out to see if things such as monetary rewards would impact intrinsic motivation. They found that rewards were linked to negative effects on an individual’s intrinsic motivation and self-regulation, and that “when organizations opt for the use of rewards to control behavior, the rewards are likely to be accompanied by greater surveillance, evaluation, and competition, all of which have also been found to undermine intrinsic motivation” (Deci et al., 1999, p. 659). In other words, extrinsic rewards have a greater negative impact on motivation than intrinsic rewards (i.e., recognition and appreciation) would.

Much like Maslow (1943) and Herzberg et al. (1959), Deci (1980) was able to identify motivational subsystems. Deci’s (1980) motivational subsystem distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is linked to receiving rewards for our work because it taps into the need to perform a certain task or behave in such a way that it becomes linked to the reward. Essentially, you are not completing the task because of the intrinsic value it brings to you and others, but because you want the reward and only the reward. Intrinsic motivation is linked to receiving recognition for our work because the need to perform a certain task is embedded in our personal growth and the value it brings to you along with increasing our self-determination. We get more out of completing a task if it brings value to ourselves and others and there is not a hidden agenda as to why we are doing it. Recognition shows us our

value and the positive impact we have on others. The positive impact that recognition can have on intrinsic motivation alone should serve as a catalyst for leaders to implement recognition programs.

As mentioned earlier, for this study I have chosen the theories of Maslow (1943), Herzberg et al. (1959), and Deci (1980) for my theoretical framework because of their applicability on motivation and their ability to identify a link to employee recognition programs. The motivational subsystems of each theory show a direct link between motivation and recognition, supporting the claim that employee recognition programs could positively impact employee motivation. The Herzberg et al. (1959) theory serves a dual purpose as it speaks not only on motivation, but also job satisfaction. Because motivation is a mediating variable in this study and because it can have an impact on job satisfaction, basing my theoretical framework on these theorists was a logical choice.

### **Job Satisfaction**

With the theoretical framework behind motivation laid out, literature on the theoretical framework behind job satisfaction was researched. The theory that I felt was the most applicable to my current study was once again the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory because of its duality and because it was almost completely based on implementation of job satisfaction (Kian et al., 2014). As mentioned above, the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory can be applicable to both motivation and job satisfaction. Herzberg et al. (1959) identified that motivation factors were linked to job satisfaction, while hygiene factors were linked to job dissatisfaction. “The presence of motivational factors can produce job satisfaction, but their absence leads to no job satisfaction. Therefore, poor hygiene factors can cause job dissatisfaction, while better hygiene factors can reduce dissatisfaction but cannot cause job

satisfaction” (Alshmemri et al., 2017, p. 13). While some would think that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are opposing feelings, according to Herzberg, they are not. Herzberg (1966, 1987) determined that the opposite of job satisfaction is not job dissatisfaction, it is simply the absence of job satisfaction. Similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, it is simply no job dissatisfaction. Herzberg et al. (1959) formulated a theory that could be applicable to both motivation and job satisfaction, thereby identifying a relationship between the two. “The role of job satisfaction towards motivation cannot be neglected. In fact, most of the motivation theories have used job satisfaction as groundwork in practice” and Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory is a prime example of using job satisfaction for the groundwork (Kian et al., 2014, p. 97).

Because of the abundance of literature on the theories surrounding motivation, and motivation being used as a mediating variable in this study, I felt that the fluidity of the Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory lends itself to best show the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction. The relationship between motivation and job satisfaction is the basis of this study and focusing on a theory that identifies this relationship was more valuable than theories highlighting just job satisfaction alone. Taking into consideration that the Motivation-Hygiene Theory was developed in 1959, the notion that it could be applicable today is very important. Stello (2011), reviewed the intervening literature and the applicability of Herzberg’s theory to current research and times and found that “a theory that stands the test of time, integrates itself into basic points of view about managing people, and continues to provide ideas for new generations of scholars is a theory that has proven its value” (p. 26).

## **Employee Recognition Programs**

Organization employee recognition programs can be defined as programs that offer awards and incentives that acknowledge, validate, and recognize a job well done and outstanding work on an employee's behalf (Daniel & Metcalf, 2005). Employee recognition programs vary depending on the organization. Some organizations choose to focus on non-monetary forms of recognition, some focus on strictly monetary forms of recognition, and some use a combination of the two (Abdullah & Wan, 2013). Literature exploring both monetary and non-monetary forms of recognition was reviewed, but greater emphasis was placed on programs using non-monetary forms of recognition because the focus of this study is on non-monetary forms of employee recognition.

Employee recognition programs are one of the key dimensions for effective leadership as these programs aim to motivate employees and to encourage increased job performance (Luthans, 2000). Bartlomiejczuk (2015) stated that "recognition programs are becoming powerful avenues for exerting positive change in the workplace. What was once a nice-to-have practice is becoming a driver for improving employee engagement and a host of other factors that impact the bottom line, when properly executed" (p. 4). Two basic forms of rewards were identified that created a positive work environment: monetary and non-monetary. Research finds that when implemented correctly, monetary rewards are a strong motivator for employees and can impact bottom line performance within an organization (Luthans, 2000). While monetary rewards are very effective, most organizations overlook the power and importance of non-monetary rewards and recognition (Luthans, 2000; Abdullah & Wan, 2013). Non-monetary rewards and recognition often do not cost anything and have a big impact on employee motivation and satisfaction. To show the importance of employee recognition programs, Luthans

administered a short questionnaire examining the importance of recognition programs in a large non-profit organization. Management, front-line employees, maintenance, and support staff were among the 254 respondents in this study. Ninety-six percent of respondents indicated a need for employee recognition programs. The respondents also indicated that while monetary rewards were welcome, they would like genuine and personal recognition and appreciation for a job well done (Luthans, 2000). Employees placed higher value on employee recognition that was non-monetary. Luthans' (2000) study indicated that recognition is a very easy and inexpensive way to motivate employees and encourage superior job performance. Leaders whose employees are motivated and performing well spend time focused on managing human capital and do this by communicating with their employees and motivating them through recognition programs. Most organizations overlook the power of recognition and resort to monetary rewards for employee's work. While this is a motivator, it does not have as much impact as non-monetary recognition. Not only are recognition programs beneficial to the employee, but they also benefit the organization as an effective leadership tool (Luthans, 2000). Giving recognition can render positive results with the individual employee and within the organization.

Like Luthans (2000), Daniel and Metcalf (2005) sought to identify the fundamentals of employee recognition in their study. Before they could identify the fundamentals, they reported the rationale for implementing an employee recognition program. Data from a 2003 National Recognition Survey found that 87% of the 413 companies that responded had a program already in place and that 80% of those companies had such programs in place to create a positive work environment (Daniel & Metcalf, 2005). Creating a positive work environment benefits employees as well as their organizations, so it is beneficial for organizations to implement employee recognition programs. Daniel and Metcalf (2005) stated that "employees not only want



good pay and benefits, but they also want to be valued and appreciated for their work...Recognition and reward programs play an important role in organizational success by helping attract and retain high-performing employees” (pg. 2). They outlined six key elements to an effective recognition program: management commitment, link to bottom line results of the company, recognized value of awards to employees, fairness/equity in distribution of awards, simplicity of the program, continuous evaluation/improvement (Daniel & Metcalf, 2005).

Throughout the literature on employee recognition programs, there was the recurring theme of what makes a good recognition program. Daniel and Metcalf (2005) identified one way for a program to be effective, they developed the term SSMART. SSMART is an acronym for an employee recognition program that: (S)upports organizational goals and values, is (S)incere and simple, (M)eaningful, (A)daptable, (R)elevant, and (T)imely. Both Luthans (2000) and Daniel and Metcalf (2005) recognized that employee’s value personalized recognition for a job well done. While Luthans (2000) did not produce a clever acronym, he drew upon Nelson’s (1995) characteristics that distinguish an effective recognition program. The characteristics were that recognition should be immediate, it should be delivered personally, it should be valuable, and it should be a direct reinforcer of desired behavior. Abdullah and Wan (2013) noted that recognition should meet three conditions for it to be effective: it should be used frequently, it should be specific, and it should be timely. There are similarities in the literature with regard to what makes recognition programs effective. Among these similarities is the overarching notion that employees can, and do, benefit from recognition programs, especially if programs are designed and implemented in a manner most effective for the employee within the organization. Ultimately, the organization determines the type of recognition that employees receive, but employees appreciate and value recognition. That feeling of appreciation and value can aid in

increasing the motivation and job satisfaction of employees. If something so simple can impact so much, then more organizations would benefit from implementing employee recognition programs.

### **Employee Recognition Programs and Motivation**

Employee recognition programs affect employees in a variety of ways. One of the ways such programs affect employees is that they can have a positive impact on employee motivation (Ali & Ahmed, 2009; Hansen et al., 2002; Lambrou et al., 2010). A review of the literature shows that the impact on motivation is not only important for the individual employee, but also for the organization as well (Ramlall, 2004; Yousaf et al., 2014). Yousaf et al. (2014) studied the impact that financial and non-financial rewards had on employee motivation. Financial rewards were referred to as pay, bonuses, insurance, and job security to name a few. Non-financial rewards were referred to as appreciation, caring attitudes, and overall recognition from the employer (Yousaf et al., 2014). The researchers identified that employee empowerment, training, and workshops were found to be beneficial and impacted motivation because employees viewed these as forms of recognition as such programs made them feel like valued members of the organization. While training and empowerment increased employee motivation, more traditional forms of non-financial rewards, such as recognition and appreciation remained the primary contributors to motivation because employees appreciate recognition and praise for a job well done and accomplishing goals. Ultimately, Yousaf et al., (2014) concluded that both financial and non-financial rewards impact employee motivation. Specifically, “the impact of non-financial rewards is instrumental in improving morale. Employees expect recognition and encouragement for their services because nobody likes to be unappreciated for the efforts he or she has made”

(Yousaf et al., 2014, p. 1785). Organizations should focus on increasing employee recognition programs to increase motivation.

Ali and Ahmed (2009) studied the impact of reward and recognition programs on motivation and job satisfaction, not too long before Yousaf et al. (2014) did. They used the Work Satisfaction and Motivation Questionnaire developed by De Beer in 1987. The study explored nine dimensions that impact employee motivation and satisfaction. The results of their survey indicated that there was a statistically significant, direct, and positive relationship between rewards and recognition and employee motivation and satisfaction (Ali & Ahmed, 2009). Through their research, they found that employee recognition programs can have a positive impact on motivation, but that organizations should not employ a “one size fits all” approach to recognition programs because people are so inherently different. Because of this finding, recognition programs should be fluid and flexible to cultural and personality differences.

The literature on employee recognition programs and motivation indicated that employee recognition programs could have a positive impact on the motivation of the employee. This led me to formulate my first hypothesis:

**H1:** Employee recognition programs are positively related to motivation in assisted living communities.

The large body of research on these programs does not show the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation in assisted living communities. Therefore, to address this gap, I conducted my research in an assisted living community to support my hypothesis and add to the body of research on employee recognition programs and motivation.

## **Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction**

The literature indicated that employee recognition programs can have a positive impact on employee motivation (Ali & Ahmed, 2009; Hansen et al., 2002; Lambrou et al., 2010). After looking at the theoretical frameworks behind motivation and job satisfaction, the literature indicated that motivation and job satisfaction often go hand in hand with one another (Herzberg et al., 1959; Maslow, 1943). Because of the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction, the literature exploring the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction was reviewed.

One of the few articles that I located pertaining to assisted living communities examined factors contributing to job retention of direct care staff. While Li (2007) was not directly researching job satisfaction or employee recognition programs, one of her respondents offered information on how the lack of recognition programs can impact job satisfaction. Li's (2007) respondent offered

No [we don't have an employee recognition program]. We used to have a thing where the residents voted employees of the months and, um, you get a little certificate thing with a little gold thing on it... [But now we don't have it.] But you need initiative to run a good place, you have got to have, first of all, you have got to have employees that are happy (p. 65).

While the intention of Li's (2007) study was to examine retention, her respondent indirectly spoke to the importance of employee recognition programs on job satisfaction. Being recognized and appreciated for your hard work will impact your happiness and satisfaction within your organization.

Danish and Usman (2010), sought to identify the impact reward and recognition programs have on job satisfaction and motivation. They indicated that the basic purpose of employee recognition programs is to implement a system that communicates management's appreciation to employees for their job performance and commitment, and for employees to link that recognition to their performance, thereby increasing their job satisfaction (Danish & Usman, 2010). While the outcome of their study did not produce the results I was hoping for, it did leave room for future research to study the impact that employee recognition programs have on job satisfaction. Danish and Usman (2010) found that recognition had a lower impact on satisfaction compared to other dimensions within their study. They noted that when employees received recognition from their peers, it influenced their job satisfaction more than if it had come from their supervisors because they felt that supervisor recognition was out of the question. It shows that organizations are neglecting the aspects of recognition, and this is an opportunity for research such as my own to shed some light on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction.

Imran et al. (2014) chose to research the relationship between reward, recognition, and employee job satisfaction. They stated that employee job satisfaction is not only important for the employee, but it is also beneficial for the performance of the organization. When conducting their literature review, they identified multiple sources that examined the impact of recognition and rewards on satisfaction and motivation. Because of the abundance of literature, they hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between recognition and job satisfaction. After administering a survey to 100 participants, they analyzed the data and found that recognition has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and that employees job satisfaction does rely on that recognition (Imran et al., 2014). Akafo and Boateng (2015) also sought to look

at the impact of reward and recognition on job satisfaction and motivation. Within their study, they refer to rewards and recognition as falling under one collective system that they refer to as a reward system. In regard to recognition, they noted that “employees do not only want attractive pay and benefits, but also expect that their efforts are valued, appreciated and treated fairly” (p. 114). Because they felt that this reward system was beneficial and imperative for employee job satisfaction, they hypothesized that a reward system would increase job satisfaction. Like Danish and Usman (2010), Akafo and Boateng (2015) were unable to identify a positive relationship between recognition and job satisfaction, due to other dimensions of satisfaction impacting employees’ views of job satisfaction. This finding, however, did not rule out the notion that future research should be conducted on reward and recognition programs and job satisfaction to identify if a relationship is there while controlling for other dimensions of satisfaction.

According to Tessema et al., (2013), “employees’ job satisfaction offers important clues concerning the health and performance of an organization and provides information on where improvements can be made to the organization” (p. 1). Tessema et al. (2013) sought to assess the impact that recognition, pay and benefits can have on job satisfaction in the United States, Malaysia, and Vietnam. Employees are more likely to improve their performance if they feel appreciated, and recognition programs can increase both employee productivity and job satisfaction. Because of the literature, Tessema et al. (2013) hypothesized that employee recognition programs would significantly impact job satisfaction. The results of their survey were very promising regarding the impact that recognition programs have on job satisfaction.

Recognition plays an important role in making employees feel valued and motivated and transcends national borders. Regardless of respondents’ culture and economic

development, recognition was found to affect their job satisfaction significantly. While a “one-way fits all” approach to employee recognition does not provide the desired outcome, employee recognition strongly affects job satisfaction (Tessema et al., 2013, p. 10).

While not all literature yielded the same findings as Tessema et al. (2013), all the literature indicates that job satisfaction is very important to employees. Keeping that in mind, if something as simple as employee recognition programs can influence the level of job satisfaction, it is worth it for an organization to try to implement such programs.

Danish and Usman (2010), Tessema et al. (2013), and Imran et al. (2014) are just a small sample of researchers who found that employee recognition programs could impact job satisfaction. Some found that to be true while others were not able to directly identify such a relationship, but both outcomes lend themselves to the need to conduct more research to try to identify a positive relationship between recognition programs and job satisfaction. These research outcomes led me to formulate my second hypothesis:

**H2:** Employee recognition programs are positively related to job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

The large body of research on employee recognition programs and job satisfaction does not indicate that any research has been conducted in the assisted living setting. Therefore, my study looked at the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities. I hope to add to the growing body of research on employee recognition programs with my own study and identify a relationship between such programs and job satisfaction.

## **Employee Recognition Programs, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction**

Since the theoretical frameworks behind the importance of motivation and job satisfaction were identified and the importance of employee recognition programs was established, I examined the literature identifying the benefits of employee recognition on both motivation and job satisfaction together. Establishing a relationship between motivation and job satisfaction is important before identifying the impact that employee recognition programs can have on both. Ayub and Rafif (2011) conducted a study to establish a relationship between motivation and job satisfaction. Through their study, they were able to establish that there is an identifiable relationship between motivation and job satisfaction. Specifically, they found that motivation helps to improve job satisfaction and employee performance. As a relationship can be identified, exploring the literature on the impact of motivation on job satisfaction was the next logical step.

As a manager, I recognize that understanding what motivates your employees is a constant challenge. If our employees are not motivated, then their job satisfaction can reflect that. Ali and Ahmed (2002) noted that in today's current environment organizations are under pressure to enhance their performance and outperform their competition and they found that there was a relationship between employee performance and organizational performance. Essentially, if your employees are not satisfied and performing well, that would be reflected in organizational performance. Ali and Ahmed (2002) conducted an empirical study on the impact of recognition programs on employee motivation and satisfaction. A survey was administered to identify if there was a relationship between rewards, recognition, and work motivation and satisfaction. Survey results indicated that there was a statistically significant, direct, and positive relationship between the variables. Ali and Ahmed's (2002) study revealed that "if rewards or



recognition offered to employees were to be altered, then there would be a corresponding change in work motivation and satisfaction” (p. 278).

Brun and Dugas (2008) conducted an analysis of employee recognition “to respond to the limits of re-engineering work processes and to the requirements of organizational productivity and efficiency, numerous researchers have examined the impact of motivation to work on performance. These studies quickly highlighted employee recognition as an essential component of motivation” (p. 717). They sought to support the theory that employee recognition positively impacts motivation and job performance.

To compare the various forms of employee recognition Brun & Dugas (2008) developed their “interaction levels and recognition practices” (p. 726). This stratified comparison, shown in Table 2.2, is very valuable as it displays the various levels from which recognition originates and identifies various types of recognition that could be given to the individual or the team.

Organizations can use this model to pinpoint the types of recognition practices they would like to implement and to identify what recognition practices they are missing. According to the authors, the sense of being appreciated and valued by their peers gives employees a sense of belonging and feeling as if they bring their own unique contributions to their organization. They sought to support that if employees felt that they were valuable and contributed to the organization and its overall mission, then they would be more motivated to carry out their job duties and be satisfied within their position (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

**Table 2.2**

*Brun and Dugas (2008) Interaction Levels and Recognition Practices (p. 726)*

Interaction Levels	Existential Recognition (Person/Group)	Recognition of Work Practice (Work Process)	Recognition of Job Dedication (Work Process)	Recognition of Results (Product, Result)
Horizontal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social gatherings (create ties)</li> <li>• Consultation among peers</li> <li>• Support in addressing personal needs</li> <li>• Information on topics of interest</li> <li>• Recognition ceremony among coworkers when someone leaves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer feedback on professional details</li> <li>• Problem-solving groups</li> <li>• Highlighting contributions, innovative thinking, and creativity at team meetings</li> <li>• Mutual congratulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praise for effort (person, team)</li> <li>• Personalized letters acknowledging a co-worker's courage and perseverance</li> <li>• Encouragement from peers to keep up effort and collective engagement</li> <li>• Support among units</li> <li>• Taking into account the quantity and difficulty of work when evaluating results</li> <li>• Organizing leisure activities after a hectic period</li> <li>• Employee thanking a manager for spending time with him/her</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Party among peers to mark success</li> <li>• Giving someone a gift to mark a major milestone</li> <li>• Informal congratulations between two employees when goals have been achieved</li> </ul>
Vertical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management accessibility and visibility</li> <li>• Management accountability</li> <li>• Participation in development</li> <li>• Access to professional development</li> <li>• Going to bat for employees</li> <li>• Giving greater latitude in decision making</li> <li>• Authorizing flexible schedules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignments to special projects</li> <li>• Authorizing employees to attend conferences</li> <li>• Career support</li> <li>• Employees' positive support for supervisor</li> <li>• Valuing project leaders</li> <li>• Congratulating an employee in front of peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing overtime</li> <li>• Recognizing years of service</li> <li>• Finding time for office social activities</li> <li>• Allowing people time off to relax</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance evaluation meetings</li> <li>• Saluting a job well done in meetings</li> <li>• Personalized letter to an employee who secured a contract for the company</li> <li>• Posting team success on company bulletin board</li> <li>• Awarding plaques</li> <li>• Incentive bonuses</li> <li>• Notes to staff or newsletters highlighting successes</li> <li>• Awards of excellence, teamwork awards</li> </ul>
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalized letters for life event (birthdays, etc.)</li> <li>• Orientation meetings for new employees</li> <li>• Access to less tedious jobs</li> <li>• Employee suggestion programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional practices awards</li> <li>• Coaching and mentoring programmes</li> <li>• Mobility programmes</li> <li>• Innovation support and recognition programmes</li> </ul>		

	Existential Recognition	Recognition of Work Practice	Recognition of Job Dedication	Recognition of Results
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informing and consulting with staff</li> <li>Clarifying compensation standards</li> <li>Incorporating human issues into management decision making</li> <li>Offering professional services to laid-off employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teamwork recognition ceremonies</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discretionary recognition budget per unit or department</li> <li>Personalized congratulation messages for noteworthy achievements</li> <li>Recognition weeks</li> </ul>
				<b>P</b>
				<b>R</b>
				<b>A</b>
<b>External (services)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weighting the opinions of clients/consultants</li> <li>Personalized contact</li> <li>Providing consultants with information</li> <li>Greeting suppliers warmly</li> <li>Remembering clients' personal details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal thanks from clients for the quality of service</li> <li>Meetings to evaluate consultant's work</li> <li>Offering consultants major contracts at par with their professional qualifications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letters of recommendation for consultants, praising their energy and enthusiasm</li> <li>Giving suppliers positive feedback</li> <li>Client congratulating an employee for doing a good job in difficult circumstances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing satisfaction with consultant's work</li> <li>Awarding subsequent contract at a higher rate</li> <li>Gift from client (bottle of wine)</li> </ul>
				<b>C</b>
				<b>T</b>
				<b>I</b>
				<b>C</b>
<b>Social (community)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer work</li> <li>Respecting the culture and identity of specific groups in the community</li> <li>Community esteem for employee or company</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Company publicly thanking a community organization for its work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognizing work of seniors and pensioners</li> <li>Letter of recognition from the community</li> <li>Commending a group of employees for their engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awarding grants to organizations based on merit</li> <li>Recognition ceremonies</li> <li>Media coverage of positive results of company–community cooperation</li> </ul>
				<b>E</b>
				<b>S</b>

The literature on employee recognition programs and motivation and job satisfaction indicated that there is a relationship between all of the variables and that employee recognition programs can affect job satisfaction through motivation. This relationship led me to formulate my third hypothesis:

**H3:** Motivation will mediate the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

Because the large body of research on employee recognition programs, motivation and job satisfaction did not indicate a potential relationship among employee recognition programs in assisted living communities, I conducted my research in an assisted living community to support my hypothesis and add to the body of research on employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction.

### **Employee Recognition Programs in Related Fields**

Employee recognition programs are programs that can be easily implemented in a variety of organizations. Finding literature that spoke about their implementation in assisted living communities, however, was difficult to find. Because of the lack of literature on employee recognition programs in assisted living communities, I looked for literature researching their implementation in similar fields. The fields I thought most like assisted living were other health related fields where they employed nurses and other direct care workers. As most employees in assisted living communities are nurses and direct care workers, this made the most sense. Surprisingly, when reviewing the literature though, it was even difficult to locate research exploring the impact of employee recognition programs on job satisfaction and motivation of employees in other healthcare-related fields. Most of the literature that I found spoke about the job satisfaction and motivation of employees in these fields but did not solely focus on employee

recognition programs being a contributing factor. Some of the literature briefly mentioned monetary or non-monetary awards but did not indicate the impact such awards had on either variable. Those studies focused more on other dimensions of job satisfaction and motivation such as age, tenure, benefits, and promotional opportunities, to name a few.

Chou and Robert (2008) and Liu (2006) were among the limited number of studies I found that pertained to assisted living. Because the aim of this study is to identify what can impact motivation and job satisfaction, I thought it to be beneficial to reference two studies that looked specifically at job satisfaction in assisted living communities. It should be noted, however, that neither of these studies considered employee recognition programs as a factor. The lack of consideration of employee recognition programs in these studies further supports the need for my research to be conducted.

Liu (2006) examined the predictors of job satisfaction among assisted living employees and found that at the time there was little research conducted in assisted living communities to gauge what can impact employees job satisfaction. Her research was important because it examined the various factors such as age, job tenure, and race that can impact job satisfaction of assisted living employees. One thing it did not address was the impact that employee recognition programs can have on job satisfaction, which I feel plays an important role in the motivation and job satisfaction of employees. Liu's (2006) research opened the door to future research on job satisfaction of assisted living employees.

Similarly, Chou and Robert (2008) examined the impact of job satisfaction on employees in assisted living communities. They indicated that there was little existing research involving assisted living communities and job satisfaction. The primary implication of their research was that if managers within the assisted living community want to increase job satisfaction, they need

to decrease work overload and improve the varying aspects of workplace support (Chou & Robert, 2008). It can be implied that workplace support could include employee recognition programs as they provide varying levels of support to employees.

Turning to the literature featuring fields related to assisted living, Janus et al. (2008) studied the job satisfaction and motivation among academic medical centers. They specifically focused on the impact of monetary (reward) and non-monetary (recognition) awards on job satisfaction and motivation among those in academic medical centers across the United States and Germany. They administered a survey and found that in Germany, there were four factors that contribute to job satisfaction and motivation: relationships, continuing education and job security, administrative tasks, and decision making and recognition. In the United States, the factors that contributed to job satisfaction and motivation were organizational cooperation, job security and incentives, and interaction and decision making (Janus et al., 2008). While their study did not go into great detail regarding the monetary and non-monetary incentives, they ultimately reported:

Health care policy and management in Germany and the United States need to follow approaches long seen in other industries that strategically use monetary and nonmonetary incentives such as recognition and advancement to motivate their workforce if they aim to manage physicians' expectations at a decent level. Taking a human resource management perspective instead of a pure administrative approach seems to be crucial to maintain and guide satisfaction (Janus et al., 2008, p. 1164).

Lambrou et al. (2010) studied the motivation and job satisfaction of medical and nursing staff in a Cyprus public general hospital. They researched specific motivation factors as well as the relationship between job satisfaction and motivation. Lambrou et al. (2010) identified four

factors of motivation being remuneration, job attributes, achievements, and coworkers. Interestingly, even though they did not specifically set out to explore monetary and non-monetary incentives, because of their study they found that motivation was influenced by these incentives. It was revealed that recognition programs that involved non-monetary incentives were not being implemented and that programs incorporating those incentives should be taken into consideration when developing human resource management initiatives (Lambrou et al., 2010). If management in the hospital setting considered such motivation factors and how they can impact job satisfaction, then they could target their implementation. Once again, job satisfaction and motivation were researched, and the use of monetary and non-monetary incentives was discussed briefly with relation to both, but not fully investigated.

My difficulty in locating literature on employee recognition programs in assisted living communities and other related fields led me to generate my second research question, which examines the relationship between employee recognition programs, employee motivation, and job satisfaction in assisted living communities. Locating literature on job satisfaction and motivation was easy to do but locating literature on the correlation that employee recognition has on either variable in a health-related field was difficult. This gap in the literature makes my research even more important, as it singles out employee recognition as one of the main factors contributing to employee motivation and job satisfaction.

### **Detriments to Employee Recognition**

Within all research, opposing arguments exist to contradict what you are trying to prove or support through your research. As this study was trying to identify the positive impact that employee recognition programs can have on employee motivation and job satisfaction, the opposing arguments and research said that employee recognition programs can have a negative

effect on employee motivation and job satisfaction (Gubler et al., 2016; White, 2015). Employee recognition and reward programs are used in many organizations and are said to be so common because they can positively influence the performance and behavior of employees (Gubler et al., 2016). However, while most research shows that employee recognition programs can increase motivation and positively improve job performance, Gubler et al. (2016) found that it does come at a price. When conducting his literature review, Gubler et al. (2016) reported an interesting trend within the literature: most individual motivation is based on employees caring about social status, approval from their peers for a job well done, and prosocial behavior. This trend served as a catalyst to study the true cost of employee recognition programs because “there have been very few studies that attempt to evaluate a more comprehensive set of costs and benefits of awards, despite the clear predictions from the social comparisons and incentive systems gaming literatures that employee awards systems are likely to result in detrimental behavior in some circumstances” (Gubler et al., 2016, p. 8). Research was conducted at an industrial laundry plant by implementing a simple attendance award program to show that award and recognition programs can be less effective at motivating employees than the literature suggests. They found that the award program did in fact have a negative impact on the motivation of employees. Most importantly, those employees who were the most punctual and productive experienced a productivity decrease. The researchers found that this was most likely due to the fact that the punctual, productive employees had not been recognized for their attendance prior to the incentive program. Those employees felt as if their earlier good behavior had gone unnoticed and unappreciated. This feeling of being undervalued led to a productivity decrease (Gubler et al., 2016).



White (2015) studied methods to improve staff morale using authentic appreciation. He found that while most organizations implemented employee recognition programs, a segment of the employee population did not feel valued and appreciated because recognition programs often had an unintentional negative impact. Some unintentionally negative impacts were a result of:

- The behavior being new and inconsistent with prior ways of relating to colleagues.
- The tone of voice or facial expressions of the person giving the recognition do not seem to match their words.
- How the person relates in front of others (especially supervisors) differs from how he interacts privately.
- The individual has a history of saying one thing and doing another.
- A past relational conflict hasn't been addressed and is essentially ignored. (White, 2015, p. 108).

If any of these situations occur, the recognition will not be perceived as genuine, thereby increasing the unintentional negative impact of the program. Leaders often try to communicate appreciation in a way that they prefer, not considering that what they like might not be how their employees like to be recognized (White, 2015).

While Gubler et al. (2016) and White (2015) did find that employee recognition programs could be detrimental, both were able to identify ways to avoid those potential negative impacts. Because both researchers were able to identify that employee recognition programs can be beneficial when implemented correctly, the argument that employee recognition programs can have negative impacts and decrease motivation and job satisfaction does not affect the focus of this study. For leaders and organizations to avoid the negative connotations that can be associated

with employee recognition, they need to execute effective employee recognition programs. When organizations are invested in their employees and their job satisfaction, they will take the proper steps to implement an effective and genuine program that will benefit both employees and the organization.

### Summary

To summarize, the primary areas of literature reviewed for this study were employee recognition, motivation, and job satisfaction with a focus on the relationship between employee recognition programs and employee motivation and job satisfaction. As shown in Table 2.3, the motivation theories of Maslow (1943), Herzberg et al. (1959), and Deci (1980) were reviewed to give the theoretical context to the need for motivation. The job satisfaction theories of Herzberg et al. (1959) were reviewed to give the theoretical context behind the importance of job satisfaction and the relationship linked between job satisfaction and motivation. Literature on employee recognition, motivation, and job satisfaction was then reviewed. The review of this literature set the stage for the current research study to explore the impact that employee recognition programs have on motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities. Table 2.3 displays a selection of major studies and theories that have influenced this study.

**Table 2.3**

#### *Selected Major Works That Influenced This Study*

Author	Date	Research Field	Research Contributions Used in This Study
<b><i>Job Satisfaction</i></b>			
Herzberg, et al.	1959	Job satisfaction	Two-factor hygiene-motivation theory of job satisfaction
Herzberg	1966	Job satisfaction	Two-factor hygiene-motivation theory of job satisfaction
Locke	1976	Job Satisfaction	Nature and causes of job satisfaction
Spector	1985	Job satisfaction	Job Satisfaction Survey
Tessema et al.	2013	Job Satisfaction	Recognition strongly impacts satisfaction
Imran et al.	2014	Job Satisfaction	Job satisfaction relies on recognition

Author	Date	Research Field	Research Contributions Used in This Study
<b><i>Assisted Living</i></b>			
Liu	2006	Assisted living	Predictors of job satisfaction in assisted living
Purk & Lindsay	2006	Assisted living	Future trends in assisted living
Li	2007	Assisted living	Factors contributing to job retention
Lepore	2008	Assisted living	Motivations for employment in assisted living
<b><i>Employee Recognition Programs</i></b>			
Luthans	2000	Recognition programs	Recognition as a powerful leadership tool
Hansen et al.	2002	Recognition programs	Impact of rewards and recognition on employee motivation
Daniel & Metcalf	2005	Recognition programs	Fundamentals of employee recognition programs
Brun & Dugas	2008	Recognition programs	Interaction levels and recognition practices
Ali & Ahmed	2009	Recognition Programs	Impact of reward and recognition programs
Danish & Usman	2010	Recognition Programs	Organizations neglect recognition
Abdullah & Wan	2013	Recognition programs	Recognition programs linked to satisfaction
<b><i>Motivation</i></b>			
Maslow	1943	Motivation	Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
Deci	1975	Motivation	Intrinsic motivation
Deci & Ryan	1980	Motivation	Exploration of intrinsic motivation and self-determination theory
Deci & Ryan	1985	Motivation	Self-determination theory
Amabile	1987	Motivation	Work Preference Inventory
Herzberg	1987	Motivation	Motivating employees and job satisfaction
Pardee	1990	Motivation	Motivation theories of Maslow and Herzberg
Amabile et al.	1994	Motivation	Work Preference Inventory
Ryan & Deci	2000	Motivation	Self-determination theory and intrinsic motivation
Deci & Ryan	2008	Motivation	Self-determination theory

### **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Leaders within the realm of senior living, specifically in assisted living, contribute greatly to the quality-of-care their residents receive. They do this by ensuring that their employees find value in their jobs and are motivated to do them well. One way to motivate employees is to recognize them for their hard work and show them that they are valued and appreciated. As shown in Chapter 2, research indicates that motivated employees are more satisfied and more productive, which benefits both the employee and the organization. My research is significant because few studies exist that examine the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation and job satisfaction of employees within assisted living communities. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities. This chapter is divided into seven major sections: research purpose; research questions and hypotheses; key variables; research design; data collection methods; data qualifications for inferential statistics; and a chapter summary.

#### **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this research was to explore the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities. There was little prior literature highlighting this relationship among employees in assisted living settings, so this quantitative study adds to the body of literature on employee recognition programs while shedding light on their association with employee motivation and job satisfaction in those communities. Motivation and job satisfaction are very important for employers to understand. I am hopeful this study will show that assisted living communities that

implement employee recognition programs will have increased employee motivation and job satisfaction versus communities that do not implement such programs.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Conducting research on the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation and job satisfaction in assisted living communities led to the need to identify the specific employee recognition programs that are being implemented in these communities. The need to identify such programs generated my first research question:

**RQ1:** What are the various employee recognition programs that are prevalent and being implemented in assisted living communities?

Because this question could be answered with the use of descriptive statistics, there was no hypothesis associated with it.

Considering the potential impact of employee recognition programs produced my second research question:

**RQ2:** Does implementation of employee recognition programs positively impact employee motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities?

From my research questions and relevant literature, I hypothesized that individuals who work in assisted living communities that implement employee recognition programs will have increased motivation and job satisfaction, and that a mediating relationship will exist between motivation and job satisfaction:

**H1:** Employee recognition programs are positively related to motivation in assisted living communities.

**H2:** Employee recognition programs are positively related to job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

**H3:** Motivation will mediate the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

### **Key Variables and Measurement Model**

This section describes the independent, dependent, and mediating variables used in this study; their relationship to the hypotheses; and this study's measurement model and its evolution.

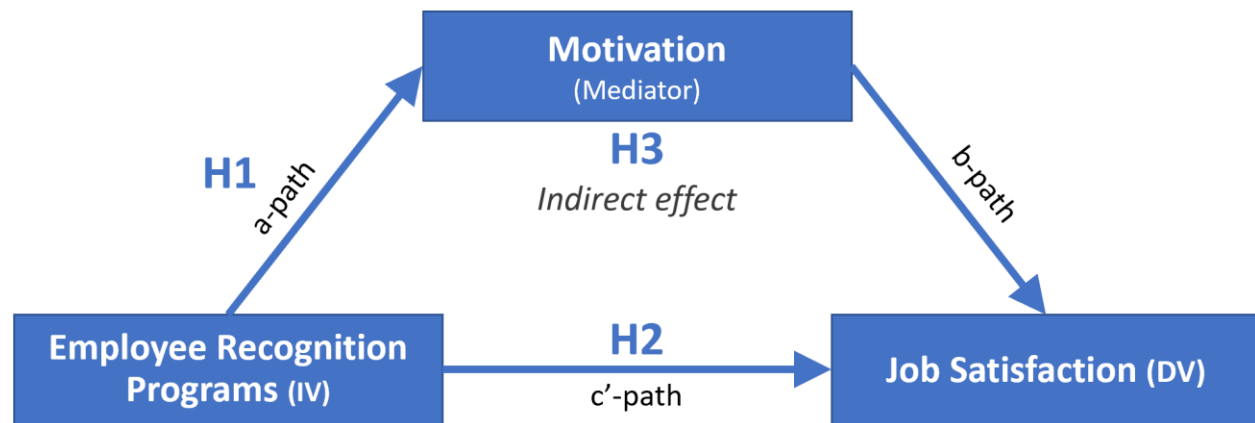
#### **Key Variables**

The key variables of this study were employee recognition programs as the independent variables (IVs), motivation as a mediating variable, and job satisfaction as the dependent variable (DV). The independent variables of employee recognition programs (ERP) are operationalized using the four different types of programs contained in the Brun and Dugas model (2008), which was highlighted in the previous chapter (see Table 2.2). These four categories are personal recognition programs (PRP), measured using 20 items; work practice recognition programs (WPRP), measured by 15 items; job dedication recognition programs (JDRP), measured by 11 items; and results dedication programs (RRP), measured by 16 items. Respondents were asked to identify the presence of these different types of recognition programs in their workplaces. In addition, they were asked to indicate their satisfaction with each of the four types of recognition programs offered. These questions were the proxies for the independent variables of the study. The mediator of the study was motivation (MOTIVATE), which was measured using 12 items and the dependent variable was job satisfaction (JOBSAT), which was measured by 16 items.

Figure 3.1. represents the conceptual framework and the relationship between these variables. It illustrates the direct relationships between employee recognition programs (ERP) and motivation (*a*-path) representing H1, between ERP and job satisfaction (*c*'-path) representing H2, and between motivation and job satisfaction (*b*-path). In addition, an indirect effect of motivation as a mediator between ERP and job satisfaction is indicated by H3.

**Figure 3.1**

*Conceptual Framework Identifying the Key Variables of This Study*

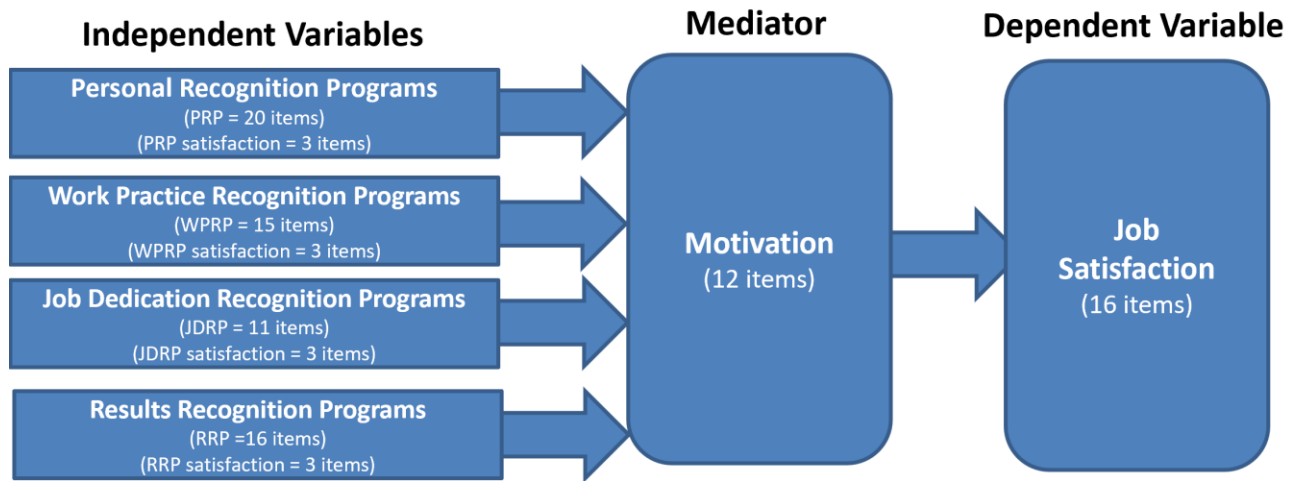


### Measurement Model

As stated in the previous section, based on relevant literature, I developed four scale variables representing the four primary types of employee recognition programs found in the Brun and Dugas (2008) study. The original model for this study, containing four ERP variables, is shown in Figure 3.2.

**Figure 3.2**

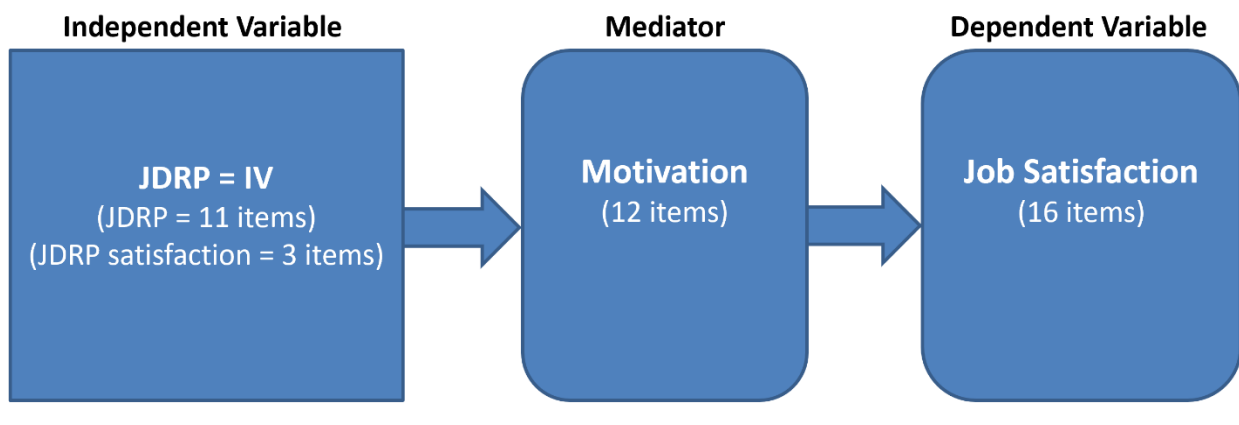
*Measurement Model: Original Configuration*



As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, subsequent correlation analysis determined that the four independent variables were highly correlated, indicating that one of them could act as a proxy for all of them in the model. Therefore, because it was most strongly correlated with the dependent variable, job satisfaction, JDRP was selected to fill that role, resulting in the measurement framework illustrated in Figure 3.3 with a single independent variable.

**Figure 3.3**

*Final Measurement Model After Correlation Analysis, with JDRP as the Sole IV*





## **Research Design**

This study used a quantitative, cross-sectional, non-experimental design. A cross-sectional online survey was used in which data was collected at one point in time from a sample of participants. I used descriptive and inferential statistics to describe my study's participants and determine if a relationship existed between employee recognition programs, employee motivation, and employee job satisfaction. My independent variable was employee recognition programs (represented by JDRP) while my dependent variable was job satisfaction. I used a mediating variable of employee motivation to show that the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction is mediated through employee motivation.

## **Population and Sample**

Participants in my study comprised employees from three assisted living communities in the Mid-Atlantic region. I was looking for a sample of around 300 study participants, and each community normally has between 100 to 150 employees. Employees in all positions were administered the survey. They included management, nurses, caregivers, housekeeping, dining, maintenance, and programming positions within each community. They were of various ages, tenure, genders, nationalities, and education levels. To have at least a 5% margin of error as well as a confidence level of around 95%, I needed to receive  $50 + 8(n)$  where  $n$  is the number of independent variables. Thus, at a minimum, I needed to receive no fewer than 58 valid responses. My sample was a non-probability convenience sample, as it consisted of all employees within the three assisted living communities. While this sample was not a true random sample, it was as good as a random sample because every individual in the sampled population had a known probability of being included. What was not known was if the responses would render it being a representative sample or not. To increase participation, I employed the help of an industry

contact to connect with the executive director (ED) within each community and establish communication with each one to bring their community on board for the study. Once I spoke with the EDs at each community I met with the staff during a virtual community-wide staff meeting to inform them about the study and its purpose and ask for their participation. I planned to allow 2 weeks for participants to complete the survey, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I allowed 2.5 months for survey completion. At the end of those 2.5 months, I contacted each community to thank them for their participation.

### **Informed Consent**

Participants were asked to complete an informed consent prior to participating in this study. The informed consent provided a description of the purpose of the study, the procedures, and asked for permission to use their results in my dissertation. Participants were not forced to take part in this study but those who signed the consent form and ultimately did participate had the option to include their email addresses in a random drawing to receive a \$75 gift card of their choice, if they opted to do so. A copy of the consent form is in Appendix A. Every participant had their confidentiality protected; no identifying information was used when analyzing the data or reporting the findings of this research. To maintain confidentiality, all data was stored in a password protected file only accessible by me. The Hood College IRB process was completed to ensure that all the research was ethically sound and that the proper steps were in place to protect the participants throughout the research process. Permission was also gained, via the ED, from each of the three assisted living communities before submitting for Hood College IRB approval. My IRB application was submitted on September 18, 2020; Hood College IRB approved my research proposal and process on October 27, 2020. A copy of my IRB application and approval letter is located in Appendix B.

## **Data Collection**

I conducted a pilot study among assisted living peers who volunteered to participate. This pilot study was conducted to ensure clarity and understanding of all survey questions. Feedback from the pilot study allowed me to adjust the format and questions prior to the start of my research. After adjusting following the pilot study, I proceeded with my study in the consenting communities. My survey was administered to all consenting participants to collect data on the relationship between employee recognition programs and employee motivation and job satisfaction. The survey included questions pertaining to employee recognition, a selection of questions from the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), a selection of questions from the Work Preference Inventory (WPI) and then a combination of self-generated and SHRM (2017) survey demographic questions. Participants were emailed a link through SurveyMonkey to access and complete the survey. I collected employee email addresses from their EDs, for those who volunteered to participate, to send them the link. The survey, excluding demographic questions, is 18 questions. The demographic questionnaire comprised 12 questions for a total survey length of 30 questions.

## **Instruments**

Because employee recognition programs were my independent variable and could greatly impact the outcome of this study, the first section of this survey was dedicated to gathering data on employee recognition programs. In their 2008 study analyzing employee recognition programs, Brun and Dugas, generated a table on “interaction levels and recognition practices” (p. 726). With the help of my dissertation committee, I converted the Brun and Dugas (2008) table into a four-section survey on employee recognition practices. I did this because I felt it would give me richer data regarding the types of recognition programs that assisted living

employees are experiencing in their respective communities. Each of the four sections of the survey captured employees' thoughts on existential recognition, recognition of work practices, recognition of job dedication, and recognition of results. I replaced existential recognition with personal recognition as this term would be easier for respondents to understand that it meant the ways in which my peers and employers recognize me as a person. The converted Brun and Dugas (2008) table resulted in four questions using a nominal scale with possible responses of *(yes)*, *(no)* or *(not sure)*. After each respective section of the survey, there were three additional questions regarding the respondent's satisfaction with each of the four types of recognition programs referred to in each section. These questions added an additional 12 questions to this survey. These 12-items use a 5-point Likert scale with possible responses ranging from 1 *(strongly disagree)* to 5 *(strongly agree)*. After I ran my pilot test, I determined Cronbach's alpha to measure the reliability and validity of these scales. Cronbach's alpha for these scales is reported in Chapter 4. The addition of these questions brought the total number of questions in Section 1 of the survey to 16 questions to measure the various employee recognition programs being implemented at assisted living communities. These questions can be found in Appendix A under Section 1 of the survey.

The second section of my survey used the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), developed by Paul Spector (1985), to measure employee job satisfaction. Spector (1985) generated this questionnaire to fill the need for a job satisfaction instrument for the human services field. The JSS is a 36-item questionnaire using a 6-point Likert scale. The possible responses ranged from 1 *(disagree very much)* to 6 *(agree very much)*. Cronbach's alpha measuring the reliability and validity of the JSS was .91 with a test-retest reliability estimate for the entire scale of .71. This scale had been vetted and tested multiple times rendering it a reliable instrument. Per instructions

from Paul Spector's website, students are permitted to use the JSS assessment free for non-commercial use in their dissertations if you share the results of your research with him via email provided on his website (Spector, 2019). In consultation with my dissertation committee, I used 16-items from the JSS instead of the full 36-item scale. In the interest of brevity and to ensure that my survey captured exactly what I wanted it to, the use of all the JSS subscales was not appropriate for my study. The Likert scale with possible responses ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) remains the same. This change, however, impacted my reliability and validity. Therefore, a panel of experts reviewed the modifications to offer expert validation prior to running my pilot test. After I ran my pilot test, I determined Cronbach's alpha to measure the reliability and validity of the modified survey. Cronbach's alpha for this scale is reported in Chapter 4. The items measuring job satisfaction can be found in Appendix A under Section 2 of the survey questionnaire.

The third section of my survey used the Work Preference Inventory (WPI), first developed by Teresa M. Amabile (1987) for the working adult. The WPI is currently in its seventh edition and was used to measure employee motivation. Amabile et al., (1994) generated both a student and working adult version of the questionnaire and for the purposes of this study. I used the working adult version to assess intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in my sample. The working adult version is a 30-item questionnaire that uses a 4-point Likert scale to assess the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations of the working adult. The possible responses to each of the questions ranged from 1 (*never or almost never true of me*) to 4 (*always or almost always true of me*). Cronbach's alpha measuring the reliability and validity of the scale was .82 for the intrinsic motivation scale and .76 for the extrinsic motivation scale rendering this instrument to be reliable. According to PsycTESTS, a database of the American Psychological

Association, use of the WPI is free for non-commercial research without seeking written permission to do so. In consultation with my dissertation committee, I used 12-items from the WPI instead of the full 30-item scale. In the interest of brevity and ensuring that my survey captured exactly what I wanted it to, the use of all the WPI's various subscales were not applicable to my study. The Likert scale was also changed from a 4-point scale to a 5-point Likert scale with possible responses ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). This change impacted my reliability and validity. Therefore, a panel of experts reviewed the modifications to offer expert validation prior to running my pilot test. After I ran my pilot test, I determined Cronbach's alpha to measure the reliability and validity of the modified survey. Cronbach's alpha for this scale is reported in Chapter 4. These items measuring motivation can be found in Appendix A under Section 3 of the survey.

The final section of my survey consisted of 12 demographic questions. A demographic questionnaire utilizing demographic questions from the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2017) was used because SHRM is a widely recognized human resources management company. These questions were supplemented by self-generated demographic questions. The demographic questionnaire included questions about generation/age, gender, race/ethnicity, job tenure, job level, level of education, perceived opportunity for advancement, intent to stay, department, length of time in current profession, single most important form of employee recognition, and an optional open-ended question regarding employee recognition. These demographic questions can be found in Appendix A under Section 4 of the survey.

### **Data Qualification for Inferential Statistical Analysis**

After all data were collected, I conducted a series of tests to ensure that the data met the qualifications for inferential statistical analysis including a regression mediation analysis. Initial

data qualification assumptions needed to be met, including adequate sample size and variable eligibility requirements, specifically, one continuous dependent variable and more than two continuous or categorical independent variables. The data must also meet the requirements for linearity, homoscedasticity of residuals, multivariate normality, absence of multicollinearity, absence of autocorrelation, independence of residuals, and no influential outliers. The results from the assumptions testing are reported in Chapter 4.

### **Data Analysis**

IBM SPSS (version 27) was used to run the statistical analysis of the data. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were computed on all items on the demographic questionnaire including generation/age, gender, race/ethnicity, job tenure, job level, level of education, perceived opportunity for advancement, intent to stay, department, length of time in current profession, and single most important form of employee recognition. Descriptive and inferential statistics were run on all items of the WPI and JSS sections of the survey and the sections pertaining to employee recognition programs. According to Salkind (2019), if I am examining the relationship between two or more independent variables on a dependent variable, a regression factor analysis should be used to analyze my data. A bivariate correlation analysis was run on all independent variables, and between the IVs, the DV, and the mediator. Because motivation is a mediating variable between employee recognition and job satisfaction, I also ran a mediated regression analysis on my data. MacKinnon et al. (2007) found that if a research study had a mediating variable along with independent and dependent variables, the researcher must statistically analyze the effects of the mediating variable. Table 3.1 shows an alignment matrix providing information regarding variables, instruments, data, units of measure and statistical tests.

**Table 3.1***Study Variables, Measures, and Statistical Tests*

Variable	Instrument	Data	Units of measure	Statistical tests
Demographic	Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM)	Age, gender, tenure, opportunity for promotion, education, race/ethnicity, etc.	Nominal Ordinal	Descriptive
Employee Recognition Programs	Demographic questionnaire and converted Brun & Dugas (2008) table	3-point nominal-scale	Nominal	Descriptive
	Brun & Dugas (2008) table	5-point Likert scale	Scale	Regression, Mediation
Employee Motivation	Work Preference Inventory (WPI)	5-point Likert scale	Scale	Descriptive, Regression, Mediation
Employee Job Satisfaction	Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)	5-point Likert scale	Scale	Descriptive, Regression, Mediation

**Reliability, Validity, and Limitations*****Reliability Challenges***

With any research there can be issues that arise pertaining to the reliability of the study. Issues regarding survey language, length, social desirability bias, and confirmation bias were addressed along with the measures that were put in place to avoid them affecting the reliability of this study. For each of the areas described below, reviews by multiple individuals and the use of a pilot survey served as important tests of survey readiness.

***Language.*** The survey was sent to all employees who volunteered to participate in this study. The survey was administered in English. This was an acceptable practice because employment in the assisted living communities I sampled in my study requires the ability to read, write, and understand English. Because this is a condition of employment, it was assumed that all who volunteered to participate were able to complete the survey in English. My study used



survey items that were vetted in previous studies by SHRM (2017), Amabile et al. (1994), and Spector (1985). I reviewed the questions and instructions to be sure that the terminology was clear and easy to understand, with no unnecessarily complex words or phrases. To further ensure that the survey questions were not confusing nor contain any potential language barriers, the survey was piloted for clarity and comprehension of questions and language.

***Length.*** The length of the survey was 30 questions: 16 questions on employee recognition programs, one question from the JSS, one question from the WPI, and a combination of 12 self-generated and vetted questions from the SHRM (2017) survey. Crawford et al. (2001) noted that if a survey is too long in length it can deter respondents from responding and have a negative impact on response rate. Because the length of the survey was long, a pilot study was conducted to ensure that the length of the survey did not deter participants from completing it and allowed me to generate an average amount of time it took to complete. The results of my pilot study yielded that it would take between 12 and 15 minutes to complete, so I relayed this information to participants when I began to administer the survey to my sample.

***Social Desirability Bias.*** Social desirability bias can occur during self-report surveys when the participant tries to answer direct questions in a favorable manner and wants to try to provide the answer they think others want to receive (Fisher, 1993). To avoid this bias, Fisher (1993) proposed that indirect questioning be used in self-report surveys. The use of indirect questions in this survey was not possible, as I was looking for the individual's personal perspective on the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation and job satisfaction. One way that I avoided social desirability bias was by asking for everyone—managers and frontline staff—to voluntarily participate in the survey. This ensured that no one individual or position was being singled out for their participation. I also asked those who chose

to participate, to complete the survey at home away from any potential influence from coworkers or supervisors. And lastly, in the cover letter, I assured participants of confidentiality: All responses were only viewed by me and were not reported back to supervisors, to reduce fear of retaliation over survey responses.

***Confirmation Bias.*** Because I work in the industry that I sampled, it was possible that I could have had biases that affected this study and the responses I was seeking (Nickerson, 1998). To avoid confirmation bias where I ask questions that confirm what I already believe, I used questionnaires that have been tested and vetted to be reliable. Initially I was going to conduct my research outside of my own organization so I would have no prior knowledge of the extent to that community's employee recognition programs. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions and being unable to gain access to many other communities, I had to administer my survey within my own organization. Because I had first-hand knowledge of my community's recognition programs there was opportunity for potential bias on my behalf. To help offset this potential bias, I conducted my research at two additional organizations other than my own in an effort to minimize knowledge about the employee recognition programs, or lack thereof, that those communities implemented. This approach enabled me to have no prior knowledge of how those communities recognize their employees, thereby reducing potential bias on my behalf.

### ***Validity***

My research design addressed multiple challenges to validity, including construct validity, internal validity, external validity, face validity, and conclusion validity. I countered these validity challenges by crafting the survey using vetted questions prepared by SHRM (2017), Amabile et al. (1994), and Spector (1985), and by using input from my committee and multiple reviewers, as well as from a pilot survey.

**Construct Validity.** My variables and their dimensions were adequately described and defined which aided in my construct validity. The WPI created by Amabile et. al. (1994) had been tested and proven reliable by multiple researchers. When the scale was published, intrinsic motivation had a Cronbach's alpha of .82 and extrinsic had a Cronbach's alpha of .76 rendering the scale to be reliable (Amabile et. al., 1994). Regarding the JSS, created by Spector (1985), it too had been tested and proven reliable by multiple researchers. When the scale was published, the overall Cronbach's alpha was .91 and during the test-retest for reliability the Cronbach's alpha was .71 for the entire scale (Spector, 1985). These scores alone aided in the strength of my construct validity of the study and allowed me to display strong construct validity. Because I generated a new survey consisting of employee recognition questions from Brun and Dugas (2008), a selection of questions from the JSS and the WPI, and a combination of self-generated and SHRM (2017) demographic survey questions, I sought expert validation of my survey prior to my pilot study to further aide in the reliability and validity of my survey. Once I received expert validation and completed my pilot study, I generated a Cronbach's alpha on my new survey that further increased my construct validity.

**Internal Validity.** I had weak internal validity as I did not use a pre- and post-test experimental research design. Incorporating pre and posttest measures increases internal validity. I also chose not to incorporate control variables. Using control variables would have allowed me to partially control for spuriousness and increase my internal validity as well. Controlling for additional variables would have allowed me to show that even after those variables were taken into account, employee recognition programs still positively correlated with the motivation and job satisfaction of employees. Through my research I identified significant associations between variables and had this study been more than an exploratory study, I would have met the last

criteria for increasing my internal validity. Factors that detracted from internal validity are that I was not randomly assigning participants to their groups, I did not conduct my research in a controlled lab environment, there were no pretest and post-test measures, I did not control for spuriousness, and this study did not use an experimental research design.

***External Validity.*** The external validity of my study was strong. While I used a convenience sample, I targeted all employees within three assisted living communities; I just did not know if the employees' responses would be a representative sample or not. The generalizability of my results was limited to the assisted living communities from which the sample was drawn. If I were to increase my population the sample size would increase, and the margin of error would decrease. If time and money had not been an issue and the COVID-19 pandemic had not been present, then the population and the sample size of my research could have increased, which would aid in the generalizability of my results.

***Face Validity.*** The face validity of my study was strong, as I ensured that the information I provided the participants aligned with what they were asked to do. Being truthful and transparent with each community and all participants regarding the goal of this study and what I needed from them helped to increase my face validity. What I discussed with the EDs in the communities, and during the staff meetings with the participants, about the survey was what they saw when they opened the survey to establish trust. Conducting a pilot study, providing detailed instructions, and administering consent forms helped to increase my face validity.

***Conclusion Validity.*** Conclusion validity refers “to the degree to which our data analyses allow us to draw appropriate conclusions about the presence or absence of relationships between our independent and dependent variables” (Maruyama & Ryan, 2014, p. 40). In other words, conclusion validity looks at whether our analysis allows us to draw appropriate conclusions

about the relationships between the variables. To do this, I needed to have a strong research design, quality measures, an adequate sample and appropriate data analysis. I believe my study had strong conclusion validity. The measures I used, the WPI and JSS, had been rendered reliable by Cronbach's alpha scores of .70 or greater. Both measures had also been used multiple times over the years and investigated for reliability and validity. My sample was not random. I estimated that the population size among the three communities would be around 300 employees. Using the formula  $50 + 8(n)$ , where  $n$  is the number of independent variables, my study required no fewer than 58 valid cases. If I had increased my population, the sample size would have increased, and the margin of error would have decreased. My study was limited by time, money, and restrictions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, without which, I may have been able to increase my sample size and population size and aid the generalizability of my results.

### ***Limitations***

This study examined a sample of employees working in the assisted living profession. With any research study there are limitations, which could include potential sampling bias, survey instrument limitations, non-response bias, the possibility of researcher bias, and limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In my study, each of these limitations was addressed by using vetted surveys, seeking input from multiple reviewers, conducting a pilot survey, and having an alternate form of data collection method if needed, all of which were in my research plan. Chapter 5 takes a more in-depth look at each of the study's limitations.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the methodology used in this research endeavor. This research sought to identify the relationship between employee recognition programs and the motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities.

Participants consisted of employees in three assisted living communities. A compilation of SHRM (2017) survey and self-constructed demographic questions, a selection of questions from the WPI and JSS surveys, and employee recognition questions converted from Brun and Dugas' (2008) table on "interaction levels and recognition practices" were administered online to voluntary consenting participants through an emailed SurveyMonkey link. Participation in the study was guided by standard human subject research principles, approval from the Hood College IRB and the participating assisted living community EDs. The survey consisted of 12 demographic questions, four questions, with three sub-questions each, for 16 questions about employee recognition, one question consisting of 16-items from the JSS and one question consisting of 12-items from the WPI for a total of 30 questions. All data from the SurveyMonkey surveys was imported into SPSS (version 27) to allow for analysis of the data using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and mediation analysis.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

This study focused on the various employee recognition programs being implemented in assisted living communities and the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation and job satisfaction among assisted living community employees. This chapter will present the results of my data analysis. Descriptive statistics will be presented on all aspects of the survey along with the results of inferential statistics that were run on scale variables. After presenting the results of both the descriptive and inferential statistics, a summary of results will be presented at the end of the chapter.

SPSS (version 27) in conjunction with Laerd Statistics was used to run the statistical analysis on the data. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were run on all variables. Bivariate correlation analysis was performed to identify the relationship, if any, between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction. Mediation analysis was conducted to determine the indirect effects of motivation on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. Because mediation analysis is a form of regression analysis, the statistical assumptions for regression analysis were reviewed prior to running my mediation analysis. There was a violation of these assumptions, but with the use of Andrew Hayes (2018) bootstrapping method in conjunction with the PROCESS procedure for SPSS version 3.5.3 tool, this violation of assumptions does not hinder the use of a mediation analysis as it is the most traditional and conservative way to determine whether motivation is a mediating variable between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The following research questions and their associated hypotheses were tested:

**RQ1:** What are the various employee recognition programs that are prevalent and being implemented in assisted living communities?

Because this question was exploratory and could be answered with the use of descriptive statistics, there was no hypothesis associated with it.

**RQ2:** Does implementation of employee recognition programs positively correlate with employee motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities?

**H1:** Employee recognition programs are positively related to motivation in assisted living communities.

**H2:** Employee recognition programs are positively related to job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

**H3:** Motivation will mediate the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

### Key Variables Used in This Study

Variables used in this study are summarized in Table 4.1. Each of the scale variables is further discussed as results of the study are presented later in this chapter.

**Table 4.1**

*Summary of Variables Used in Statistical Analysis*

Variable Name	Hypotheses	Variable Function	Level of Measure	SPSS Description	Survey Questions <sup>a</sup>
Employee Recognition Programs	H1, H2, H3	Independent	Scale	PRP, WPRP <b>JDRP (IV)</b> RRP	Q. 1-16
Job Satisfaction	H2, H3	Dependent	Scale	JOBSAT	Q. 17
Motivation	H1, H3	Mediator	Scale	MOTIAVTE	Q. 18

*Note:* <sup>a</sup> Survey questionnaire is provided in Appendix A



## **Demographics**

### **Participant Demographics**

Demographic data for 46 of the 58 respondents to this survey are presented in the subsequent subsections. Because 12 respondents of the 58 total cases did not complete the survey beyond Section 1, and therefore did not complete any demographic questions, their cases were omitted from the demographic data and analysis, resulting in the use of only 46 valid cases. For inferential statistical analysis, I ran inferential statistics on only the 46 valid cases.

#### ***Age/Generation***

Of the 46 respondents, 24 respondents (52.2%) were Millennials (born after 1980), 16 respondents (34.8%) were Generation X (born 1965–1980), 4 respondents (8.7%) were Baby Boomers (born 1945–1965), and 2 respondents (4.3%) elected not to disclose their age/generation.

#### ***Gender***

Of the 46 respondents, 5 respondents (10.9%) were male, 40 respondents (87%) were female, and 1 respondent (2.2%) elected not to disclose their gender.

#### ***Education***

Of the 46 respondents, 9 respondents (19.6%) indicated their highest level of school completed or highest degree received was their high school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED), 18 respondents (39.1%) completed some college but received no degree, 5 respondents (10.9%) had earned an Associate degree, 8 respondents (17.4%) had completed a Bachelor's degree, 5 respondents (10.9%) had earned a Master's degree, and 1 respondent (2.2%) did not offer a response to this question (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2***Level of Education*

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?	<i>n</i>	%
High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)	9	19.6
Some college but no degree	18	39.1
Associate degree	5	10.9
Bachelor's degree	8	17.4
Master's degree	5	10.9
Doctoral degree	0	0.0
No answer	1	2.2
Total:	46	100.0

*Race/Ethnicity*

Of the 46 respondents, 14 respondents (30.4%) were White/Caucasian, 18 respondents (39.1%) were Black/African American, 3 respondents (6.5%) were Hispanic/Latino/Latina, 5 respondents (10.9%) were Asian or Asian American, 2 respondents (4.3%) were two or more races, 3 respondents (6.5%) elected not to indicate their race/ethnicity, and 1 respondent (2.2%) did not garner a response to this question (Table 4.3).

**Table 4.3***Race/Ethnicity*

What is your race/ethnicity?	<i>n</i>	%
White	14	30.4
Black/African-American	18	39.1
Hispanic/Latino/Latina	3	6.5
Asian or Asian American	5	10.9
Two or more races	2	4.3
American Indian and Alaska Native	0	0.0
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Prefer not to answer	3	6.5
No answer	1	2.2
Total:	46	100.0

### ***Job Level***

Of the 46 respondents, 3 respondents (6.5%) were Entry Level (i.e., Newly hired /in training), 23 respondents (50%) were Intermediate (i.e., Front-line staff), 12 respondents (26.1%) were Middle Management (i.e., Department Head/Supervisor), 2 respondents (4.3%) were Senior Management (i.e., Executive Director/Associate Executive Director), 2 respondents (4.3%) selected “Other (please specify)”, and 4 respondents (8.7%) did not offer a response to this question (Table 4.4).

**Table 4.4**

#### ***Current Job Level***

Which of the following best describes your current job level?	<i>n</i>	%
Entry Level (i.e., Newly Hired/In Training)	3	6.5
Intermediate (i.e., Front-line staff)	23	50.0
Middle Management (i.e., Department Head/Supervisor)	12	26.1
Senior Management (i.e., Executive Director/Associate Executive Director)	2	4.3
Other (please specify)	2	4.3
No answer	4	8.7
Total:	46	100.0

The two respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” each supplied a response, one of which was “caregiver, healthcare.” Based off the options available, and working within the industry, this response would fall into the Intermediate (Front-line staff) option due to the caregiver position within assisted living being deemed a front-line staff position. The other respondent simply stated “prefer not to answer” regarding this question.

### ***Department***

Of the 46 respondents, 18 respondents (39.1%) work in the Nursing/Care Giving department, 11 respondents (23.9%) work in the Dining department, 4 respondents (8.7%) work in the Programs/Activities department, 2 respondents (4.3%) work in the Sale & Marketing

department, 5 respondents (10.9%) work in the Front desk/Reception/Concierge department, 2 respondents (4.3%) were either an Executive Director or Associate Executive Director, and 4 respondents (8.7%) selected the “Other (please specify)” response (Table 4.5).

**Table 4.5**

*Current Department*

Which of the following best describes the department you currently work in?	<i>n</i>	%
Nursing/Care Giving	18	39.1
Dining	11	23.9
Programs/Activities	4	8.7
Housekeeping	0	0.0
Maintenance	0	0.0
Sales & Marketing	2	4.3
Business Office	0	0.0
Front Desk/Reception/Concierge	5	10.9
Executive Director/Associate Executive Director	2	4.3
Other (please specify)	4	8.7
No answer	0	0.0
Total:	46	100.0

The four respondents who selected the “Other (please specify)” each supplied a response regarding the department that they work within. One response was “Entertainment.” Based off the options available, and working within the industry, this response would fall under the Programs/Activities department option due to this department within assisted living encompassing the entertainment aspect for residents. Another response was “PNA” which stands for personal nursing assistant. Based off the options available, and working within the industry, this response would fall under the Nursing/Caregiving option due to the caregiver position within assisted living falling under the nursing and caregiving department. Two other responses provided were “Administration” and “Supplement.” It is unclear, even with industry experience, as to which department these responses would fall under.

### ***Length of Time in Current Profession***

Of the 46 respondents, 12 respondents (26.1%) have been in their current profession for 2 years or less, 10 respondents (21.7%) have been in their current profession for 3 to 5 years, 11 respondents (23.9%) have been in their current profession for 6 to 10 years, 5 respondents (10.9%) have been in their current profession for 11 to 15 years, and 8 respondents (17.4%) have been in their current profession for 16 years or more.

### ***Length of Time in Current Organization***

Of the 46 respondents, 35 (76.1%) have worked for their current organization for 2 years or less, 7 respondents (15.2%) have worked for their current organization for 3 to 5 years, and 4 respondents (8.7%) have worked for their current organization for 6 to 10 years (Table 4.6).

**Table 4.6**

#### ***Length of Time in Current Organization***

How long have you worked for your current organization?	<i>n</i>	%
2 years or less	35	76.1
3 to 5 years	7	15.2
6 to 10 years	4	8.7
11 to 15 years	0	0.0
16 or more years	0	0.0
No answer	0	0.0
Total	46	100.0

## **Employment Related Perceptions**

### **Opportunity for Advancement**

Of the 46 respondents, 20 respondents (43.5%) felt there was opportunity for advancement within their organization, 9 respondents (19.6%) felt there was no opportunity for advancement within their organization, 16 respondents (34.8%) indicated that they did not know

whether there was opportunity for advancement within their organization or not, and 1 respondent (2.2%) did not provide a response to this question.

### **Maintaining Employment**

Of the 46 respondents, 18 respondents (39.1%) saw themselves still being employed with their current organization 2 years from now, 10 respondents (21.7%) did not see themselves being employed with their current organization 2 years from now, and 18 respondents (39.1%) were unsure whether they would be employed with their current organization 2 years from now.

### **Summary of Participant Demographic and Employment-Related Perceptions**

Demographic data showed that most respondents were female millennials (born after 1980) and Black/African American. The typical respondent reported having some college but no degree, indicated they were at the intermediate job level (i.e., front-line staff) and worked in the nursing/caregiving department. Most of these staff had been employed in their current profession and current employer for 2 years or less and indicated there was opportunity for advancement within their current organization. Participants were divided as to whether they would still be employed with their current employer in the next 2 years.

### **Employee Recognition Programs Being Implemented (Research Question 1)**

One of the goals of this research, as described in Research Question 1, was to identify the various forms of employee recognition programs being implemented within the assisted living communities participating in this study. Recognition programs were divided into four distinct categories: personal recognition programs, work practice recognition programs, job dedication recognition programs, and results recognition programs. The following subsections display the results of various employee recognition programs being implemented within the communities participating. The top three most prevalent and least prevalent forms of recognition are presented

in the Summary of Results section at the end of this chapter. Results in Tables 4.7 through 4.10 are presented from highest to lowest response rankings, based on the number of “Yes” responses.

## Personal Recognition Programs

Personal Recognition Programs (PRP) indicates the ways in which employers and peers show that they value employees (Table 4.7).

**Table 4.7**

### *Personal Recognition Programs*

SECTION 1.1 PERSONAL RECOGNITION	This form of employee recognition is offered to employees at my current community (select one):			Total
	Yes	No	Not Sure	
My employer and peers show that they value me as a person in the following ways:				
Allowing for consultation/communication among peers at work	40 (86%)	3 (7%)	3 (7%)	46
Providing flexible schedules	38 (86.5%)	4 (9%)	2 (4.5%)	44
Conducting orientation meetings for new employees	38 (83%)	7 (15%)	1 (2%)	46
Providing access to professional development	37 (80%)	4 (9%)	5 (11%)	46
Informing and consulting with staff	36 (78%)	6 (13%)	4 (9%)	46
Management accessibility and visibility	35 (76%)	5 (11%)	6 (13%)	46
Support in addressing employees' personal needs	34 (74%)	7 (15%)	5 (11%)	46
Information sessions/training on topics of interest	34 (74%)	8 (17%)	4 (9%)	46
Incorporating human issues into management decision-making	34 (74%)	4 (9%)	8 (17%)	46
Social gatherings (to create ties)	33 (73%)	8 (18%)	4 (9%)	45
Giving me greater latitude in decision making	30 (65%)	9 (20%)	7 (15%)	46
Management accountability to employees	29 (63%)	9 (20%)	8 (17%)	46
Clarifying compensation standards	29 (63%)	7 (15%)	10 (22%)	46
Providing funding for advanced education	29 (63%)	8 (17%)	9 (20%)	46
Going to bat for employees	28 (64%)	8 (18%)	8 (18%)	44
Sending personalized letters for life events (birthdays, etc.)	26 (57%)	13 (28%)	7 (15%)	46
Recognition ceremony among co-workers when someone leaves	24 (52%)	15 (33%)	7 (15%)	46
Providing access to less tedious jobs	23 (50%)	13 (28%)	10 (22%)	46
Having an employee suggestion program	22 (49%)	14 (31%)	9 (20%)	45
Offering professional services to laid-off employees	13 (28%)	11 (24%)	22 (48%)	46

## Work Practice Recognition Programs

Work practice recognition programs (WPRP) indicates the ways in which the individual's community/organization recognizes and encourages quality work practice (work process) (Table 4.8).

**Table 4.8**

### *Work Practice Recognition Programs*

SECTION 1.2 RECOGNITION OF WORK PRACTICE  My community recognizes and encourages quality work practice (work process) in the following ways:	This form of employee recognition is offered to employees at my current community (select one):			Total
	Yes	No	Not Sure	
Mutual congratulations between peers for achievements	36 (78%)	7 (15%)	3 (7%)	46
Congratulating an employee in front of peers	36 (78%)	5 (11%)	5 (11%)	46
Employees' positive support for supervisor	35 (76%)	4 (9%)	7 (15%)	46
Encouraging peer feedback on my professional skills	31 (67%)	11 (24%)	4 (9%)	46
Valuing project leaders	31 (67%)	4 (9%)	11 (24%)	46
Holding teamwork recognition ceremonies	29 (63%)	9 (20%)	8 (17%)	46
Highlighting my contributions, innovation thinking, and creativity at team meetings	28 (61%)	12 (26%)	6 (13%)	46
Providing career support	28 (61%)	6 (13%)	12 (26%)	46
Coaching and mentoring programs	25 (55.5%)	13 (29%)	7 (15.5%)	45
Providing assignments to special projects	23 (50%)	11 (24%)	12 (26%)	46
Fostering problem-solving in groups	22 (48%)	14 (30%)	10 (22%)	46
Offering professional practices awards	22 (48%)	12 (26%)	12 (26%)	46
Innovation support and formal recognition programs	22 (48%)	8 (17%)	16 (35%)	46
Mobility programs (i.e., programs geared towards professional advancement)	21 (46%)	12 (26%)	13 (28%)	46
Authorizing employees to attend conferences	20 (43%)	11 (24%)	15 (33%)	46



## Job Dedication Recognition Programs

Job dedication recognition programs (JDRP) indicates the ways in which an employer recognizes the employee's dedication to their job and community/organization (Table 4.9).

**Table 4.9**

### *Job Dedication Recognition Programs*

<b>SECTION 1.3 JOB DEDICATION</b>	This form of employee recognition is offered to employees at my current community (select one):			<b>Total</b>
<b>My employer recognizes my dedication to my job and community in the following ways:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	
Recognizing years of service	37 (80%)	5 (11%)	4 (9%)	46
Praise for effort (person, team)	35 (76%)	4 (9%)	7 (15%)	46
Encouragement from peers to keep up effort and collective engagement	33 (72%)	10 (22%)	3 (6%)	46
Support among units	30 (65%)	8 (17%)	8 (17%)	46
Employee thanking a manager for spending time with him/her	29 (63%)	11 (24%)	6 (13%)	46
Recognizing overtime	29 (63%)	11 (24%)	6 (13%)	46
Taking into account the quantity and difficulty of work when evaluating results	28 (64%)	9 (20%)	7 (16%)	44
Finding time for office social activities	28 (61%)	13 (28%)	5 (11%)	46
Allowing people time off to relax	28 (61%)	8 (17%)	10 (22%)	46
Organizing leisure activities after a hectic period	25 (54.5%)	14 (30.5%)	7 (15%)	46
Personalized letters acknowledging a co-worker's courage and perseverance	23 (50%)	15 (33%)	8 (17%)	46

## Results Recognition Programs

Results recognition programs (RPR) indicates the ways in which an employer and peers recognize a community's/organization's results (Table 4.10).

**Table 4.10***Results Recognition Programs*

<b>SECTION 1.4 RECOGNITION OF RESULTS</b>	This form of employee recognition is offered to employees at my current community (select one):			<b>Total</b>
<b>My employer and peers recognize results in the following ways:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	
Saluting a job well done in meetings	35 (76%)	4 (9%)	7 (15%)	46
Awarding plaques	35 (76%)	6 (13%)	5 (11%)	46
Manager publicly congratulating/thanking employees for their role in a project's success	34 (74%)	6 (13%)	6 (13%)	46
Informal congratulations between two employees when goals have been achieved	33 (73%)	6 (13%)	6 (13%)	45
Performance evaluation meetings	31 (67%)	10 (22%)	5 (11%)	46
Party among peers to celebrate a success	29 (63%)	11 (24%)	6 (13%)	46
Awards of excellence, teamwork awards	27 (60%)	13 (29%)	5 (11%)	45
Posting team successes on departmental bulletin board	25 (54%)	15 (33%)	6 (13%)	46
Giving someone a gift to mark a major career milestone	24 (53%)	10 (22%)	11 (24%)	45
Personalized congratulation messages for noteworthy achievements	23 (50%)	12 (26%)	11 (24%)	46
Incentive bonuses	21 (46%)	13 (28%)	12 (26%)	46
Recognition weeks	21 (46%)	17 (37%)	8 (17%)	46
Notes to staff or newsletters highlighting successes	20 (43%)	16 (35%)	10 (22%)	46
Discretionary recognition budget per unit or department	20 (43%)	13 (28%)	13 (28%)	46
Personalized letter to an employee who secured a contract for the company	18 (39%)	12 (26%)	16 (35%)	46
Establishing an Honor Roll	16 (36%)	17 (38%)	12 (26%)	45

**Most Important Form of Recognition**

With regard to the single most important form of employee recognition, 1 respondent (2.2%) felt it was social gatherings among peers, 3 respondents (6.5%) felt they it was sending personalized letters for life events, 1 respondent (2.2%) felt it was informing and consulting with

staff, 1 respondent (2.2%) felt it was offering professional practices awards, 3 respondents (6.5%) felt it was holding teamwork recognition ceremonies, 6 respondents (13%) felt it was praise for effort (person, team), 3 respondents (6.5%) felt it was personalized letters acknowledging a co-workers courage or perseverance, 2 respondents (4.3%) felt it was organizing leisure activities after a hectic period, 2 respondents (4.3%) felt it was performance evaluation meetings, 2 respondents (4.3%) felt it was awarding plaques or achievement certificates, 19 respondents (41.3%) felt it was incentive bonuses, 1 respondent (2.2%) felt it was personalized congratulation messages for noteworthy achievements, 1 respondent (2.2%) felt it was recognition weeks, and 1 respondent (2.2%) did not provide a response to this question (Table 4.11).

**Table 4.11**

*Single Most Important Form of Employee Recognition*

Please select the single most important form of recognition to you. (Please select only one)	<i>n</i>	%
Social gatherings among peers	1	2.2
Sending personalized letters for life events	3	6.5
Informing and consulting with staff	1	2.2
Congratulating an employee in front of peers	0	0.0
Offering professional practices awards	1	2.2
Holding teamwork recognition ceremonies	3	6.5
Praise for effort (person, team)	6	13.0
Personalized letters acknowledging a co-worker's courage and perseverance	3	6.5
Organizing leisure activities after a hectic period	2	4.3
Recognizing years of service	0	0.0
Performance evaluation meetings	2	4.3
Awarding plaques	2	4.3
Incentive bonuses	19	41.3
Personalized congratulation messages for noteworthy achievements	1	2.2
Recognition weeks	1	2.2
No answer	0	0.0
Total:	46	100.0

Respondents were also given the option to indicate if they had any suggestions for how to improve employee recognition at work. Five respondents offered their suggestions:

1. Allow for more informal forms of recognition so that employees feel you are paying attention to them and value their work.
2. Incentive bonuses
3. Just tell them their efforts don't go unnoticed and be specific.
4. To switch staff between departments after a period of time so that everyone knows how to work at all departments for the company.
5. Upper management never gets recognized, but they are the ones recognizing their teams and even sometimes with their own money.

These suggestions will be interpreted further in Chapter 5.

### **Inferential Statistics and Analysis (Research Question 2)**

Research Question 2 seeks to determine whether a positive relationship exists in assisted living communities between four types of employee recognition programs, job satisfaction, and employee motivation. Based on the questionnaire and published studies, six scales were created to measure these six variables. Using these six scales, correlational and mediation analyses were conducted to determine the presence and strength of the relationships between employee recognition programs, employee motivation, and job satisfaction.

#### **Scale Variables**

Table 4.12 depicts the descriptive statistics for the scales used within this study. Table 4.12 also presents the scales' Cronbach's alpha scores which ranged from a low of .808 to a high of .936. Traditionally, a Cronbach's alpha score above .70 indicates internal consistency of the

scales and renders them to be reliable for measuring the study variables. Therefore, the scales used within this study were all vetted to be reliable.

**Table 4.12**

*Scale Variables: Reliability and Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Scale Items	Valid Frequency	Valid Percentage	Mean	Median	SD	Mean Inter-item Correl.
Personal Recognition Programs (PRP)	.884	3	46	100.0	6.56	6	2.85	.726
Work Practice Recognition Programs (WPRP)	.881	3	45	97.8	6.69	7	2.82	.717
Job Dedication Recognition Programs (JDRP)	.936	3	46	100.0	6.45	6	2.91	.832
Results Recognition Programs (RRP)	.875	3	46	100.0	6.73	6	2.57	.702
Motivation (MOTIVATE)	.832	12	43	93.5	27.69	29	7.02	.291
Job Satisfaction (JOBSAT)	.808	16	46	95.7	42.63	44	9.09	.212

Tables 4.13 through 4.16 provide an analysis of the responses to the questions that comprise each of the four recognition program scales. Personal recognition programs (PRP) indicate the ways in which one's employer and peers show that they value employees. The PRP scale measures the respondent's opinion on the PRPs within their community (Table 4.13).

**Table 4.13**

*Personal Recognition Program (PRP) Responses*

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
1. My organization's personal recognition program <b>enables me to work better.</b>								
<i>n</i> = 46	0	3	16	13	14	3.83	4	0.95
100%	0.0%	6.5%	34.8%	28.3%	30.4%			
2. My organization's personal recognition program <b>enables me to feel recognized for my contributions</b> to the organization.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	3	12	16	14	3.85	4	1.01
100%	2.2%	6.5%	26.1%	34.8%	30.4%			

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
3. <b>I am satisfied</b> with my organization's personal recognition program.								
<i>n</i> = 46	3	4	9	15	15	3.76	4	1.20
100%	6.5%	8.7%	19.6%	32.6%	32.6%			

Work practice recognition programs (WPRP) indicate the ways in which one's community recognizes and encourages quality work practice (work process). The WPRP scale measures the respondent's opinion on the WPRPs within their community (Table 4.14).

**Table 4.14**

*Work Practice Recognition Program (WPRP) Responses*

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
1. My organization's work practice recognition program <b>enables me to work better.</b>								
<i>n</i> = 45	0	4	10	19	12	3.78	4	0.92
100%	0.0%	8.9%	22.2%	42.2%	26.7%			
2. My organization's work practice recognition program <b>enables me to feel recognized for my contributions</b> to the organization.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	6	10	17	12	3.72	4	1.07
100%	2.2%	13.0%	21.7%	37.0%	26.1%			
3. <b>I am satisfied</b> with my organization's work practice recognition program.								
<i>n</i> = 46	2	4	13	15	12	3.67	4	1.10
100%	4.3%	8.7%	28.3%	32.6%	26.1%			

Job dedication recognition programs (JDRP) indicate the ways in which one's employer recognizes their dedication to their job and community. The JDRP scale measures the respondent's opinion on the JDRPs within their community (Table 4.15).

**Table 4.15**

*Job Dedication Recognition Program (JDRP) Responses*

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
1. My organization's job dedication recognition program <b>enables me to work better.</b>								
<i>n</i> = 46	0	4	10	16	16	3.96	4	0.96
100%	0.0%	8.7%	21.7%	34.8%	34.8%			

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
2. My organization's job dedication recognition program <b>enables me to feel recognized for my contributions</b> to the organization.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	4	10	15	16	3.89	4	1.06
100%	2.2%	8.7%	21.7%	32.6%	34.8%			
3. <b>I am satisfied</b> with my organization's job dedication recognition program.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	5	14	13	13	3.70	4	1.07
100%	2.2%	10.9%	30.4%	28.3%	28.3%			

Results recognition programs (RRP) indicate the ways in which one's employer and peers recognize results. The RRP scale measures the respondent's opinion on the RRP within their community (Table 4.16).

**Table 4.16**

*Recognition of Results Program (RRP) Responses*

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
1. My organization's recognition of results program <b>enables me to work better.</b>								
<i>n</i> = 46	0	3	13	18	12	3.85	4	0.89
100%	0.0%	6.5%	28.3%	39.1%	26.1%			
2. My organization's recognition of results program <b>enables me to feel recognized for my contributions</b> to the organization.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	4	10	20	11	3.78	4	0.99
100%	2.2%	8.7%	21.7%	43.5%	23.9%			
3. <b>I am satisfied</b> with my organization's recognition of results program.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	5	13	18	9	3.63	4	0.99
100%	2.2%	10.9%	28.3%	39.1%	19.6%			

Job satisfaction (JOBSAT) indicates the employee's satisfaction with their job and their organization. JOBSAT measures the respondent's level of job satisfaction. I reverse coded seven items that were negatively worded items so that the high value on the scale presents the same response on every item. Those items are indicated with an 'R' by each item (Table 4.17).

**Table 4.17***Job Satisfaction Scale (JOBSAT) Responses*

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
1. When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.								
<i>n</i> = 46	2	4	7	18	15	3.87	4	1.11
100%	4.3%	8.7%	15.2%	39.1%	32.6%			
2. I like the people I work with.								
<i>n</i> = 45	1	1	3	18	22	4.31	4	0.87
100%	2.2%	2.2%	6.7%	40.0%	48.9%			
3. I sometimes feel that my job is meaningless. <b>(R)</b>								
<i>n</i> = 46	8	14	11	7	6	2.76	2	1.29
100%	17.4%	30.4%	23.9%	15.2%	13.0%			
4. Communication seems good within this organization.								
<i>n</i> = 46	5	4	3	24	10	3.65	4	1.23
100%	10.9%	8.7%	6.5%	52.2%	21.7%			
5. Raises are too few and far between. <b>(R)</b>								
<i>n</i> = 46	3	3	14	16	12	3.80	4	0.99
100%	6.5%	6.5%	30.4%	34.8%	26.1%			
6. The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.								
<i>n</i> = 46	6	3	12	19	6	3.35	4	1.20
100%	13.0%	6.5%	26.1%	41.3%	13.0%			
7. I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated. <b>(R)</b>								
<i>n</i> = 46	7	14	9	7	9	2.93	3	1.37
100%	15.2%	30.4%	19.6%	15.2%	19.6%			
8. I like doing the things that I do at work.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	2	5	20	18	4.13	4	0.93
100%	2.2%	4.3%	10.9%	43.5%	39.1%			
9. I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me. <b>(R)</b>								
<i>n</i> = 46	2	12	11	15	6	3.24	3	1.12
100%	4.3%	26.1%	23.9%	32.6%	13.0%			
10. The benefits package we have is equitable (meaning benefits are fair and consistent across all departments and positions).								
<i>n</i> = 46	3	3	13	21	6	3.52	4	1.03
100%	6.5%	6.5%	28.3%	45.7%	13.0%			
11. There are few rewards for those who work here. <b>(R)</b>								
<i>n</i> = 46	2	8	13	16	7	3.39	3	1.08
100%	4.3%	17.4%	28.3%	34.8%	15.2%			
12. I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.								
<i>n</i> = 46	0	2	7	19	18	4.15	4	0.84
100%	0.0%	4.3%	15.2%	41.3%	39.1%			
13. I feel satisfied with my chances for a salary increase.								
<i>n</i> = 46	2	7	15	13	9	3.43	3	1.11
100%	4.3%	15.2%	32.6%	28.3%	19.6%			
14. There are benefits we do not have which we should have. <b>(R)</b>								
<i>n</i> = 45	3	16	17	9	0	2.71	3	0.87
100%	6.7%	35.6%	37.8%	20.0%	0.0%			
15. I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be. <b>(R)</b>								



	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
<i>n</i> = 46	1	5	13	18	9	3.63	4	1.11
100%	2.2%	10.9%	28.3%	39.1%	19.6%			
16. My job is enjoyable.								
<i>n</i> = 46	2	7	15	13	9	3.43	3	0.90
100%	4.3%	15.2%	32.6%	28.3%	19.6%			

Motivation (MOTIVATE) indicates the employee's motivation to carry out their job duties within their organization. MOTIVATE measures the respondent's level of intrinsic motivation. While it is unusual, no items in this scale were reverse coded. Item 6 was questionable, but it was not reverse coded because of the double negative the item presents while measuring one's intrinsic motivation (Table 4.18).

**Table 4.18**

*Motivation Scale (MOTIVATE) Responses*

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
1. I want my work to provide me with opportunities for increasing my knowledge and skills.								
<i>n</i> = 46	0	0	3	19	24	4.46	5	0.62
100%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	41.3%	52.2%			
2. No matter what the outcome of a project is, I am satisfied if I feel I gained new experience.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	4	10	20	11	3.78	4	0.88
100%	2.2%	8.7%	21.7%	43.5%	23.9%			
3. I enjoy tackling problems that are completely new to me.								
<i>n</i> = 46	0	2	4	22	18	4.22	4	0.78
100%	0.0%	4.3%	8.7%	47.8%	39.1%			
4. I'm concerned about how other people are going to react to my ideas.								
<i>n</i> = 46	1	5	13	18	9	3.71	4	1.08
100%	2.2%	10.9%	28.3%	39.1%	19.6%			
5. I seldom think about salary and promotions.								
<i>n</i> = 46	2	17	9	11	7	3.09	3	1.19
100%	4.3%	37.0%	19.6%	23.9%	15.2%			
6. I believe that there is no point in doing a good job if nobody else knows about it.								
<i>n</i> = 45	17	16	5	2	5	2.16	2	1.30
100%	37.8%	35.6%	11.1%	8.9%	11.1%			
7. I am strongly motivated by the money I can earn.								
<i>n</i> = 45	0	6	11	18	10	3.71	4	0.97
100%	0.0%	13.3%	24.4%	40.0%	22.2%			
8. It is important for me to be able to do what I most enjoy.								
<i>n</i> = 45	0	2	1	23	19	4.31	4	0.73
100%	0.0%	2%	1%	39.1%	19.6%			

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	Med.	SD
9. As long as I can do what I enjoy, I'm not that concerned about exactly what I am paid.								
n = 45	2	17	12	8	6	2.98	3	1.14
100%	4.4%	37.8%	26.7%	17.8%	13.3%			
10. I am strongly motivated by the recognition I can earn from other people.								
n = 45	0	7	10	20	8	3.64	4	0.96
100%	0.0%	15.6%	22.2%	44.4%	17.8%			
11. I want other people to find out how good I really can be at my work.								
n = 46	0	6	10	18	12	3.78	4	0.99
100%	0.0%	10.9%	28.3%	39.1%	19.6%			
12. What matters most to me is enjoying what I do.								
n = 46	0	0	7	21	18	4.24	4	0.71
100%	0.0%	0.0%	15.2%	45.7%	39.1%			

## Correlational Analysis

### *Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs*

Table 4.19 depicts the results of the bivariate correlation analysis that show that there is a multicollinearity issue associated between the recognition programs. Each form of recognition was significantly correlated to each other. This multicollinearity indicates that the four scales are very similar to one another and that I do not need all four scales to represent my independent variable, employee recognition programs; I only need one. The scale that was ultimately used as my independent variable was JDRP. The rationale for its selection will be discussed in the paragraphs that follow, along with results from my correlation analysis between all employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction.

**Table 4.19***Correlation Between Employee Recognition Programs*

		<b>Correlations</b>			
		PRP_scale	WPRP_scale	JDRP_scale	RRP_scale
PRP_scale	Pearson Correlation	1	.842**	.792**	.802**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	46	46	46	46
WPRP_scale	Pearson Correlation	.842**	1	.906**	.831**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	46	46	46	46
JDRP_scale	Pearson Correlation	.792**	.906**	1	.867**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	46	46	46	46
RRP_scale	Pearson Correlation	.802**	.831**	.867**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	46	46	46	46

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

*Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction*

To determine the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation, bivariate correlation analysis was run between each of the employee recognition scales and the scale created for motivation. Table 4.20 presents the results of this bivariate correlation analysis and shows that WPRP, more than any other form of recognition, is significantly and positively correlated with motivation. To determine the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction, bivariate correlation analysis was run between each of the employee recognition scales and the scale created for job satisfaction. Table 4.20 also indicates that JDRP, more than any other form of recognition, are significantly and positively correlated with job satisfaction.

After identifying relationships between employee recognition programs alone and then between those programs and motivation and job satisfaction respectively, bivariate correlation analysis was run between each employee recognition program scale, motivation, and job satisfaction. As previously stated above, JDRP has the strongest correlation with job satisfaction, but WPRP is stronger with motivation. Because of this discrepancy, JDRP was selected as the independent variable because it had a strong correlation with motivation, and the strongest correlation with job satisfaction, my dependent variable. Because of JDRPs correlation with both dependent variables, it will be used as my independent variable for the remaining statistical analysis. Table 4.20 depicts the bivariate correlation analysis between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction.

**Table 4.20**

*Correlation Between Employee Recognition Programs, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction*

		<b>Correlations</b>					
		PRP_scale	WPRP_scale	JDRP_scale	RRP_scale	JOBSAT_scale	MOTIVATE_scale
PRP_scale	Pearson Correlation	1	.842**	.792**	.802**	.451**	.364**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.001	.006
	N	46	46	46	46	46	46
WPRP_scale	Pearson Correlation	.842**	1	.906**	.831**	.501**	.510**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	46	46	46	46	46	46
JDRP_scale	Pearson Correlation	.792**	.906**	1	.867**	.560**	.442**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.001
	N	46	46	46	46	46	46
RRP_scale	Pearson Correlation	.802**	.831**	.867**	1	.486**	.416**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.002
	N	46	46	46	46	46	46
JOBSAT_scale	Pearson Correlation	.451**	.501**	.560**	.486**	1	.168
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000		.132
	N	46	46	46	46	46	46
MOTIVATE_scale	Pearson Correlation	.364**	.510**	.442**	.416**	.168	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.006	.000	.001	.002	.132	
	N	46	46	46	46	46	46

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

## Assumptions of Multiple Regression

Data for this study were tested to determine whether they met the nine assumptions of eligibility for analysis using multiple regression and related procedures, including mediation analysis. Because of this study's small sample size, these assumptions could not be met.

Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) state that to determine the minimum number of cases required when using statistical regression, a "cases-to-IV ratio of 40 to 1 is reasonable" and that a larger number may be required if the dependent variable is skewed or abnormally distributed (p. 105). This study's sample size was not large enough to meet this criterion; however, Andrew Hayes's bootstrapping method with 5,000 cases was used to compensate for this condition during testing for indirect effect of mediation analysis (Hayes, 2018).

Bootstrapping does not assume normal distribution, which is beneficial, as this study's sample was not normally distributed. Normality was checked with a histogram and further checked with a Kolmogorov-Smirnov goodness of fit test. The significance scores of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests (Table 4.21) indicate that only the JOBSAT scale is normally distributed, but this outcome does not impact the use of bootstrapping.

**Table 4.21**

### *Tests of IV Distribution Normality*

Scale Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
PRP	.122	46	.084	.932	46	.010
WPRP	.144	46	.019	.937	46	.015
JDRP	.164	46	.003	.909	46	.002
RRP	.156	46	.007	.943	46	.025
JOBSAT	.103	46	.200*	.976	46	.438
MOTIVATE	.161	46	.004	.898	46	.001

<sup>a</sup>Lilliefors significance correction

\*Lower bound of true significance

Because we are using Andrew Hayes's bootstrapping method, there are only four assumptions that are vital: linearity, absence of multicollinearity, independence of residuals, and homoscedasticity of residuals. These four assumptions of multiple regression, required for use with bootstrapping, are described in the paragraphs that follow.

***Linearity.*** A scatter plot of standardized residuals was generated using SPSS to determine if there was a linear relationship between DV scores and errors of prediction. Failure of linearity could impair analysis by failing to fully measure the relationship between the DV and IVs. An assessment of the scatter plot showed that residuals were adequately positioned along the horizontal plot line to meet this requirement.

***Absence of multicollinearity.*** Multicollinearity between IVs was evaluated to ensure that there was no correlation of Pearson's  $r$  coefficient exceeding .7, which could indicate that two IVs may be measuring the same construct (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). The results of this testing are presented in Table 4.19 above and indicate that the four IVs are significantly correlated ( $p < .001$ , one-tailed). As a result, one of these variables can represent all four in inferential statistical analysis. Because JDRP was most strongly correlated with the DV, JOBSAT, it was selected to serve that function.

***Independence of residuals.*** A residual plot was analyzed to ensure that residuals were sufficiently independent (uncorrelated). Output from a linear regression produced Durbin-Watson statistics, used to test for autocorrelation in the residuals, with a value of 2.0 indicating that no autocorrelation could be detected in the sample (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2005; Piedmont, 2014, p. 3303; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). In this study's sample, using JDRP as the IV, the Durbin-Watson score of JOBSAT was 2.515 and the score for MOTIVATE was 1.857, indicating acceptable levels of residual independence.

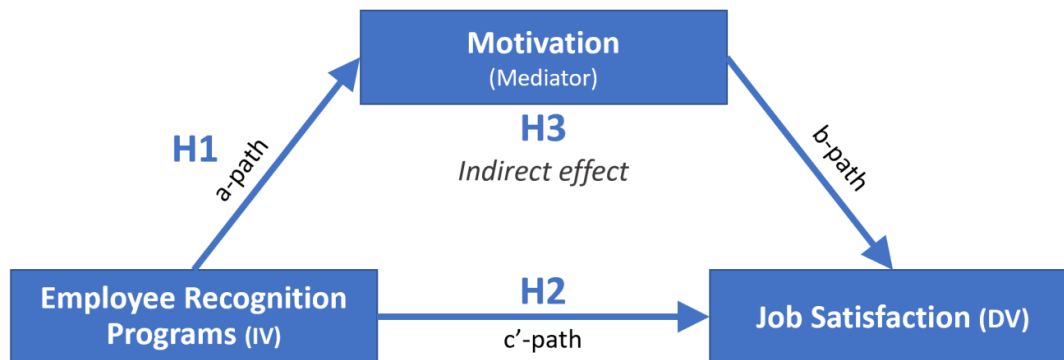
***Homoscedasticity of residuals.*** Homoscedasticity exists when “the standard deviations of errors of prediction are approximately equal for all predicted DV scores” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019, p. 108). Its opposite, heteroscedasticity, may occur when some IVs are skewed and others are not, impairing the predictive capability of the total model. An assessment of the scatter plot showed mild heteroscedasticity of residuals as indicated by distribution distance from the center plot line, but within limits of acceptability.

### **Mediation Analysis**

Mediation analysis was conducted to determine whether motivation indirectly mediated the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. Motivation was selected as the mediating variable based on literature alluding to the link between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction (Ali & Ahmed, 2002; Brun & Dugas, 2008; Tessema et al., 2013; Imran et al., 2014; and Yousef et al., 2014). The significant correlation between certain types of employee recognition programs and motivation along with the significant correlation between certain types of employee recognition programs and job satisfaction strengthened the idea that motivation could act as a mediating variable between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. Figure 4.1 depicts the mediating effects of motivation on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. Path *a* indicates the direct effect of employee recognition programs between motivation; path *b* is the direct effect of motivation between job satisfaction; path *c* is the direct effect between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction while holding motivation constant; and path *c'* is the total effect from employee recognition programs and job satisfaction, which is the direct effect plus indirect effect. This figure also indicates the location of this study’s hypotheses within those relationships.

**Figure 4.1**

*Simple Mediation Effect of Motivation on Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction*



Hayes (2018) mediation analysis, which focuses on the indirect effects of a mediating variable, was used in conjunction with SPSS (version 27) and PROCESS. Hayes (2018) promoted the use of the bootstrapping method, which despite my small sample size, allowed me to still perform the mediation analysis on my data. The bootstrapping method with mediation “Model 4” using SPSS (version 27) and PROCESS were conducted to test the indirect effects of motivation on employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. Table 4.22 depicts the mediation effects of motivation on employee recognition programs and job satisfaction.

**Table 4.22**

*Mediation Effects of Motivation on Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction*

Path	Coefficient	SE	<i>p</i>	95% CI	
				LL	UL
<i>a</i>	1.0625	.3253	.0021	.4070	1.7181
<i>b</i>	-.1270	.1813	.4873	-.4927	.2386
<i>c'</i>	1.8792	.4361	.0001	.9997	2.7587
<i>ab [m]</i>	-.1350	.2223	–	-.5981	.3365
<i>c</i>	1.7442	.3890	.0001	.9603	2.5281

*Note:* Path *a* is the direct effect between the independent variable (JDRP) to mediator (MOTIVATE). Path *b* is the direct effect between the mediator (MOTIVATE) to the dependent variable (JOBSAT). Path *c'* is the direct effect between the independent variable (JDRP) to the dependent variable (JOBSAT) while holding the mediator constant. Path *ab* is the indirect effect or the mediator effect, which tests whether the mediation is significant between IV (JDRP) and DV (JOBSAT). Path *c* is the total effect from the IV (JDRP) into the DV (JOBSAT), which includes both the direct effect and the indirect (mediation) effect. CI stands for confidence interval; LL stands for lower limit and UL stands for upper limit.



The results summarized in Table 4.22 show that the relationship in path *a* is significant ( $p < .01$ ) but path *b* is not, indicating that while the presence of an employee recognition program positively impacted motivation, motivation did not impact job satisfaction for this sample. Path *c* ', the direct effect of employee recognition program on job satisfaction, is also significant ( $p < .001$ ). However, the indirect effect of motivation on the relationship between an employee recognition program and job satisfaction (path *ab*/mediation effect) is not significant, indicating that motivation is not a mediating variable between employee recognition and job satisfaction in this sample. Although the indirect effect (mediation effect) is not significant, the total effect (*c*-path) is significant, signifying that the IV (JDRP) affects the DV (JOBSAT) directly in a statistically significant way. In other words, the relationship between job dedication recognition programs (JDRP) and job satisfaction (JOBSAT) is direct, positive, and statistically significant, and is not an indirect one through motivation.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided the data analysis for this study which comprised of descriptive statistics, bivariate correlation analysis, and mediation analysis. Demographic data revealed that most respondents were Black/African American female millennials (born after 1980). Most respondents had some college but no degree, were at the intermediate job level (i.e., front-line staff) who worked in the nursing/caregiving department of their community. Most of these staff had been employed in their current profession and with their current employer for 2 years or less. Employment related perceptions revealed that respondents felt there was opportunity for advancement within their current organization but were divided as to feeling that they would still be employed with their current employer in the next 2 years and not knowing if they would be or not.

## Research Question 1

In response to RQ1, descriptive statistics on the various forms of employee recognition programs indicated the most frequently observed and least frequently observed forms of employee recognition in assisted living communities, as reported earlier in Tables 4.7 through 4.10 and summarized in the following paragraphs.

### *Most Prevalent Employee Recognition Programs*

The most prevalent forms of employee recognition programs (highest value “Yes” responses) found in assisted living communities within in each form of recognition were as follows:

#### 1. Personal Recognition Programs

- a. Allowing for consultation/communication among peers at work ( $n = 40$ , 86%)
- b. Providing flexible schedules; conducting orientation meetings for new employees ( $n = 38$  each, 86.5%)
- c. Providing access to professional development ( $n = 37$ , 80%)

#### 2. Work Practice Recognition Programs

- a. Mutual congratulations between peers for achievements ( $n = 36$ , 78%)
- b. Congratulating an employee in front of peers ( $n = 36$ , 78%)
- c. Employees’ positive support for supervisor ( $n = 35$ , 76%)

#### 3. Job Dedication Recognition Programs

- a. Recognizing years of service ( $n = 37$ , 80%)
- b. Praise for effort (person, team) ( $n = 35$ , 76%)
- c. Encouragement from peers to keep up effort and collective engagement ( $n = 33$ , 72%)

#### 4. Results Recognition Programs

- a. Saluting a job well done in meetings ( $n = 35$ , 76%)
- b. Awarding plaques ( $n = 35$ , 76%)
- c. Manager publicly congratulating/thanking employees for their role in a project's success ( $n = 34$ , 74%)

#### ***Least Prevalent Employee Recognition Programs***

Similarly, the least commonly reported forms of employee recognition (highest value “No” responses) reported in each category are as follows:

##### 1. Personal Recognition Programs

- a. Recognition program among peers when someone leaves ( $n = 15$ , 33%)
- b. Having an employee suggestion program ( $n = 14$ , 31%)
- c. Sending personalized letters for life events, e.g., birthdays; providing access to less tedious jobs ( $n = 13$  each, 28%)

##### 2. Work Practice Recognition Programs

- a. Fostering problem solving in groups ( $n = 14$ , 30%)
- b. Coaching and mentoring ( $n = 13$ , 29%)
- c. Offering professional practices awards; mobility programs (i.e., programs geared to professional advancement ( $n = 12$  each, 26%)

##### 3. Job Dedication Recognition Programs

- a. Personalized letters acknowledging a co-worker's courage and perseverance ( $n = 15$ , 33%)
- b. Organizing leisure activities after a hectic period ( $n = 14$ , 30.5%)
- c. Finding time for office social activities ( $n = 13$ , 28%)

#### 4. Results Recognition Programs

- a. Establishing an honor roll ( $n = 17, 38\%$ )
- b. Recognition weeks ( $n = 17, 38\%$ )
- c. Notes to staff or newsletters highlighting successes ( $n = 16, 35\%$ )

#### **Research Question 2**

Bivariate correlation analysis and mediation analysis were used for the assessment of the three hypotheses associated with RQ2 in this study and the findings are described below:

Hypothesis 1 (H1) stated that employee recognition program is positively related to motivation in assisted living communities. Based on the results presented in Table 4.22, this hypothesis, shown as path *a*, is supported for this sample ( $p < .01$ ). The regression analysis conducted at a 95% confidence interval showed that the range between the LLCI and the ULCI did not include zero, which means that we reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between employee recognition program and motivation and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is such a relationship.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) stated that employee recognition programs are positively related to job satisfaction in assisted living communities. Based on the results presented in Table 4.22, the relationship between the variables employee recognition programs and job satisfaction (path *c*) was found to have a direct effect and be statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported through regression via mediation analysis, and employee recognition programs were found to be positively correlated with job satisfaction through bivariate correlation analysis as well.

Hypothesis 3 (H3) stated that motivation will mediate the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction in assisted living communities. Based on the

bootstrapping method (5,000 bootstrap confidence intervals) results presented in Table 4.22, the indirect relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction through mediator motivation (path  $c'$ ) was not statistically significant. The mediation analysis was performed at the 95% confidence interval and the range between the LLCI and the UCLI included zero. Because of this, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Table 4.23 depicts the summary of findings for all three hypotheses.

**Table 4.23**

*Summary of Findings: Results of Hypothesis Testing*

No.	Hypothesis	Findings
H1	Employee recognition programs are positively related to motivation in assisted living communities	Supported
H2	Employee recognition programs are positively related to job satisfaction in assisted living communities	Supported
H3	Motivation will mediate the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction in assisted living communities	Not supported

Chapter 5 will interpret the results of the data analysis in relation to the current literature on the topics of employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction. In addition, Chapter 5 will discuss the limitations of this study, implications of this study, and the avenues that future research could take to expand upon the results of this study and to further examine the relationship between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction among employees in an assisted living setting.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS**

A review of the literature indicated that while there is a relationship between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction among employees in a variety of settings, there is little research examining the relationship between these factors among employees working in assisted living communities. Identifying this gap in the literature and using empirically based research to fill said gap will help to enable leaders in the assisted living industry improve motivation and job satisfaction by creating policies and practices that promote employee recognition within their communities.

### **Discussion**

The following sections will interpret the data provided from Chapter 4 in relation to each of the research questions and their subsequent hypotheses. First, I will interpret the results of my data analysis regarding participant demographics, and then interpret the results of the descriptive and inferential statistics in regards to both of my research questions. Next, I will discuss the limitations to my research and conclude by discussing implications for practice and future research.

### **Participant Demographics**

The demographics of participants in this study were generally consistent with industry data as reported by a University of California San Francisco study (Bates et al., 2018). Based on my personal experience working in the Mid-Atlantic region, most employees in assisted living tend to be younger Black/African American females who work in the nursing department. Most staff are in the nursing/caregiving department as that tends to be the biggest department in most assisted living communities. The results from the demographic questionnaire for this study indicate that the majority of respondents (87%) were female, 39.1% were Black/African

American, 52.2% were Millennials (born after 1980). The majority of respondents (77.2%) also had pursued education beyond high school, with 28.3% obtaining a Bachelor's or Master's degrees. Fifty percent of respondents were at the intermediate job level (i.e., front-line staff) working in the nursing/caregiving department of their community. The majority of these staff (76.1%) had been in their current profession and with their current employer for 2 years or less.

### **Employment-Related Perceptions**

When asked about employment-related perceptions, 43.5% of respondents felt that there was opportunity for advancement within their current organization but were divided as to feeling that they would still be employed with their current employer in the next 2 years and not knowing if they would be or not. The uncertainty of still being with their current employer was in line with current trends in assisted living based on my professional experience. I have observed a great many employees who are pursuing advanced education while working in the community and are using their position within the assisted living community as a steppingstone to gain experience until they graduate and can then further their career.

### **Employee Recognition Programs Being Implemented (Research Question 1)**

In Section 1 of the survey questionnaire, participants were asked about the various forms of recognition being offered in their assisted living communities. This was done to determine what types of programs assisted living workers were aware of or had experienced in their workplaces. Participants had a variety of options to choose from highlighting each of the four different types of employee recognition programs. The four types were: personal recognition programs, work practice recognition programs, job dedication recognition programs, and results recognition programs. Within each type of recognition program, I identified the most prevalent and least prevalent forms of recognition being offered in the sampled communities.

## Most Prevalent Employee Recognition Programs

The most prevalent forms of employee recognition programs found in the assisted living communities sampled within each form of recognition are displayed in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1**

### *Most Prevalent Recognition Program Activities*

Program Category	Activity
Personal Recognition Programs ( <i>value me as a person</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Allowing for consultation/communication among peers at work</li><li>▪ Providing flexible schedules; conducting orientation meetings for new employees</li><li>▪ Providing access to professional development</li></ul>
Work Practice Recognition Programs ( <i>recognize/value quality of work</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Mutual congratulations between peers for achievements</li><li>▪ Congratulating an employee in front of peers</li><li>▪ Employees' positive support for supervisor</li></ul>
Job Dedication Recognition Programs ( <i>recognize dedication to my job/community</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Recognizing years of service</li><li>▪ Praise for effort (person, team)</li><li>▪ Encouragement from peers to keep up effort and collective engagement</li></ul>
Results Recognition Programs ( <i>recognize successful outcomes</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Saluting a job well done in meetings</li><li>▪ Awarding plaques</li><li>▪ Manager publicly congratulating/thanking employees for their role in a project's success</li></ul>

## Least Prevalent Employee Recognition Programs

Similarly, the least commonly reported forms of employee recognition reported in each category are as shown in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2**

### *Least Prevalent Recognition Program Activities*

Program Category	Activity
Personal Recognition Programs ( <i>value me as a person</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Recognition program among peers when someone leaves</li><li>▪ Having an employee suggestion program</li><li>▪ Sending personalized letters for life events, e.g., birthdays; providing access to less tedious jobs (responses tied)</li></ul>



Program Category	Activity
Work Practice Recognition Programs ( <i>recognize/value quality of work</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fostering problem solving in groups</li> <li>▪ Coaching and mentoring</li> <li>▪ Offering professional practices awards; mobility programs (i.e., programs geared to professional advancement (tied))</li> </ul>
Job Dedication Recognition Programs ( <i>recognize dedication to my job/community</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personalized letters acknowledging a co-worker's courage and perseverance</li> <li>▪ Organizing leisure activities after a hectic period</li> <li>▪ Finding time for office social activities</li> </ul>
Results Recognition Programs ( <i>recognize successful outcomes</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishing an honor roll</li> <li>▪ Recognition weeks</li> <li>▪ Notes to staff or newsletters highlighting successes</li> </ul>

What is interesting to note about the more prevalent forms of recognition is that they are all non-monetary and can be easily implemented by EDs in assisted living communities. Literature has shown that non-monetary forms of recognition can be very well received and often can have a bigger impact on an employee's job satisfaction and motivation than monetary rewards can (Yousef et al., 2014). I believe that this is due to the perception that non-monetary forms of recognition are more genuine and authentic, and that they can be more personalized towards individual accomplishments. The least prevalent forms of recognition can be viewed as opportunities for EDs and communities to focus on and possibly implement within their communities. Most of the least prevalent forms of recognition acknowledge the employees' contributions, but also give employees the opportunity to better themselves through mobility programs or mentoring and coaching. They also provide an opportunity for staff to contribute to the community by offering an employee suggestion program and by fostering problem solving in groups. The recognition programs offered the least represent opportunities for EDs to revamp their employee recognition programs and focus on making these least prevalent forms more available.

While identifying the most and least prevalent forms of recognition being implemented in assisted living communities, it was important to give respondents the chance to offer their opinion on how to improve employee recognition within their communities. The following opinions were offered on how to improve employee recognition:

1. Allow for more informal forms of recognition so that employees feel you are paying attention to them and value their work.
2. Offer incentive bonuses.
3. Just tell them their efforts don't go unnoticed and be specific.
4. Switch staff between departments after a period of time so that everyone knows how to work at all departments for the company.
5. Upper management never gets recognized but they are the ones recognizing their teams and even sometimes with their own money.

Being able to communicate with employees to find out the forms of recognition they prefer but also how to improve recognition lets employees know that their opinion is valued, but can also help to strengthen recognition programs in communities because they have input into the programs and they know better than anyone what will work and what will not. From the opinions offered, aside from incentive bonuses, the forms of recognition offered are non-monetary and can be easily implemented in an assisted living community.

### **Interpretation of Inferential Statistics and Analysis (Research Question 2)**

Chapter 4 provided the results of my data analysis. Now I will interpret the results as they relate to the current literature and the assisted living industry. I will employ my own industry knowledge to further aid in the interpretation of the results as well.

## **Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs and Motivation**

One of the goals of this research was to identify a relationship between my variables. Running a mediation analysis on my data showed that motivation had no indirect mediating effect on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. However, while there was no indirect relationship, a direct relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation was identified. This direct effect indicated that employee recognition programs were positively related to motivation. To further expand upon this relationship, I ran a bivariate correlation analysis between my motivation scale and all employee recognition scales. The findings indicated there was also a positive correlation between motivation and work practice recognition programs ( $r = .510, p < .001$ ). Work practice recognition programs are the ways that a community recognizes and encourages the quality work practice (work process) of individuals in an organization.

This finding does not mean that those employee recognition programs are going to impact an employee's motivation; they simply indicate that a relationship exists. Being that employee motivation is more intrinsically driven, the relationship between work practice recognition programs and motivation is more thought-provoking as many of the components of work practice recognition programs are intrinsic forms of recognition. For example, encouraging peer feedback, providing career support, congratulating an employee in front of peers, coaching and mentoring programs, and mobility programs (i.e., programs geared towards professional advancement) are a few of the components of work practice recognition programs. These examples show the intrinsic nature of the recognition and indicate why a relationship would exist between this form of recognition and employee motivation.

The results of my correlation analysis aligned with the results of Ali & Ahmed's (2009) study on the effect of rewards and recognition on employee motivation and satisfaction. Much like their study, my survey indicated that a statistically significant and positive relationship exists between employee recognition and motivation (Ali & Ahmed, 2009). Ali and Ahmed (2009) indicated that employee recognition programs can have a positive impact on motivation. My research did not indicate an impact, but more of a relationship, with motivation being an intrinsic force within the employee themselves and not truly impacted by employee recognition programs.

### **Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction**

After running the mediation analysis on my data, the findings indicated that there was a direct effect between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. This direct effect indicated that employee recognition programs were positively related to job satisfaction. To further verify that a relationship existed, bivariate correlation analysis was run on my data as well. The findings showed that a positive relationship existed between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction (see Table 4.20). The employee recognition programs that correlate most effectively with job satisfaction are job dedication recognition programs ( $r = .560, p < .01$ ). Job dedication recognition programs recognize an employee's dedication to their job and community. Some examples of job dedication recognition include praise for effort (person, team), support among units, personalized letters acknowledging a co-worker's courage and perseverance, organizing leisure activities after a hectic period, and recognizing overtime.

The results of my correlation analysis aligned with aspects of both Imran et al. (2014) and Tessema et al. (2013) research. Both chose to research the relationship between reward, recognition, and employee job satisfaction and they hypothesized that employee recognition programs would significantly impact job satisfaction. After the analysis of their data, both Imran

et al. (2014) and Tessema et al. (2013) found that employee recognition has a statistically significant and positive relationship with job satisfaction. Much like both of their studies, my correlation analysis yielded that a statistically significant and positive relationship existed between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction.

Being able to identify multiple ways that there is a relationship and direct link between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction is important for leaders. Leaders can single handedly impact their employee's job satisfaction and they can do so in a variety of ways that are not costly to their organization. Having satisfied employees can lead to success and positive results for an organization. In assisted living, a satisfied employee can result in satisfied residents and as a result, satisfied family members.

### **Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction**

While mediation analysis did not indicate an indirect effect on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction, it does not mean that a relationship does not exist between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction. To identify a potential relationship between the variables, bivariate correlation analysis was run on all variables. The results of the correlation analysis indicated that job dedication recognition programs revealed the most correlation and were positively and statistically significant with both motivation and job satisfaction.

Results from Ali and Ahmed (2002) survey found that there was a statistically significant, direct, and positive relationship between recognition, motivation, and job satisfaction. They found that if rewards or recognition offered to employees were to be altered, then there would be a corresponding change in work motivation and satisfaction. While my study did not aim to alter the recognition being offered, only identify it, it would be interesting to see if a similar

correlation would be found in assisted living communities if they were to do the same. Brun and Dugas (2008) sought to support the idea that if an employee feels appreciated and valued then they will be more motivated and satisfied with their jobs. Specifically, they found that

the wider the range of interaction types translated into meaningful recognition practices in the workplace, the greater employee satisfaction will be and, by extension, better corporate performance. Thus, in our view, by providing outlets for recognition on the vertical, horizontal and external levels, organizations will make a considerable first step toward achieving a culture of recognition (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 725).

Because I used their interaction levels to generate the survey questions revolving around employee recognition programs, the Brun and Dugas (2008) research impacted this study, and its results aligned with the outcome of my own study. Through correlation analysis I was able to determine that a relationship exists between the variables, but unable to determine the strength of this relationship or the true impact employee recognition programs have on motivation and job satisfaction. The strength of this relationship is something that leaders could better identify through the development, implementation, and evaluation of their employee recognition programs.

### **Mediating Effects of Motivation on the Relationship Between Employee Recognition Programs and Job Satisfaction**

The findings revealed that motivation did not have an indirect mediating effect on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. However, in this sample, they did show that there was a direct positive effect on the relationship between employee recognition programs and motivation as well as a direct positive effect on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. These findings

produced an interesting interpretation of the data. The fact that motivation has no indirect effect on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction indicates that the job satisfaction of the employees in this sample is not influenced by their motivation. This may be because assisted living employees are intrinsically motivated to do the work that they do because they have a passion for the job and an internal drive to work with the elderly population.

In contrast, when it comes to an employee's job satisfaction, the direct effect between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction makes perfect sense. This relationship exists because job satisfaction is affected by employee recognition programs and the employer can positively impact job satisfaction through implementation of employee recognition programs. More importantly, recognition programs that recognize dedication to the job and community correlate most strongly with job satisfaction.

Assisted living communities are unique in that they represent a very person-centered industry. Community personnel work one-on-one with their clientele and the successful relationships they build with those they serve drive their business. Implementing effective employee recognition programs will not only determine the success of an organization but also impact the job satisfaction of its employees. Lack of effective employee recognition programs can decrease job satisfaction and thereby impact employee retention and the quality-of-care residents receive (Decker et al., 2009). Thus, employee recognition programs increase the job satisfaction of assisted living employees and consequently positively impact the community itself. The strong positive correlation between job dedication employee recognition programs and job satisfaction, as well as the direct effect between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction demonstrates that leaders within assisted living should design and implement more employee recognition programs to increase the job satisfaction of their employees.

## **Limitations**

Several limitations were identified and taken into consideration when interpreting the results of this study. This study examined a sample of employees working in the assisted living profession. Participants were recruited after I spoke with their EDs and presented the research study to them and they indicated employees who volunteered to participate in this study. The communities used in this study were selected within a small region as a matter of convenience during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that limited selection may have reduced the generalizability of this study to the greater assisted living population. Being able to administer this study to a greater number of employees in a wider array of assisted living communities in the Mid-Atlantic region would have made the results of this study more generalizable. The lack of generalizability has rendered the results of this study to be of an exploratory nature, to lay the groundwork for future research in the field of employee recognition programs and assisted living.

My sample was a non-probability convenience sample, as it was a sample consisting of all employees within the assisted living communities selected for this study. The sample was therefore non-random, and it was unclear whether the responses would produce a representative sample or not. To avoid potential sampling bias, I administered my survey to all employees who volunteered within each community regardless of their position or tenure within the company. Administering my survey to all employees regardless of position or tenure reduced the possibility that sampling bias would affect the outcome of this study and act as a limitation.

Survey instrument limitations include whether the survey was the appropriate length, did it ask the right questions, were the instructions clear, and was the online format engaging? To avoid survey instrument limitations, I conducted a pilot study, among fellow peers within the



assisted living field, to gauge for clarity and length of survey. I received no negative feedback regarding the survey. Had any negative feedback been provided regarding the length or clarity, it would have been taken into consideration and changes would have been made prior to sending out the survey to participants. In addition, I used instruments that were vetted and proven to be reliable, and I sought input from multiple reviewers. Because I was generating part of my survey and combining it with previously vetted and reliable surveys, I sought expert review and validation of my survey to ensure that it was asking the appropriate questions in relation to my topic and research questions. My survey was reviewed and validated by Dr. Anita Jose, my committee chair, and Dr. Peggy Dufour, one of my committee members. Independent expert validation was provided by Dr. Preetha Abraham and Dr. Mary Jo Anderson, both professors who teach graduate level courses in organizational behavior and human resource management. They were asked to provide either informal feedback or provide feedback using the “Survey/Interview Validation Rubric for Expert Panel – VREP” by Marilyn K. Simon with input from Jacquelyn White.

The possibility of researcher bias was another limitation posed to my study. I needed to be aware of the possibility that I could inject my beliefs into the questions through topic selection or wording. To avoid this bias, I avoided speaking to my study participants about my experiences as I did not want them to use those stories to shape their own experiences. I also used survey instrument tools that were well vetted and shown to be reliable, I conducted a pilot study, and I sought input from multiple reviewers. Taking each of these steps helped to prevent imposing my own biases in this study.

Non-response bias posed another limitation to my study. Non-response bias considered whether I would receive enough responses for valid analysis if individuals opted not to take my

survey or chose not to answer some questions for a variety of reasons. To avoid this bias, I administered my survey to all employees within each community, explained the nature of the research and its importance, and stressed that participant confidentiality would be preserved. After using the sample size calculator, I determined the response rate I needed to receive in order to receive enough responses for valid analysis was 169 responses.

Unfortunately, my initial prediction of being able to administer my survey to around 300 employees was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to low census in communities and employees' hours being decreased, or positions becoming vacant, I was only able to send my survey to 144 individuals. Of those 144 individuals, 58 responded to the survey, a 40.3% response rate, and out of those 58 responses, only 46 cases were valid for analysis. Cases were determined to be invalid if the respondents failed to answer a majority of the questions. This small number of valid cases impacted my ability to run a traditional regression analysis because the number of cases did not meet the assumptions of eligibility for a regression analysis. Even though my original data set did not meet the assumptions of eligibility for multiple regression, I was still able to run a mediation analysis (a form of regression analysis) by using Hayes (2008) bootstrapping method for mediation analysis.

Because the participating communities were either in the midst of a COVID-19 outbreak or preparing for a second wave of positive cases, I believe that these circumstances caused some individuals to not participate in my study at all. Participating in my survey was not at the forefront of employees' thoughts, as they had more important things to focus on. For those who did participate, there was a variety of reasons that could have contributed to their failure to answer some survey questions. There could have been a lack of understanding of certain questions, the length of the survey could have kept participants from finishing the survey, the

option to skip questions could have been used, and some participants may have forgotten to finish the survey after they started it. Overall, non-response bias posed a limitation to my study, but it did not impact being able to run the mediation analysis on my data.

As described in the preceding paragraphs, a major limitation to my study was the current COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic impacted my ability to visit the assisted living communities to meet with staff and administer my survey in person. Because I could not visit the communities, I employed Zoom technology and e-mail to communicate with the ED and staff at each community. Because my survey was administered via SurveyMonkey, the pandemic did not impact my ability to send it to participants and collect my data. The main impact the pandemic had on my survey was the participants response rate. Because the winter weather and holiday season contributed to an uptick in the number of COVID-19 cases in the Mid-Atlantic region, each community participating in my survey was experiencing different levels of outbreak at the time I administered my survey. When worrying about the health and safety of not only oneself, but also of others, completing my survey was the furthest from many people's minds. Even after allowing additional time to complete the survey and sending multiple reminders, my response rate was still much lower than anticipated and I believe that the COVID-19 pandemic was a major contributor.

### **Implications of the Findings**

The aforementioned limitations did not impact the possible implications for practice and future research of this study. The results provide insights on the impact that employee recognition programs can have on the motivation and job satisfaction of employees working in assisted living. These results, while exploratory in nature, can have a profound impact on how

supervisors within assisted living communities recognize their employees and the effect that recognition can have on their motivation and job satisfaction.

### **Implications for Practice**

I explored the various employee recognition programs that were present and being implemented in assisted living communities along with the mediating effects of motivation on the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction. Literature reviewed for this study only gave general ideas for employee recognition. Based on the responses I received, employee recognition consists of many different layers and can impact employees in many ways. Responses showed that there was a great deal of recognition within the three communities sampled, but that some forms of recognition were more prevalent than others and of the forms not as prevalent, those are opportunities for improvement. Employers could benefit from speaking with staff to design an employee recognition program that is conducive to their community's needs. Employee recognition is not a "one size fits all" approach, so designing a program with your employees in mind makes it more personal and has the potential to be more effective. Referring to Brun and Dugas' (2008) interaction levels and recognition practices table, which highlights the various forms of recognition geared towards personal, work practice, job dedication, and results recognition programs, would be an invaluable tool for EDs when designing their employee recognition program. EDs need to consider that employees preferences change, so their recognition programs should be ever evolving so they do not become stagnant and lose effectiveness.

Another way in which employers can increase their focus on employee recognition would be to incorporate recognition in supervisor training, specifically, the practice of acknowledging and expressing recognition of employees as a daily work habit as Brun and Dugas (2008)

suggested. While my research was exploratory in nature, referring to the most and least prevalent forms of recognition in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 would be a good place for EDs and supervisors to start regarding making it a daily work habit. Many of the least prevalent forms of recognition are forms of recognition that could be implemented daily. Small gestures to show employees they are appreciated and valued are oftentimes simple to implement and incur little to no cost to the organization. If supervisors are trained on its importance and the ease with which to implement recognition, it would help to make recognition become second nature.

While this study did not support the idea that motivation is a mediating factor between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction, it did yield an interesting finding. With there being no indirect link between motivation and employee recognition and job satisfaction, it leads me to believe that motivation in assisted living employees is intrinsic to the individuals themselves—they select these jobs because they have a strong desire to do them. EDs would benefit from hiring staff that have a passion for what they do and are motivated by an intrinsic driving force. Employing staff who are truly passionate about working with and enriching the lives of the elderly will make an ED's job easier and more successful because they will not have to try to motivate their staff to do their jobs or to enjoy what they are doing. Taking motivation out of the equation makes it easier for an ED to focus on creating and sustaining the job satisfaction of their employees. Designing and implementing employee recognition programs that are catered to their employees and their community will increase overall job satisfaction and lead to higher retention, greater community stability, and more successful delivery of high-quality care to residents.

## **Implications for Future Research**

The findings of this exploratory research study have shed some light on the impact employee recognition programs can have on the motivation and job satisfaction of assisted living employees. It has also contributed to the growing body of research on employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction. In doing so, this study has opened the door to future research to further explore the impact of employee recognition programs in assisted living communities.

One area that needs to be further understood are the various types of employee recognition programs that are prevalent in assisted living communities. Due to the small sample size and low response rate, there was not enough data to fully determine or understand the types of employee recognition programs that are being implemented in assisted living communities. This study provided more of an initial and exploratory approach to the topic, therefore, replicating this study using a larger sample size and more than three assisted living communities will offer greater insight into which employee recognition programs are prevalent and being implemented in assisted living communities.

Future research on this topic would benefit from replicating this study post COVID-19 pandemic when access to communities to speak face-to-face with staff is possible. This would allow for better communication and explanation among staff to emphasize the importance of gathering this information and to make the research process more personal. Conducting the survey post pandemic could also aid in increasing the response rate, thus rendering the results more generalizable.

Conducting this study with pretest and posttest measures would increase its internal validity and would allow future researchers to see if staff perceptions of motivation and job

satisfaction change over time with either the introduction of employee recognition programs or the discontinuance of such programs. It would allow for more accurate implications of practice and indicate more of the true impact that employee recognition programs can have on employee motivation and job satisfaction. Ideally, using communities that have no employee recognition programs and implementing one would render better results as to the true impact of employee recognition programs on job satisfaction.

While my research simply identified that a relationship exists between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction, future research can determine whether employee recognition programs positively or negatively impact the motivation and job satisfaction of employees. By using the Hayes (2008) bootstrapping method with 5,000 samples, I was able to conduct a successful mediation analysis and compensate for my COVID-19 related small sample size. Future researchers with larger sample sizes could run multiple regression analyses to determine the true impact that employee recognition programs have on motivation and job satisfaction.

A final recommendation for future research was drawn not only from my research, but from the recommendations revealed during my literature review. Ali and Ahmed (2009) and Brun and Dugas (2008) both indicated that future research should look at how you develop and implement employee recognition programs that are both universal for the organization and diverse and meaningful to the individual. While my research has shown that communities offer a variety of employee recognition programs and literature indicated there is not a “one size fits all” approach, future research should look at how assisted living communities make employee recognition meaningful to the individual, as that individuality can have a direct impact on motivation and job satisfaction.

## **Conclusions**

I conducted an exploratory study that employed a quantitative, non-experimental, cross sectional design in which surveys were administered via SurveyMonkey to employees within three assisted living communities in the Mid-Atlantic region. The aim of this study was to identify the various employee recognition programs prevalent and being implemented in assisted living communities and to determine whether motivation was a mediating factor between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction.

As of 2019, the assisted living profession employed around 435,000 individuals (American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living, 2020) and represented an \$83 billion industry that is growing by 5% annually (Grand View Research, 2021). In the years to come that number is bound to increase as the Baby Boomer generation ages and needs more assistance; according to Purk and Lindsay (2006), by 2030 about 20% of the U.S. population will be over 65. This demographic trend indicates an increasing need for individuals to work in assisted living.

Many older adults downsize in their older age for several reasons, but from my professional experience, complications from various health conditions are one of the main reasons for moving to assisted living. Knowing that there could be an influx of older adults moving into assisted living is why EDs need to staff with motivated employees. While motivation is not a mediating factor between employee recognition programs, this result simply indicates that employees are intrinsically motivated by their passion for caring for others. Someone who is motivated to be in the assisted living field is not motivated by the money, but rather by the impact they can have on the lives of the elderly. Along with hiring motivated employees, EDs need to work towards making sure employees are satisfied with their jobs so



that they provide the best quality care to the individuals they are serving. Employee recognition programs, specifically those geared towards job dedication, directly affected the job satisfaction of employees in assisted living. Thus, EDs are in a unique position to single handedly design and implement employee recognition programs geared towards creating and sustaining the job satisfaction of their employees.

Although conducting this exploratory study during the COVID-19 pandemic posed several limitations, the results offered valuable insights into the relationship between employee recognition programs, motivation, and job satisfaction of assisted living employees. While there was an abundance of literature exploring employee recognition, motivation, and job satisfaction, this is one of the few offering insights into assisted living. Assisted living leaders would benefit from future research delving deeper into this topic and drawing deeper connections between the variables. However, although exploratory in nature, the results of this study provide novel insight into the importance of employee recognition programs for EDs. Designing and implementing employee recognition programs tailored to the needs of their employees and communities can provide EDs with the necessary devices to sustain job satisfaction within their community.

## EPILOGUE

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the assisted living industry as those of us in the industry were deemed essential workers and were entrusted with caring for one of society's most vulnerable populations. In November 2020, my community experienced a COVID-19 outbreak that resulted in over 70 residents and employees testing positive, myself included, and claimed the lives of 12 of our residents. During the holiday season when most people were planning their Thanksgiving celebrations, we were constructing our special isolation unit in an attempt to contain a virus that had the potential to affect our whole building. My Thanksgiving was spent not with my own family but providing care to sick residents and coordinating Zoom and FaceTime calls between residents and their loved ones as they were unable to be together. Three days later, I tested positive for COVID-19. I spent 2 weeks in isolation at home trying to recover as fast as possible. During my isolation I felt guilty as I was at home and my fellow workers were risking their health and safety to continue to care for our residents. I felt I failed my residents because I could not keep them safe. Day by day, I was notified of more positive cases, more hospitalizations, and more deaths. I felt angry as my organization told me I knew the risks of being an essential employee and since I could not prove I contracted COVID-19 at work, I had to use my own vacation time to cover my time missed while sick with COVID. I felt overwhelmed as I was trying to balance my professional obligations with my doctoral studies and research.

Being an essential employee and a doctoral candidate during a global pandemic was very challenging. I felt a moral obligation to my community but also an obligation to my research as I needed to collect my data even as the second wave of the pandemic was hitting. COVID-19 affected my ability to visit communities and affected my response rate as my community was in

the midst of an outbreak and the other communities in my study were preparing for potential outbreaks as well. Being an essential employee and researcher during a pandemic also posed some interesting moral questions:

1. How do you find a balance between your professional and personal obligations?
2. To what extent are you able to care for others while also caring for yourself?
3. What is the true risk-return payoff for essential employees?
4. How can society recognize and protect the rights of essential employees in the future?
5. Why were essential employees forced to choose between their jobs and their own health and safety?

COVID-19 had an impact on my industry, my research, on me personally, and on all essential workers who were on the frontlines during the pandemic. Employee recognition has always been important, but the pandemic was a catalyst for organizations to not take their employees for granted and to recognize them for their hard work and dedication. This was especially true in the assisted living profession. Employees in assisted living continued to show up to work even though the risks of exposure were greater than we would have liked, even when residents and loved ones were dying, and even after beating COVID themselves. My research journey and my COVID journey have taught me that even though we were deemed essential, we wanted to be in our communities and our efforts to care for our residents did not go unrecognized by our residents or their families. Heroes do work in assisted living and I am grateful to work among such resilient and dedicated individuals.

## References

- Abdullah, A. A., & Wan, H. L. (2013). Relationships of non-monetary incentives, job satisfaction and employee job performance. *International Review of Management and Business Research*, 2(4), 1085–1091. <https://www.irmbrjournal.com/papers/1384881024.pdf>
- Akafo, V., & Boateng, P. A. (2015). Impact of reward and recognition on job satisfaction and motivation. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7(24), 112–124. <https://iiste.org/Journals/index.php/EJBM/article/view/25095>
- Ali, R., & Ahmed, M.S. (2009). The impact of reward and recognition programs on employee's motivation and satisfaction: An empirical study. *International Review of Business Research Papers*, 5(4), 270–279. <https://www.scirp.org/journal/ajibm>
- Alshmemri, M., Shahwan-Akl, L., & Maude, P. (2017). Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. *Life Science Journal*, 14(5), 12–16. doi:10.7537/marslsj140517.03
- Amabile, T. M. (1987). The Work Preference Inventory. Unpublished instrument, Brandeis University.
- Amabile, T. M., Hill, K.G., Hennessey, B. A., & Tighe, E. M. (1994). The Work Preference Inventory: Assessing intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 66(5), 950–967. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.66.5.950>
- American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (2020). <https://www.ahcancal.org/Assisted-Living/Facts-and-Figures/Pages/default.aspx>
- Assisted Living Workgroup (ALW) (2003, April). *Assuring quality in assisted living: Guidelines for federal and state policy, state regulation, and operations*. [Report to the U.S. Senate]

- Special Committee on Aging].
- <http://www.theceal.org/images/alw/AssistedLivingWorkgroupReport-April2003.pdf>
- Ayub, N. & Rafif, S. (2011). The relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction. *Pakistan Business Review*, 13(2), 332–347.
- <https://journals.iobmresearch.com/index.php/PBR>
- Bates, T., Amah, G., & Coffman, J. (2018, April). *Racial/ethnic diversity in the long-term care workforce*. [Research report]. UCSF Health Workforce Research Center on Long-Term Care. [https://healthworkforce.ucsf.edu/sites/healthworkforce.ucsf.edu/files/REPORT-2018.HWRC\\_diversity\\_.4-18.pdf](https://healthworkforce.ucsf.edu/sites/healthworkforce.ucsf.edu/files/REPORT-2018.HWRC_diversity_.4-18.pdf)
- Bartlomiejczuk, G. (2015, April). *How do recognition programs impact employee engagement and how have companies with a large global footprint structured such programs to drive results?* [Executive summary]. <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/student/90>
- Brun, J. P., & Dugas, N. (2008). An analysis of employee recognition: Perspectives on human resources practices. *International Journal of Human Resources Management*, 19(4), 716–730. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190801953723>
- Chou, R. J., & Robert, S. A. (2008). Workplace support, role overload, and job satisfaction of direct care workers in assisted living. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 49(2), 208–222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002214650804900207>
- Cohen, R. J., & Swerdlik, M. E. (2021). *Psychological testing and assessment an introduction to tests and measurement* (10th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Crawford, S. D., Couper, M. P., & Lamias, M. J. (2001). Web surveys: Perceptions of burden. *Social Science Computer Review*, 19(2), 146–162.
- <https://doi.org/10.1177/089443930101900202>

- Daniel, T. A., & Metcalf, G. S. (2005, May). *The fundamentals of employee recognition*. [White paper]. Society for Human Resource Management, Information Center.
- Danish, R. Q., & Usman, A. (2010). Impact of reward and recognition on job satisfaction and motivation: An empirical study from Pakistan. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 5(2), 159–167. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v5n2p159>
- Decker, F. H., Harris-Kojetin, L. D., & Bercovitz, A. (2009). Intrinsic job satisfaction, overall satisfaction, and intention to leave the job among nursing assistants in nursing homes. *The Gerontologist*, 49(5), 596–610. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnp051>
- Deci, E. L. (1975). *Intrinsic motivation*. Plenum Press.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1980). The empirical exploration of intrinsic motivational processes. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 13, 39-80. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60130-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60130-6)
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum Press.
- Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(3), 182–185. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012801>
- Deci, E. L., Ryan, R. M., & Koestner, R. (1999). A meta-analytic review of experiments examining the effects of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(6), 627–668. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.125.6.627>
- Fisher, R. (1993). Social desirability bias and the validity of indirect questioning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(2), 303-315. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209351>

- Grand View Research (2021, January). U.S. assisted living facility market size, share & trends analysis report, and segment forecasts, 2021–2027. [Report summary].  
<https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/us-assisted-living-facility-market>
- Gubler, T., Larkin, I., & Pierce, L. (2016). Motivational spillovers from awards: Crowding out in a multitasking environment. *Organizational Science* 27(2), 286-303.  
<http://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2016.1047>
- Hansen, F., Smith, M., & Hansen, R. B. (2002). Rewards and recognition in employee motivation. *Compensation & Benefits Review*, 34(5), 64–72.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886368702034005010>
- Hayes, A. F. (2018). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. (2nd ed.). The Guilford Press.
- Herzberg, F. I., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (1959) *The motivation to work*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Herzberg, F. I. (1966). *Work and the nature of man*. World Publishing.
- Herzberg, F. I. (1987). One more time: How do you motivate employees? *Harvard Business Review*, 65(5), 109-120.
- Imran, A., Ahmad, S., Nisar, Q. A., & Ahmad, U. (2014). Exploring relationship among rewards, recognition and employees' job satisfaction: A descriptive study on libraries in Pakistan. *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research*, 21(9), 1533–1540.
- Janus, K., Amelung, V. E., Baker, L. C., Gaitanides, M., Schwartz, F. W., & Rundall, T. G. (2008). Job satisfaction and motivation among physicians in academic medical centers: Insights from a cross national study. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 33(6), 1133–1168. <https://doi.org/10.1215/03616878-2008-035>

- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M.D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (pp. 1297-1343). Rand McNally.
- Kian, T. S., Wan Yusoff, W. F., & Rajah, S. (2014). Job satisfaction and motivation: What are the difference among these two?. *European Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(2), 94–102. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v3-i11/319>
- Lambrou, P., Kontodimopoulos, N., & Niakas, D. (2010). Motivation and job satisfaction among medical and nursing staff in a Cyprus public general hospital. *Human Resources for Health*, 8(1), Article 26. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1478-4491-8-26>
- Lepore, M. J. (2008). *Care workers' motivations for employment in long-term care, assisted living, and particular facilities: Reconciling inconsistent values*. [Doctoral dissertation, Georgia State University]. ScholarWorks. [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology\\_diss/34](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology_diss/34)
- Li, Z. (2007). *Factors contributing to job retention of direct care staff in urban assisted living facilities*. [Master's thesis, Georgia State University]. ScholarWorks. [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/gerontology\\_theses/6](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/gerontology_theses/6)
- Liu, G. (2006). *Predictors of job satisfaction among staff in assisted living*. [Master's thesis, Georgia State University]. ScholarWorks. [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology\\_theses/11](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology_theses/11)
- Luthans, K. (2000). Recognition: A powerful, but often overlooked, leadership tool to improve employee performance. *The Journal of Leadership Studies*, 7(1), 31–39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107179190000700104>
- MacKinnon, D., Fairchild, A., & Fritz, M. (2007). Mediation analysis. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 58, 593–614. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.58.110405.085542>



- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50, 370-396.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>
- Maruyama, G. & Ryan, C. S. (2014). *Research methods in social relations* (8th ed.), Wiley Blackwell.
- Nickerson, R. S. (1998). Confirmation bias: A ubiquitous phenomenon in many guises. *Review of General Psychology*, 2(2), 175–220. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.2.2.175>
- Pardee, R. L. (1990). *Motivation theories of Maslow, Herzberg, McGregor & McClelland. A literature review of selected theories dealing with job satisfaction and motivation* (ED316767). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED316767.pdf>
- Purk, J. K., & Lindsay, S. (2006). Job satisfaction and intention to quit among frontline assisted living employees. *Journal of Housing for the Elderly*, 20(1-2), 117–131.  
[http://doi.org/10.1300/J081v20n01\\_07](http://doi.org/10.1300/J081v20n01_07)
- Ramlall, S. (2004). A review of employee motivation theories and their implications for employee retention within organizations. *The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge*, 5(1/2), 52–63.
- Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2000) Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Salkind, N. J. (2019). *Statistics for people who (think they) hate statistics* (7th ed.), SAGE.
- Shahzadi, I., Javed, A., Pirzada, S. S., Nasreen, S., & Khanam, F. (2014). Impact of employee motivation on employee performance. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 6(23), 159–166.

- Society for Human Resource Management (2017). Employee job satisfaction and engagement: The doors of opportunity are open. [Executive summary]. Retrieved from <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/pages/2017-job-satisfaction-and-engagement-doors-of-opportunity-are-open.aspx>
- Soper, D. (2006-2021). Calculator: Post-hoc statistical power for multiple regression. <https://www.danielsoper.com/statcalc/calculator.aspx?id=9>
- Spector, P. E. (1985). Measurement of human service staff satisfaction: Development of the job satisfaction survey. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 13(6), 693–713. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00929796>
- Spector, P. E. (2019, July 11). Conditions for using these assessments. <http://paulspector.com/scales/our-assessments/conditions-for-using-these-assessments>
- Stello, C. M., (2011). *Herzberg's two-factor theory of job satisfaction: An integrative literature review*. ACADEMIA. <https://stelloherzberg-with-cover-page-v2pdf>
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2019). *Using multivariate statistics* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson.
- Tessema, M. T., Ready, K. J., & Embaye, A. B. (2013). The effects of employee recognition, pay, and benefits on job satisfaction: Cross country evidence. *Journal of Business and Economics*, 4(1), 1–12. [https://doi.org/10.15341/jbe\(2155-7950\)/01.04.2013/001](https://doi.org/10.15341/jbe(2155-7950)/01.04.2013/001)
- Yousaf, S., Latif, M., Aslam, S., & Saddiqui, A. (2014). Impact of financial and non-financial rewards on employee motivation. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 21(10), 1776–86.

## APPENDIX A

### WELCOME LETTER, INFORMED CONSENT, AND SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Welcome!

Dear Colleague:

My name is Kelly Harrington and I am a doctoral candidate at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland. Along with being a doctoral candidate, I work in an assisted living community as the Resident Program Manager. I have been working in senior living for almost ten years, with six of those years in assisted living. I am very passionate about both my residents and my staff as they are the driving force behind my research.

I am in the final stages of my doctoral program and for the completion of my dissertation I am kindly requesting your participation in a research survey that explores the impact of employee recognition programs on motivation and job satisfaction. The intent of the study is to understand ways to improve motivation and job satisfaction in the assisted living industry by creating policies and practices that promote employee recognition. Therefore, your participation is extremely valuable in helping to continue to advance the understanding of effective employee recognition programs.

Your participation involves completing this online survey on the employee recognition policies of your current employer. The survey is expected to take between 12 and 15 minutes.

The survey requires informed consent which is given on the next page, but does not require any personally identifiable information, and all data will be kept confidential. The results will be published only in an aggregate form. I suggest that you take this survey at home on your personal computer. If you would like to receive a copy of the findings of the study, you will be given the option of submitting your email address at the conclusion of the survey. If you voluntarily submit your email address at the conclusion of the survey, your email address will be kept confidential, and will only be used to communicate with you to keep you informed of the findings of the study.

Thank you in advance for your support of this important effort and for sharing your valuable knowledge, insights, and experiences. Your responses to this survey will help advance the state of practice within the assisted living community.

Sincerely,

Kelly Harrington  
kelly.harrington86@gmail.com  
301-787-7045

## **Informed Consent Statement:**

The purpose of this survey is to examine the impact that employee recognition programs have on motivation and job satisfaction of employees in assisted living communities. The outcome of this study is intended to help inform management within assisted living communities of the impact that employee recognition programs can have on the motivation and job satisfaction of their employees. You are invited to participate in this survey because you are an employee within an assisted living community.

Your participation in this survey is purely voluntary, you are not being forced/coerced to take part in this survey. This survey has 30 questions and you can skip any question you choose not to answer at any time during the survey. You can withdrawal from answering questions or participating in this survey at any time. There are no known risks to participating in this survey. The results of this survey will be used to understand the potential impact that employee recognition programs can have on employee motivation and job satisfaction.

The procedure involves completing an online survey that will take approximately 12–15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept confidential, no identifying information will be collected or used when analyzing the data or reporting the findings of this survey. In order to maintain confidentiality, all data will be stored in a password protected file accessible only by the principal researcher. The results of this study will be published only in aggregated form so that no individual participant can be identified at any time.

If you wish to be included in an anonymous raffle to win a \$75.00 gift card, or to receive a copy of the survey results, you will be given the option to submit your email address at the end of the survey. Submitting your email address is purely optional and will remain confidential. It will only be used to notify you if you have won the raffle or to provide you with information regarding the outcome of this survey.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to speak with someone other than the researcher, you may contact Dr. Diane Graves, Institutional Review Board Chair, Hood College, 401 Rosemont Ave., Frederick, MD 21701, [graves@hood.edu](mailto:graves@hood.edu).

Selecting the “agree” button below indicates that:

- You have read and fully understand the above information
- You are at least 18 years of age or older
- You are voluntarily agreeing to participate
- You understand that you can request a copy of this consent form at any time by contacting the principal researcher
- You are currently employed by an assisted living community

If you wish not to participate in this survey, you can decline participation by selecting the “disagree” button.

- ☐ AGREE
- ☐ DISAGREE

SECTION 1: RECOGNITION PROGRAMS					
	<b>SECTION 1.1</b> <b>PERSONAL RECOGNITION</b>	This form of employee recognition is offered to employees at my current community <b>(circle one)</b> :			
	<b>My employer and peers show that they value me as a person in the following ways:</b>	Yes	No	Not	Sure
	Social gatherings (to create ties)	X	X	X	
	Allowing for consultation/communication among peers at work	X	X	X	
	Support in addressing employees' personal needs	X	X	X	
	Information sessions/training on topics of interest	X	X	X	
	Recognition ceremony among co-workers when someone leaves	X	X	X	
	Management accessibility and visibility	X	X	X	
	Management accountability to employees	X	X	X	
	Providing access to professional development	X	X	X	
	Going to bat for employees	X	X	X	
	Giving me greater latitude in decision making	X	X	X	
	Providing flexible schedules	X	X	X	
	Sending personalized letters for life events (birthdays, etc.)	X	X	X	
	Conducting orientation meetings for new employees	X	X	X	
	Providing access to less tedious jobs	X	X	X	
	Having an employee suggestion program	X	X	X	
	Informing and consulting with staff	X	X	X	
	Clarifying compensation standards	X	X	X	
	Incorporating human issues into management decision-making	X	X	X	
	Offering professional services to laid-off employees	X	X	X	
	Providing funding for advanced education	X	X	X	
<b>The statements given below refer to the policies and programs in Section 1.1. Please circle the response for each question that comes closest to reflecting your opinion.</b>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
My organization's <b>personal recognition program</b> enables me to work better.		1	2	3	4
My organization's <b>personal recognition program</b> enables me to feel recognized for my contributions to the organization.		1	2	3	4
I am satisfied with my organization's <b>personal recognition program</b> .		1	2	3	4

	<p align="center"><b>SECTION 1.2</b></p> <p align="center"><b>RECOGNITION OF WORK PRACTICE</b></p>	<p>This form of employee recognition is offered to employees at my current community <b>(circle one)</b>:</p>				
	<p align="center"><b>My community recognizes and encourages quality work practice (work process) in the following ways:</b></p>	Yes	No	Not Sure		
	Encouraging peer feedback on my professional skills	X	X	X		
	Fostering problem-solving in groups	X	X	X		
	Highlighting my contributions, innovation thinking, and creativity at team meetings	X	X	X		
	Mutual congratulations between peers for achievements	X	X	X		
	Providing assignments to special projects	X	X	X		
	Authorizing employees to attend conferences	X	X	X		
	Providing career support	X	X	X		
	Employees' positive support for supervisor	X	X	X		
	Valuing project leaders	X	X	X		
	Congratulating an employee in front of peers	X	X	X		
	Offering professional practices awards	X	X	X		
	Coaching and mentoring programs	X	X	X		
	Mobility programs (i.e. programs geared towards professional advancement)	X	X	X		
	Innovation support and formal recognition programs	X	X	X		
	Holding teamwork recognition ceremonies	X	X	X		
	<p><b>The statements given below refer to the policies and programs in the Section 1.2. Please circle the response for each question that comes closest to reflecting your opinion.</b></p>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	My organization's <b>work practice recognition program</b> enables me to work better.	1	2	3	4	5
	My organization's <b>work practice recognition program</b> enables me to feel recognized for my contributions to the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
	I am satisfied with my organization's <b>work practice recognition program</b> .	1	2	3	4	5

	<b>SECTION 1.3 JOB DEDICATION</b>	This form of employee recognition is offered to employees at my current community <b>(circle one)</b> :				
	<b>My employer recognizes my dedication to my job and community in the following ways:</b>	Yes	No	Not Sure		
	Praise for effort (person, team)	X	X	X		
	Personalized letters acknowledging a co-worker's courage and perseverance	X	X	X		
	Encouragement from peers to keep up effort and collective engagement	X	X	X		
	Support among units	X	X	X		
	Taking into account the quantity and difficulty of work when evaluating results	X	X	X		
	Organizing leisure activities after a hectic period	X	X	X		
	Employee thanking a manager for spending time with him/her	X	X	X		
	Recognizing overtime	X	X	X		
	Recognizing years of service	X	X	X		
	Finding time for office social activities	X	X	X		
	Allowing people time off to relax	X	X	X		
<b>The statements given below refer to the policies and programs mentioned in Section 1.3. Please circle the response for each question that comes closest to reflecting your opinion.</b>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	My organization's <b>job dedication recognition program</b> enables me to work better.	1	2	3	4	5
	My organization's <b>job dedication recognition program</b> enables me to feel recognized for my contributions to the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
	I am satisfied with my organization's <b>job dedication recognition program</b> .	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 1.4 RECOGNITION OF RESULTS		This form of employee recognition is offered to employees at my current community <b>(circle one)</b> :				
My employer and peers recognize results in the following ways:		Yes	No	Not Sure		
	Party among peers to celebrate a success	X	X	X		
	Giving someone a gift to mark a major career milestone	X	X	X		
	Informal congratulations between two employees when goals have been achieved	X	X	X		
	Performance evaluation meetings	X	X	X		
	Saluting a job well done in meetings	X	X	X		
	Personalized letter to an employee who secured a contract for the company	X	X	X		
	Posting team successes on departmental bulletin board	X	X	X		
	Awarding plaques	X	X	X		
	Manager publicly congratulating/thanking employees for their role in a project's success	X	X	X		
	Establishing an honor role	X	X	X		
	Incentive bonuses	X	X	X		
	Notes to staff or newsletters highlighting successes	X	X	X		
	Awards of excellence, teamwork awards	X	X	X		
	Discretionary recognition budget per unit or department	X	X	X		
	Personalized congratulation messages for noteworthy achievements	X	X	X		
	Recognition weeks	X	X	X		
The statements given below refer to the policies and programs in Section 1.4. Please circle the response for each question that comes closest to reflecting your opinion.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	My organization's <b>results recognition program</b> enables me to work better.	1	2	3	4	5
	My organization's <b>results recognition program</b> enables me to feel recognized for my contributions to the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
	I am satisfied with my organization's <b>results recognition program</b> .	1	2	3	4	5



SECTION 2: MEASURING WORK ATTITUDES						
	Please circle the response for each question that comes closest to reflecting your opinion.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I like the people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Communications seem good within this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Raises are too few and far between.	1	2	3	4	5
6	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I like doing the things I do at work.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what I am paid.	1	2	3	4	5
10	The benefit package we have is equitable (meaning benefits are fair and consistent across all departments and positions).	1	2	3	4	5
11	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1	2	3	4	5
14	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1	2	3	4	5
16	My job is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 3: MEASURING WORK INSPIRATION						
	Please circle the response for each question that comes closest to reflecting your opinion.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I want my work to provide me with opportunities for increasing my knowledge and skills.	1	2	3	4	5
2	No matter what the outcome of a project, I am satisfied if I feel I gained new experience.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I enjoy tackling problems that are completely new to me.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I'm concerned about how other people are going to react to my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I seldom think about salary and promotions.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I believe that there is no point in doing a good job if nobody else knows about it.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am strongly motivated by the money I can earn.	1	2	3	4	5
8	It is important for me to be able to do what I most enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5
9	As long as I can do what I enjoy, I'm not that concerned about exactly what I am paid.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I am strongly motivated by the recognition I can earn from other people.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I want other people to find out how good I really can be at my work.	1	2	3	4	5
12	What matters most to me is enjoying what I do.	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION 4: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions so that I know more about you.  
This confidential information is very important for ensuring good analysis.

<b>1) What is your age/generation?</b>	Check one
Millennial (Born after 1980)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generation X (Born 1965-1980)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baby Boomers (Born 1945-1980)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Veterans (Born before 1945)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to answer	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>2) What is your gender?</b>	Check one
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to answer	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>3) What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?</b>	Check one
High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some college but no degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Associate degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bachelor's degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Master's degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doctoral degree	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>4) What is your race/ethnicity?</b>	Check one
White	
Black/African-American	
Hispanic/Latino/Latina	
Asian or Asian American	
Two or more races	
American Indian and Alaska Native	
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	
Prefer not to answer	

<b>5) Which of the following best describes your current job level?</b>	Check one
Entry Level (i.e. Newly Hired/In Training)	
Intermediate (i.e. Front-line staff)	
Middle Management (i.e. Department Head/Supervisor)	
Senior Management (i.e. Executive Director/Associate Executive Director)	
Other (please specify)	

<b>6) Which of the following best describes the department you currently work in?</b>	Check one
Nursing/Care Giving	
Dining	
Programs/Activities	
Housekeeping	
Maintenance	
Sales & Marketing	
Business Office	
Front Desk/Reception/Concierge	
Executive Director/Associate Executive Director	
Other (please specify)	

<b>7) How long have you worked in your current profession?</b>	Check one
2 years or less	
3 to 5 years	
6 to 10 years	
11 to 15 years	
16 or more years	

<b>8) How long have you worked for your current organization?</b>	Check one
2 years or less	
3 to 5 years	
6 to 10 years	
11 to 15 years	
16 or more years	

<b>9) Is there opportunity for advancement within your organization?</b>	Check one
Yes	
No	
I do not know	

<b>10) Do you see yourself still being employed with this company two years from now?</b>	Check one
Yes	
No	
I do not know	

**11) Based on Section 1 (Employee Recognition) of this survey, please select the single most important form of recognition to you (Please select only one)**

Check one

Social gatherings among peers	
Sending personalized letters for life events	
Informing and consulting with staff	
Congratulating an employee in front of peers	
Offering professional practices awards	
Holding teamwork recognition ceremonies	
Praise for effort (person, team)	
Personalized letters acknowledging a co-worker's courage and perseverance	
Organizing leisure activities after a hectic period	
Recognizing years of service	
Performance evaluation meetings	
Awarding plaques	
Incentive bonuses	
Personalized congratulation messages for noteworthy achievements	
Recognition weeks	

**12) OPTIONAL If you have any suggestions about improving employee recognition at work, please indicate below.**

---



---



---

## CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like to be included in a raffle for \$75.00, please provide your contact information below. All information is confidential. It will not be shared with anyone and will be deleted when the raffle has been completed.

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

☐

I would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey.

Thank you for participating in this survey and for sharing your valuable knowledge, insights, and experiences. Your responses to this survey will help advance the state of practice within assisted living communities.

## APPENDIX B

### INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPLICATION AND AUTHORIZATION

#### **Hood College Institutional Review Board Research Proposal Template**

1. **Title of Proposal:** Impact of Employee Recognition Programs on Motivation and Job Satisfaction of Employees in Assisted Living Communities
2. **Principal Investigator (PI):** Kelly Harrington
3. **PI Department:** Hood College Doctoral Program in Organizational Leadership (DOL)
4. **PI Contact Information:** [kelly.harrington86@gmail.com](mailto:kelly.harrington86@gmail.com); 301-787-7045
5. **Faculty Sponsor and Contact Information (if PI is a student):**  
Anita Jose, Ph.D., [ajose@hood.edu](mailto:ajose@hood.edu), 301-696-3691
6. **Other Investigators:** None
7. **Date of this Submission:** September 18, 2020
8. **Proposed Duration of the Project:** October 15, 2020 – November 30, 2020
9. **Background Information and Research Questions/Hypotheses:**  
According to the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), there are 28,900 assisted living communities with a combined 996,100 total licensed beds in the United States today. As of January 2019, within those communities, there were 435,000 employees in the assisted living profession. Decreased employee motivation and lack of employee job satisfaction are two overarching issues that employers face within their organizations (Danish & Usman, 2010).

In the world of senior living, specifically assisted living communities, employee motivation and employee job satisfaction can greatly impact the quality of care that residents are receiving (Liu, 2006). In assisted living communities, residents receive personalized care from the care staff within the community in accordance to their needs. If employees are not motivated or satisfied with their jobs, or with their organizations, this could affect how they carry out their job duties and could lead to decreased quality of care that residents receive (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Increasing salaries and wages in an industry that works with low margins is not an easily attainable option. One way that organizations can positively impact employee motivation and employee job satisfaction is by implementing employee recognition programs (Hansen et al., 2002).

Employee recognition programs can be easily implemented, and can not only affect the motivation and satisfaction of employees, but can lead to increased organizational performance. Because assisted living is a very person-centered job, studying the impact that employee recognition programs can have on motivation and job satisfaction may lead to recommendations that would greatly impact the quality care that employees are giving to residents. If assisted living community employees are motivated and satisfied with their jobs, it not only benefits them, but also could potentially benefit those for whom they are providing care. [As a manager in an assisted living community, I want staff to be motivated and satisfied with their jobs so that they deliver the best possible care. From once having employee recognition programs, to not having employee recognition programs implemented within my own organization, I have seen firsthand the impact that they can have on employee motivation and job satisfaction.]

Survey questions were generated using portions of the Work Preference Inventory (Amabile et al., 1994) for working adults to measure motivation, portions of the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1985) to measure job satisfaction, converting a table on employee recognition practices and programs from Brun and Dugas (2008) to measure employee recognition programs, and from a combination of demographic questions that were self-generated and derived from the 2017 Society for Human Resource Management survey. The survey was reviewed and validated by Dr. Anita Jose, my committee chair, and Dr. Peggy Dufour, one of my committee members. Expert validation was provided by Dr. Preetha Abraham and Dr. Mary Jo Anderson, both professors who teach graduate level courses in organizational behavior and human resource management. The questions will be loaded into the survey instrument by October 15, 2020 and pilot tested by assisted living employees within my organization.

My research questions are:

1. What are the various employee recognition programs that are prevalent and being implemented in assisted living communities? [No hypothesis]
2. Does implementation of employee recognition programs positively impact employee motivation and job satisfaction of employees in an assisted living community?

My hypotheses are:

H1: Employee recognition programs are positively related to motivation in assisted living communities.

H2: Employee recognition programs are positively related to job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

H3: Motivation will mediate the relationship between employee recognition programs and job satisfaction in assisted living communities.

Please note, all three of my hypotheses are related to research question 2.

## **10. Human Participants:**

**A. Who are the participants?** Participants will be adult individuals who are employed within three assisted living communities in the Mid-Atlantic region. The survey is an online instrument and will be anonymous unless participants voluntarily provide their contact information.



**B. How many participants do you plan to have in your study?** The survey will be available to all employees within the assisted living communities, around 300 employees. As I do not know what to expect with COVID-19, I would happy to receive at least 100 responses back between the three assisted living communities, which will provide adequate data for statistical analysis.

**C. How will the participants be contacted or recruited?** The survey will be introduced to the Executive Director (ED) and employees during an in-person or virtual staff meeting. During this meeting I will ask individuals who want to participate to sign up by leaving only their email address and an invitational email will be sent out to each employee with a link to the survey. If the survey is introduced via a virtual staff meeting, I will ask the ED to send me the email addresses of those who volunteer to participate so that I may send them the link to the survey. The survey will be conducted using SurveyMonkey and will be designed to not collect any personal identifying information; therefore, I will not know which volunteers actually submit surveys and which do not.

**D. Will the participants be compensated for participating? If so, describe:** Participants will not be directly compensated, but have the option to submit their email address to be included into an anonymous raffle to win a \$75.00 gift card to thank them for their participation.

11. **Procedures:** Participants will open the link sent to them through an email, take the survey, and then close the document. Participants can skip questions they wish not to answer and can end the survey at any time they so choose. Participants will be asked to complete the survey at their home so as to complete it in a comfortable setting away from any influences from supervisors or other coworkers.
12. **Consent:** Participation in this survey is voluntary and informed consent is requested to begin the survey. No personal identifying information will be collected, stored, or used.
13. **Risks and Debriefing:** It is not anticipated that an individual can be harmed or deceived by participating in this survey. There are no projected physical, psychological, or social risks to participating in this survey. Debriefing will take the form of delivering survey results to those who volunteer to have the results of the survey emailed to them. Results of this survey are purely for this dissertation research and will be published in an aggregate form.
14. **Privacy and Storage of Data:** This survey will be conducted anonymously using SurveyMonkey software. No identifying information will be collected or used and if participants voluntarily submit their email address it will remain confidential. When the survey has concluded, all data will be downloaded to a password-protected file only accessible by the PI and stored on a password-protected computer.



October 27, 2020

Ms. Kelly Harrington  
401 Rosemont Ave.  
Frederick, MD 21701

Dear Ms. Harrington,

The Hood College Institutional Review Board reviewed your revised proposal for the study entitled *"Impact of Employee Recognition Programs on Motivation and Job Satisfaction of Employees in Assisted Living Communities"* (Proposal Number 2021-3). The committee approves this study for a period of 12 months. This approval is limited to the activities described in the procedure narrative and extends to the performance of these activities at each respective site identified in the IRB research proposal. Nice job providing us with partnership documentation from Arbor Place, Arbor Terrace Fulton, and Brookdale Olney. This approval does not authorize you to recruit participants or conduct your study on site at other institutions. Should you decide you would like to systematically recruit participants and/or conduct your study on location at other institutions or facilities you will need to receive IRB approval from those organizations *prior* to any recruitment activities or data collection.

In addition, due to the current COVID 19 precautions, Hood's IRB is restricting all in-person (e.g. face-to-face) data collection with participants at this time. You may only recruit participants and collect data online. You are not authorized to meet in person with your participants for the purpose of data collection until notice from this IRB. In accordance with this approval, the specific conditions for the conduct of this research and informed consent from participants must be obtained as indicated.

All individuals engaged in human subjects research are responsible for compliance with all applicable Hood Research Policies:  
<https://www.hood.edu/sites/default/files/Hood%20IRB%20Policy%20revised%20September%202013.pdf>.

The Lead Researcher of the study is ultimately responsible for assuring all study team members review and adhere to applicable policies for the conduct of human sciences research.

The Hood College IRB approval expiration date is October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021. As a courtesy, approximately 30-60 days prior to expiration of this approval, it is your responsibility to apply for continuing review and receive continuing approval for the duration of the study as applicable. Lapses in approval should be avoided to protect the safety and welfare of enrolled participants.

No substantive changes are to be made to the approved protocol or the approved consent and assent forms without the prior review and approval of the Hood IRB. All substantive changes (e.g. change in procedure, number of subjects, personnel, study locations, study instruments, etc.) must be prospectively reviewed and approved by the IRB before they are implemented.

Sincerely,

Diane R. Graves, PhD  
Chair, Hood College Institutional Review Board