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Charting Courses: Exploring Occupational Inheritance and Career Decisions Among SMET Cadets

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between occupational inheritance, personal interest, and peer influence in the career choices of seafaring dependents at SJIT-SMET Campus. Utilizing a purposive sampling method, data were collected from 146 respondents, consisting of 37 from the BSMARE program and 109 from the BSMT program. Of these, 81 seafaring dependents were identified and surveyed using the Influencing Factor Scale. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation (r), and logistic ordinal regression. The findings indicate that personal interest (r = .615, p = 0.001) and relative influence (r = .316, p = 0.004) were significantly associated with higher levels of agreement in choosing seafaring as a career. Conversely, peer influence (r = .192, p = 0.85) and immediate family influence (r = .136, p = 0.225) exhibited weaker associations. Moreover, a positive association between relative influence (estimate = 0.5998, SE = 0.274, Z = 2.186, p = 0.029) and the likelihood of agreeing with a seafaring career was identified.

1. Introduction.

In the Philippines, the tradition of family inheritance is deeply ingrained, encompassing cultural legacies, customs, property, and cherished heirlooms that are passed down through successive generations. This enduring practice extends to occupational choices, a common occurrence within Filipino families. Parents often wield significant influence in shaping their children's career trajectories, reflecting their own professional experiences. As students embark on their college journeys, they often grapple with uncertainty when selecting academic courses aligning with their career aspirations, influenced by various factors.

One influential factor affecting career choices is the phenomenon of occupational inheritance. Occupational inheritance describes the practice of children following their parents' vocational paths (Doerries and Roller, 2008). This familial influence plays a crucial role in steering the career decisions of the younger generation and is an integral part of the broader tradition of family inheritance, particularly within the context of the Philippines.

A prevalent career choice among Filipinos is pursuing maritime-related courses, covering a diverse range of professions in transportation, engineering, and seafaring. Notably, as of 2021, the Philippines stands as the largest contributor to the global seafaring community, with a staggering 14.4 percent of the world's 1.6 million seafarers originating from the country (The Manila Times, 2021). This statistic underscores the high demand for careers in the maritime sector, both within the Philippines and the broader global job market.

However, there is a notable scarceness of research concerning occupational inheritance within the seafaring profession, particularly in the context of the Philippines. Existing studies have primarily focused on other industries, leaving the seafaring sector understudied in terms of generational job succession. Furthermore, there's a lack of research exploring into the generational influence and patterns of occupational inheritance among SMET cadets, which could provide valuable insights into how career choices are shaped across generations in a mar-

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itime education and training environment.

2. Review of Literature and Studies.

2.1. Factors affecting Career Choice.

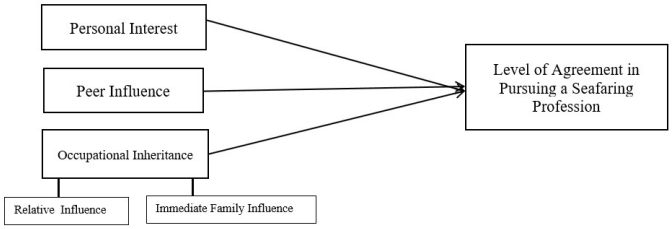
In the complex realm of career decision-making, various factors converge to guide individuals on their vocational journey. Farin and Lupas (2021) illuminated this intricate process, emphasizing the crucial roles played by schools, parents, and peers. This aligns with the findings of Aguador et al. (2015), whose study revealed that aspiring maritime students are primarily influenced by their personal interest in the profession. Additionally, Pesigan et al. (2019) stated in their study that students coming from private high schools tend to choose a seafaring career due to personal interest, while students from public high schools base their decision on support from parents and relatives. Similarly, Laguador (2014) emphasized the significant influence of parents, particularly in the selection of general engineering courses. Digamon's (2021) study further reinforced the enduring importance of parental guidance, especially in the context of selecting college career programs. Analyzing the hierarchy of influences, Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) identified parental guidance as paramount, followed by peer influence, gender considerations, personal interests, and various other factors. Their research also highlighted the limited impact of intergenerational influences, such as relative influence, on career choice. These findings align with Jungen's insights, as cited by Lee, Lee, and Dopson (2019), which expanded the spectrum of influences to include family dynamics, school environments, and broader social factors. A consistent theme across these studies is the significant role of parental influence in shaping career aspirations, corroborated by Ehigbor and Akinlosotu's (2016) examination of the correlation between parents' occupations and students' career aspirations. However, it's noteworthy that research in the field of seafaring lacks exploration into such influences.

2.2. Occupational Inheritance and Career Choice.

The concept of family career inheritance, or occupational inheritance, emerges as a crucial aspect. This phenomenon refers to instances where individuals choose career paths aligning with those of their parents (Roller & Doerries, 2008). The exploration of occupational inheritance takes center stage in Gubler, Biemann, and Herzog's (2017) study, specifically focusing on teachers and their children. Their findings indicate a higher success rate for individuals who pursued the same career as their parents.Aside from parental influence, the impact of relative occupation impacts career choice of students. However, Roller and Doerries's (2008) study presented a contrasting perspective, suggesting no significant differences in success rates between those with occupational inheritance and those without, particularly within the midship class.

The disparities in these findings may stem from variations in study parameters, respondent demographics, and the intricacies of specific professions under examination. A critical gap surfaces when considering the seafaring profession, where scant studies explore occupational inheritance. This study, thus, assumes a pioneering role, aiming to unravel the dynamics of occupational inheritance within one of the most sought-after professions in the Philippines. By doing so, it seeks to contribute novel insights to the broader discourse on career decision-making and the enduring influence of familial and societal factors.

2.3. Framework.



Source: Author.

The framework of this study is designed to look into the various factors that shape individuals' career choices, with a particular emphasis on the seafaring profession. The study identifies four independent variables: "Relative," "Immediate Family Members," "Peers," and "Personal Choice," all of which are influential factors in the career decision-making process. These factors are considered in relation to the dependent variable, "Seafaring Profession," representing the chosen career path under investigation. Adopting a theoretical perspective, the study aligns itself with the principles of Human Capital Theory, as articulated by Becker (1993). This theory posits that an individual's investment in skills, education, and training plays a pivotal role in personal development, enhancing potential and creating better opportunities in the future. It provides a lens through which to analyze the choices individuals make regarding their careers, particularly in the context of the seafaring profession. In connection to Human Capital Theory, the study also addresses the concept of occupational inheritance. Here, the transfer of skills and education from parents to their children is seen as a form of capital, influencing and shaping future career trajectories. The research specifically aims to investigate the prevalence of occupational inheritance within the realm of the seafaring profession, seeking to understand how familial legacies impact career choices. The rationale behind this study lies in the recognition of the multifaceted nature of career decision-making. By exploring the roles of personal choices, familial influences, and the overarching framework of Human Capital Theory, the research endeavors to uncover patterns and dynamics that contribute to individuals' decisions in pursuing a career within the seafaring profession. This comprehensive approach aims to shed light on the intricate interplay between personal agency and familial influences in shaping career aspirations within the maritime industry.

3. Objectives of the Study.

The objective of this study is to:

1. Investigate the influence of personal interest, peer influence, and occupational inheritance and its relation to cadets pursuing a career in seafaring and its prevalence.
2. Examine the potential significant association between occupational inheritance (immediate family and relative) and the career choices of maritime cadets.
3. Contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics influencing the career decisions of individuals in the maritime field.

4. Methodology.

The study employed a quantitative research design, targeting 1st and 2nd-year students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Maritime Transportation and Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering at Saint Joseph Institute of Technology Maritime Education and Training Center. Respondents will be chosen through a purposive sampling method. To collect data, a meticulously crafted questionnaire which underwent face validity and content reliability using cronbach's alpha. The questionnaire consists of two sections: the first part concentrates on respondents' demographics which includes the identification of seafaring and non-seafaring dependents. Only seafaring dependents where chosen to answer the second part of the questionnaire. The second part explores the factors influencing their career choices. The impact and extent of these factors will be gauged using a 5-level Likert scale (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree). Each factor will be assessed based on participants' responses to measure the degree of influence. For data analysis, descriptive statistics will be applied to ascertain the frequencies of variables. Furthermore, the association between occupational inheritance factors among seafaring dependents and level of career choice agreement was evaluated using logistic ordinal regression The execution of these analyses was done using statistical software.

5. Results and Discussion.

5.1. Seafaring and Non-Seafaring Dependents in SMET.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Seafaring and Non-Seafaring Dependents among SMET cadets.

Course/Program:		Seafaring Industry Relation		Total
		Non-seafaring dependents	Seafaring dependents	
BS Marine Engineering	frequency	18	19	37
	%	27.7 %	23.5 %	
BS Marine Transportation	frequency	47	62	109
	%	72.3 %	76.5 %	
Total	frequency	65	81	146
	%	100.0 %	100.0 %	

Source: Author.

The frequency distribution table above provides insights into the distribution of participants' relations to the seafaring industry, categorized into seafaring dependents and non-seafaring dependents. Upon examining the distribution, it is evident that the maritime program with the highest proportion of seafaring dependents is the BS Marine Transportation, comprising 76.5% (81) of the total population of seafaring dependents, while BS Marine Engineering accounts for 23.5% (19). Similarly, the majority of non-seafaring dependents are found within the BS Marine Transportation program, constituting 72.3% (65) of the total population, whereas BS Marine Engineering comprises only 27.7% (18). Furthermore, the data reveals that there are more seafaring dependent cadets (81) than non-seafaring dependent cadets (65) in the population. This distribution underscores the influence of family dynamics and parental guidance on career choices (Lee and Dopson, 2019; Ehigbor and Akinlosotu, 2016).

Table 2: Influencing Factors (Personal Interest).

	Mean	Verbal Rating	Interpretation
I have always aspired to pursue a career in seafaring	4.60	Strongly Agree	Very High Extent
I am genuinely interested in the field of seafaring	4.63	Strongly Agree	Very High Extent
I believe studying seafaring will contribute to my personal growth.	4.54	Strongly Agree	Very High Extent
I believe studying seafaring will contribute to my financial stability.	4.68	Strongly Agree	Very High Extent
My goal is to become a successful mariner in the future through studying seafaring.	4.68	Strongly Agree	Very High Extent
Overall Mean	4.63	Strongly Agree	Very High Extent

Source: Author.

The table shows the distribution of the personal interest career influencing factor in seafaring. It was identified that financial stability contribution and becoming a sucessful mariner in the future emerges with the highest mean (M=4.68).Notably, the personal interest factor yield a very high level of extent among seafaring dependent cadets with an overall mean of 4.63. This reveals that cadets who are seafaring dependents are also interested in the field they have chosen. This agrees with the findings of Aguador et al (2015) and Pesigan et al (2019) which states that aspiring seafarering students are influenced by their own personal goals in the profession. Notably, financial stability also emerges as the foremost influencing factor. Prioritizing financial security, cadets perceive seafaring as a means to achieve economic independence, aligning with established research indicating financial considerations as pivotal in career choices (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). Within the context of SMET cadets, the personal goal and pursuit of financial autonomy stands as the primary motivator for entering the seafaring profession.

The table 3 displays the distribution of peer influence as a career influencing factor in choosing the seafaring profession among seafaring dependents. It shows that peer influence is observed to a high extent, with an overall mean of 3.64. It has been identified that a common study interest emerges with the highest mean among peer influence indicators. This signifies that seafaring dependents have a tendency to choose seafaring because they share the same field of study with their peers. This aligns with the study by Kazi & Akhlaq (2017), which stated that peer influence is one of the considerations for stu-

Table 3: Influencing Factors (Peer Influence).

	Mean	Verbal Rating	Interpretation
My friends and I share a common interest in studying seafaring.	3.80	Agree	High Extent
A significant number of my friends have chosen to study seafaring, influencing my decision.	3.64	Agree	High Extent
I find comfort in knowing that my close friends are also studying seafaring.	3.73	Agree	High Extent
The suggestions of my friends have influenced my decision to study seafaring.	3.49	Agree	High Extent
My decision to study seafaring has been influenced by the guidance and suggestions of my friend's parents.	3.56	Agree	High Extent
Overall Mean	3.64	Agree	High Extent

Source: Author.

dents when choosing a profession. The peer influence factor is also a secondary influencing factor after personal interest.

Table 4: Influencing Factors (Occupational Inheritance).

	Mean	Verbal Rating	Interpretation
My grandparents/parents/siblings have a history or actively working in the seafaring industry.	3.41	Agree	High Extent
My uncle, aunts, and cousins are also part of the seafaring industry, contributing to my decision to pursue a similar path.	3.91	Agree	High Extent

N=81

Source: Author.

The table illustrates the influence of occupational inheritance on career choice among seafaring dependents. It indicates that relative influence has the highest mean (3.91) compared to immediate family influence (3.41). Both aspects of occupational inheritance influence are interpreted to a high extent. This suggests that parental and relative influences can be considered when choosing a seafaring profession, and occupational inheritance within immediate family and relatives can be observed. This finding is in line with the study conducted by Gubler, Biemann, and Herzog (2017), which suggests that parental and relative occupations influence the career success and choices of students.

Table 5: Spearman Rank Correlations Between Level of Seafaring Career Agreement and Influencing Factors.

Variables	rs	df	p-value
Personal Interest	0.615	79	.001
Peer Influence	0.192	79	.085
Immediate Family Influence	0.136	79	.225
Relative Influence	0.316	79	.004

Source: Author.

The results of the Spearman's rank correlations (Table) indicate significant positive correlations between personal interest (r= .615, p = 0.001) and relative influence (r = .316, p = 0.004). This suggests that higher levels of personal interest and relative influence are associated with higher levels of agreement in choosing seafarer as a career. Conversely, peer influence (r = .192, p = 0.85) and immediate family influence (r = .136, p = 0.225) yielded a not significant results which suggests that peer influence and immediate family influence is not directly associated with the level of agreement in choosing a seafaring career.

The results of the logistic ordinal regression provide insightful perspectives on the influence of immediate family and relatives in shaping an individual's choice of a seafaring career among seafarer dependents. The analysis revealed that immediate family influence did not yield a statistically significant effect on the level of agreement in choosing a seafaring career among cadets. The coefficient for immediate family influence was non-significant (estimate = -0.0889, SE = 0.240, Z = -0.371, p = 0.711), suggesting that cadets' decisions regarding a seafaring career were not significantly swayed by the presence of immediate family members in the profession. This finding contradicts prior research suggesting the pivotal role of immediate family ties, such as parents and siblings, in career decision-making (Laguador, 2014; Gubler, Biemann, & Herzog, 2017; Digamon, 2021).

In contrast, the analysis indicated that relative influence significantly impacted the level of agreement in choosing a seafaring career. Cadets who reported being influenced by relatives to pursue such a career were significantly more likely to express agreement with this path. The coefficient for relative influence was statistically significant (estimate = 0.5998, SE = 0.274, Z = 2.186, p = 0.029), indicating a positive association between relative influence and the likelihood of agreeing with a seafaring career. This suggests that beyond immediate family ties, extended relatives may play a substantial role in shaping individuals' perceptions and decisions regarding seafaring careers.

These findings contribute to a varied understanding of seafaring career choices and occupational inheritance within the community. While previous research has primarily focused on immediate family ties and influence, this study emphasizes the importance of considering a broader definition of occupational inheritance, which encompasses relative influence in career decision-making. The significant effect of relative influence highlights a new dimension in understanding the dynamics of seafaring career choices.

Conclusions.

The following conclusions were drawn from the study:

1. The study found that, in terms of familial connection in seafaring, the highest proportion of seafaring dependents is in the BS Marine Transportation program, comprising 76.5% (81) of the total population of seafaring dependents, while BS Marine Engineering accounts for 23.5% (19). Regarding non-seafaring dependents, it was found that the BS Marine Transportation program constitutes 72.3% (65) of the total population, while BS Marine Engineering comprises only 27.7% (18).
2. In terms of the factors influencing career choice, personal interest (r = .615, p = 0.001) and relative influence (r = .316, p = 0.004) were associated with higher levels of agreement in choosing seafaring as a career. In comparison, peer influence (r = .192, p = 0.85) and immediate family influence (r = .136, p = 0.225) were found not to be directly associated with the level of agreement in choosing a seafaring career.
3. Concerning occupational inheritance, a positive association between relative influence (estimate = 0.5998, SE

= 0.274, Z = 2.186, p = 0.029) and the likelihood of agreeing with a seafaring career was identified. This suggests that beyond immediate family ties, extended relatives may play a substantial role in shaping individuals' perceptions and decisions regarding seafaring careers.

Recommendations.

1. The Saint Joseph Institute of Technology's administration should:
   (a) Implement career counseling services providing guidance and exploration of personal interests. Additionally, offer advice on navigating parental influences to make informed job decisions.
   (b) Organize and develop programs engaging the families of prospective seafarers to promote a better understanding of the profession.
2. For maritime education guidance counselors and faculty, the findings of the study coudl serve as basis for weaving a caree guidance program that adresses specific needs and aspiration of SMET cadets.
3. For future researchers, conducting in-depth explorations of these influences, such as considering generational gaps, socio-economic factors, and cultural differences, and imploying a qualitative design will further deepen the understanding of choosing a career in the seafaring industry.

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