

A Case Study on the Job Satisfaction of Registered Medical Technologists Working In Metro Manila, Philippines during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: The medical technology profession has been given more importance as COVID-19 pandemic arrives in the Philippines in March 2020. Workload in the laboratory and the hospital has never been put under pressure with the large number of patients along with a contagious virus that continuously raises the number of COVID-19 cases in the Philippines, all of which could impact the job satisfaction and work performance of the medical technologists. The primary aim of this research is to assess the job satisfaction level of the Registered Medical Technologists working in Metro Manila, Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as identify the factors that significantly influence job satisfaction. The research employs a cross-sectional survey and a purposive sampling technique comprising 97 participants based on Metro Manila, Philippines. The questionnaire was based on Paul E. Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) with a six-point, agree-disagree response choices, covering different facets in job satisfaction. Pearson's Correlation analysis, One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and independent-samples t-test were used to evaluate and assess the significance of each facet and the significant difference between the groups regarding job satisfaction level, respectively. Most of the participants (68.04%) were ambivalent with regards to the overall job satisfaction. Generally, there is dissatisfaction with the facets pay (56.70%), promotion (45.36%), contingent rewards (44.33%), and operating conditions (52.58%). Satisfied results show with the facets supervision (74.23%), co-workers (47.42%), nature of work (73.20%), and communication (59.79%). With regards to fringe benefits facet, the participants were both dissatisfied and ambivalent (40.21%). Pearson Correlation Analysis was conducted and showed that all facets were significant to overall job satisfaction ($p < .05$), and displayed positive correlation to overall job satisfaction ($r > .20$). The results for salary range and the type of laboratory showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) whereas the results for age, biological sex, classification of laboratory, availability of COVID-19 testing services, and year of experience showed no significant difference ($p > .05$). The majority of the respondents were neither generally satisfied nor generally dissatisfied, rather ambivalent about job satisfaction. The respondents are generally dissatisfied with regards to Pay, Promotion, Contingent Rewards, and Operating Conditions while they are generally satisfied with Supervision, Co-Workers, Nature of Work, and Communication. Also, two of the greater number of respondents corresponds with either generally dissatisfied or ambivalent towards Fringe Benefits. All of the facets have a significant relationship and positive correlation to the overall job satisfaction level. As for the sociodemographic factors, only the type of laboratory and salary range have significant differences in job satisfaction level among different groups. It would be ideal to include Registered Medical Technologists from different regions across the country, aside from NCR, for a wider sample size and scope of respondents to achieve more accurate results. Modifying the sociodemographic profile of the respondents can create more divisions of groups which can achieve a better depiction of how the job satisfaction level is affected. It is also recommended to include other classifications of laboratories (by function and service capability) as well as the position of the medical technologist since this may explain their salary and benefits as well as their responsibilities. A comparative analysis of this study and the job satisfaction in pre-pandemic context could also be performed.

Key Words: — *Medical Technologist, COVID-19, Pandemic, Job Satisfaction, Job Facets, Philippines.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has given an immense impact to the healthcare sector of the Philippines as it affected hospitality supply and facilities, especially manpower. The large amount of workload, rising number of COVID-19 positive patients, and the contagious virus are some of those that challenge our healthcare workers (HCWs) as they continue to face and lead the way into eliminating the virus in the Philippines. With this, the work of a medical technologist has been greatly emphasized in the pandemic. Job satisfaction is a relevant topic nowadays especially for our HCW as it is expected that they should have a satisfactory working environment. There has been a concern regarding the ratio of medical doctors to population in the Philippines as it turns out to be 10 doctors per 10,000 population.^[41] With this, the Department of Health (DOH) initiated a program in April 2020 called “Emergency Hiring of Health Personnel for COVID-19 Response” because of the alarming increase of COVID-19 cases in the country.^[17] Medical Technologists have the authority, skills, and capabilities in detection of SARS-CoV-2 virus, thus, their role in this pandemic has been in the spotlight towards the flattening of the curve and preventing transmission.

Role and Work of Medical Technologists:

Medical technologists may not be receiving the same recognition as the other medical professions but their role in the healthcare system is essential in laboratory diagnostics especially during the viral outbreak of COVID-19.^[34] RT-PCR is the laboratory diagnostic tool currently used to detect the virus which is a part of the medical technology expertise. The Philippine Medical Technology Act, otherwise known as Republic Act 5527, states that medical technologists analyze blood, tissue, and body fluid samples to determine the chemical content, cell count, drug levels, or blood type, and search for the presence of specific microorganisms like bacteria or parasites. On a day-to-day basis, medical technologists face high risks and chances of acquiring different infections in terms of bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Besides this, in order to avoid acquiring these different infections, they ensure quality control within the laboratory by keeping a clean environment, assuring

that the equipment are properly working, and performing infection control and sterilization protocols.^[42]

Relevance and Experience of Health Professionals during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Health professionals have already proven themselves that they are a necessity in the society as they have addressed previous outbreaks such as SARS and MERS. These outbreaks have also subjected the professionals to extreme stress, risk of infection, stigmatization, understaffing, and other factors (Liu et al., 2020).^[31] With this pandemic, health professionals are at high risk of contracting the virus mainly because the understanding of the virus and control measures are still insufficient. There have been reports that transmitting diseases from asymptomatic patients to their homes is widely increasing. Many HCWs have conditions that elevate the risk for severe infection or death if contact with COVID-19 happens. Still, the possibility of eliminating the risk is out of the question.^[2] Health professionals are extremely challenged physically and mentally as they have to be in their personal protective gear for long hours because of shortage of supplies. Also, there is a decreased social activity, anxiety, and reduction pay.^[4] In relation to these, interventions are made for professionals suffering from mental health care degradation.^[13] Hospitals provided a place for professionals to rest and temporarily isolate themselves from their family, provided that food and daily supplies are given which provided a general satisfaction from the health professionals. There are those that promote a work-from-home movement and remote control system in the laboratory wherein they make use of applications such as Zoom, WhatsApp, etc. however, there are those who have a low bandwidth connection and lack of knowledge in online platforms.^[4] Despite these challenges, healthcare providers incessantly show great strength and resilience. They are always reminded of their duty and responsibility in order to save lives which keeps an uninterrupted production of vital test results for diagnosing, prognosticating, and managing patients with COVID-19.^[30]

Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction:

Job Satisfaction is very important to measure since it might be a significant factor in job performance which could affect one's productivity and efficiency in fulfilling their respective roles in the healthcare system. Several studies have commonly mentioned these factors that mostly affect the health care professionals in general when it comes to their job: good working environment, salary, compensation & benefits, treatment, teamwork & cooperation with coworkers,

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recognition, and appreciation from supervisors, good communication with different personnel in the laboratory, improvement of technical and professional competencies through training and guidance provided by the institution, and the degree of workload. Salary has been found as one of the major determinants to consider in the retention of workers, especially those who have a perception that they are not adequately paid to compensate for their specific credentials.^[7] Other relevant factors worth considering in job satisfaction evaluation are the institution's policies and job-related rules and procedures, the opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge of the field in the actual laboratory scenario, and the freedom and state of autonomy in the work environment. Job performance may not depend solely on salaries and 13th-month pay; rather, it may consider similar factors to job satisfaction which would then be based on their motivation to get the job done, properly and with the best accuracy and results.

Sociodemographic Factors in Relation to Job Satisfaction:

Sociodemographic factors are those that define the sociological and demographic characteristics of a person which is commonly used for analyses in social studies as well as in medical studies.^[63] The sociodemographic factors that this study will be focusing are age, sex, type of laboratory, classification of laboratory, availability of COVID-19 services, salary range, and years of experience. The relationship between age and job satisfaction reveals a small positive correlation as job satisfaction tends to paradoxically increase with age. In terms of sex and its relation to job satisfaction, previous studies have reported gender differences in job quality and job satisfaction, revealing that women show greater job satisfaction than their male counterparts due to lower job expectations.^[35] The type of laboratory, whether public or private, shows significance in job satisfaction as the working environment is considered an important characteristic of an ideal job. A study revealed that public sector employees face poor working conditions, lesser skills enhancement and lack opportunities to utilize advanced procedures and equipment.^[56] Years of work experience as a factor associated with job satisfaction has also been identified to be significant. This shows that those who have a working experience of more than five years are more satisfied with their job than those with less than five years of experience.

Job Satisfaction Assessment Methodologies:

Each study conducted different assessment methods, thus qualitative assessment of satisfaction of each medical

technologist is subjective that could vary from one individual to another with different factors contributing to their satisfaction. In line with this, some researchers limited their scope to a small population or 1-2 institutions with a high response rate from the participants to make their study efficient and credible. The other method used was through survey questionnaires. It was the most used method in gathering data from the researchers due to its convenience. Survey questionnaires were given to the health care providers on the selected institution through emails. However, there are times that qualitative research is quite invaluable due to several factors contributing to the response of the participants.^[49] Instead of gathering the absolute responses of the participants, they often alter their answers on what they think is socially acceptable or what the researcher is looking for.

This study relates to the current situation of the Philippines, wherein for the past year of still addressing the pandemic, a lot of issues have been observed and yet some of them are still left unresolved and unacknowledged in giving more support to the healthcare workers in our fight against the pandemic. Medical Technologists have the authority, skills, and capabilities in detection of SARS-CoV-2 virus, making their role significant in the healthcare delivery system. This study was then pursued to find out how working as a Medical Technologist during a pandemic in the Philippines turned out. In consideration of having only a few studies that focus on Medical Technologists especially in the Philippines, the primary aim of this study is to assess the overall job satisfaction level of the Registered Medical Technologists working in Metro Manila, Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic and identify the factors which significantly influence job satisfaction.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Design and Subjects

This cross-sectional research was carried out between January to July 2021. A total of 109 respondents were gathered during the study period through an online survey. Of these, 12 respondents failed to meet the inclusion criteria, therefore only 97 respondents were included in the study. The inclusion criteria were Registered Medical Technologists that have been working full-time in a medical laboratory, either free-standing or hospital-based, public or private, within Metro Manila, Philippines for at least 1 year during the pandemic, whose work includes, but is not limited to, clinical laboratory testing, while not holding any administrative position in the medical

laboratory they are affiliated. The exclusion criteria were Registered Medical Technologists that fulfill at least one of the following: works in a medical laboratory outside Metro Manila, Philippines; has less than 1 year of experience working during the pandemic; working in a medical laboratory part-time only; whose work does not include clinical laboratory testing, or; holds any administrative position in the medical laboratory they are affiliated. Data privacy notice and ethical clearance were provided in the survey and informed consent was obtained from the respondents. The study was approved by the Faculty of Pharmacy-Research Ethics Committee (FOPREC) of the University of Santo Tomas (Approval No. FOP-ERC-2021-01-055).

2.2 Survey Questionnaire

The survey was adapted from the Job Satisfaction Survey (1994) of Paul Spector.^[22] It was designed with a nine-facet scale with four questions per facet and a total of 36 items. The internal consistency reliability test (coefficient alpha) made by the owner of the survey is equal to 0.91. To ensure its reliability in the local setting, the researchers have conducted a pilot testing which garnered 0.874 coefficient alpha and guaranteed consistency. The questionnaire used a summated rating scale format with six choices per item - 6 as highly strong agreement on a positively worded statement, and 1 as highly strong disagreement on a positively worded statement; the scoring is done in reverse for negatively worded statements. Each respondent is then classified according to their total job satisfaction - dissatisfied, ambivalent, or satisfied based on their total score and interpretation on *Table 1*. The respondents are

further classified according to their satisfaction for each facet based on the 4-item subscale summarized in *Table 2*.

2.3 Statistical Analyses

The data collected were divided into two categories of variables: predictor variables and outcome variables. The significance of each facet on overall job satisfaction was evaluated through Pearson's Correlation analysis. The significant difference between groups of respondents in each sociodemographic factor with regards to overall job satisfaction level was measured using One-Way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and *t*-test analysis. A P value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Table.1. Score and Interpretation Table for 36-item Questionnaire

Score Range	Interpretation
36-108	Dissatisfied
Between 108-144	Ambivalent
144 - 216	Satisfied

Table.2. Score and Interpretation Table for 4-item Subscale

Score Range	Interpretation
4-12	Dissatisfied
Between 12-16	Ambivalent
16-24	Satisfied

Table.3. Frequency of Respondents according to Satisfaction in Each Facet of Job Satisfaction and Total Job Satisfaction

	Dissatisfied		Ambivalent		Satisfied	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Pay	55	56.70	18	18.56	24	24.74
Promotion	44	45.36	36	37.11	17	17.53
Supervision	11	11.34	14	14.43	72	74.23
Fringe	39	40.21	39	40.21	19	19.59
Rewards	43	44.33	39	40.21	15	15.46
Operations	51	52.58	31	31.96	15	15.46

Coworker	12	12.37	39	40.21	46	47.42
Nature of Work	2	2.06	24	24.74	71	73.20
Communication	12	12.37	24	24.74	61	59.79
Total Job Satisfaction	10	10.31	66	68.04	21	21.65

III. RESULTS

Total Job Satisfaction: Table 3 displays the overall job satisfaction of the respondents in three interpretations, using frequency and percentages: dissatisfied, ambivalent, and satisfied. It shows that most of the respondents (68.04%) were ambivalent or equivocal.

Satisfaction in Each Facet of Job Satisfaction: Table 3 displays the job satisfaction level of the respondents for each facet using frequency and percentage for each interpretation. The majority of respondents were dissatisfied in these following facets: *Pay* (56.70%), *Promotion* (45.36%), *Contingent Rewards* (44.33%), and *Operating Conditions* (52.58%). In terms of *Fringe Benefits*, the greater number of respondents had tied in dissatisfaction and ambivalence (40.21%). For facets such as *Supervision* (74.23%), *Coworkers* (47.42%), *Nature of Work* (73.20%), and *Communication* (59.79%), the majority of the respondents were satisfied.

Correlation of different facets to Job Satisfaction: A Pearson Correlation Analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the facets of job satisfaction and the overall job satisfaction level of Registered Medical Technologists. It showed that all facets were significant to overall job satisfaction, $p < .05$, and displayed positive correlation to overall job satisfaction, $r > .20$. Specifically, a high positive correlation was observed between job satisfaction and the following facets: *Pay* ($r = .81, p < .001$); *Promotion* ($r = .75, p < .001$); *Fringe Benefits* ($r = .70, p < .001$), and *Contingent Rewards* ($r = .79, p < .001$).

Furthermore, the following facets demonstrated a moderate positive correlation to job satisfaction, namely: *Supervision* ($r = .63, p < .001$); *Co-Workers* ($r = .65, p < .001$); *Nature of Work* ($r = .41, p < .001$), and *Communication* ($r = .60, p < .001$). The facet *Operating Conditions* and job satisfaction were only small positively correlated, ($r = .29, p < .01$).

Job Satisfaction between Groups within Each Sociodemographic Profile: An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and independent-samples t-test were conducted to compare groups of respondents according to each sociodemographic factor with regards to their job satisfaction level. ANOVA was performed in groups by age and salary range while independent-samples t-test was performed among groups of biological sex, type of laboratory, classification of laboratory, availability of COVID-19 testing services, and years of experience.

For the *age groups*, it showed that there was no significant difference in the scores for “20-29” ($M = 129.16, SD = 18.21$), “30-39” ($M = 123.89, SD = 14.29$), and “40-49” ($M = 146.20, SD = 31.43$); $F(2, 94) = 2.42, p > .05$.

For *salary range groups*, it showed a significant difference in the scores for “below Php 20,000” ($M = 121.11, SD = 17.57$), “Php 20,000 - 29,999” ($M = 127.75, SD = 17.82$), and “above Php 29,999” ($M = 138.90, SD = 20.43$) respondents; $F(2, 94) = 3.99, p < .05$.

For *biological sex groups*, it showed no significant difference in the scores for female ($M = 129.66, SD = 20.67$) and male ($M = 129.31, SD = 15.15$) respondents; $t(95) = 0.09, p > .05$.

For groups according to the *type of laboratory*, it showed a significant difference in the scores for public ($M = 120.56, SD = 16.38$) and private ($M = 131.59, SD = 18.99$) laboratories; $t(95) = -2.28, p < .05$.

For groups according to the *classification of laboratory*, it showed no significant difference in the scores for free-standing ($M = 132.90, SD = 18.75$) and hospital-based ($M = 126.13, SD = 18.73$) laboratories ($t(95) = 1.78, p > .05$).

For groups according to the *availability of COVID-19 testing services*, it showed no significant difference in the scores for with COVID-19 testing services ($M = 128.57, SD = 17.72$) and

without COVID-19 testing services ($M = 140.38$, $SD = 28.79$) respondents; $t(95) = -1.70$, $p > .05$.

For groups according to the *years of experience*, it showed no significant difference in the scores for 1-5 years of experience ($M = 129.14$, $SD = 18.01$) and 6 or more years of experience ($M = 131.21$, $SD = 22.90$) respondents; $t(95) = -0.43$, $p > .05$.

IV. DISCUSSION

Measurement of Job Satisfaction has always been one of the significant factors that can assess the current employment status of different professions and a critical basis of one's criteria in staying in their current job and workplace. Even before the pandemic, many HCWs, like Registered Medical Technologists, have been on the frontline, rendering their services with possible danger of acquiring infectious diseases as it is already a part of their profession. However, COVID-19 pandemic has put an enormous pressure not only to ordinary individuals, but mostly was directed to our medical frontliners, as apart from facilities being forced to reach their full capacity, the ratio of the medical workforce and patients is very high, to the point that the healthcare system is crumbling as number of healthcare frontliners being infected and fatalities continuously increase and the domino effect to their workplace, such as overwork or exhaustion, deterioration of physical and mental health, to name a few. To compensate for their hard work and contribution during this difficult time, the national government has implemented laws regarding the provision of certain remuneration benefits for the country's health workers such as Special Risk Allowance (SRA), Active-Duty Hazard Pay (ADHP), Priority for COVID-19 vaccination and Free COVID-19 Test. As we go deeper, we can see that satisfaction does not revolve around remuneration or benefits only but also includes various facets.

4.1 Total Job Satisfaction

The overall job satisfaction level of most respondents is ambivalent (68.04%). This data suggests that the majority of our respondents are not completely satisfied nor dissatisfied with their job, but there are specific facets of concern that may need improvement or reorganization to achieve a much better job experience. It can be traced by interpretation of job satisfaction level per facet. A minority of respondents, which accounts to 10 out of 97 respondents (10.31%), have expressed overall dissatisfaction in their job. This may indicate that they are not satisfied in most of the facets observed for job

satisfaction, either they are receiving insufficient support may it be financially or socially and/or their job experience has been below their expectations of an ideal job. Meanwhile, 21 out of 97 respondents (21.65%) have expressed their overall satisfaction in their job, which may also indicate that less than a quarter of total respondents has a good experience of the different facets ranging from salary to communication among the organization and/or their work is either within or above their expectations of an ideal job.

4.2 Satisfaction in Each Facet of Job Satisfaction

4.2.1 Pay:

The majority of the respondents which accounts to 55 out of 97 (56.70%) is dissatisfied with their pay or salary. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include "Proper Remuneration based on Workload or Job Description" and "Salary Increase". Since the majority has expressed dissatisfaction, it suggests that they are not getting the proper amount of salary based on their workload or job description. For the salary increase, there could be some that have not been receiving any increase or if they do, it may have not been frequent, had less chances, or only a minimal increase.

Numerous medical frontliners, especially registered medical technologists, have been raising concern in various platforms regarding being an underpaid worker. Most of them have been receiving within the minimum salary range, whereas some even receive below the average economic living expense. Therefore, aside from dissatisfaction, it may also be inferred that respondents have been seeing this as being unappreciated for their role and professional work by their respective organizations, thus contributing to being dissatisfied with their job. This supports the notion that performance and satisfaction of workers are directly related to the compensation given to them in exchange for their work.^[24]

4.2.2 Promotion:

Many of the respondents, which accounts to 44 out of 97 (45.36%), are dissatisfied in terms of promotion in work. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include "Chances in Promotion" and "Fairness". Since the majority has expressed dissatisfaction, it may indicate that they have not had plenty of promotion opportunities in their job. It may be due to very low chance of having promotion and if they did have promotions, it might have been mixed up with bias (i.e., personal relationship, relative, close friend, or if it is

based on years of loyalty to the laboratory/seniority/hierarchy). Additionally, it may also reflect their comparison with other workplace where there might have been more promotion opportunities than their current workplace. Thus, few promotion opportunities would contribute to being dissatisfied with their job as it could entail lesser chances of growth or development in their profession.

4.2.3 Supervision.

The majority of the respondents which accounts to 72 out of 97 (74.23%) is satisfied in terms of their work relations with their supervisors. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include "Treatment and Impression of the Supervisor to the Employees". Since most of the respondents have expressed satisfaction, it could mean that the supervisor has been treating the employees well and has had a good impression. The supervisor may have been leading the employees with good leadership and fairness in which all agree to. The raised concerns in the laboratory may have been addressed well by the supervisor, which lessened the probability of encountering errors and misinterpretations, implying the existence of good feedback between the supervisor and the employees.

Personalities of coworkers could affect the mood of the environment and how well the performance is. The satisfied employees can signify that the supervisor has a positive personality which gives an influence. Improvement in the perception of the workers toward their supervisors may increase the level of job satisfaction and also influence their behavior in the workplace.^[7]

4.2.4 Fringe Benefits:

The greater number of respondents have tied with dissatisfaction and ambivalence. Thirty-nine respondents out of 97 (40.21%) are dissatisfied and ambivalent with fringe benefits. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include "Equitable and Sufficient Benefits". Since a greater number of respondents has expressed dissatisfaction and ambivalence, it could mean that they have not been receiving the appropriate benefits they deserve. It may be in a case wherein these respondents may have been receiving benefits, but only a bare minimum and/or incomparable with the benefits that most other organizations had offered. One of the most sought questions aside from salary and job description when applying is "what are the benefits the applicant is eligible to receive once they have been accepted". This is a strong factor that can support and make their employees stay true, loyal, and

perform according to their job.^[26] This can be regarded as the perks of being part of the organization and therefore most job seekers would search for those employers that could provide them more than their salary.^[18] The reality in our setting is proof that employees cannot rely on their salary solely as there are a lot of living expenses to address within a common individual considering that almost everyone has a family to support and raise. This is why we have a law that a regular employee would be entitled to the minimum benefits such as SSS, PHILHEALTH, and PAG-IBIG, in which their organization would be contributing to support their employees' future needs. Due to issues such as minimum compensation and the rapidly increasing market prices, employees would increase their demand or search for greater benefits to sustain their needs. In addition, due to the aggravating effect of this pandemic, there might be few institutions that may be offering hazard pay, special risk allowance, free annual check-ups, company-sponsored COVID-19 testing/paid absences due to COVID-19 etc., which makes the competition among different establishments increasingly high. This might explain why a lot of our respondents are equivocal or overall dissatisfied about fringe benefits, leading to dissatisfaction or mixed feelings about their job.

4.2.5 Contingent Rewards:

Many of the respondents which accounts to 43 out of 97 (44.33%) are dissatisfied in terms of the rewards they have received. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include "Receiving Recognition and Rewards" and "Exchange for Efforts." This affirms that the workers have less motivation to strive in their work if the compensation given is poor.^[32] Since many of the respondents have expressed dissatisfaction, it may indicate that the employees have not received such recognition and rewards that equal the amount of effort that they have given when they work. Ideally, bonuses are given to employees who work exemplary by consistently doing a good job or exceeding the expectations or goals of the company. Dissatisfaction of employees may be due to being ignored or underappreciated of their accomplishments as an excellent worker which may then affect job performance, services, and capability of the laboratory. An instance could be about having a longer turn-around time (TAT) due to slower performance as they might believe that such effort to finish early or being able to accommodate more requests would just be compensated with their regular salary, thus being dissatisfied with their job.

4.2.6 Operating Conditions:

The majority of the respondents which accounts to 51 out of 97 (52.58%) is dissatisfied in terms of operating policies and procedures. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include “generally the amount of work to be done” and “paperwork to be processed” as governed by existing policies and procedures. Since the majority has expressed dissatisfaction, it could mean that they have been experiencing difficulties in working due to excess requirements and paperwork as well as being required to strictly comply with every policy and procedure set by the company. Employee dissatisfaction resulting from too strict company policies would feel like they are gripped and cannot be at ease while working.^[5]

The work of a Registered Medical Technologist is under time pressure and there are a lot of procedures to take to arrive at an accurate result. It is also another case when times like the laboratory would be swamped up with lots of laboratory requests and would require registered medical technologists to work double time. One way of helping them would be less paperwork needed to be done while they work with specimens. Rigorous processing of data, inventory, or other tasks that require a lot of paperwork before they can submit the expected output may take a lot of time, energy, as well as compromise their attention and quality of work. It may also be considered when in an instance, human resource departments of companies would request for so many requirements and paperwork to be filled up when filing for a leave of absence or loan applications. Instead of devoting their time to work, much time is spent in complying with the requirements. There might also be some companies to which every little mistake is treated with a penalty, therefore making employees unable to work properly and at ease, as they are always criticized by their company that has excessive conformity to rules and regulations. Thus, this might have led to dissatisfaction with their job. Overly imposed policies would make the ambiance of the workplace as “work only”, thus increasing the dissatisfaction of these employees.^[7]

4.2.7 Coworker:

Many of the respondents, which accounts to 46 out of 97 (47.42%), are satisfied in terms of the relationship among coworkers. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include “Relationship and Competence among Coworkers”. Since many of the respondents have expressed their satisfaction, it could indicate that they have enjoyed working with their co-workers. Enjoyment may come from good attitude, professional work ethics and competency, and reliability. This can be inferred that a lot of our respondents

have had a good experience with their workers during their duty and that they have not caused hindrance or difficulty in performing tasks during their shift.

A worker who is satisfied with his/her colleagues tends to initiate and perform more tasks other than those that were assigned to him/her.^[24] This positive finding could promote flexibility and better job performance as teamwork could be expected from workers with good relationships, therefore increasing their satisfaction in their job as a whole.^[37]

4.2.8 Nature of Work:

The majority of the respondents which accounts to 71 out of 97 (73.20%) is satisfied with their nature of work. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include “Appreciation and Enjoyment of the Job itself”. Since the majority of the respondents have expressed their satisfaction, it may suggest that they have enjoyed and felt a sense of pride in doing their job. It may also mean that they have accepted and liked most of the tasks that are given to them as part of their job and have not seen it as a struggle. Thus, it can contribute to their satisfaction with their job. The satisfaction here may also be inferred to be coming from their company wherein they have let these employees practice freely their skills and apply their professional knowledge. This may have helped them to raise their motivation, self-esteem, and work appreciation leading to better satisfaction.^[37]

4.2.9 Communication:

Most of the respondents which accounts to 61 out of 97 (59.79%) are satisfied in terms of communication within the organization. Among the concerns tackled in this facet based on the questionnaire include “Open Communication within the Organization and Clarity of Goals and Work Assignments.” Since the majority of the respondents have expressed satisfaction, it may imply that most of them have been able to speak and exchange relevant conversations within the organization without too much difficulty. Communication within the organization is very essential not only to facilitate proper dissemination of information, but to be able to reach out to the inner thoughts of each one of the members. This is to further enhance interpersonal relationships, to welcome new ideas, and to solidify the direction that the organization as a whole should move forward to. Two-way communication is very important in increasing productivity and to enhance the workflow in laboratories.^[61] If one is lost because there is no good open communication, then it will affect the workflow and

may pose a risk of committing errors. Satisfaction in this part may be inferred that a lot of our respondents have been clarified to them how and what they should work into and in what direction their institutions are moving into. In healthcare sectors, “effective and functional communication along with teamwork within the institution is necessary to achieve delivery of quality healthcare”.^[7]

4.2.10 Correlational Analysis of different facets to Job Satisfaction:

With all p-values of all facets being less than 0.05, it means that all facets are significant to overall job satisfaction level. All facets being observed using the survey have been proven to play an essential role in determination of overall job satisfaction level. To interpret their degree of significance or correlation to overall job satisfaction level, Pearson Correlation Coefficients for all facets were produced and analyzed. These following facets have been classified as having high positive correlation to overall job satisfaction: Pay, Promotion, Fringe Benefits, and Contingent Rewards. This means that among all facets of job satisfaction, these four facets have the most influence on the overall job satisfaction level of Registered Medical Technologists working in Metro Manila, Philippines during the COVID-19 Pandemic. With the majority of respondents being generally dissatisfied in these 4 facets already explains what areas of concern needed to be addressed, considering that their general response is ambivalence. Notably, salary is one of the major factors in retention of workers, which also affects their level of satisfaction.^[7] This can be correlated with how job satisfaction is greatly influenced by better salary, fringe benefits packages and promotion opportunities or advancement, which could make not only local nurses to be satisfied and stay, but also those working abroad could come back to the country.^[26]

These following facets have moderate positive correlation to overall job satisfaction: Supervisor, Coworker, Communication, and Nature of Work. These 4 facets may be interpreted as related to another and also these 4 facets represent the group which the majority of respondents are generally satisfied with, which may explain why they belong to the same degree of correlation. Being less positively correlated compared to the first mentioned facets may mean that it does not affect the overall job satisfaction whenever their satisfaction for the individual facets increases or decreases. Since the most popular and pressing issues here in the Philippines, at least for the Medical Technologists, are about salary ranges and

promotion – also affecting the former – it could be that most of the respondents have lesser concern when it comes to interpersonal relationships in their respective organizations. Though, it may be very much expected for the overall job satisfaction level to increase or decrease as their satisfaction to these facets also increase or decrease, similarly to how treatment and attitude of supervisors, personality and reliability of coworkers, and communication within the organization, which involves proper assignment of tasks and free to work with their professional skills, may influence the job satisfaction of a worker.^{[5][28]}

Operating Condition is the only facet which has a small positive correlation to overall job satisfaction level. Although a good working condition is a relevant factor of job satisfaction^[7], further studies might be recommended for this facet on the rationale of the slight positive correlation.

4.2.11 Comparative Analysis on Job Satisfaction between Groups within Each Sociodemographic Profile:

There is a significant difference when it comes to the type of laboratory and salary range, since their p-values are less than 0.05. This may indicate that these are the major sociodemographic factors that contribute to the job satisfaction of Registered Medical Technologists working in Metro Manila, Philippines. In terms of the type of laboratory, this shows significance since the working environment plays a crucial influence in having an ideal job. Working in different types of laboratories, whether public or private, also means that there is a difference in the motivation among its workers.^[26] Differences in motivation include the working conditions, skills enhancement, and advancement with regards to the procedures and equipment. In addition to the type of laboratory, salary or salary range is also a factor that shows significance in the job satisfaction of Registered Medical Technologists working in Metro Manila, Philippines. Salary serves as a major contributing factor that keeps the satisfaction of the employees.^[26] Although there is a Magna Carta for Public Health Workers in the Philippines to have proper salary and provision, the successive governments after its passage have failed to provide all the benefits that it prescribed.^[25] Since salary has a negative impact on motivation of employees, the retention and performance of the employees are also being affected as it is a part of the overall job satisfaction.

From an introspective view, type of laboratory and salary range may be interconnected as public and private laboratories, or the

sectors in general, tend to have different policies and guidelines with regards to compensation, as well as standards and priorities when it comes to employment, financial support, and benefits. Further studies may be recommended to establish evidence regarding the possible existing relationship between the type of laboratory and salary range.

Nonetheless, there is no significant difference with respect to biological sex, age, classification of laboratory, availability of COVID-19 services, and years of experience since their p-values lie beyond 0.05. Although women were thought to show greater job satisfaction than their male counterparts due to lower job expectation^[35], this is inapplicable with the Registered Medical Technologists in Metro Manila, Philippines as opposed by the results. Whereas for ages, all of the results do not fit with the notion that “older employees tend to be more motivated than the younger employees because older employees need a continuous challenge within their job to become motivated, whereas younger employees have a positive linear relationship with career opportunity and motivation.^[12] However, this is not true with the target respondents of our study. As for the classification of laboratories, whether free-standing or hospital-based, and availability of COVID-19 services, there are limited studies within the sector of this factor and further studies might be recommended to differentiate the two in terms of job satisfaction. Lastly, years of experience, one of the factors that influences job satisfaction, is contrary to the notion that newly hired workers are not as satisfied as compared to the workers with more years of experience.^[57] However, the generalizability of the results with biological sex, age, classification of laboratory, availability of COVID-19 services, and years of experience is reliable, but limited by the number and scope of respondents that this study have. Thus, as mentioned earlier, additional studies are recommended to further support the study.

V. CONCLUSION

The current data of the study demonstrate that the overall job satisfaction level of Registered Medical Technologists in Metro Manila, Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic is generally ambivalent. Further investigation of job satisfaction level per facet was conducted and revealed that the respondents are mainly dissatisfied with regards to Pay, Promotion, Contingent Rewards, and Operating Conditions, whereas they are generally satisfied with Supervision, Co-Workers, Nature of Work, and Communication. Moreover, the respondents are either generally dissatisfied or ambivalent

towards Fringe Benefits. It is concluded that there is a significant relationship linking the facets to the overall job satisfaction level, showing a positive correlation. Furthermore, the results indicate a significant difference in satisfaction of Registered Medical Technologists belonging to different groups, specifically the type of laboratory and salary range.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

For the recommendations for future studies, we would like to recommend to expand their sample size and widen the scope of respondents surveyed, wherein different Registered Medical Technologists in every region outside Metro Manila can be considered to obtain more accurate demonstration of job satisfaction among medical technologists across the whole country. Other recommended factors to include for future studies are the classification of laboratories by function and service capability, inclusion of the registered medical technologist’s position in the workplace, and modification of sociodemographic factors being observed in order to create more divisions of groups and have a better depiction of how job satisfaction level is affected. Lastly is the adaptation of comparative study between conditions within and outside the period of COVID-19 pandemic to provide a much more accurate and acceptable generalization of job satisfaction.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

There is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study.

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