

FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE DELAYED EMBARKATION FOR AND RETURN FROM SHIPBOARD TRAINING OF MAAP CADETS

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Abstract. *The general aim of the study was to identify the factors that affected the delayed embarkation for and return from Shipboard Training of cadets from the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP). In this paper, the researchers set three different phases of Shipboard Training, namely: 1. Pre-Shipboard Training, 2. Shipboard Training, and 3. Post-Shipboard Training, to categorize the factors of delay and to determine the extent of delay which these factors generated. The research involved fourth-year cadets who came back from a one-year Shipboard Training, set during their third year of study. Using a validated survey form and by implementing one-on-one interview with every respondent, the researchers were able to collect data needed for the completion of this paper. Of all the factors in the first and second phases, Shipboard Training Contract and Vessel Assignment appeared to be the most dominant factors that caused the delay of MAAP cadets. The said factors of the delay were most evident during the Pre-Shipboard Training phase. From the 80 respondents, the majority of respondents (48 of 80) were affected during the Pre-Shipboard Training phase by either In-House Trainings, Vessel Assignment, Company Requirements or any combination of these three. During the Shipboard Training phase, the majority of the respondents (54 of 80) were affected by Contract and Vessel Assignment. For the Post-Shipboard Training phase, 37 out of 80 were delayed due to Enrollment. The Pre-Shipboard Training phase proved to affect cadets the most in terms of the duration of the delay. It had a median value of four months, as compared to the median value of one month for both Shipboard Training and Post-Shipboard Training phases. With these results, the researchers recommended that Shipping Companies, Manning Agencies, and the Academy should organize studies to improve the forecasting of Cadet demand vis-à-vis vessel availability. Furthermore, close coordination with the Academy's Department of Shipboard Training and Shipping Companies / Manning Agencies should include projecting Cadet's training schedule, embarkation, vessel transfer,*

disembarkation, and overall Shipboard Training duration. As part of the Pre-Shipboard Orientation, the Academy should cascade the results of this research to the MAAP cadets who are going on Shipboard Training so that they are made aware of the existence and extent of these factors that cause delay.

1 INTRODUCTION

In 2009, MAAP started implementing two graduations in an academic year as the Institution began to accommodate twice the number of enrollees to cope with the demands of the Stakeholders. Also, as a way of accommodating varying Stakeholders demands, MAAP implemented two academic schemes, namely the 2-1-1 and 3-1 schemes. These schemes were guided by the Commission on Higher Education's proposed Programs of Study outlined in CHED CMO No.67 and No.70. In these memoranda, a BSMT or BSMarE student should have a total of three years' academics and one year of shipboard training.

To be able to graduate, a cadet must comply with all academic requirement set by the Academy and must complete one year of shipboard training. Failure to comply with the requirements would merit a deferment to the next graduation date, whether within the same academic year or the next.

Over the years, there has been considerable growth in the number of cadets who fail to graduate within their respective graduation year. The disparity between the number of graduates during the first and second graduation within the same year was becoming a concern as the second batch were more often more populous than the first batch.

Results of cadet exit interviews conducted by the Academy revealed that the cadets deem Shipboard training as the major cause of failing to graduate on time. Specifically, the cadets noted that Shipboard Training accounts for the considerable delay of returning to the Academy, either for graduation (3-1 scheme) or resuming academic study (2-1-1 scheme).

1.1 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework simplifies how the various factors contribute to the ultimate concern of the researchers: being delayed in embarkation for, and return from, Shipboard Training of MAAP cadets. The researchers initially identify the various independent variables that cause the delay to be: Medical Causes, Behavioral Factors, Completion of Documents, Vessel Assignment, Company Policies, and Training Requirements, which are present among the three phases we have categorized into Pre-Shipboard-Training, Shipboard-Training, and Post-Shipboard-Training.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The general objective of the study is to determine the factors that cause the delay of embarkation for and return from, Shipboard Training of cadets to potentially discover vital areas from which plausible recommendations can be drawn to avoid such delays in the future. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions 1.) What are the factors that affect the delay of embarkation of MAAP cadets? 2.) What are the factors that affect the delay of return from Shipboard Training of MAAP cadets? and 3.) Which of the three phases, Pre-Shipboard-Training, Shipboard-Training, and Post-Shipboard-Training have the most dominant effect in the delay of MAAP cadets?

1.3 Hypothesis of the study

1. Vessel Assignment has a dominant effect on the delay of embarkation of MAAP cadets for Shipboard Training.
2. Contract and Vessel Assignment has the most significant impact on the delay of midshipmen during Shipboard Training, while Enrollment has the greatest effect on the cadets' delay on the Post-Shipboard-Training period.
3. Among the three phases, Pre-Shipboard Training is the most critical period in terms of contributing most to cadets' delays.

1.4 Significance of the study

The findings of the study are deemed significant to the following entities:
cadets of MAAP. The researchers believe that this paper would help the cadets in making necessary solutions should these cadets ever encounter any of the factors affecting the delay of their embarkation for Shipboard Training.

Institution. The institution would have a grasp of not only the magnitude of this occurrence but also the reason why this occurs in the first place. In its capacity, the Academy can set in place preventive measures to address this situation and mitigate the effect of this problem.

Stakeholders. It cannot be stressed enough that the Stakeholders play a crucial role in addressing this concern. From the time the Institutions sends the cadet to their offices for shipboard training to the time that the cadet returns to the Academy, it is the Stakeholders who have control over the cadets. In the business side of things, cadets are investments made by Stakeholders to secure their long-term financial standing. The sooner the cadets graduate, the sooner they become part of the pool of officers at the company's disposal. The sooner they can get to work; the sooner the return of investment would be for the company.

1.5 Scope and delimitation

The study involves fourth-year cadets (with the 2-1-1 scheme) of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific, currently enrolled for the Academic Year 2017-2018, who completed 12 months of Shipboard Training for BSMT and or BSMarE (as required by STCW).

1.6 Literature review

Singh (2017) recognizes in his article five problems that the shipping industry is currently facing that needs to be resolved immediately. Along with other problems, the author also identifies the difficulty to join a ship as one. The author states that for seafarers, it has become more challenging to travel and join a ship at a faraway port, contending that ships are loaded and all set to sail by the time the visa is accomplished. The problem of lenient registries in other countries such as Belize and the Marshall Islands make countries such as the Philippines and Ukraine take things more seriously by improving the quality of the training these countries offer. Document requirements and completion may also be a vital issue in this discussion. According to the author, fast loading and discharging rates contribute to the difficulty in joining a ship such that before the necessary documents, such as the visa can be processed, the vessel would already be done with loading and about to set sail.

A significant feature of the Shipboard Training for cadets is described in the study of

Livingstone, Caesar (2013). He describes the cadet training system as being designed to principally ensure that there is a consistent pool of skilled cadets from which the different companies could select their next officers. Shipboard Training, being penultimate to officership, is already part of the practice of maritime employment. A continuously growing international fleet, which foreshadows the lack of merchant marine officers, calls for a re-evaluation of maritime policies in the labor market of the maritime industry (WMU Journal of Maritime Affairs, 2015). Maritime policies and national policies, being the foundations of maritime employment and the deployment grounds for Shipboard Training, dramatically affects the variables of interest for the researchers. These factors may be less perceivable to the cadets, however, with the companies and the national authority having the firsthand information on such variables. Some are more evident however to the cadets, such as restrictions on nationality when it comes to employment, or preferences at the very least, whether positively or negatively. If the competitiveness of our country is severed because of these circumstances, we can, in turn, expect difficulties to arise, even if we only take the stance of those waiting for their Shipboard Training.

There exists definite dynamics in the labor market of the maritime industry, among these, are vacancies and movements in employment and the workforce, as well as changes in the activity content, according to Kalvaitiene and Sencila (2013). Considering this situation of the maritime sector drives the need for professional career planning among future seafarers and the corresponding skills development thereof. It then becomes the burden of Maritime Education and Training Institutions to both ensure their primary function of preparing qualified individuals and to ensure a systematic and streamlined education for the profession. In their study, it has been revealed that cadets do not usually regard matters such as professional career planning. The study showed that success in a student's professional career is patterned by three components: professional competence, general and career planning skills. With Shipboard Training as a pathway to a professional career, the researchers view the importance of professional career planning skills as an important quality for a cadet to possess. Certain career planning skills and their decision-making capabilities greatly affect their Shipboard Training and the time spent in such activities up to their graduation.

Dizon and Vergara (2013) discusses on the same issue of delays in shipboard training and reveals the requirements, certificates, and documents takes cadets several weeks or even months to accomplish. Vessel availability was also cited as one of these factors, and the study even stated on age limit being imposed and serving as a barrier to early employment. The study even went as deep as to answer how these delays can even affect the educational and training process of these cadets.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design

The research is a descriptive-correlational study wherein the independent variables have a relationship with the dependent variables. Through qualitative analysis, the researchers gained an understanding through underlying reasons, opinions, and insights through formal and informal interviews used to develop appropriate ideas and or hypotheses to solve the existing problem. Furthermore, the researchers incorporated the design of quantitative research as there would be numerical analyses and statistical treatment of data (which were gathered

through questionnaires) for this particular paper.

2.2 Population of the study

The study involves one hundred (100) fourth-year cadets (2-1-1 scheme) of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific, enrolled for the Academic Year 2017-2018, who completed Shipboard Training requirement for BSMT and or BSMarE. Using an online sample size computer (by Raosoft), the researchers were able to have a sample size of eighty (80), with five (5) percent margin of error and ninety-five (95) percent confidentiality.

2.3 Data gathering tools / Materials and equipment

The researchers used survey forms to collect data. Three (3) instructors have validated this survey form, two (2) are from the General Education Department, and one (1) is from the Maritime Professionals. After the validation, the researchers conducted a pilot testing involving eleven (11) fourth-year cadets, which is at least 10 percent of the population, to check errors and see whether necessary corrections and improvements are to be done on the survey form. Revisions have been made, and the survey form has undergone revalidation with the same validators. After which, the survey form has been approved for actual floating.

2.4 Data gathering procedure

After the validation of the final survey form, the researchers collected the data through a guided survey. The researchers discussed the contents to every respondent part by part, one researcher is to one respondent, to assure that the data would be entered and gathered correctly. The researchers conducted their data gathering methods in the Study Room of the Old Dormitory of the CGSO Campus. The respondents are divided into equal percentage per batch: eighty (80) percent on each batch; First Batch, Second Batch, and Deferred cadets.

2.5 Data analysis or treatment of data

The researchers utilized the internet in transferring all raw data from the questionnaire to the online forms. Through this online form(s) the data were automatically sorted which the researchers used for comprehensive data analysis. The researchers consulted a statistician to analyze the data. The data were treated under a computer program called SPSS to answer the problems of the study. The data were subjected to statistical tools, simple descriptive statistics such as getting the frequency and median were used to analyze and interpret the gathered numerical data on this research.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Delaying Factors Before Embarkation for Shipboard Training of MAAP cadets

FACTORS	DESCRIPTIVES		DURATION OF DELAY (MONTHS)					
	FREQ	% OF CASES	0-1	> 1 - 2	> 2 - 3	> 3 - 4	> 4 - 5	> 5
Medical	11	14.30%	9	1				1
In-house Training	48	62.30%	39	7	1			1
Sponsorship	22	28.60%	4	5	2	3	3	5
Vessel Assignment	48	62.30%	8	10	5	9	4	12
Company Policies	23	29.90%	16	2	1	4	1	1
Training Ship	5	6.50%	1	2			1	1
STCW Requirements	34	44.20%	31	3				
Company Requirements	48	62.30%	43	2	1	1		
Behavioral	1	1.30%	1					
Financial	2	2.60%	1	1				
Personal Decision	17	22.10%	6	3		1	2	5
Others	1	1.30%	1					

The table above shows the different factors that delay the cadets, prolonging the time before their Shipboard Training.

From this data it could be depicted that the three factors of In-House Training, Vessel Assignment, and Company Requirements affected the respondents the most, regarding frequency, occurring at 48 out of the 80 samples and representing over 60% of the 77 respondents who said they were affected during this phase. These are followed by STCW Requirements at f=34, Company Policies at 23 followed closely by Sponsorship at 22.

Table 2: Delaying Factors During and After Completion of Shipboard Training

PHASE	FACTORS	DESCRIPTIVES		DURATION OF DELAY (MONTHS)					
		FREQ	% OF CASES	0-1	> 1 - 2	> 2 - 3	> 3 - 4	> 4 - 5	> 5
Shipboard Training	Sponsorship	2	3.60%	1			1		
	Contract / Vessel Assignment	54	96.40%	18	11	7	7	2	7
	Company Policies	19	33.90%	7	7	1		1	2
	Personal Decision	12	21.40%	5	1			2	2
	Other	2	3.60%	1					1
Post Shipboard Training	Medical	28	50.00%	23	2	1			1
	Company Policies	22	39.30%	12	4	2			4
	Behavioral	2	3.60%		1			1	1
	Enrolment	37	66.10%	10	1		6	1	18
	Personal Decision	10	17.90%	5			3		2

Table 2 under the phase Shipboard-Training illustrates the occurrences of delaying factors experienced by cadets during Shipboard Training and while the phase Post-Shipboard-Training shows delaying factors experienced by cadets after completing Shipboard Training.

It is apparent from this table that majority of the cause of the delay of cadets fall under contract and Vessel Assignment, of which more than 96.4% of the 57 cadets that indicated to have delays during this period have been affected by the said factor. On the far second, with f=19 (33.9% of the cases) is company policies followed by company policies with 21.4% occurrence among the cases at f=12. From the data in Post-Shipboard Training, it is clear that Enrollment considerably occurs among cadets to cause delays. Of the 56 cadets who said they were affected during this period, 37 (66.1% of the cases) suffered from this factor. Medical factors ranked second during this stage while company policies ranked second, occurring at f=28 (50%) and f=22 (39.3%) respectively. (See Appendix B and C for a detailed projection of the data)

Table 3: Delays Before, During and After Shipboard Training

TRAINING PHASE	MEDIAN (MONTHS)
Pre-Shipboard	4
Shipboard	1
Post-Shipboard	1

Table 3 shows the phase as to what phase has the most significant effect in the delay of MAAP cadets

In determining which of the three phases has the most dominant effect in terms of the duration it costs cadets before they can enroll, it is first necessary for the researchers to identify which of the three measures of central tendency, the mean, median or mode, would be most suitable for the data. It is apparent however that Pre-Shipboard-Training training is the most dominant phase in terms of the median duration it takes cadets, and even if the mean or the mode were used, the result would still lead to this phase delaying cadet the most. Shipboard Training and the Post-Shipboard-Training phases are tied with a median of value one month. Had the mean been used, however, the results would turn out a bit differently with the Shipboard Training phase at an average of 2.07 months (62 days) and Post-Shipboard-Training training at 3.3 months (99 days). The mean for Pre-Shipboard-Training-Training is close to the median of 4 months, at 3.71 months (111 days).

2 CONCLUSION

Evident from the findings, it is conclusive that:

1. In-House Training, Vessel Assignment, and Company Requirements are factors with a dominant effect on the delay of embarkation of MAAP cadets for Shipboard Training.
2. Contract and Vessel Assignment has the greatest impact on the delay of midshipmen during Shipboard-Training, while Enrollment has the greatest effect on the cadets' delay on the Post-Shipboard-Training period.
3. Pre-Shipboard-Training is the most critical period in terms of contributing most to Cadet's delays.

2.1 Recommendation

With these results, the researchers recommended that:

1. Shipping Companies, Manning Agencies, and the Academy may organize studies to improve the forecast of Cadet demands, taking into consideration the companies' projected acquisitions, vessel count, trade competitiveness, and even affiliations to other educational institutions or sponsored affiliates. This process will ensure companies do not take in more cadets than they can allow to board their vessels.
2. The Academy may impose policies requiring companies and the cadets to complete a maximum of only twelve months on their Shipboard Training, taking into consideration the duration of the layover in between contracts, as well as other factors that may delay the completion of their training and their return to the academy.

Adopting the tri-semester or quad-semester schemes can reduce the waiting period for cadets for the next cycle of enrolment. The population of enrollees, the influx of cadets as

they return from Shipboard Training, as well as financial and human resources must be considered in this decision.

3. The Academy may conduct a pre-shipboard orientation for the cadets and make them wary of the factors that may cause delays, particularly for the Pre-Shipboard phase so that cadets can be vigilant specifically on the three factors of Company Requirements, In-House Trainings, and Vessel Assignment.

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