

An Evaluation on the Culture Adaptation and Attitude Towards Work Environment Aboard the Ship

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Abstract – The study evaluated the culture adaptation and attitude of Filipino seafarers. Specifically, determined the cultural adaptation and attitude towards work environment to test the significant relationship between the cultural adaptation and attitude towards work environment. The researcher employed the descriptive correlation method of research. This was utilized since descriptive research provides a snapshot of the affairs which directly impact the attitude and motivation of Filipino seafarers aboard international vessel. This study covered 289 respondents working in the hotel department of international cruise vessels of Magsaysay Maritime Corporation and United Philippine Lines. This includes cruise ships from Star Cruises, P&O Pacific Explorer, Star Cruises, Holand Ame.Line, M/V Turama, NSC Cruises, Costa Cruises, Carnival, Star Cruises, Celebrity Cruises, Princess Cruises, and Carnival Cruises. The researcher randomly selected 289 seafarers among international vessels. The researchers found out that the training of the employees to practice their English language and improve their communication skills and encouragement of employees to socialize in the multicultural environment onboard ship as well as ashore are of prime importance. The seafarers are provided safe and healthy working environment in terms of physical setting, whereas for emotional setting, they have decreased fear and inferiority complex. On one hand, building up language and communication skills is what seafarers need in terms of social setting. Age group of 40 years old is revealed to have significant difference in the responses in terms of work motivation-reward system. Likewise, a monthly income of P50,000 to P99,000 has also significant difference in terms of physical setting and emotional setting under work environment. It is recommended for the ship owners or cruise line companies to develop programs as measures leading to inclusive work environment towards the success for the seafarers and the company as well

Keywords: Adaptation, Attitude, Culture, Seafarers, Ship

INTRODUCTION

In the recent year, as for the Filipino seafarers deployed, there was a total number of 517, 972, accounting to 22% of all the overseas Filipino workers in the world. With their remittances amounting to billions of US dollar, Filipino seafarers brought a significant impact in the stability and growth of the economy in the Philippines and have assisted in insulating the country from the effects of the previous Asian crises. Thus, it is worth noting that seafarers perform over the high sea function as role players undertaking the work of moving commodities.

With the herculean effort seafarers exert and the usual harsh work environment they have, it is not surprising that the profession is being looked at differently. Some people start losing their interest and develop an attitude of unwillingness towards a path that is deemed worthwhile before. This goes to say that work environment plays a central component in the life of a productive human being.

Aside from practical adversities, seafarers face cultural and language disparities. Seafarers are affected by the impact of globalization. Cross-culture teams are usual scenarios onboard cruise vessel. For long periods of time, they are away from home and share the same workplace. For this reason, they should all agree on a common objective, and adopt the same plan to be a homogenous team whose final goal is geared towards the accomplishment of their task and ensuring safety of the ship and of their lives [1].

This commonly shared adaptation experiences are the focus of this cross-cultural adaptation theory. According to Kim [2], cross-cultural adaptation refers to a process of strong unfolding of the natural human tendency to struggle for an internal equilibrium in the midst of oftentimes conflicting environmental conditions. Simultaneously, several forces are at work surrounding the communicative interface between the host environment and individual. The individual's openness, strength, and positivity enable the stranger to

overcome even the most severely unreceptive host environment.

Differences in culture may also obstruct communication because not all the seafarers have full understanding of different cultures, which may be difficult to deal with. Seafarers must acknowledge that people communicate in various ways as they are influenced by their own background, race, age, gender, personality, etc. With the purpose of realizing productive outputs in their work, crew members should avoid discrimination, exclusion, discrimination; they should be adaptable and flexible, and respectful of other cultures. However, as it is inevitable for other cultures to be entirely different, in personal relationships, social behavior, ways of asking and responding eating habits, misunderstanding might transpire and may lead to stress.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Generally, the study assessed the culture adaptation and attitude of Filipino seafarers. Specifically, this study aimed to determine the cultural adaptation and attitude towards work environment and to test the significant relationship between the, cultural adaptation and attitude towards work environment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study analyzed work experience, motivation, culture adaptation and attitude of Filipino Seafarers to gather inputs for positive work environment framework. To be able to carry out the objectives, the researcher employed the descriptive correlation method of research. This was utilized since descriptive research provides a snapshot of the affairs which directly impact the attitude and motivation of Filipino seafarers aboard international vessel. In addition, correlational research is designed to discover relationships among variables and to allow the prediction of future events from present knowledge.

In scientific research, a descriptive - correlational method refers to a type of study in which information is collected without making any changes to the study subject. This means that the experimenter cannot directly interact with the environment in which the person is studying in a way that would cause any changes related to the experiment. These types of studies are also sometimes known as observational studies. Thus, the paper utilized the descriptive - correlational method to determine the relationships between and among the selected variables considered

in relation to the respondents' profile. Such data for each variable were presented and analyzed using the principles of descriptive statistics. The relationship among variables was treated and analyzed using the principles of inferential statistics.

All descriptive - correlational method studies have the same basic property of avoiding any direct changes in the environment of the study. Nevertheless, there are several different types of descriptive correlational methods that each performs research in a slightly different way. Some scientists and researchers prefer to meet with a group of people one time and ask them questions. This is called a cross-sectional study.

Participants of the Research

This study covered 289 respondents working in the hotel department of international cruise vessels of Magsaysay Maritime Corporation and United Philippine Lines. The researcher randomly selected 289 seafarers among international vessels.

Research Instrument

The study employed a research instrument to measure seafarers experience relevant to work experience, motivation culture adaptation of Filipino Seafarers to gather inputs for positive work environment framework. The researcher employed an adopted questionnaire. Part I included the respondents' demographic profiles such as gender, age, civil status, how long they have been in service, and monthly income. On the other hand, Part II provided the questionnaire containing questions on work experiences aboard the ship. The assessment was set against the sub-variables which encompass in terms of physical factor, work related factor, reward system, personal setting, emotional setting and social setting. The research instrument underwent validation through researcher's adviser and two research experts. Pilot testing and reliability were conducted prior to the actual survey to the respondents. The pilot testing employed 30 respondents, having the Cronbach alpha value of 0.970 denotes that the instrument is excellent to use.

Data Gathering Procedures

Upon the pilot testing, the researcher sought the assistance of the ship owners under study to randomly distribute the questionnaires to the respondents having experience on board. The researcher assured the respondents of the confidentiality of their responses. The researcher strongly believed that people's consciousness may also

affect their honesty and effectiveness in answering the survey, and so, the researcher provided respondents the option of being anonymous. The data gathered were encoded in Microsoft Excel, tallied systematically, analyzed and interpreted using the data analysis plan using SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Profile

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
30 yrs and below	137	47.4
31 – 35 years old	54	18.7
36 – 40 years old	73	25.3
40 yrs and above	25	8.7
Gender		
Male	131	45.3
Female	144	49.8
Civil Status		
Single	131	45.3
Married	144	49.8
Widow	7	2.4
Separated	7	2.4
How long have you been working onboard?		
2 years and below	38	13.1
3 – 6 years	123	42.6
7 – 10 years	56	19.4
More than 10 years	72	24.9
Department		
Food and Beverage	130	45.0
Housekeeping	74	25.6
Purser / Front Office	27	9.3
Galley	58	20.1
Monthly income		
P 49,000 and below	38	13.1
P50,000 – P99,000	119	41.2
P 100,000 – 149,000	103	35.6
P150,000 and above	29	10.0

Table 1 illustrates that majority of the respondents belong to the age bracket of 30 years old and below, comprising 47.4 percentage, followed by 36 –40 years old, with 25.3 percentage while 54 respondents are from the age bracket of 31 – 35 with 18.7 percentage and the remaining 25 respondents range from 40 years and above with 8.7 percentage of

the population. The result implies that the seafarer-respondents are still young who are deemed active and dynamic compared to older crew. In addition, experiencing invigorating new cultures and people, the possibility visiting international ports and the gleam of adventure, might have enticed many young people to join seafaring.

In terms of sex, the table reveals that out of 285 respondents, 144 or 49.8 percentage are females while 131 or 45.3 are males. This illustrates that female seafarers, in terms of number, dominate the crews and employees aboard population from the select cruise lines. The result confirms the females' aspirations of being and feeling equal with the male counterpart. Filipino women began setting aside cultural tradition that women should take of the responsibilities at home owing in part to the growing popularity of passenger cruise and the dearth of economic opportunities in the country. Women have been lured because of the adventurous chances of seeing see the world.

In terms of civil status, the result bears that 144 comprises 49.8 percentage of married respondents, followed by 131 with 45.3 percentage of single respondents, while the remaining 14 are equally distributed to widow/widower and separated respondents with 2.4 percentage, correspondingly. It is no surprising that majority of the respondents who are married are enticed in joining the industry since it promises a lucrative salary. According to the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) [3], seafaring offers higher remuneration compared to land based jobs. Internationally, the officers onboard working on merchant ships obtain the top remuneration in their countries. With the family expenses that needed to cover, seafaring seems a very practical solution.

Furthermore, in terms of the years of work experience, the table shows that out of 285 respondents 123 or 42.6 percentage has been working onboard the ship for 3 - 6 years, followed by 72 respondents or 24.9 for more than 10 years, while 56 respondents or 19.4 percentage have 7-10 years and the remaining 38 respondents, or 13.1 percentage have been aboard for 2 years and below. This reflects that these young seafarers have just graduated and have shown strong willingness to join the industry. The result can be supported by Dungo [4] who affirmed that fresh graduates are eager to have their job and who most of them have taken loans for their maritime training and even have mortgages that will be cleared off through the great benefits and high salaries the seafaring offers.

As for the department, it can be gleaned from the results that 130 respondents or 45 percentage work in food and beverage, followed by 74 respondents comprising of 25.6 percentage for housekeeping, then galley consisted of 58 respondents with 20.1 percentage, and the remaining 27 respondents or 9.3 percentage under purser/front office department. Since the respondents are aboard international vessels, this can mean that they choose to work in Food and Beverage department as it gives them the opportunity to meet new people. As indicated in International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) [3] report, working at sea offers the prospect of focusing on work life and in building professional social interactions. It signals hope for youngsters looking for something exhilarating and uncommon, which eventually will also open path to delightful and well paid executive career in a major international cruise company and progress in career.

In terms of the monthly income, 119 respondents or 41.2 percentage receives Php 50,000 to

Php 99,000 followed by Php100,00– Php 149,000 with a frequency of 103 or 35.6 percentage while 38 respondents or 13.1 percentage have a monthly income ranging from Php 49,000 and below. Lastly, the 29 respondents or 10 percentage have an income ranging from Php 150,000 and above. The results clearly show that majority of the respondents get higher than the average income for typical employees.

Dungo [4] asserted that some seamen receive as much as P60, 000 above depending the status of the company at the same time on the positions held. Majority of companies offer paid vacation leave. International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) [3] also reported that seafarers commonly receive lavish leave or holiday periods. Thus, even seafarers may be away from home for extended periods, they also savor the benefits when they return home.

Table 2 illustrates the respondents’ attitude towards work environment aboard the ship as to physical setting.

Table 2. Attitude Towards Work Environment Aboard the Ship as to Physical Setting

Physical Setting	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Provides me with less rigid elements on physical arrangement	3.70	Strongly Agree	6
2. Encourages quality of work and promotes work efficiency	3.81	Strongly Agree	3
3. Helps me better appreciate standard work performance	3.87	Strongly Agree	2
4. Allows me to see things work smoothly	3.75	Strongly Agree	4
5. Provides me reasonable working hours	3.13	Agree	10
6. Provides me with safe and healthy working environment	3.90	Strongly Agree	1
7. Promotes enthusiasm and interest to work	3.70	Strongly Agree	5
8. Allows me to observe how the system and processes work	3.63	Strongly Agree	8
9. Gives me protection from physical stress	3.57	Strongly Agree	9
10. Gives me opportunity to manipulate the needed change	3.64	Strongly Agree	7
Composite Mean	3.67	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

It obtained a composite mean of 3.67, which means strongly agreed by the respondents. The physical setting of the select international vessels as concluded from the results suggests conduciveness and security. It can also be noted that respondents strongly aspire for a safe and healthy working environment in which the select international vessels have been successfully providing. At the same time, the respondents’ current management has encouraged them to produce of standard and quality output.

First in the rank, obtaining a weighted mean of 3.90 is providing safe and healthy working environment, followed by helping them better appreciate standard work performance with a weighted mean of 3.87. Hence, third among the indicators is

encouraging quality of work and promoting work efficiency earning a weighted mean of 3.81.

The findings reveal that respondents are provided safe and secure environment. With the strict implementation of safety and environmental laws, advanced training policies and guidelines, and increasing administrative work, life on board has been frantic. More so, the reduced social life and limited space on board have often led to feelings of frustration, homesickness and loneliness. Hence, it is imperative that shipping companies pay attention to how the employees are treated.

Contrary to the findings, Jeżewska, [5] stressed that maritime workers spend more than six months onboard a ship once leaving port. They are usually exposed to a poor working condition while having to

survive the physiological changes resulting from long working hours. Consequently, cruise line industry should necessarily have great attention in the welfare and health of its employees.

Meanwhile, giving protection from physical stress receives the 9th place having obtained a weighted mean of 3.57, and lastly, providing reasonable working hours earned a weighted mean of 3.13, agreed by the respondents.

The findings signal that there might be inconsistency with the working hours assigned to the employees as well as control and protection from stress given that they belong to the bottom three. This

suggests for an initiative to strengthen those needs that might have not been satisfactorily met.

The positive physical setting of the work environment with less rigid elements must be provided to the ship employees to achieve quality work output. Ugurlu, [6] stressed that unattractiveness of seafaring is brought by pressure related with seafaring. Thai and Latta [7] agreed that cruise ships have drastically expanded the workload of seafarers who experience longer and tighter work schedules. Ellis and Sampson [8] also reported that only 23 percent of the crews on board have enough rest, and this is worsened by vibration and noise in their cabins.

Table 3. Attitude Towards Work Environment Aboard the Ship as to Emotional Setting

Emotional Setting	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Stimulates new thoughts and feelings	3.56	Strongly Agree	9
2. Encourages me to positively react to situations	3.70	Strongly Agree	5
3. Promotes individual control of my environment	3.57	Strongly Agree	8
4. Allows me to experience the joy of solitude	3.53	Strongly Agree	10
5. Helps me to combat loneliness and homesickness	3.63	Strongly Agree	7
6. Gives me a more confident feeling about myself	3.77	Strongly Agree	3
7. Makes me a calm and clear-thinking person	3.84	Strongly Agree	2
8. Gives me a feeling of security and calmness	3.71	Strongly Agree	4
9. Protects me from psychological stress and disorders	3.67	Strongly Agree	6
10. Decreases my fear and inferiority complex	3.89	Strongly Agree	1
Composite Mean	3.69	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows the respondents’ attitude towards work environment aboard the ship as to emotional setting. The indicators receive a composite mean of 3.69 and a verbal interpretation of ‘strongly agree’. The result suggests that the work environment of the select international vessels successfully and positively impacts the respondents’ attitude. A safe and secure environment aboard the ship gives the employees feeling of confidence. It also signals that these said vessels highlight the importance of conducive work environment. However, it is also the responsibility of those working on board to utilize all the available mechanism to satisfy their needs.

Wang [9] suggested that society, government, and related industries should pay attention to alleviate the difficulties of seafarers. It is necessary that they are provided a strong land-based support for seafarers’ families; proper policies should be executed to ensure the standard of living of crew on board. Hence, a humanistic work environment is deemed beneficial for the emotional being.

Also gleaned from the table are the top three indicators. Decreasing fear and inferiority complex

receives the highest weighted mean of 3.89. This is seconded by making the person a calm and clear-thinking person with a weighted mean of 3.84, whereas, giving the person more confident feeling about self is positioned in the third place with a weighted mean of 3.77. When the working condition is good, seafarers feel calm which enabled them to think clearly as persons. Such emotion decreased their fear and inferiority complex. Evidently, the positive attitude brought by the positive physical setting continuously sustained the seafarers’ enthusiasm and interest in their work. It can then be concluded that the respondents received what their workplace promised when it comes to work environment. While seafaring is a culture based on the tradition of camaraderie, friendships and interaction with colleagues onboard; however, complaints of seafarers are increasing that spikes in workload, short voyages in and out of ports fast turnarounds, result in limited time for interaction. Thus, the feeling of fear and inferiority complex linger the workplace.

On the other hand, it can be drawn from the same table that respondents place promoting individual

control of the environment in the 8th rank with a weighted mean of 3.57, stimulating new thoughts and feelings in the 9th rank with a weighted mean of 3.56 and allowing to experience the joy of solitude with a weighted mean of 3.53 in the 10th rank.

The findings imply that respondents look for an opportunity of escapism. Since work has become a routine and monotonous, respondents search for things that will pique their interest. And because they are far from their loved ones, triggering new buttons for new experiences is necessary as to avoid homesickness and aloneness. The shipping industry must give the seafarers opportunity to enjoy moments of solitude. Thus, shipping companies try and encourage members to draw on their social networks on board of the ship.

However, as there is also balance to achieve, they promote moments of solitude among crewmembers.

Table 4 presents the indicators on attitude towards work environment in terms of social setting. The indicators receive the composite mean of 3.73 with a verbal interpretation of ‘strongly agree’. The findings signify the outstanding condition of the working environment and relationship among employees in terms of the social setting. By taking into consideration the value of interactive and open working environment, the respondents are enabled to build trust and camaraderie towards their superiors and peers. Seafarers highly value freedom and team spirit. This is why seafarers may feel satisfied and confident in a situation where a direct relation between employer and employee is rather loose.

Table 4. Attitude Towards Work Environment Aboard the Ship as to Social Setting

Social Setting	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Promotes social interaction of individuals	3.78	Strongly Agree	4
2. Encourages problem solving and group action	3.61	Strongly Agree	9
3. Promotes pleasant and harmonious relationship with people	3.82	Strongly Agree	2
4. Allows people to grow socially	3.69	Strongly Agree	7
5. Promotes group dynamics and fosters group interaction	3.69	Strongly Agree	8
6. Allows to adjust myself with multi-cultured co-workers	3.74	Strongly Agree	6
7. Builds up my confidence in dealing with superiors and peers	3.79	Strongly Agree	3
8. Fosters good relations and increase my cross-cultural tolerance	3.60	Strongly Agree	10
9. Builds up my language and communication skills	3.83	Strongly Agree	1
10. Helps me to bring out my leadership abilities	3.76	Strongly Agree	5
Composite Mean	3.73	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

As Sampson [10] stated, the ship is not only a workplace, but also the home of seafarers. Efficient ships could, and should, provide welcome respite from problems; both talk of them, and consideration of them. A cultural atmosphere of kind-hearted and respectful seafarers should be established to strengthen the identification and sense of belonging of seafarers.

The table reveals that respondents strongly agree that their work environment builds up language and communication skills as evident by its highest weighted mean of 3.83. Likewise, the respondents strongly agree on their working environment promoting pleasant and harmonious relationship with people. It receives a weighted mean of 3.82. With the verbal interpretation of strongly agree and a weighted mean of 3.79, building up confidence in dealing with superiors and peers is positioned in the third place. Effective communication encourages employees’ positive safety attitudes in their work practices. The results suggest that the select international vessels

prioritize communication skills. As maritime accidents usually transpire due to poor communication skills, the shipping companies regard opportunities for enhancement of communication skills necessary.

Progoulaki and Theotokas, [11] believed that by introducing dialogues and interactions, it can help employees and seafarers build trust that guide them to embrace open attitudes and learn cultural concerns individually and as a group, and assist employees appreciate the importance of value congruency. More so, training foreign languages and developing communication skills can assist seafarers to meet their needs in a complex global working environment.

On the other hand, drawn from the table, are the least three indicators, yet verbally interpreted as strongly agree. Beginning with the 8th place is promoting group dynamics and fostering group interaction, which obtained a weighted mean of 3.79. Meanwhile, positioned in the 9th is encouraging problem solving and group action with 3.61 as

weighted mean, and last is fostering good social relations and increasing cross-cultural tolerance with a weighted mean of 3.60.

The results imply that the needs with regard to social relations and dynamics with regard to cross-cultural tolerance are provided, yet not fully prioritized. The select international vessels must develop among the seafarers the kind of attitude that supports behaviors for establishing trust, group efficacy and group identity. People are more productive, more creative and work better when they feel good. Good feelings towards people are like lubrication for the brain. It means that

when cognitive efficiency goes up, memory is sharp, and people can comprehend directions and make better decisions. Still the results confirm what Dyne, and Ang, [12] said that obtaining international work experience, emerging in varying cultural backgrounds, studying abroad, familiarizing with cultural guides, and taking even shorter trips to other cultures can assist in improving awareness of different cultures. More so, when seafarers are open to novel experience, imaginative, creative and adventurous, they help lessen the adverse effects of mingling with unfamiliar cultures.

Table 5. Difference in Responses on Attitude Towards Work Environment Aboard the Ship when grouped according to Profile

Profile Variables	Physical Settings			Emotional Setting			Social Setting		
	F-value	p-value	Interpretation	F-value	p-value	Interpretation	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	2.849	0.038	Significant	0.026	0.994	Not Significant	0.100	0.960	Not Significant
Gender	0.311	0.756	Not Significant	0.108	0.914	Not Significant	0.703	0.483	Not Significant
Civil Status	1.342	0.261	Not Significant	1.026	0.382	Not Significant	0.520	0.669	Not Significant
Length of Service	0.542	0.654	Not Significant	0.149	0.930	Not Significant	0.143	0.934	Not Significant
Department	0.126	0.945	Not Significant	1.768	0.153	Not Significant	1.206	0.308	Not Significant
Monthly Income	1.025	0.382	Not Significant	2.652	0.049	Significant	2.356	0.072	Not Significant

Legend: Significant at p -value < 0.05; HS = Highly Significant; S = Significant; NS = Not Significant

Table 5 reveals that there is a significant difference observed in physical setting when grouped according to age and since the obtained p -value of 0.038 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. This means that the responses vary and based on the post hoc, age group of 40 years old, and those with monthly income of P50,000 to P99,000 have higher assessment compared to the other groups.

The results imply that age affects the evaluation of attitude as to physical setting. This may be attributed to the fact that majority of the respondents fall under 30 years old and below, which signals that their expectation of the working environment is higher compared to those who have experienced and witnessed working in the shipping industry. They have perceived the industry as shimmering and vibrant with limitless opportunities and possibilities. The results corroborate to what Thai [13] affirmed that benefits in the form of salary, cash bonus can be an essential way to attract and motivate seafarers. Indeed, Li [14] added that pay is the primary indicators of job satisfaction and motivation among younger seafarers.

On the other hand, the respondents with monthly income of Php 50,000 to Php 99,000 have higher assessment due to the same anticipation that shipping industry offers lucrative remuneration, which

may not be provided to them. Fenstad, et al. [15], believe that nowadays, there are less incentives to continue a career in seafaring since perks and salaries offered by land-based jobs are as competitive.

However, according to the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) [2], compensation earned by seafarers are generally higher than similar professions ashore. In developing countries, ships' officers on international ships are amongst that receive very high compensation in their countries according to the ICS. The opportunities to accumulate savings, even when young, are important. The real value of wages may be significantly greater as they are oftentimes free of tax.

Table 6 presents the indicators on cultural adaptation in terms of communication skills. The indicators obtained the composite mean of 3.74, with a verbal interpretation of 'strongly agree.'

The findings reveal that respondents regard their workplace as a conducive environment when it comes to the enhancement of communication skills particularly the use of English Language. Seeing the importance of interaction in the multicultural setting, the select international vessels have endowed their employees' diverse opportunities and training practices that will help them be comfortable with other races.

Table 6. Culture Adaptation Aboard the Ship in terms of Communication Skills

	Communication Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1.	Encourages the employees to apply English language as a standard communication at sea	3.77	Strongly Agree	4
2.	Trains the employees to practice their English language to improve their communication skills	3.97	Strongly Agree	1
3.	Exhausts efforts to strengthen provisions concerning Maritime English requirements	3.68	Strongly Agree	8
4.	Teaches the non-verbal communication to complement spoken English	3.54	Strongly Agree	10
5.	Exposes the employees to social interactions to avoid being isolated and alienated	3.73	Strongly Agree	6
6.	Encourages the employees to interact appropriately with people from different cultures	3.83	Strongly Agree	2
7.	Creates collaborations and good cooperation among mixed-cultured employees	3.63	Strongly Agree	9
8.	Leads people to learn and know the differences between people who have different cultures and perspectives	3.78	Strongly Agree	3
9.	Has broadened mindset and strategies to handle mixed cultured employees that help them collaborate	3.71	Strongly Agree	7
10.	Persuades employees to take part in chatting and sharing their feelings	3.74	Strongly Agree	5
Composite Mean		3.74	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

The results of the study are in consonance with Deliotte [16] who affirmed that because of the worldwide nature of seafaring and multicultural crewing forces seafarers to create the ability to adjust in diverse working environment, he then suggested that multi-cultural relations and foreign languages should be included in the maritime curricula to fulfil the needs of individuals in a complicated global work environment.

It can be generated from the table that ranking first among the indicators is the training of the employees to practice their English language to improve their communication skills. It has received the highest weighted mean of 3.97. Next in rank is encouraging the employees to interact appropriately with people from different cultures obtaining the weighted mean of 3.83 while third in the list is leading people to learn and know the differences between people who have different cultures and perspectives with a weighted mean of 3.78.

The findings imply that the select international vessels have given the training of the common language and culture education of great importance. This suggests that they see the relevance of English and cultural awareness in the achievement and mobility of their employees. A capable standard of English is needed not only as an international requirement for certification but most importantly to ensure skills

efficiency, safe working which is beneficial to ship operations.

More so, the results strengthen the need for English language improvement. A study conducted among Chinese seafarers by Teng and Qu [17] revealed that the Chinese seafarers' ability to communicate in English restricts them in contributing a huge part in the international cruise line industry. In addition, Galic, et al. [18] also described that there will always be some problems under the conditions of multinational crewing, such as cultural and ideological differences, lack of mutual understanding language difficulties, which will essentially produce a negative effect on the overall safety and stay of cruise vessels. Hence, seafarers should begin with the improvement of their Maritime English.

On the other hand, regarding the least three indicators, the respondents put exhausting efforts to strengthen provisions concerning Maritime English requirements with a weighted mean of 3.68 in the 8th place, creating collaborations and good cooperation among mixed-cultured employees with a weighted mean of 3.63 in the 9th place, and teaching the non-verbal communication to complement spoken English with a weighted mean of 3.54 in the 10th place.

The results imply that respondents are looking more rigorous trainings in Maritime English as well as wide opportunities for socializations and

collaborations. This also indicates that teaching non-verbal communication is needed to help the employees adapt with the multicultural environment. The respondents regard that non-verbal communication can complement or even substitute language in situations that words might fail.

However, the findings contradict with the study of Teng and Qu [17] among Chinese seafarers. In the Chinese's existing maritime English test system, attention is not focused on verbal communication

abilities but instead on maritime English and non-verbal communication. Thus, as regard the teaching method in MET institutions, the students only received English education at the level of learning rather than communicating. Along with the reality that many Chinese seafarers did not come from the urban areas but rather from rural community, where the English education level is substandard, this limits their ability to communicate in English.

Table 7. Culture Adaptation Aboard the Ship in terms of Interpersonal Relationship

Interpersonal Relationship	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Provides socio-cultural trainings for and among employees	3.88	Strongly Agree	3
2. Encourages employees to socialize in the multicultural environment onboard ship as well as ashore	3.96	Strongly Agree	1
3. Requires employees to have both technical and soft skill competencies	3.92	Strongly Agree	2
4. Furnishes capability programs to help employees adapt and adjust in new diversified cultures	3.71	Strongly Agree	6
5. Utilizes strategies to assist employees blend in to the work situation aboard	3.66	Strongly Agree	7
6. Provides relaxation time and a place for employees to share time and opinion with others	3.57	Strongly Agree	8
7. Practices good leadership that benefits employees concerning their work relationship	3.76	Strongly Agree	4
8. Issue's publication related to socio-cultural study that guides employees	3.42	Strongly Agree	10
9. Is proactive in offering its employees lectures and short courses on cultures	3.56	Strongly Agree	9
10. Requires the employees to possess cultural intelligence before they sign in on a ship	3.76	Strongly Agree	5
Composite Mean	3.72	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 7 illustrates the indicators on culture adaptation aboard the ship in terms of interpersonal relationship. The indicators receive a composite mean of 3.72 and a verbal interpretation of 'strongly agree'.

The findings confirm that the respondents deem that they are furnished with opportunities to socialize and interact in their multicultural environment. Through these chances, they are made capable and equipped despite the differences in language and cultural ideologies. More so, allowance for interpersonal communication among employees plays an indispensable role to their sanity. In a stressful shipping industry, communication can alleviate isolation and depression.

Progoulaki and Theotokas, [11] suggested the following steps to be considered by cruise line companies. First, begin with the establishment of a clearly defined goals, set of core values, and principles at the organizational level that recognize and respect diversity of cultures, next write into its procedures and creating rules and structures that handle the dynamics

of diverse culture and promote cultural consideration from the top management down to lowest level of the organization, beginning with the recruitment procedure until implementation to onboard leadership style.

Further, it can be drawn from the results that the respondents rated with the highest weighted mean of 3.96 in terms of encouraging employees to socialize in the multicultural environment onboard ship as well as ashore, followed by the weighted mean of 3.93, requiring employees to have both technical and soft skill competencies while third, providing socio-cultural trainings for and among employees which obtained a weighted mean of 3.88. The encouragement received by the employees builds up their confidence in dealing with culturally diverse superiors and peers. The consistent support allowed them to adjust themselves with multi-cultured co-workers. Through the group dynamics and group interaction, employees will develop lasting friendships with their colleagues. Moreover, seafarers can cope with the isolation brought

about by physical distance and are able to acquire a sense of sociality found at home.

The results have strong connection to Acejo [19] who affirmed that the form of personal interaction in the mess room and during mealtimes can help seafarers cope with the alienation brought about by physical distance. In addition, Progoulaki and Theotokas, [11] suggested that shipping companies, support employees and seafarers build trust by creating meetings and interactions encouraging them to embrace openness and learn cultural issues individually and as a group, and assist employees recognize the significance of congruency of value.

In addition, Table 7 illustrates that the respondents position the provision of relaxation time and a place for employees to share time and opinion with others in the 8th place. It obtained a weighted mean

of 3.57, while the vessel is proactive in offering its employees lectures and short courses on cultures received a weighted mean of 3.56 positioning it to the 9th place. Last in rank among the indicators is the vessel issuing publication related to socio-cultural study that guides employees with a weighted mean of 3.42.

It can be inferred from the findings that there might still be a dearth of issuance of socio-cultural studies to the employees. Though respondents agreed on the indicator, the fact that it receives the lowest weighted mean signifies inadequacy. This suggests then that the select international vessels must augment their offering of socio-cultural guides that will be beneficial to the employees. More so, when seafarers are open to novel experience, imaginative, creative and adventurous, they help lessen the adverse effects of mingling with unfamiliar cultures.

Table 8. Difference in Responses on Culture Adaptation Aboard the Ship When Grouped According to Profile

Profile Variables	Communication Skills			Interpersonal Relationships		
	F-vale	p-value	Interpretation	F-vale	p-value	Interpretation
Age	0.965	0.410	Not Significant	1.520	0.210	Not Significant
Gender	-0.211	0.833	Not Significant	0.657	0.512	Not Significant
Civil Status	0.097	0.961	Not Significant	0.208	0.891	Not Significant
Length of Service	0.971	0.407	Not Significant	0.263	0.852	Not Significant
Department	0.466	0.706	Not Significant	0.679	0.566	Not Significant
Monthly Income	1.595	0.191	Not Significant	0.922	0.430	Not Significant

Legend: Significant at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$; HS = Highly Significant; S = Significant; NS = Not Significant

Table 8 shows the comparison between culture adaptation aboard ship when grouped according to profile variables. As shown from the results, all computed p-values are all greater than 0.05 alpha level, thus, the researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis. This means that there is significant difference existing, which implies the responses do not vary across the respondents' profile.

As previously mentioned, the profiles of the respondents do not necessarily affect their evaluation on their cultural adaptation. Since the respondents are all Filipino employees, they might have experienced the same crisis with regard to adapting to other cultures. This can also be associated to the fact that the respondents share set of values and adaptations skill when it comes to multicultural environment. Like other Asian countries, Filipinos share similar perception on multiculturalism. In particular, Papachristou, et al. [20] confirmed that the Asian seafarers' collectivistic cultures that prioritize being with the family than satisfying individual needs. Hence, their responses do not vary.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The training of the employees to practice their English language and improve their communication skills and encourage employees to socialize in the multicultural environment onboard ship as well as ashore are of prime importance. The seafarers are provided safe and healthy working environment in terms of physical setting, whereas for emotional setting, they have decreased fear and inferiority complex. On one hand, building up language and communication skills is what seafarers need in terms of social setting. Age group of 40 years old is revealed to have significant difference in the responses in terms of work motivation-reward system. Likewise, a monthly income of P50,000 to P99,000 has also significant difference in terms of physical setting and emotional setting under work environment.

The ship owners or cruise line companies may develop programs as measures leading to inclusive work environment towards the success for the seafarers and the company as well. The Lyceum University may contribute to the effectiveness of Filipino seafarers

through equipping the cruise line students with trainings and seminars especially on cultural awareness so they can easily adjust to their workplace. A study may be conducted in the future using other variables such as other skilled works in cruise line companies to further create an inclusive work environment in the international cruise vessel, thus, making a huge impact in the lives of the Filipino seafarers. The study is only limited to selected seafarer employed in international vessels focusing on the cultural adaptation and attitude toward work environment, future study may be conducted as comparative study on international and local vessel.

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