

# MOTIVATION AND RESTRAINTS OF MAAP MIDSHIPMEN IN CHOOSING A MARITIME PROGRAM AS ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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**Abstract.** The role of the Maritime Higher Education institutions (MHEIs) in the Philippines is very vital in producing competent seafarers that will man the international ships. However, the motivations and restraints of the learners are also important in determining the performance of the midshipmen during their stay in the academe and later in their performance as ship officers.

A total of one hundred thirty-five (135) or seventy – five percent (75%) of the students taking Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) during the first semester of the Academic Year (AY) 2015 – 2016, participated in the study.

A self-made questionnaire was used to determine the motivations and restraints of the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into six (6) areas of concerns namely: fulfilment of dreams, source of income, expression of myself, challenging work/ workplace, accidentally chosen profession and long term plans.

Among the six (6) areas of concerns, the results showed that the main motivation of the midshipmen in choosing the maritime profession is the source of income while their main restraint is that they find maritime profession as a challenging work or work place.

It also showed that the demographic profile of the respondents and restraints in choosing maritime profession are not significantly associated with their academic performance while motivation is significantly associated with the academic performance.

**Key words:** Motivation, Restraints, Academic Performance, Association

## **I. Introduction**

The motivation of students is always a critical issue in higher education, especially because it may affect the academic performance of the learners and their professional life. This study is focused on determining the motivations and restraints of the MAAP midshipmen in choosing maritime profession. This may help the educational managers and leaders to know the learners' outlooks towards learning, their motivation in learning and the hindrances to their learning progress. Learning sometimes becomes a cause of pressure and intimidation rather than a source of fun during their university life, that's why a significant number of students tend to leave the university prior to their graduation. It shows that learners with repulsive attitude and less motivation towards education tend to quit or cannot perform better in their academics.

The role of the Maritime Higher Education institutions (MHEIs) in the Philippines is very vital in producing competent seafarers that will man the international ships. Graduates that have high motivations in their chosen career and profession may perform better and may be more competent than those with restrictions and restraints in their decisions. Therefore, motivations and restraints of the learners are important in determining the performance of the midshipmen during their stay in the academe and later in their performance as ship officers. These motivations and restraints may greatly affect their academic performance that later may also affect their chosen profession.

Determining the motivations and restraints of the learners are an essential step toward academic success. It involves different factors that arouse the desire and energy of the learners to be constantly interested and committed to pursue, actively participate, or excel in the attainment of their goal.

Therefore, it is deemed necessary to determine the motivations and restraints of the learners in choosing the maritime profession as their lifetime career may help and support the maritime higher education institutions' leaders to predict learners' academic performance and identify the student's weaknesses before their grades begin to fall.

### **1.1 Research Question**

The general problem of the study: How do the motivations and restraints of the midshipmen in choosing seafaring profession associate with their academic performance?

Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

1. How may the profile of the respondents be described in terms of: Age, Gender and Region of origin, Seafaring as their first choice of career, plans in staying in seafaring profession, and their knowledge in seafaring profession?
2. How may the motivations and restraints related factors be described in terms of: Life time Profession, Fulfillment of Dreams, Source of Income, Expression of Myself, Challenging Work/Work Place, Accidentally Chosen Profession, and Long Term Plans?
3. How do the demographic profile, motivation and restraints related factors associate with the academic performance of the respondents?
4. What are the implications of the findings to the Maritime Education and Training?

### ***1.2 Significance of the Study***

The results of this study may help the midshipmen to determine their weaknesses and restraints in choosing the maritime profession. With the results of the study, midshipmen may do some modifications in their learning styles to improve their academic performance. It may help also the instructors on how to deal with their students. Appropriate actions may differ based on the needs of their learners. The results of the study may also serve as a database for the school and its directors in modifying or improving their educational plans and programs to suit the different needs of the learners. Necessary trainings for teachers and academic staff may be developed and executed based on the findings of the study to further improve their teaching methodologies. Lastly, the results of the study may be used by future researchers as a reference in conducting other related studies.

## **II. Methodology**

### ***1.1 Methods and Techniques***

The quantitative type of research was used in the study. One hundred thirty-five (135) or seventy – five percent (75%) of marine transportation student-respondents were given a self – made survey questionnaire to gather information based on their perceptions on the motivations and restraints of midshipmen in choosing the maritime profession. The tool is divided into two (2) parts; part I is the demographic profile of the respondents and part II is the motivations and restraints related factors.

### ***1.2 Hypotheses:***

1. The profile of the respondents has no significant relationship to the motivations and restraints of the midshipmen in choosing seafaring profession.

2. The motivations and restraints of the midshipmen in choosing seafaring profession have no significant relationship to their academic performance.

### **III. Results and discussion**

#### **1. How may the profile of the respondents be described in terms of age, gender, region of origin, seafaring as their first choice of career, plans in staying in seafaring profession and their knowledge in seafaring profession?**

It shows that 57 (42%) of the respondents are 17 years of age while 41 (30%) are 16 years old and the remaining 37 (27%) are in the range of 18 – 21 years old. This means that the majority of the respondents are in the adolescence stage. It is the time of decision-making on what program to take that later will affect their future. According to Kaneshiro (2015), it is necessary for an adolescent to become more strong and independent before he develops good decision making skills. Furthermore, Cherry (2016) said that an adolescent who is exposed to proper inspiration, proper guidance and good environment through personal evaluation and assessment will have the chance to grow with a strong self-confidence and a feeling of individuality and self-control.

In terms of gender, 96% of the respondents are men while the remaining four percent (4%) are women. It only shows that maritime profession is not an attractive program for females. Most of the young professional women are more inclined to business, tourism, hotel programs, education, IT and medicine. In the study of International Maritime Organization (IMO), 225 out of the 230,000 Filipino seafarers registered from 1983 to 1990 were women which shows less than 1 percent of the total population of the maritime officers. From 2006 to 2010, women seafarers account for 2 percent of the total number of sea-based workers deployed (Tangi, 2015).

Furthermore, most women have an anxiety and inferiority feelings in entering a man's world because they might encounter different problems such as sexual and physical harassments, intimidations and discrimination. It has been a noted tradition that the maritime profession is a male dominated environment and that tradition runs for a long time. It also shows that shipping industries are one among other professions with very low number of women workforce (Mukherjee, 2015) and most of the ship owners' associations are hesitant in employing female merchant officers (Zhao, 1998 as cited by Aggrey, 2000).

In terms of whether seafaring is their first choice of career, 80 (59%) said yes that seafaring is their first choice while the remaining 55 (41%) said no. It only shows that majority of the respondents prefer other programs to maritime studies. Out of 55 respondents (41%), 32 said

that they prefer engineering, medicine and law programs; five (4%) said that Information Technology (IT) is their first choice of program; and four (3%) prefer to become part of the military or navy group. According to Kalvaitiene (2013), making a career decision cannot be done in a day. A good planning must be established for the consequences will last for a long-term.

In their plans on how long they are going to stay in the maritime profession, 61 (45%) said that they will stay from 16 to 20 years, while 40 (29%) will stay in the maritime profession from 11 to 15 years. The remaining 34 will stay from 5 to 10 years or no plan at all.

In terms of their knowledge in seafaring profession, 76 (56%) said that their knowledge is probably enough, 27 (20%) have absolutely enough knowledge, 26 (19%) have neutral knowledge, and the remaining population said that their knowledge is not enough or absolutely not enough.

## **2. How may the motivations and restraints related factors be described in terms of life time profession, fulfillment of dreams, source of income, expression of myself, challenging work/ work place, accidentally chosen profession, and long term plans?**

Among the four (4) categories given, the seafaring profession as a source of income came out to be the first motivation of the MAAP midshipmen in taking the maritime program, with an average mean of 4.67 or strongly agree. This is followed by seafaring as a maritime profession (4.55 or strongly agree), expression of oneself (4.20 or agree) and a fulfillment of dreams (3.59 or agree). Overall, the respondents agree with the statements of motivation given.

In the area of lifetime profession, MAAP midshipmen strongly agree that because of their profession, they will be able to travel and see different places, with a mean rating of 4.84. They also strongly agree that they will have a stable job (4.60), and that maritime profession is a prestigious profession (4.56). Midshipmen agree that they will be challenged by the nature of work and they will be able to man different types of vessels.

In the fulfillment of dreams as a motivation, it shows that the respondents strongly agree that they will be able to travel the world for free. They also agree that they like to continue the dreams of their parents to become a seafarer. Further, they agree that they love the sea compared to other environment. However, they neither agree nor disagree that it was their childhood dream. And lastly, they also neither agree nor disagree that maritime profession is a family tradition.

Furthermore, in the area that it will be a good source of income, the respondents strongly agree to all the specific statements, except for buying anything they want. Looking closely, it shows that the respondents put more value for future endeavors with their income than satisfying their present wants like buying whatever they feel like buying. It may also mean that they value their family and hard work that is why they do not indulge in whims.

Moreover, MAAP midshipmen strongly agree that choosing the maritime profession means independence from their family, becoming a part of a team and proving their abilities. They also agree to the regimented training in the academy. Finally, they are neutral at working far from home.

Together with motivations are perceived deterrents that come with the maritime program and profession. Life at sea got the highest mean rating of 4.36 indicating the agreement of the respondents of the problem that this entails. This is followed by the maritime profession as a challenging work (4.26). On the contrary, the respondents disagree with the maritime profession as chosen by accident as a restraint (2.32 or disagree) in choosing seafaring.

In the category 'life at sea,' the midshipmen expressed strong agreement on having no one to take care of them when they get sick, on the possibility of being captured by pirates, and on being confined by routine. They also agree on the possibilities of acquiring diseases and experiencing distress and urgent situations on board.

Another perceived deterrent is the challenge of seafaring job. The midshipmen strongly agree that competition on board is very strong and they need to excel in their work. This is followed by working for months with the same crew on board (4.44), and working with people with different personalities, nationalities and attitudes (4.43). While working on board ship will disconnect them from their families for months got a mean rating of 4.04. Lastly, midshipmen agree that internet at social media connections will be a problem during their shipboard with a mean rating of 3.79.

It only shows that the respondents' greatest deterrent in choosing seafaring profession in terms of challenging work/ work place is the environment on board ship. Although, they will be trained to become competent seafarer, there are still hesitations that once they act as an officer they need to perform well. Otherwise they will be sent home and lost their job. Further, they believed that the competition on board is very strong especially with different nationalities present onboard. Likewise, since they will be working with different nationalities, it cannot deny the fact that discriminations among other nationalities still exist. In the study of Lane et.al. (2003), evidences of discrimination still occur on board. According to the same author, crews appeared to be divided more on the degree of nationality and at

times work-related hierarchies were re-aligned aboard ship to accord with nationality rather than rank.

In the area of accidentally chosen profession, it has a mean rating of 2.32. Among the areas of concerns, midshipmen neither agree nor disagree, that choosing the seafaring profession was a suggestion of family, friends and relatives with a mean rating of 3.25. In the same way, midshipmen cannot manage to study other programs because of high tuition fee and maintenance allowance got a mean rating of 3.11. While they all disagree that most of their friends took seafaring profession, they were able to pass entrance examination for other programs and they were forced by their parents are the reasons of choosing the seafaring profession with a mean rating of 1.87, 1.55 and 1.79 mean respectively.

Parallel to the study of Lau and Ng (2015), choosing maritime profession with the influence of family members and friends does not play any significant role in persuading the decision of the maritime students.

### 3. How do the demographic profile, motivation and restraints factors relate to the academic performance of the respondents?

**Table 1. Profile, Motivation and Restraints and Academic Performance**

Profile	X <sup>2</sup>	Sig.	Remarks	Cramer's V	Remarks (Level of Associations)
Age	1.17	0.88	Not significant	.07	Negligible
Gender	1.96	0.38	Not Significant	.12	Weak
Region of origin	6.35	0.18	Not Significant	.15	Weak
Seafaring as first choice	0.47	0.79	Not Significant	.06	Negligible
Plans in staying in seafaring profession	4.24	0.64	Not Significant	.18	Weak
Knowledge in seafaring profession	2.28	0.68	Not Significant	.13	Weak
Motivation	6.01	0.05	Significant	.21	Moderate
Restraints	5.77	0.22	Not Significant	.15	Weak

[Based from Rea & Parker (2014), Cramer's V coefficient is interpreted such that a value below 0.10 indicates negligible association; 0.10 to 0.19 weak association; 0.20 to 0.39 moderate association; 0.40 to 0.59 relatively strong association; 0.60 to 0.79 strong association, and 0.80 to 1.00 very strong association.

As gleaned from the table, age is not significantly associated with academic performance based on the chi square value of 1.17, not significant at 0.88, and the negligible Cramer's V coefficient of 0.07. Gender is not significantly related to the academic performance with chi square value of 1.96, not significant at 0.38, and weak correlation of Cramer's V coefficient of 0.12. The same way with the region of origin, seafaring as his first choice of career, plans

in staying in the seafaring profession, knowledge in seafaring profession and restraints in choosing seafaring profession show not significant and either weak or negligible level of association to their academic performance.

However, motivation shows significant association with the academic performance of the students as implied by the chi square value of 6.01 significant at 0.05 level. However, the Cramer's V coefficient of 0.21 only suggests a moderate association. It only means that the motivations of the students in choosing the maritime profession have vital role on their academic performance. It reflects student's choices in dealing with the learning chore, in the time and effort they will dedicate and their perseverance in handling different obstacles they encounter during the learning process. When a student enjoys what he is doing, he sees it as an avenue to learn. Student participates in an activity because he is motivated to do so. In the study of Bandalos et. al (2005) as cited by Peklaj and Levpušček (2006), students' success, their interest in chosen courses and their achievement anticipations were positively correlated to their course grade.

#### **4. What are the implications of the findings to the Maritime Education and Training?**

The identification and recognition of motivations and restraints issues of the midshipmen based on self-efficacy, control beliefs, goal direction and value concern, and anxiety may be helpful in developing particular strategies that will lead to a greater success in university and their future maritime career. It is the goal of every institution and educator to help the learners acquire self – motivation that will lead to a continuous desire to learn.

#### **IV. Conclusions**

1. The null hypothesis that the demographic profile of the respondents has no significant effect to the motivations and restraints of the midshipmen in choosing maritime profession is accepted.
2. The null hypothesis that the restraints of the midshipmen in choosing maritime profession have no significant effect to their academic performance is accepted while the null hypothesis that the motivations have no significant effect to their academic performance is rejected.



## V. Recommendations

The management may develop an approach or strategies that will highlight and focus on the motivations of the midshipmen in choosing the maritime profession. Creating methodologies/ techniques that may counteract the restraints of the midshipmen in choosing maritime profession may also be done. These maybe in the forms of continuous dialogues, inspirational talk from a maritime officer and the like. Another study may also be conducted after the shipboard training of the respondents to determine whether their motivations and restraints in choosing maritime profession will change after experiencing the life of a seafarer.

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