



JOHN B. LACSON FOUNDATION MARITIME UNIVERSITY-MOLO
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THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE SEAFARING PROFESSION

A Research Presented to the
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John B. Lacson Foundation Maritime University-Molo
Iloilo City

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Degree Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BS Mar-E)

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Abstract

This study determined the role of culture in the seafaring profession. This addressed the following questions: 1) What is the seafarers' perception of culture in the seafaring profession? 2) What is the role of culture in the seafaring profession as perceived by the respondents? 3) What are some of the adjustments/skills that cadets need to do to adjust to multicultural diversity in the seafaring profession? The respondents of the study were the seafarers who are currently at JBLFMU- Molo for their upgrading in the Training Center. The study was conducted during the second semester, school year 2012-2013. The research utilized descriptive research. This describes data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied. Although the data description is factual, accurate and systematic, the research cannot describe what caused a situation. A structured interview was utilized in this paper. An interview questionnaire asking the seafarers about their experiences was prepared to gather data on the different factors such as the seafarers' work experiences. In order to analyze the data, the researchers utilized the constant comparative method. It is a process in which any newly collected data is compared with previous data that was collected in one or more earlier studies. This is a continuous ongoing procedure, because theories are formed, enhanced, confirmed, or even discounted as a result of any new data that emerges from the study. Through this method, the researchers constantly compared answers by means of coding. The codes were based on the data of the texts that have been transcribed during the interview. As the researchers work through the data, the number of codes was noted for identification of the themes. If a theme is identified from the data that does not quite fit the codes that have already been identified, then the researchers create a new code to involve that theme within their analysis. No inferential statistics was used in this study. Results showed that: 1) The seafarers' perception of culture in the seafaring profession were the following: adjusting to the different attitudes of the crew on board, leaving others to act and behave based on their individual culture, and individual differences. 2) The role of culture in the seafaring profession included the following: culture helps seafarers to develop the ability to have flexible



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personality, culture enables understanding of other co-seafarers, culture enables seafarers to address discrimination and unfair practices, and culture helps seafarers to be more focused. 3) Adjustments/skills that cadets need to do to adjust to multicultural diversity in the seafaring profession included the following: professional competence goes beyond cultural barrier, staying focused in one's work, developing a mechanism to address discrimination and unfair practices, and staying patient, sacrificing, and resilient in the face of seafaring problems. The conclusions are as follows: 1) Culture as perceived by the seafarers incorporates a total awareness of diversity and individual differences. 2) Seafarers' awareness of the role of culture helped them create necessary adjustments and accommodations in their work on board. 3) Professional competence among other factors can help seafarers adjust to their work despite cultural issues. Thus, it is recommended that: 1) The results of this study must be given to the academic coordinator for dissemination specifically on the role of culture in the seafaring profession. 2) Students have to be informed about the role of culture so that they can already start making adjustments prior to their actual work on board in the future. 3) Parallel studies of this kind must be done to further validate other factors that may have an impact in the performance of seafarers on board.