

Factors that Influence Seafarers' Job Retention as Perceived by Cruise Seafarers from Three Major Cruise Fleets in Manila

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to know the factors that influence the seafarer's job retention in terms of their demographic profile, work environment, working hours, salary, and benefits that they receive in the cruise industry. The researchers used a survey questionnaire for data gathering. There was a total of 150 respondents from three cruise fleet companies in Manila. Married male respondents dominated the majority of the seafarers. Most of them are around 30 – 40 years old, and they have been in the industry for more than five years. The respondents did not find any problem in terms of the factors (work environment, working hours, salary, and benefits) that affect their job retention for they strongly agree that they feel belonged, safe, and secured, and they can work with flexible working schedules. Moreover, their compensations, benefits (training and medical care), and some bonuses stimulate them to work and be loyal to the company. The researchers found that there is still a high chance of retention for every seafarer as long as they feel that they are an important member of the organization.

Keywords: *Filipino seafarers, job retention, employee retention*

INTRODUCTION

The most common seafarers today around the world were reported to be 50 – 60 percent from the Philippines, this showed us that the Filipinos have a lot of dedication and talents in terms of performing their job at sea. Working at sea is way dissimilar from land-based jobs. Cruise ships travel to different cities and places in the world, which operates for 24/7. It is really a different kind of emotion when you are at sea, you must move faster every day, and it can be somewhat challenging, and may take you weeks just to adjust with the new environment and conquer the emotional stress. Sea-based jobs are becoming in demand in the cruise ship industry, shipping companies around the world indicate the requirements of their manpower (Scout Cruise, 2019).

A good employee leads to retention and recruiting good staff is central to running a good provision for companies. One of the primary costs is providing staff with compensation and benefits because recruiting and retaining good staff is key in management responsibility (Croner-i, 2016). According to Cruise Industry News (2014), there are two objectives for companies—to recruit and to retain their employees. They realize that it is important to be aware and reach out with their employees' needs and give job promotion opportunities. Meanwhile, as mentioned by Smith (2018), working in a cruise ship sounds pretty good, but life at sea is not always for everyone. Although the accommodation and living expenses are taken care of by them, the salaries are usually low, some tips, however, can top up the wages. While one would like to travel the world, it is certainly not a holiday because the hours for staff are long and days off are rare. Seafarers have to adapt to living in small confinements, thus it is also quite difficult to keep up with good work and life balance as you are always confined in the ship majority of the time since they do not have the chance of going home.

With this, the researchers decided to conduct a research on how seafarers retain their careers in the cruise industry by knowing the factors that keep them in their jobs. It is important to know why crew members choose to stay and pursue their careers on board despite some negative aspects to pursue their career paths. This study aimed to know the reasons why they continue to work aboard a ship with a different environment, less privileges, and sometimes poor working environments with more hours of

work and less hours of rest because it is important to sustain the workforce on board especially Filipinos being the most demanded workforce in the cruise seafaring industry. Using quantitative data, the researchers gathered information that can also be helpful for future seafarers to know the realities that they should know when working on board a cruise ship and if they want to continue pursuing their careers onboard.

Review of literature

Editor (2017) says that around the world, Philippines is one of the sources for seafarers. The Filipino seafarer are composed of more than 25 percent of the 1.5 million seafarers worldwide. Meanwhile, other foreign countries describe the Filipinos as hardworking, flexible, disciplined, and have strong attitudes in their work. Filipino seafarers also refer to Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who are sea-based workers. We often hear stories that when someone mentions that they are working as a seaman, the first thinking of people is that being a seaman has a lot of benefits, and that he is taken cared of, or the most usual impression, he has a bigger salary. Thus, even if seafarers work at sea, it is still sad that they are away from their family.

As mentioned by Kallenberg (2013), job positions can be distinguished into so-called 'good jobs' and 'bad jobs' in which a good job provides a fair and reasonable pay and sufficient health insurance, retirement plan, and other benefits. It is considered a good job if workers are in the right condition and has flexibility over work activities and have control over termination of job. Moreover, bad jobs mostly offer low salaries, insufficient benefits, and very limited control and security to workers.

Arsenie, Hanzu-Pazara, and Surugiu (2014) stated in their study, that the retention of seafarers is an important aspect for all the shipping companies which includes ship owners, ship managers, and crewing companies. All of these companies want advantages from retention of seafarers with their company for a long time as possible. In order to realize this long-time retention to the company, however, it is necessary to know and to manage correctly those seafarers' considerations which make them seek for "long-term contracts" that can lead to retention in their jobs onboard. In addition, it is stated in their study that when seafarers decide to remain onboard the same company's ships, they consider many other aspects such as company policies regarding personnel training, good training, support for their families, and sustaining of family members who intend to follow their parents' careers in which seafarers need to feel that the company takes care of their problems and reassures them of a safe and healthy environment onboard.

Based on the study of Arsenie, Hanzu-Pazara, and Surugiu (2014), the seafarers appreciate those companies that took care of them during their difficult years and have less favorable payment conditions in exchange to a stable workplace with a good environment onboard and a possibility for continuity with the same company wherein it is also possible to be on the same ship. Therefore, seafarers can be less willing to move from other companies for a minimum salary increase. In the future, other considerations will be important to seafarers when they decide to remain with a particular shipping company, than considerations of the past or present.

The feeling of being valued by the organization is another way in which a person feels that he is an important member in the workplace which shows in terms of fair treatment to one another, good medical care, and relief at work (Bloor, 2013). According to Arsenie, Hanzu-Pazara, and Surugiu (2014), the seafarer's number of years working onboard is because their reason to remain in the same company has been influenced mostly by a good work environment, good communication with their co-workers and manager, and the company's involvement in their retention.

As stated by Kahveci (2013), providing seafarers to internet accessibility onboard such as access to social networking sites affects their motivation and productivity because this is how they keep in touch with their families. According to Lloyd's List (2012), it shows that senior officers have much broader access to internet and the hierarchical structure can be considered as one factor that should be taken into

account when access to communication is examined. It can be concluded that it is unrealistic to expect young seafarers to go at sea for months without contact with the outside world.

During events like Christmas, New Year, birthdays, or just a great day, a party on board makes each and everyone happy and forget all the workloads after and have time for themselves to enjoy and relax a bit (Bhattacharjee, 2018). In an article, Gazelidis (2018) says that the overall travel experience of a seafarer onboard is another key to maintaining onboard and offshore satisfaction and by means of the seafarer's happiness, wellbeing, and mental health is a topic currently gathering much discussion between crew managers in keeping seafarers engaged and content at sea is one of the keys in retaining staff and encouraging future potential recruits to consider a career at sea. He also stated that a good crew manager should be able to provide support for all crew members as they move around the world and help or advise them on how to deal with their work onboard. It can be done by improving working conditions, providing training and professional development courses, giving plenty of opportunities for feedback, and also creating a detailed travel itinerary without multiple changes. These can increase seafarers' satisfaction.

Landry & Kling (2019) says that working on a cruise ship means there will always be a risk on the safety and security of everybody aboard. Cruise ship safety is one valid concern in working onboard. In recent data, it confirms that cruising is still one of the safety forms of recreation and travel in the world with a record of 20 million passengers cruising every year, the industry made sure to always maintain the safety and security of passengers and its crew. Moreover, as the ships have grown bigger, cruises have to be safer than at any time in history.

Arsenie, Hanzu-Pazara, and Surugiu (2014) mentioned that an important aspect of retention is represented by the generation of a career path for every seafarer which allows more controlled promotion of seafarer in their careers. They indicate that the career path is an important element within bigger ship companies where advancing in job positions is possible after some training or their dedication at work that lead to a seafarer's career evolution and remain loyal with respect for the company. As stated by Yamamoto (2014), improved strategies will help enable employees' benefits from the company become profitable as well as encouraging a positive attitude in the job and to the workplace can mediate the retention of employees. It is vital to have a policy that is friendly to seafarers so they can enjoy their jobs and help prevent early retirement.

Working hours

According to Seafarers Right International (2014), every seafarer has their right in terms of regulated working hours and also during their rest hours. Per the Maritime Labor Convention of 2006 (MLC), the hours of work are stated as either maximum hours of work, or minimum hours of rest: the maximum hours of duty must not exceed 14 hours in 24 hours, and 72 hours in any seven-day period, or the minimum rest hours must not be less than 10 hours in a 24-hour period, and 77 hours in whichever seven-day period; the hours of rest mean the time spent outside of duty on account of the ship, short breaks are not included; the hours of rest can be divided into two periods, it must be at least six hours, the interval during rest hours should not be longer than 14 hours; the account should be taken of the danger posed by the fatigue of seafarers; any mandatory musters or drills must be performed in a way that minimizes the disturbances of rest hours and does not induce fatigue; and the schedule/table of service at sea and service at port for all job positions must be posted on the ship, it should be in the work language of the ship and in also in English.

The record of a seafarer's daily hours of rest or hours of work must be kept onboard in the working language of the ship and in English and must be signed by the seafarer and the master or other authorized person. The seafarer must be given a copy. In the event of an emergency or to give assistance to other ships or persons in distress at sea, the master can suspend the work schedule until the problem is resolved. If the usual working hours are interrupted, a seafarer is entitled to an appropriate compensatory rest period.

According to Singh (2013), the implementation of MLC 2006 is to benefit seafarers, but in some certain provisions, they did not realize that the best people to make such rules for working and resting hours are those who work onboard. Thus, these rules can surely help seafarers globally in some certain extent, the truth is, even without these rules, professionals working on ships know how to look out for one another without anyone telling them what or how to do so with these labor and rest hours.

As stated by Cruise Job Finder (2019), seafarers are expected to usually work long hours and the job can be a bit stressful and demanding some times. This is most demanding especially if they work as a server in a restaurant or in housekeeping. Thus, it is important to keep up with passengers' requests and that is another reason that can keep you on your feet and busy throughout your work hours.

Salary and benefits

Aside from wages and tips, there are a number of cruise companies that provide a range of fringe benefits for seafarers such as medical and dental care, stock purchase program, free return trips, paid leave, discounted cruise packages for family members, service awards, and retirement plans (CCL, 2017; NCL, 2017; Princess, 2017).

One of the good things about working at sea is the good pay compared to their homelands. Based on the 2015 results, most seafarers mentioned that they want a fair wage and must be ensured that they receive it. In the Seafarers Happiness Index, the salary and wage levels are really important and have an impact for every seafarer.

Cruise Ship Jobs (2019) says that if a crew member gets sick onboard, he can go to the medical staff and will be given prescription medicine at no cost. When he becomes better, he can go back to his duties and the medical staff will provide a doctor's note to the supervisor. Thus, if crew members need to disembark for medical reasons which manifests while working onboard the cruise ship, they will be entitled to medical attention paid by the cruise line upon their return home. The crew member also receives daily allowance in an amount determined by the cruise line until the crew member is capable to go back to duty. In addition, most cruise lines cover medical expenses.

Crew agencies and the ship owners could agree to provide seafarers with other financial benefits such as performance, standby, loyalty, and study leave bonuses. They even offer 'guaranteed employment' for qualified relatives (Pacific Basin, 2015).

Shipping companies offer bonuses to seafarers for the period spent on shore and help stimulate them to remain loyal to the company and it can be the best option for the seafarers' loyalty because they consider this to be like a 12-month contract. In this kind of system, both company and the seafarer have advantages where the company is sure about their personnel coverage and seafarers are assured of their job positions within the company that is why there is also a system of personnel rotation that is supposed to rotate the same seafarers inside the ship with three- to four-month contracts which requires three or four crew members for each ship (Arsenie, Hanzu-Pazara, and Surugiu, 2014).

Based on Arsenie, Hanzu-Pazara, and Surugiu (2014), seafarers also consider the higher standards of training provided by companies to be really useful. At the same time, shipping companies should start developing and implementing programs for the retention of seafarers which provide the opportunity for good career development.

Seafarers will be more interested in remaining with the company that has covered the two essential costs of insurance and retirement. Those seafarers who were questioned declared that those companies that cover these costs are more highly rated than those companies who do not have these kinds of benefits. In any case, seafarers' interest in these subjects appear after their time spent at sea where they realized their importance; possibly after a medical problem or when they start to think about retirement. Because of these, the retention of seafarers has become a difficult task for shipping companies in which the situation has been emphasized by recent economic crisis. Due to reduction of activity, most companies lost some of their seafarers and are now forced to come up with more attractive offers to cover

their personnel needs and at the same time, companies able to manage the economic crisis now have the advantage of recruitment and retention of seafarers from other companies.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers used a descriptive-correlated method in this study which describes the characteristics of the sample population. It focused more on the “what” of the respondents of the study rather than the “why” (Bhat, 2019). According to Manalo, et al. (2015), a descriptive study is the collected information without changing the environment and where nothing is manipulated. Sometimes, these are “correlational” or in other aspect, it may be “observational” studies.

This study was conducted in the three major cruise fleet companies or agencies located in the Manila area. The selected three cruise agencies were TDG Crew Management Inc. located in Port Area, Manila for Disney Cruise Line, United Philippine Lines (UPL) in Intramuros, Manila for Carnival Cruises, and RCCL Crew Management Inc. in Pasay City for Royal Caribbean. The researchers chose these three cruise fleet companies since the respondents of this study were Filipino seafarers who are currently working in the three selected cruise companies in Manila.

There were 150 Filipino seafarers who served as respondents of this study. The researchers used quota sampling and G-power to determine effective size (0.364), alpha error (0.05), and power (0.95). The respondents are currently working for at least a year, in the cruise industry and residing here in the Philippines. They were from three major cruise fleets in Manila. The participants were asked for their consent and approval to answer the questionnaire until the researchers reached the desired number of respondents per cruise ship company. The opinion and responses of the respondents were highly appreciated by the researchers.

The researchers used different methods in analyzing the gathered data. For the demographic profile of the respondents, the researchers used the frequency and percentage statistical method. Weighted mean in the Likert Scale was used to determine the factors that affect seafarers’ retention. Furthermore, the researchers also used a Pearson Chi-Square to determine the significant relationship when respondents are grouped according to their demographic profile.

Researchers ensured the quality and integrity of this paper. All of the answered survey questionnaires were allowed and the researchers sought the consent of the respondents who voluntarily participated in this study. The researchers also wanted to give the three companies respect for allowing them to conduct their study. Rest assured, all of the given information is confidential and anonymous. To avoid any harm, the researchers followed the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The researchers used all of the information purely for educational purposes only.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Number of respondents according to their cruise company

Cruise ship company	Frequency	Percent
United Philippine Line	50	33.30
TDG Management Crew	50	33.30
Royal Caribbean Cruise Line	50	33.30
Total	150	100.00

The three cruise line companies have different aims for their employees. For UPL, they want to ensure that their employees will give better value of service for every guest cruiser onboard. Meanwhile, TDG aims to help their employees develop their personal growth and professional development with their skills and careers. Lastly, RCCL aims to have a good environment onboard by giving respect to one another and appreciating the hard work of their employees through opportunities or possible promotions.

As stated by UPL (2016), companies are committed to better quality and value of service to every cruiser. Meanwhile, TDG (2019), encourages and prioritizes the growth and development of skills among their people in order to achieve their personal and professional growth. Moreover, according to Royal

Caribbean International (2019), they foster an environment of mutual respect and appreciation for their employees and value them also through promotions and transfer processes.

Table 2. Respondents of the study according to their gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	85	56.70
Female	52	34.70
LGBTQ	13	8.70
Total	150	100.00

An article in the Manila Times by Sharp Minds Content (2017), it is an accepted fact that men usually dominate the cruise industry. Moreover, as stated by George (2017), gender diversity is not just about gender. Also, Dawes (2016) says that the condition of sexual orientation character has developed throughout the years, however, not without some contentions between transgender men and distinguished butch lesbians, who feel strained to be recognized as men or accept the transgender label.

The results show that most seafarers who work in the cruise industry are still male, followed by female seafarers. Thus, it is surprising that the number of female seafarers is now growing. Few, however, are part of the LGBTQ. It is possible that some of the respondents feel pressured to identify themselves as LGBTQ. Furthermore, it is really important that the cruise fleet company or agency now implements gender diversity in the cruise industry because it is an important matter onboard that makes the organization work as a whole despite their gender preferences.

Table 3. Respondents of the study according to their age

Age	Frequency	Percent
21 – 30 years old	27	18.00
31 – 40 years old	83	55.30
41 – 50 years old	38	25.30
51 – 60 years old	2	1.30
Total	150	100.00

The researchers found that the respondents were commonly in their mid-30s which means most seafarers have been working for several years. It can be true that they have been retained from their companies and their jobs despite their age. Furthermore, it can be said that most seafarers could still work onboard despite their age, and it is also surprising that there are still seafarers older than 41 – 50 years old. The results show that there is retention happening for seafarers regardless of their age.

According to Cruise Jobs (2018), there were crew members over the age bracket of 30 – 40 years old who still work as a seafarer for a long period in their cruise companies. Although there is no maximum working age limit in cruise ships, usually, most of cruise companies do not usually hire older applicants in some circumstances.

Table 4. Respondents of the study according to their civil status

Civil Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	51	34.00
Married	96	64.00
Widowed	1	0.70
Divorced	2	1.30
Total	150	100.00

As seen from the results, many of the seafarers are already tied and happily married. Meanwhile, there are still some seafarers who are single as supported by the results of the age of the respondents. It could be possible that many of the seafarers, aged 30 – 40 years old, are still single. Moreover, few of the respondents are divorced, in which there are less possible chances of a failed marriages for seafarers and only few are already widowed.

According to the PSA (2018), an individual's status is classified as follows: a legally and consensually married couple is composed of a husband and wife; an individual is classified under "divorced" if the tie of marriage was dissolved legally and can remarry; and a widower is an individual whose tie of marriage was dissolved by the death of the spouse. Meanwhile, Benjamin (2017) stated that older people, during their average life, have shifted from 24 years old for brides and 27 years old for grooms in 2005, to 26 years old and 28 years old in 2015 when entering marriage. Between the given age, people in their early 20s are more likely to get married than teenagers.

Table 5. Respondents of the study according to their job department

Job Department	Frequency	Percent
Housekeeping	29	19.30
Bar	22	14.70
Restaurant	30	20.00
Front Office	14	9.30
Others	55	36.70
Total	150	100.00

The researchers found that majority of seafarers who work onboard were usually from other job departments, such as spa, entertainment, and deck department. Moreover, it could be possible that there is a rapidly growing demand from different specializations aside from the restaurant, housekeeping, and bar department which opens many opportunities for everyone who is interested to work in the cruise industry.

Based on Cruise Job Finder (2019), employees onboard are divided into different job departments: service, entertainment, and accommodation that is often called hotel department, generalship maintenance, engine work, and safety. Other cruise lines use descriptions on these categories such as hotel activity or entertainment, service or hospitality, personal care, deck, and engineering department.

Table 6. Respondents of the study according to the years in experience on a cruise ship

Years in Experience	Frequency	Percent
Below 1 year	3	2.00
1 – 2 years	19	12.70
3 – 4 years	58	38.70
Above 5 years	70	46.70
Total	150	100.00

Based on the results, most of the seafarers had already experienced working onboard that exceeds up to more than five years of their service in staying with their cruise ship companies for many years. Many of the seafarers nowadays who still work in the cruise industry, have been retained with their companies for many years. It is also surprising that the result shows that only few seafarers have been working for not more than a year in the cruise industry. This can be proof that most seafarers already have been working with their cruise companies for not less than a year.

As stated by Williamson (2017), however, the retention record of employees is above the standard of the industry and majority of the crew decided to stay in their companies than to jump ship with another cruise line. In general, crew members choose to stick with one cruise ship company and only

few decide to move to another company. Even so, there are still many seafarers who have reached 5 – 10 or more years of service.

Table 7. Level of seafarer retention in terms of working environment

Working Environment	Mean	Interpretation
I am satisfied with how the company takes care of their employees.	3.40	Agree
There are many opportunities for a possible promotion in my career.	3.37	Agree
I can still enjoy and relax a bit after my workloads onboard.	3.36	Agree
I always feel like an important member in my workplace.	3.34	Agree
I feel safe and secure in my working environment aboard.	3.27	Agree
Composite Mean	3.35	Agree

Legend: 1.00 -1.49 - Strong Disagree; 1.50-2.49- Disagree; 2.50-3.49- Agree; 3.50 -4.00 - Strongly Agree

Most of the respondents *agree* that they are satisfied with how their companies take care of their employees. This serves as an indicator to the level of seafarers' retention in terms of the working environment onboard. The results only imply that in terms of the working environment onboard, the seafarers feel that they have a good work environment. Somehow, it is important for cruise ship companies to maintain a better assurance of safety and security onboard not only for the guest, but also for their employees because it is important that employees feel a welcoming, safe, and not toxic working environment onboard. This is supported by Bathena (2018), it really matters for a company that most of their employees are satisfied like in terms of how everyone deals with and respects each other, trusts the management, feels secured with their career paths, and of course, gives fair compensation. The seafarers give their extra efforts to achieve their dreams and take pride in their job, teamwork, and achievements.

Meanwhile, the lowest is concerned with the safety and security of seafarers in their working environment onboard. Furthermore, for the overall interpretation of the level of retention in terms of the working environment, the respondents *agree* with regard the working environment onboard. Since results show that the lowest mean is safety and security, it can be improved by providing security and visibility, especially in times wherein there are only few persons onboard. The company may also install more CCTV cameras inside and outside deck or in some prohibited areas that need monitoring for the security of employees and also for cruisers.

Moreover, according to Royal Caribbean International (2019), the security department onboard ensures the safety and security of the environment of their guests and crew members, so they will be able to enjoy their cruise vacation or their work. Security wants to prevent incidents and a highly-trained staff provide immediate action to issues onboard. They are also responsible for accessing security control to the ship, screening operations in gangways, and monitoring video security and investigations.

Table 8. Level of seafarers' retention in terms of working hours

Working Hours	Mean	Interpretation
I can work with a flexible shift schedule during my duty.	3.31	Agree
I have continuous sleep and rest hours after my work and get to spend my leave ashore.	3.29	Agree
I have adequate time to eat meals during break time.	3.26	Agree
I always work overtime after my duty onboard.	2.80	Agree
I became fatigued due to inadequate sleep and rest hours onboard.	2.17	Disagree
Composite Mean	2.97	Agree

Legend: 1.00 -1.49 - Strong Disagree; 1.50-2.49- Disagree; 2.50-3.49- Agree; 3.50 -4.00 - Strongly Agree

Majority of the respondents *agree* that they can work with a flexible shift working schedule during their duty. This serves as an indicator to the level of seafarers' retention in terms of working hours. The results only imply that most seafarers are still able to work with a good flexible shift schedule onboard and they can also have enough time to rest and enjoy their rest hours despite their work hours. Singh (2013) stated that despite the enforced regulations onboard, an adequate rest and working hours

should be given to seafarers. The right work-life balance onboard are achieved if seafarers know how to adapt to their work conditions.

Meanwhile, the lowest rank resulted in a positive scenario, since the seafarers *disagree* that they experienced feeling fatigued onboard due to inadequate sleep and rest hours. The overall interpretation of the level of retention in terms of the working hours resulted the respondents' *agreement* with regard their working hours onboard. Singh (2013) indicated that only an incompetent worker experience fatigue because a skilled seafarer, who loves their job, is rarely seen complaining about experiencing fatigue. The work and rest hours are nothing for seafarers. Half (2016), however, stated that work and rest can help keep their energies high and remain focused with their duties. Without proper rest, the brain and its productivity for quality of work will only fail.

Table 9. Level of retention in terms of salary and benefits

Salary and Benefits	Mean	Interpretation
I am provided with the company's higher standard of training for an opportunity for good career development.	3.40	Agree
My company bonus stimulates me in remaining loyal to it.	3.33	Agree
I only work onboard because of good compensation.	3.28	Agree
My company provides a range of fringe benefits (medical, dental care, free return trips, paid leave, discounted cruise packages for family members, and retirement plan).	3.21	Agree
My cruise agency provides bonus benefits for performance, standby, loyalty, and employment opportunity for my family.	3.19	Agree
Composite Mean	3.28	Agree

Legend: 1.00 -1.49 - Strong Disagree; 1.50-2.49- Disagree; 2.50-3.49- Agree; 3.50 -4.00 - Strongly Agree

Based on the results, the respondents *agree* their company provides high standards of training. Marlins (2018) supported this idea by arguing that onboard training services help refresh the seafarer's knowledge and verify the safe operation through trainings, drills, and exercises that will be used while working onboard. Meanwhile, respondent's *cruise agency provides bonus benefits for performance, standby, loyalty, and employment opportunity for my family* got the lowest rank. Companies should give their employees a chance to work with their family members or relatives onboard as a benefit. Overall, the respondents *agree* with the level of retention in terms of the salary and benefits. It is also important, however, that companies should consider their employees' performance and loyalty, and they should take a closer look at the benefits needed by seafarers. Arsenie, Hanzu-Pazara, and Surugiu (2014) say that companies that offer bonuses to seafarers for the period spent onshore can help stimulate them to remain loyal with the company. This is the best strategy to gain seafarers' loyalty for them, the job is a 12-month contract.

Relationship between demographic profile and factors that influence seafarers' job retention

Table 10. Relationship of level of retention and gender

Factors	Pearson Chi square	p-value	Interpretation
Work Environment	17.101	0.251	Not Significant
Working Hours	18.626	0.180	Not Significant
Salary and Benefits	18.153	0.446	Not Significant

p-value > 0.05 Not significant

There is no significant relationship between job's retention and gender as regards the factors including work environment, working hours, and salary and benefits. The cruise industry upholds equality

to all the gender orientations and there are no limits on what they can or cannot do because they are all equally capable of doing something. Furthermore, it also shows that everyone has to work with the same working hours and everyone has the same benefits that they could have regardless of gender. The result shows that regardless of their gender identity, they are all fairly and equally treated onboard.

As stated by Conrad (2015), there is a segmentation of gender that is being featured now on cruise employment. The 80 percent of the work population onboard are male which is why there is a perception that “man-work” is the only thing that exists onboard because it is physically demanding and is only suitable for males rather than females. Females are usually in service-oriented positions. This is not an outcome of the employment policy to hire male workers for specific jobs. Hence, the segmentation of gender may occur before job application, in which the males apply for “men’s jobs” and women apply for jobs that are seen as “women’s jobs” or gender neutral.

Table 11. Relationship of level of retention and age

Factors	Pearson Chi square	p-value	Interpretation
Work Environment	29.896	0.094	Not Significant
Working Hours	21.954	0.402	Not Significant
Salary and Benefits	28.358	0.393	Not Significant

p-value > 0.05 Not significant

There is no significant relationship between retention and age with regard factors including work environment, working hours, and salary and benefits. The result just shows that seafarers, regardless of their age, can easily adapt themselves well with their work environment since they have already worked in the same industry for a number of years. Also, they can easily deal with their working hours since they have adequate sleep and rest hours. They receive higher compensations and benefits which could be the reason why they are more likely to return to their jobs onboard. Nowadays, seafarers are seeking for permanent jobs that could provide for their needs.

Cruise Jobs (2018) stated that even if there is no age limit in working on cruise ships, the truth is that most cruise companies do not hire applicants over 35 years old. Thus, there are still crew members over the age of 35 who work in their cruise companies. Also, according to PTS (2018), a seafarer’s pension is received in addition to any state pension that they are entitled to before the age of 60.

Table 12. Relationship of level of retention and civil status

Factors	Pearson Chi square	p-value	Interpretation
Work Environment	17.559	0.677	Not Significant
Working Hours	17.675	0.669	Not Significant
Salary and Benefits	21.808	0.747	Not Significant

p-value > 0.05 Not significant

There is no significant relationship between retention and civil status as regards the factors, including the work environment, working hours, and salary and benefits. Majority of the seafarers are already married so they need jobs that could provide for their family’s needs, as well as for the single ones. Filipinos are known for having close family ties, so both statuses have the same need for job retention regardless the working environment and distance from their loved ones, long period of working hours, and the salary they could get from their cruise companies.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2018), a married person lives together with a partner. Majority of the seafarers onboard are already married compared to the single ones. Also, as stated by Kritz (2017), it is important to have an insurance benefit for the protection of seafarers and their families. It will also be very useful for better working conditions and when things go wrong.

Table 13. Relationship of level of retention and job department

Factors	Pearson Chi square	p-value	Interpretation
Work Environment	45.578	0.019	Significant
Working Hours	49.934	0.007	Significant
Salary and Benefits	35.156	0.509	Not Significant

p-value > 0.05 Not significant

The study reveals that working environment and working hours have significant relationships with job department. Based on the study of Arsenie, Hanzu-Pazara, and Surugiu (2014), seafarers appreciate if their companies take care of them during their difficult years, and if they receive favorable payment conditions in exchange for a stable workplace with a good work environment onboard. These factors lead them to the possibility of continuing with the same company. Working hours are also considered as a significant factor. As indicated by Marine Insight (2017), inadequate sleep leads to more error or more accidents. Therefore, seafarers can be less willing to move to other companies for a minimum salary increase.

In the future, other considerations will be important to seafarers when they decide to remain with a particular shipping company. It is true that when working in the cruise industry, most of the crew members are usually engaged physically and mentally to their demanding work. Thus, also in dangerous situations, they must fulfill their work no matter how tight and demanding it is. It is also a question of whether their work environment is good to make a seafarer come back after their leave. The cruise industry continuously faces a significant challenge in retaining well-experienced crew members.

Table 14. Relationship of level of retention and years of experience

Factors	Pearson Chi square	p-value	Interpretation
Work Environment	39.182	0.009	Significant
Working Hours	37.681	0.014	Significant
Salary and Benefits	15.729	0.958	Not Significant

p-value > 0.05 Not significant

There is a significant relationship between retention and years of experience in terms of work environment and working hours. As stated by Bloor (2013), the feeling of being valued by the organization is another way in which a person feels that he is an important member in the workplace. This makes them loyal to their careers onboard. Based on Singh (2013), seafarers working on cruise ships know how to look out for one another without someone telling them what or how. Moreover, there is no significant relationship between retention and years of experience in terms of salary and benefits.

The result shows that seafarers' years in service sometimes could lead to a feeling that they do not belong to the group because of the difference in the level of experience from others. In terms of working hours, new and seasoned employees do not have the same working hours or schedules. Furthermore, with regard to salary and benefits, despite their years of service, they still somehow have the same benefits and compensation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There is no credible relation or there is no significant relationship between job retention in terms of the seafarers' gender identity, civil status, and age. All of them are treated equally. Thus, it is not impossible to prove the contrary of the significance between the seafarer's retention from their careers and their profile. The results did not limit the study, however, for there was a significance between the relationship of retention with regard to job department in terms of working environment onboard, working hours, and their salary and benefits.

The following recommendations are based on the results of the study: having a feasible proposed plan for useful benefits that employees could get from their companies is helpful and useful for every seafarer and to yield a good job performance onboard and company loyalty; companies should also consider giving an improved retirement plan for old seafarers who have been with them for a long period of time; Cruise companies should also add employment career opportunities for seafarers' family members or relatives that may possibly help recruit and retain other sets of people; and a standby benefit can also be useful for those seafarers who are in vacation offshore. Furthermore, the most important thing for cruise companies to do is to take care of their employees, make them feel valued in their work organization onboard, and improve employees' job retention and career growth opportunities. In addition, the researchers would also like to recommend for the cruise fleet companies to ensure and monitor the safety and security onboard and the various spaces that need CCTV cameras. Lastly, this study can be a helpful guide for future researchers and those who want to pursue careers in cruise industry.

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