



CHALMERS



Social Sustainability at Sea

The gap between policies and reality from a gender perspective

Bachelor thesis for Master Mariner Program

ALEXANDRA ANDERSSON
MAJA LUNDBERG

DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICS AND MARITIME SCIENCES

CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
Göteborg, Sweden, 2022

Social Sustainability at Sea

The gap between policies and reality from a gender
perspective

Bachelor thesis for Master Mariner Program

ALEXANDRA ANDERSSON
MAJA LUNDBERG

Department of Mechanics and Maritime Sciences
Division for Maritime Studies
CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
Göteborg, Sweden, 2022

Social Sustainability at Sea

The gap between between policies and reality from a gender perspective

ALEXANDRA ANDERSSON

MAJA LUNDBERG

© ALEXANDRA ANDERSSON, 2022

© MAJA LUNDBERG, 2022

Department of Mechanics and Maritime Sciences

Chalmers University of Technology

SE-412 96 Göteborg

Sweden

Telephone: + 46 (0)31-772 1000

Cover:

[A lonely person standing on a wharf looking out over the ocean. Alexandra Andersson, 2022]

Department of Mechanics and Maritime Sciences

Chalmers University of Technology

Göteborg, Sweden 2022

PREFACE

The bachelor thesis has been conducted by two students studying the bachelor program in nautical science at Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg Sweden. The thesis discusses the difficulties of being a gender minority in the shipping industry and the importance of continuous work for a more social sustainable future.

The writers would like to thank all participating institutions: Australian Maritime College, University of Split, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Batumi Navigation Teaching University, Indian Maritime University, Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz, Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific, Constanta Maritime University, Chalmers University of Technology, Kalmar Maritime Academy and World Maritime University.

The writers would also like to send a special thanks to the university representatives who were kind enough to partake in interviews. Lastly a big, warm thank you is directed to Tomas Olsson Neptun for his help and support in the making of this thesis.

Social Sustainability at Sea

The gap between between policies and reality from a gender perspective

ALEXANDRA ANDERSSON

MAJA LUNDBERG

Department of Mechanics and Maritime Sciences

Chalmers University of Technology

SAMMANDRAG

Denna studie undersöker jämställdhetspolicys hos deltagande sjöfartsakademier i Australien, Asien och Europa. Syftet med studien är att titta på ojämställdhet till sjöss ur ett riskanalysperspektiv och försöka belysa fördelarna med likabehandling till sjöss. Rederiers policys är inte del av denna forskning. Denna studie är en explorativ, kvalitativ undersökning och analyserar insamlad data från principen att kvinnor i arbetslivet generellt är underordnade män. Intervjuer med representanter från ett urval av sjöfartsakademier har genomförts.

Sjöfartsnäringen har en obalans mellan könen, det finns internationella regler och förordningar för att motverka detta, tillsammans med policyer kring jämställdhet vid universiteten och högskolorna. De officiella dokumenten tycks inte räcka till för att bidra till en fullständigt jämställd sjöfart. Att se på sociala frågor på arbetsplatsen på samma sätt som andra säkerhetsfrågor, och prioritera det lika, kan vara ett sätt att komma närmare jämställdhet till sjöss. Riskanalys kan vara ett kraftfullt verktyg för att göra detta. En heterogen arbetsplats har många fördelar, både för individen och organisationen. Denna studie visar att ansvaret ofta faller på minoriteterna istället för på organisationen. Detta kan bero på att branschen är kortsiktigt orienterad, vilket gör att frågor som involverar människor inte prioriteras eftersom mänskliga relationer är ett långsiktigt projekt. Ansvaret bör delas jämlikt mellan alla delar av branschen.

Nyckelord: Genus, jämställdhet, sjöfart, utbildning, policy, riskanalys.

Social Sustainability at Sea

The gap between between policies and reality from a gender perspective

ALEXANDRA ANDERSSON

MAJA LUNDBERG

Department of Mechanics and Maritime Sciences

Chalmers University of Technology

ABSTRACT

This study examines the gender policies of some maritime academies in Australia, Asia and Europe. The aim of the study is to look at gender inequality at sea from a risk analysis perspective and try to shed light on the benefits of equal treatment at sea. Policies of shipping companies are not subjects for this research. This study is an explorative, qualitative research and analyzes the collected data from the principal that women in the work life generally are subordinate to men. Interviews with representatives from a selection of maritime academies have been conducted.

The shipping industry has a gender imbalance, there exist international rules and regulations to counteract this, along with policies regarding equality at the scholar institutions. The policies do not seem to be enough to contribute to a fully gender balanced shipping industry. Looking at social issues at the work place the same way as other safety issues, and prioritize it equally, could be one way to come closer to equality at sea. Risk assessment could be a powerful tool to do so. A heterogenous workplace have plenty of benefits, both for the individual and the organization. This study reveals that the responsibility often falls on the minorities instead of the people in charge. This might be because the industry is short-term oriented, causing issues involving people to not be prioritized since human relations are a long-term project. The responsibility should be shared between all parts of the industry.

Keywords: Gender, equality, shipping, education, policy, risk assessment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction 1
 - 1.1 Aim of the Study 2
 - 1.2 Research Questions 2
 - 1.3 Delimitations 2
- 2. Theory 3
 - 2.1 Gender Theory 3
 - 2.2 Scholar Institutions and Gender 4
 - 2.3 Women at Sea 5
 - 2.4 Harassment 6
 - 2.5 Legislation 7
 - 2.5.1 The International Labour Organization 7
 - 2.5.2 The International Safety Management Code 8
 - 2.5.3 Standards of Training, Certifications and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 8
 - 2.5.4 The Swedish Work Environment Act 8
 - 2.5.5 The European Union 8
 - 2.6 Work Culture 9
 - 2.7 Risk Assessment 10
- 3. Methods 12
 - 3.1 Selection 12
 - 3.2 Document Review 12
 - 3.3 Interviews 13
 - 3.4 Fall Off 14
 - 3.5 Ethics 14
- 4. Results 15
 - 4.1 Policies 15
 - 4.1.1 Audits and Follow-up 18
 - 4.1.2 The Importance of Policies 20
 - 4.2 Representation and Diversity 21
 - 4.3 Mental Health 23
 - 4.4 Risk Assessment 24
 - 4.5 Responsibility 27
- 5. Discussion 30
 - 5.1 Responsibility 30
 - 5.2 Rules and Legislation 31

5.3 Preaching to the Choir	32
5.4 The Power of the Word	32
5.5 Culture and Traditions	32
5.6 Risk Assessment and Drifting to Failure	34
5.7 Benefits of a Heterogenous Workplace	35
5.8 Priorities.....	36
5.9 Method Discussion	36
6. Conclusion	38
6.1 Recommendations for Further Research	38
References	39
Literature	39
Articles.....	39
Conference Papers	40
Lectures	40
Websites.....	40
Appendix 1	41
Questionnaire for representatives of the participating academies.....	41
Appendix 2	42
Questionnaire for participating psychologist.....	42
Appendix 3	43
Agreement of participation.....	43
Appendix 4	45
List of contacted maritime academies	45
Members of IAMU:.....	45
Other maritime academies:.....	47
Appendix 5	48
Initial email sent to members of IAMU.....	48

LIST OF FIGURES

[Figure 1 Social Driftning \(Andersson, 2022\)](#)26

[Figure 2 Social risk assessment matrix \(Andersson, 2022\)](#)34

ACRONYMS

IAMU	International Association of Maritime Universities
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ISM Code	International Safety Management Code
STCW	Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping
UN	United Nations

TERMINOLOGY

IAMU	Global network of maritime universities. 69 members. Founded in 1999. Executive Director: Takeshi Nakazawa. Secretariat in Tokyo, Japan.
ILO	Specialized labour agency within the United Nations. Aim is to provide international labour standards to ensure social and economic justice for all workers. Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.
IMO	Specialized maritime agency within the United Nations. Head quarters in London, United Kingdom.
ISM Code	International standards provided by the IMO, to prevent environmental pollution and to ensure safe ship management and operation.
MeToo	Global social movement against sexual abuse and harassment.
STCW	International convention provided by the IMO to set standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers. Adoption 1978; Entry into force 1984; Major revisions in 1995 and 2010.
UN	International organization to ensure global peace. 193 member states. Founded in 1945. Secretary-General: António Guterres.

1. INTRODUCTION

During the last decade, gender equality and gender equity have been frequently discussed all over the world. Gender equality means that men and women have the same possibilities, responsibilities and rights, in all areas of life. Something that might seem like a given for many people, but still struggles to root itself in today's society.

All type's of workplaces have issues with equal treatment, it's latent in all spectrums of life. It is this thesis aim to shed light on those issues from a gender perspective.

Now take the, already burdensome, struggle of being harassed at the workplace and put it on a ship in the middle of the ocean and the individual challenges are bound to increase. The work and living environment on a ship is isolated and cut off from the real world, which will have an impact on the psyche of an harassed individual. Harassed seafarers are not able to meet their safety net and social network at home and without allies onboard they will find their reality lonely and exposed. What will happen to the psyche of such a seafarer? How are people onboard influenced by hostile colleges and a hostile work climate, when they are both living and working together?

There are policies and plans in most companies and maritime academies engaging in the improvement of equal treatment. Stories and experiences from women working at sea shows that these policies do not seem to be enough. A whole ocean of testimonies from women all over the world, especially after "MeToo" 2017, evidently proves that more needs to be done to make the sea a gender equal workplace. The question now is what, how and by who.

The thesis researches however reality corresponds to policies at universities and if and how they work with them, it also looks into if the policies are implemented and fortified if needed.

The shipping industry is considered a dangerous one. A lot of the field circles around physical safety. If looked at from a strict risk assessment perspective, how can the industry benefit from constructing such an assessment with the human perception in consideration? The study examines the possible benefits of equal treatment at sea, in regards to both physical and mental health for not only the individual but for the whole crew along with the ship and cargo.

1.1 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to look at gender inequality at sea from a risk analysis perspective and try to shed light on the benefits of equal treatment at sea. The thesis will also try to map whether it exists gender equality policies at maritime education centers and if so, how they are formulated. It will also try to find differences between these written policies and the actual global reality of today's seafarers when it comes to gender equity and equality. The aim is also to understand the maritime academies responsibility in the current climate and culture at sea and find out how the industry as a collective works for a gender equal workplace for all seafarers.

1.2 Research Questions

To fulfill the aim of the thesis the following questions were constructed

- How do the policies and curriculum for equal treatment look like at maritime universities and how are they being implemented and audited?
- How do gender policies impact reality?
- What are the academies responsibilities for ensuring gender equality at sea?
- How can inequality issues be looked at from a risk analysis perspective?

1.3 Delimitations

This study limits the research to a gender perspective, knowing other points of view as ethnicity and sexual orientation are equally essential as well as being connected to the issue of gender segregation.

The study is limited to institutions of maritime education, shipping companies are not subject to this research. The amount of participating universities have been limited to the members of IAMU, including two separate, legitimate academies.

Although there exist general policies which includes equality they have not been considered in this research. The focus has been on policies specific for gender equality.

2. THEORY

World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen, 14 to 30 July 1980, report:

[...] while they represent 50 per cent of the world adult population and one third of the official labour force, they perform nearly two thirds of all working hours, receive only one tenth of the world income and own less than 1 per cent of world property.¹

In the citation above the word *they* refers to women in general and it is a well known quote for many who are familiar with gender studies. It derives from a report of a conference by the United Nations held in Denmark in 1980. Although the numbers might have changed over the last 42 years, the conditions described in the report are still the foundation of which today's society stands on and the quote sends a strong message of the obstacles women through time have had to face in their work life.

2.1 Gender Theory

Feminist theory needs to be extensive and diverse to reach different people while unveiling the imbalance between the genders. It is important to understand that reaching gender equality is a process that takes time. There is both people who will agree and disagree that societal systems and structures that suppress women exist and are wrong. To reach its doubters feminist theory usually have a wide approach about how women are being mistreated and discriminated. According to gender studies scientist Lena Gemzöe there is both a strength and weakness with this kind of gender theory. It impacts a lot of people, both skeptics and supporters, but it does not deal with how the gender imbalance shows itself in society or how to overcome it. Without the two last named aspects, how and why, it becomes impossible to change what needs to be changed to come closer to an equal society.²

People which do not have the world view of women being treated as inferior to men in certain facets in life usually use individual examples to prove their position. This is nothing strange, it is human to interpret the structure of the world from your own experiences. Nevertheless it means that people might have trouble seeing the power balance of the genders. What is important to remember when it comes to feminism is that it does not deny individual women having power in different situations, but it does claim that men in general have more power than women.³

Gender segregation in the work life is considerable. Women are mainly working at socially coded jobs centered around care and social health. Jobs with low status and low payment.

¹ The United Nations, *World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen, 14 to 30 July 1980: report*, United Nations Publication 1980, p. 8. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/36306#record-files-collapse-header> retrieved 2021.01.02.

² Lena Gemzöe, *Feminism*, Stockholm: Bilda Förlag 2010, p. 15.

³ *Ibid.*, p.16.

Men dominate the higher positions within the finance field, both when it comes to politics and business, thus leading to the minimum influence of women when it comes to economic power.⁴

Women today are still doing the majority of the household work while being mainly responsible for childcare. In Sweden 2010, mothers with small children did around 50 hours of household work every week while the fathers did approximately 25 hours of housework each week. Household work is a job that does not offer any status or pension and is hard, demanding and takes a lot of time, while being unpaid.⁵

Media emphasizes the woman's appearance to be her main attribute and sole purpose. Women are often represented happier, sexier and younger in comparison to men. There are few types of media which feature successful and independent women.⁶

The news are filled with stories of women being victims to rape, murder, abuse and sexual exploitation. The approach society takes against these crimes, perpetrators and victims tells us how the power between the genders is divided. This kind of physical and mental violence is the most naked type of oppression, impossible to deny due to being severely brutal. In general it is primarily women who debate, speaks about and researches these issues, while supporting other women who has fallen victim for them.⁷

2.2 Scholar Institutions and Gender

As far back as from the eighteenth century, science has been nourishing an hierarchical conception of men and women.⁸ There has been a tradition of portraying the man as the norm of the human being, while the woman has been defined as the deviant gender.⁹ The heritage of this worldview can be found in today's general society and at the universities, with the maritime academies in extension. These homes of science are still shaped by said traditions.

During the 1990s people became aware of that few women were represented in science. It became clear that women had less possibilities than men to make a scientific career. For instance, at the time of the change into the new millennium, the percentage of female professors in Sweden was as low as 11 percent. In Germany the number was only 6 percent. Several governments do work to increase these numbers.¹⁰ The work of women have trough time been devalued and unnoticed. History has been coded by a masculine norm, while

⁴ Ibid., p. 17.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., p. 18-19.

⁷ Ibid., p. 19.

⁸ Nina Lykke, *Feminist Studies: A Guide to Intersectional Theory, Methodology and Writing*, New York: Routledge 2010, p. 67.

⁹ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁰ The Swedish Government Office, *Ett jämställt Europa: om Sveriges EU-politik för jämställdhet*, Eds., Johan Murray, Jeanette Neij, Marie-Helene Lindblom, Stockholm: 2000, p. 33.

culture have been defined through the male gaze. In school the contributions of women are made invisible and thus taught to be insignificant.¹¹

2.3 Women at Sea

Studies prove that more gender equal countries have more economical growth than countries with less gender equality. It is also proven that the same goes for companies with more women in leading positions, these companies achieves more than other companies.¹²

Recent reports show that women seafarers make up approximately 2 percent of all seafarers.¹³ According to Dr. Kitada at the World Maritime University, these numbers could actually be closer to 0.12 percent when it comes to women employed in the operational sections on cargo ships. If these numbers are correct they have not improved since 2009.¹⁴

The last years there has been an increased number of women enrolled at the maritime academies, studying for technical degrees. However, studies show that the gender imbalance stays steady.¹⁵ In their paper *Female figures in maritime education and training institutions between 2009 and 2018: analyzing possible impacts of gender policies* Barahona-Fuentes, Castells-Sanabra, Ordás and Torralbo presents an analysis over the number of women enrolled in maritime institutions between the years of 2009 to 2018. The paper unveils that the number of female students that begin and completes their training, at the institutions studied, is unchanging over said years.¹⁶ Ergo, despite an increased awareness of gender equality the actual number of females working at sea has not changed in the last decade. The same paper also lay out the fact that there is not only a lot fewer women already working at sea, but the ones which do have a higher tendency to abandon their careers before reaching higher positions in the onboard organization. 60 percent of the female officers go ashore before becoming captains, while only 25 percent of the male officers do the same.¹⁷

The above stated numbers are important not only to female seafarers but to the shipping industry as a whole. In 2014 a report discussed the upcoming shortage of officers. The

¹¹ Gemzöe, p. 18.

¹² Clàudia Barahona-Fuentes, Marcella Castells-Sanabra, Santiago Ordás & Jordi Torralbo, "Female figures in maritime education and training institutions between 2009 and 2018: analysing possible impacts of gender policies", in *WMU Journal of Maritime Affairs*, Vol. 19, Issue 1, New York: Springer 2020, p. 145.

¹³ Kate Pike, Emma Wadsworth, Sarah Honebon, Emma Broadhurst, Minghua Zhao, & Pengfei Zhang, "Gender in the maritime space: how can the experiences of women seafarers working in the UK shipping industry be improved?", in *The Journal of Navigation*, Vol. 74, Issue 6, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2021, p. 1.

¹⁴ Momoko Kitada, "Women Seafarers: An Analysis of Barriers to Their Employment" in *The World of the Seafarer*, WMU Studies in Maritime Affairs, Vol. 9, Eds., V. O. Gekara, H. Sampson, New York: Springer 2021, p. 66.

¹⁵ Barahona-Fuentes et al., p. 143.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 149-150.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 154.

shortage was predicted to be as high as 21,700 officers in 2018. To manage a shortage of personnel, recruitment of women should be considered a reasonable solution. Women make up half of the adult population and to not use them and the competence they hold is, as dr. Kitada mentions, unwise.¹⁸

2.4 Harassment

Studies suggest that the risk of a female seafarer being harassed at least once during her career is close to 100 percent.¹⁹ Being harassed is not only an individual problem but poses a risk for the entire crew along with the ship, the cargo and the environment. In addition to the mental toll harassment has on the affected party, research shows that people being harassed are more likely to be part in workplace accidents. Studies prove that the psychosocial work climate affects the physical safety at the workplace.²⁰ Thus proving harassment and the mental health of the workers as risk factors which should not be taken lightly, but dealt with accordingly. Occupational accidents are expensive for both the seafarer, the shipping company and the stakeholders, not only regarding finance but also competence and effectiveness. A physically injured seafarer being absent from work is a loss of competence and productivity for the company in addition to being a financial cost. In a study of occupational accidents in the Netherlands it was written that one third of the work related accidents caused the injured party to be absent from work for over at least a month, numbers from 2010. The same study claims that the hospital expenses were around 76 million euros for such accidents.²¹

Historically the suicide rate amongst seafarers has been high in comparison to other occupations.²² As opposed to the general worker, the seafarer not only confronts a higher risk of physical harm, but also a psychological one.²³ Previous research claims that mental illness is a problem for seafarers of every age, rank and workplace as well as for seafarers of many nationalities. There are multiple stress factors at sea, fatigue and social isolation being two of them.²⁴ Adding harassment to an already stressful environment is bound to have a severe toll on an individual's mental health.

¹⁸ Momoko Kitada, "A Prospect for Women Seafarers", in *The Mariners' Digest*, Vol. 39, Tokyo: The Japan Shipping Exchange, Inc. 2015, p. 21.

¹⁹ Pike et al., p. 8.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 9.

²¹ Marloes van der Klauw, Karen Oude Hengel, Maartje Bakhuis Roozeboom, Lando L. Koppes & Anita Venema, "Occupational accidents in the Netherlands: incidence, mental harm, and their relationship with psychosocial factors at work", in *International Journal of Injury Control and Safety Promotion*, Vol., 23, Issue 1, : Taylor & Francis 2014, p. 79. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17457300.2014.966119>.

²² R.Y. Lefkowitz, M.D. Slade & C. A. Redlich, "Rates and occupational characteristics of international seafarers with mental illness" in *Occupational Medicine*, Vol., 69, Issue 4, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2019, p. 279. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqz069>.

²³ Pike et al., p. 2.

²⁴ R. Y. Lefkowitz et. al., p. 280-281.

2.5 Legislation

The maritime industry is heavily regulated by IMO, the International Maritime Organization. IMO is a branch under the United Nations which have 175 member states.²⁵

As a specialized agency of the United Nations, IMO is the global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping. Its main role is to create a regulatory framework for the shipping industry that is fair and effective, universally adopted and universally implemented.²⁶

Below follows some excerpts of regulations regarding discrimination and workplace environment on both a national and international level.

2.5.1 The International Labour Organization

ILO's, the International Labour Organization, Discrimination Convention from 1958 is ratified by 175 countries, of which all of them have it in force.²⁷ In article number 2 the convention states that:

Each Member for which this Convention is in force undertakes to declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote, by methods appropriate to national conditions and practice, equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination in respect thereof.²⁸

The convention define discrimination as follows:

[...] any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation,²⁹

²⁵ International Maritime Organization, "IMO At Glance", <https://www.imo.org/> retrieved 2022.01.28.

²⁶ International Maritime Organization, "Introduction to IMO", <https://www.imo.org/en/About/Pages/Default.aspx> retrieved 2022.01.28.

²⁷ International Labour Organization, "Ratifications of C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)", *NORMLEX*, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11300:0::NO:11300:P11300_INSTRUMENT_ID:312256 retrieved 2021.11.28.

²⁸ International Labour Organization, "C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)", *NORMLEX*, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C111 retrieved 2021.11.28.

²⁹ Ibid.

2.5.2 The International Safety Management Code

The main purpose of the ISM, the International Safety Management Code, is to secure maritime safety, when it comes to safe ship handling and prevention of environmental pollution. The code states that assessments should be performed of all identified risks onboard every ship, as well as establishing precautions against those risks.³⁰

2.5.3 Standards of Training, Certifications and Watchkeeping for Seafarers

In 1978 the IMO issued a convention called STCW, Standards of Training, Certifications and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, which established a basic requirement on an international level for seafarers regarding certifications, training and watchkeeping. Before the convention was issued standards were established on a national level by individual governments. By not referencing other countries' practices, the procedures and standards varied widely as a result. STCW sets a minimum standard which countries are obliged to meet or exceed. The convention contains eight chapters which include general provision, master and deck department, engine department, radio communication and radio personnel, special training requirements for personnel on certain types of ships, emergency, occupational safety, medical care, survival functions, alternative certifications and watchkeeping.³¹

2.5.4 The Swedish Work Environment Act

The Swedish Work Environment Act states in chapter 3 paragraph 2, that it is the employers responsibility to secure the work environment for every employee. The employer should take every precaution to prevent the risk of illness or accidents for their employees by changing or removing everything that might lead to illness or accidents and so eliminate the risk of it happening.³² This means that the responsibility for the work environment onboard falls on the employer.

2.5.5 The European Union

The Treaty of Amsterdam is a treaty of the European Union, which came into force in 1999. A treaty like this is a kind of constitutional law within the members of the union and this treaty, or law, is now over 22 years old. Several articles in the treaty processes the matter of gender equality. For example in article 2 and 3:2 there can be read how the union should promote equality between men and women. Article 141.1 treats the issue of equal pay for equal work. The principle of equal pay for equal work was part of the first original treaty of the European

³⁰ International Maritime Organization, "The International Safety Management (ISM) Code", <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/HumanElement/Pages/ISMCode.aspx> retrieved 2021.12.08.

³¹ International Maritime Organization, "International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW)", <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/HumanElement/Pages/STCW-Conv-LINK.aspx> retrieved 2022.02.03.

³² Arbetsmiljölagen [The Swedish Work Environment Act] (1977:1160), chapter 3 §2.

Union, the Treaty of Rome 1957, but has in the Treaty of Amsterdam been developed further with an even stricter prohibition of salary discrimination.³³

In the European Union treaties are complemented by directives. The directives specifies what has been decided in the treaties.³⁴ The goals the directives represent are binding for the member states both in content and time limit for implementation. How to implement the directives into their own national legislation is up to every individual state.³⁵ Directive 2006/54/EG is about gender equality at the labour market. The directive's aim is to improve the European Union's legislation of gender equal treatment at the workplace and everything regarding employment. It mentions how gender equality is a keystone in the jurisdiction of the European Union and how it should influence all aspects of life. The directive makes it clear that the European Union prohibits all kind of direct and indirect discrimination due to gender when it comes to the labour market, for example during recruitment, termination of employment and equal pay for equal or equivalent work. All 27 member states has implemented the directive in their national legislation.³⁶

2.6 Work Culture

Practical experience is highly valued amongst seafarers. Traditionally that is how the trade was taught and it still is.³⁷ A large part of maritime education takes place onboard ships. At some universities the practical segment is vowed into the theoretical parts and in others it take place at the end of the academic studies. In any case the maritime students get to be an active part of the industry before they have graduated. This means they learn about life and culture at sea from experience.

Women often experience the need to constantly prove themself and their competence to their co-workers and employers. One reason for this, like Dr. Kitada and Dr. Langåker writes in their paper *Women seafarers as minority organizational members*, is the existing assumptions about how women are not probable to execute physical tasks as well as men in high-risk trades as seafaring. There is a study that shows that women working in these types

³³ The Swedish Government Office, *Ett jämställt Europa: om Sveriges EU-politik för jämställdhet*, Eds., Johan Murray, Jeanette Neij, Marie-Helene Lindblom, Stockholm: 2000, p. 10-11.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 12.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 10.

³⁶ The European Union, "Dokument 32006L0054", *EUR-Lex*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SV/TXT/?uri=celex:32006L0054> retrieved 2021.12.30.

³⁷ Maria Boström Cars & Cecilia Österman, "Mind the Gap! Maritime Education for Gender-Equal Career Advancement" in *Maritime Women: Global Leadership*, Eds., Dr. Momoko Kitada, Erin Williams, & Dr. Lisa Loloma Froholdt, New York: Springer 2015, p. 143.

of fields, engineering to be exact, feel pressured to become, as Kitada and Langåker puts it, "one of the guys".³⁸

Working at sea differs a lot from other jobs. Seafarers live and work in the same areas onboard, with a small number of people while having little leisure time. All aspects of a seafarers life, like how they speak and how they behave, are controlled while onboard.³⁹ Creating a quite unique working culture, infused in the social culture. Meaning that the companies have absolute control over their employees even when the working day is done.

In their paper Kitada and Langåker concludes that the issue women seafarers pose, as a minority working at sea, is an organizational matter and not an individual one. It needs to be treated as such since the experiences female seafarers face are common and shared.⁴⁰

2.7 Risk Assessment

To identify any potential risk, hazards need to be identified and analysed to prevent any situations with dangerous or grave consequences. The severeness of these potential consequences and the likelihood of them occurring are done by risk assessments.⁴¹

Risk perception, or human perception, needs to be taken into consideration when assessing potential hazardous situations. People will subjectively judge the likelihood and severeness of a risk, which will affect how the situation is dealt with. Human perception can be both cognitive and emotional. Cognitive perception is based on knowledge and understanding, while the emotional is solely based on how the individual feel about a plausible risk.⁴²

When doing risk assessments it is equally important to consider a concept called drifting. In this situation the term refers to a phenomenon explaining how people have a tendency to take small steps away from a practice to end up miles in distance from where they started. Since the person is always taking such small steps, they will not realize how far they have drifted.⁴³

³⁸ Momoko Kitada & Lise Langåker, "Women seafarers as minority organizational members", *The International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) Annual General Assembly*, Hai Phong 2016, p. 327. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309488867_Women_seafarers_as_minority_organizational_members retrieved 2021.11.02.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 332.

⁴¹ Göran Davidsson, Liane Haeffler, Bo Ljungman & Håkan Frantzich, *Handbok för riskanalys*, Räddningsverket 2003, p.15.

⁴² Hye-Jin Paek & Thomas Hove, "Risk Perceptions and Risk Characteristics", *Oxford Encyclopedia of Communication*, Oxford University Press 2017, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.283> retrieved 2022.01.28.

⁴³ Mats Gruvefeldt, lecture Bridge Team, "Drifting", Chalmers University of Technology, 2021.09.20.

Like N. Pidgeon and M. O'Leary says in their article *Man-made disasters: why technology and organizations (sometimes) fail*:

Instead, there is an accumulation over a period of time of a number of events which are at odds with the picture of the world and its hazards represented by existing norms and beliefs. Within this 'incubation period' a chain of discrepant event, or several chains of discrepant events, develop and accumulate unnoticed.⁴⁴

An example to make it clearer: Onboard a ship it exists a praxis that both safety harness and safety helmet should be worn the correct way when working on heights higher than two meters. One time a crew member does not deem it necessary for all the personal equipment, since they are just performing a standard, one-minute job at exactly two meters height, so the person chooses to wear the safety harness and just put the helmet on without buttoning it correctly. The crew member took a tiny step away from the praxis, a step that might seem insignificant. The next time the crew member has to do a job at two meters height the crew member chooses to not put the helmet on at all since it is once again just a one-minute, routine job. To not use the helmet is not a big step from just hanging the helmet on their head without buttoning it. The next time the crew member has to do a job at two and a half meters height and the crew member does it without a helmet and does not secure the safety harness correctly. So it continues, the crew member keeps taking small, almost invisible, steps away from the last step until they are doing a non-routine, dangerous job on five meters height without either safety harness or safety helmet on. Thus the crew member has drifted far away from the original praxis without even noticing. This is possible due to people always comparing where they stand with where they last stood, not where they began.

⁴⁴ N.Pidgeon & M.O'Leary, "Man-made disasters: why technology and organizations (sometimes) fail", in *Safety Science*, Vol., 34, Issues 1-3, Amsterdam: Elsevier Science Ltd 2000, p. 15-30. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0925-7535\(00\)00004-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0925-7535(00)00004-7).

3. METHODS

This study is an explorative, qualitative research which aims to find out whether there exist policies and curriculums regarding gender equality at maritime academies around the world and if so, how they are being implemented. The method is deductive and analyzes the collected data from the principal and gender theory that women in the work life generally are subordinate to men.

3.1 Selection

To gather data about existing policies and curriculums regarding gender equality at maritime academies members of the IAMU, International Association of Maritime Universities, were contacted together with two maritime academies which are not members of the IAMU. A complete list of the contacted universities is attached in Appendix 4.

The academies were selected because of their spread over the continents, to add to the global perspective of the research, along with the authority they hold by being members of the IAMU. The two non-IAMU-members were selected because of the writers knowledge of their authority as legitimate training centers for seafarers.

One psychologist was asked to participate in the research to discuss the psychological perspective of harassment, bullying and being a minority at the workplace. The selection was based on recommendations from a senior lecturer at Mechanics and Maritime Sciences, Division of Maritime Studies, at Chalmers University of Technology, along with the psychologist's credentials in the fields of both seafaring and psychology.

An associate professor at the World Maritime University, IMO, was contacted to participate and discuss the focus of the study because of the person's expertise in the area and solid research in the subject.

3.2 Document Review

Previous studies about female seafarers have been analyzed and put in the perspective of how the life as a minority working at sea is likely to be for a woman. The data has been collected from relevant sources with research legitimacy. The previous studies have given the intel to what obstacles women working at sea can come to encounter during their careers due to their gender as well as statistics of the current gender division imbalance existing in the shipping industry.

Policies and curriculums regarding gender equality and equity at each participating academy were gathered via email. The documents were analyzed and put in the perspective of the aim of the study.

3.3 Interviews

Representatives from the participating academies were interviewed about their personal perception of social sustainability at sea. They were also asked questions about their specific institution and the work they do to ensure gender equality both at the institution itself as well as in the industry at large.

The interviewed psychologist was asked about the potential mental and physical risks of inequality at the workplace. They were also asked about the benefits of equal treatment in the work place, whether harassment poses a risk factor worth considering in risk assessments together with the questions if and how the shipping industry differs from other workplaces when it comes to social security.

The doctor in social sciences was asked the same questions as the maritime academies' representatives with the difference of the questions about their individual academies being reformulated to describe the maritime academy as a general institution.

When using the interview as a research technique it is important for the researchers to not make the informant feel uncomfortable or judged, the interviewers need to be understanding and show interest in the informants answers. This include body mimic and facial expressions as well as the verbal language.⁴⁵ This research handles a delicate topic and the interviewers goal was to retain an objective outlook during all interviews to let the informants feel free to speak their opinion without the risk of feeling judged or criticized.

Interviews were the questions are being asked in a certain order for a specific informant and constructed during the interview have a low level of standardization. Interviews were the questions are the same and asked in the exact same order to every interviewee have a high level standardization. The amount of space for individual answers the informants are given categorizes the structure of the interview. The more space for individual responses given, the less structured the interview is.⁴⁶ The interviews in this study were semi-structured and semi-standardized. The informants were asked the same questions, but with follow-up questions which were formulated during the interview and in an order that during the interview was adjusted to the informant. The interviews were constructed as conversations were the interviewers and the interviewee both asked and answered questions and discussed the topic in a fluent exchange of different perspectives on the matter at hand.

All participants were informed of the study beforehand and asked to sign an agreement of participation before being interviewed. The agreement made it clear to the informant that they will be anonymous and that they are free to back down from participating at any given time. The interviewees were informed that the meetings were going to be recorded for research purposes.

In Appendix 1, 2 and 3 interview questionnaire and agreement of participation can be found.

⁴⁵ Bo Davidsson & Runa Patel, *Forskningsmetodikens grunder: Att planera, genomföra och rapportera en undersökning*, Lund: Studentlitteratur 2011, p. 75.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.76.

3.4 Fall Off

From the contacted maritime academies 11 took part in the study. They are as follows:

- Australian Maritime College, University of Tasmania / Australia
- University of Split Faculty of Maritime Studies / Croatia
- Satakunta University of Applied Sciences / Finland
- Batumi Navigation Teaching University / Georgia
- Indian Maritime University / India
- Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences/ Netherlands
- Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific / Philippines
- Constanta Maritime University / Romania
- Chalmers University of Technology, Department Mechanics and Maritime Sciences, / Sweden
- Kalmar Maritime Academy, Linnaeus University / Sweden
- World Maritime University / Sweden, IMO

Thus making the fall of a total of approximately 85 percent.

3.5 Ethics

When conducting a people based research, it demands high levels of ethical standards. It is important that the informants know their participation is voluntary and that they have been informed of the basic preconditions of the study and that they have given consent. The safety of the participants is vital. The researchers have to make sure the informants do not risk to be harmed due to the research, neither physical or psychological.⁴⁷ All interviewees have before participating signed an Agreement of Participation, which states the aim and focus of the study and attests the informants anonymity, to ensure their safety. A copy of the agreement can be found in Appendix 3. All participating universities have been informed of the basic preconditions of the research and by answering and sharing information, they have given consent to participate in the study. The initiating email addressed to the academies can be found in Appendix 5. The focus of the study is the general, global approach to the gender imbalance at sea, therefore the name of the universities have been shared in the study to show their international spread, but their answers have been made anonymous since the individual academies are not the focus of this research.

⁴⁷ Martyn Denscombe, *Forskningshandboken: För småskaliga forskningsprojekt inom samhällsvetenskaperna*, Lund: Studentlitteratur 2018, p. 438-439.

4. RESULTS

11 maritime institutes took part in the research, which amount to a fall off of 85 percent. The participating academies represent three continents: Oceania, Asia and Europe. Thus the global perspective is impaired and the results are not to be viewed as an unequivocal truth for all maritime institutes, but as an indication of the current social climate in the industry.

4.1 Policies

There has been a lack of responses regarding the universities equality policies, few academies have contributed with that kind of information. Most of the academies have policies, but they are not specific to equal treatment. The sections of gender equality and equity can usually be found in policies regarding the overall work of the institutes. Following are examples from three different universities:

The University is committed to ensuring that our people are at the centre of everything we do. We aim to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between those who share a protected attribute and those who do not.

We will only achieve this if all members of the University community take personal responsibility for advancing inclusion, diversity and equity.⁴⁸

Through systematic work with equal opportunity, the University's structure and cultures will contribute to increased gender equality and minimize risks of discrimination.⁴⁹

The work on equality in our university shall lay the foundation for a sustainable work climate for the students and employees. Equality is about attitude and values, but equally about gender division, health, development, opportunities and salary. Equality work in the university focuses on strategic questions and preventive work, for instance thru unravel harassment and conflicts and to create conditions for a sustainable work environment.⁵⁰

By doing a search on the websites of some academies not taking part in the study they seem to have a general attitude of a divers and including atmosphere. It has been difficult to find any policies regarding gender equality, they might exist but are not open to the public. In all data that have been received or found there is no indication as to how the universities work with, or any concrete examples of, the implementations of their polices.

Equal treatment as part of the curriculum is scarce. At some universities it is implemented in the leadership courses, but in general the responsibility appears to be put on the individual lecturer. The lecturer makes the choice of whether letting equal treatment be part of the course content or not. According to one of the informants the subject has no formal part in the

⁴⁸ University A

⁴⁹ University B

⁵⁰ University C

curriculum at their university. They explain that the marine engineer students have discussions about equal treatment during their leadership course, but that it is not a formal part of the course plan. When asked if they think equal treatment being part of the course plan would help with decreasing inequality issues in the shipping industry, the informant answers that they have not thought about it before. Subsequently the informant explains that at their university they let new students watch confronting videos about harassment, respect and gender in their first week, and says that hopefully that will have an effect on the new generation going through the university.⁵¹ Another informant describes a similar situation at their institute. The informant explains how their academy has no official place in the curriculum for equality. They say that they sometimes experiment with culture awareness in a certain course, but clarifies that the reason for this is the specific lecturer holding the course. The informant explains that if that professor did not do it it probably would not be done.⁵² The partaking psychologist brings forth the same issue, that the responsibility of equality falls on an individual level rather than an organizational one. During the interview the psychologist describes how they have been researching the shipping industry for approximately twenty years and that they think the merchant navy has become much better, but how these kinds of questions often depend on specific individuals taking on the responsibility. Regarding the curriculum the informant also discusses the maritime academies responsibility for the social climate at sea:

[...] the problem have in many cases been STCW. That there is no room for anything else. If you're going to put something new in, you have to take away something else and then you no longer fulfill the requirements of STCW or you have to prolong the education and no-one is interested in that. So I would say that the foundational problem is the regulations unfortunately. [...] we had to work very long to get human factors into the educational program and it is nothing full covering in any way. It is about raising awareness that it exist something called human factors as well and in it there is something called work environment. And then they just scratch the surface a little bit while students puts, I don't know how many weeks, learning how to use a damn sextant.⁵³

Another university representative writes:

[...] we do not have a specific course on gender equality, but it is implemented in all our policies and we have internal mechanisms established to deal with any form of discrimination complaints if any should happen.⁵⁴

In light of this, the general understanding is that there is a reactive measurement system when dealing with inequality, but the industry is lacking when it comes to proactive work. The

⁵¹ Informant 1

⁵² Informant 2

⁵³ Informant 5

⁵⁴ University D

focus seems to be on short-term solutions rather than working long-term. The psychologist explains how often when issues appear onboard they are dealt with through the affected party having a conversation with the master, who promises that what happened will never happen again, and then that is that. They do not follow up later since they feel like they have already done their part. The informant claims that the long-term, proactive work in the industry is insufficient and says: "The question is if it takes a ship sinking for someone to do something. If it is that bad, that someone needs to get really fucking hurt for someone to wake up, then we have really shot ourselves in the foot. Then all of the preventive work is gone."⁵⁵ Another informant describes the issue as follows:

In general the industry has always been more short-term or mid-term oriented, which might be the reason for not letting people being in the focus. Because educating, training and building human capacity takes time, it is a long-term project and the industry is not very interested in that. There is always some so-called more economical labour in other parts of the world and it is a globalized industry, so they have other solutions basically than investing in people.⁵⁶

The importance of long term thinking becomes apparent when talking about sustainability, but sustainability is not a term only to be used when discussing the environment or economics, as another informant writes: "Beside critical environmental aspects, humankind needs to also consider critical social aspects with long term impact for the wellbeing of the next generations."⁵⁷ This rises the question of priorities in the industry as a whole. One informant discusses where the industry should put their focus and says:

If the shipping industry is to be sustainable in twenty years, what is important then? You will have every technical gadget you can imagine to be able to drive this boat, but you will still have people onboard somewhere or wherever they will be, the working environment will still always be central. So it is natural to assume that those parts should get more attention, or we should at least look over the content division in the educational programs. Maybe stuff gets redistributed or some parts get extended or shortened, or whatever you do, but some sort of modernization is needed.⁵⁸

According to one informant social sustainability has always been behind the scenes and never prioritized, they claim that this is the culture of the industry and the attitude of the stakeholders in general.⁵⁹ Another informant confirms this to be the general attitude of the industry. They explain how they do not believe that it is a matter of wanting to have a good work environment, but rather not knowing how to put it into practice. The informant also says that the general attitude is that if the technical operation is running, everything is fine and there is no reason to come dragging with problems involving the work environment. They

⁵⁵ Informant 5

⁵⁶ Informant 3

⁵⁷ Informant 4

⁵⁸ Informant 5

⁵⁹ Informant 3

continue by saying: "[...] it is the whole sector which needs to find a new approach where work environment and working conditions have to be prioritized."⁶⁰ Furthermore the informant speaks about how shipping is good at turning away from the problem and that there is resilience which permeates the whole industry. They compare the shipping field with the aviation industry and says that if the working climate in a cockpit were to be really bad the aircraft would not take off, the pilots would not be allowed to fly. While there could be a physical fight on the bridge and no one would bat an eye, because the ship has to leave, it has to get to the next port of call.⁶¹

Regarding the shipping industry's general attitude towards women at sea one informant describes how many companies do not want to deal with the imaginary risks that women onboard poses. Having female seafarers onboard increases the risk of them being harassed. The informant explains how many companies do not want to, or do not know how to, deal with it if something were to happen onboard. According to the informant the companies then think it is better not to hire women at all, they also say that it is an issue of reputation.⁶² Another informant talks about the same problem. Their university have had cases were they had tried to make certain companies better workplaces for their female cadets, but it backfired and two of those companies then decided to stop taking women onboard.⁶³ A third informant discusses the same potential risk:

I think the people responsible at the schools do the best they can to make sure their students have a good time onboard. But they do not really have the tools to do it, to follow up and make demands, because then they risk the shipping companies saying that they will not continue taking any students from them. And then we have a giant problem, that students stand without internships is among the worst things that could happen at a maritime university. So, I don't know how it is supposed to be dealt with, it is very difficult.⁶⁴

4.1.1 Audits and Follow-up

The maritime institute representatives were asked about their university's audits and follow-up procedures concerning their policies about equality. One of the representatives shared that they are a chairman of the institutes participation council. The council checks the executive board, containing the highest headmasters, and makes sure that they are doing their work. The informant explains how the council is officially responsible for follow-ups of policies regarding equality and continues by saying: "we work on it but there is so many things and the focus lands on other things, like the price of coffee, because everyone thinks that that's

⁶⁰ Informant 5

⁶¹ Informant 5

⁶² Informant 3

⁶³ Informant 2

⁶⁴ Informant 5

important.”⁶⁵ They proceed by telling how it does exist policies of equality at the institute, not enough, but they do exist. Followed by describing the official audit routine:

I have taken part of audits and we are very good at putting up smoke screens. To tell the correct story, because so much rides on it, you can lose your payments. You try to put up smoke screens and make yourself look more beautiful than you are, it's a bit like Tinder. That's what universities and schools do. They don't lie, but it is not really the truth. Sometimes they bend it a lot, because nobody can check. It is up to individuals with passion for the subject.⁶⁶

The informant adds that to their understanding the university have a big work group committee which works with equality questions and that hopefully more things will happen at the academy. The informant talks further about how their institute speaks these big words without making sure they drip down to the bottom and colors the whole organization: "It is hollow if you don't work with it. The gap between the policies and the reality is huge. You can say all these pretty words, but work with it, do something about it."⁶⁷

Another informant talks about the difficulty of implementing policies as being an organizational issue:

From my own point of view I guess I could say that a lot of institutions, because of what I described about it being apted at the top and people impunde at the bottom but little middle management understanding of knowledge, therefore hard to implement. Means you ask a lot of people to be proactive in this space and then provide them with very little support, very little recognized time to do it. And no real accountability because nobody really knows what you are trying to ask them to achieve.⁶⁸

By saying that, the informant shows the institutions' will to change but their lack of tools to do it. The policies exist but so does the gap between them and reality, since it seem to be little understanding of how to implement them. When asked about their academy's work with following up on their policies the same informant says:

I see the problem as one of unpicking. Constantly addressing the social problem of unpicking the hurdles that are unnecessarily placed in front of individuals, that either prevent them from succeeding as well as they might or, if we can, more extreme ends things like sexual harassment. Which cause them to disengage early on in their career or early on in their academic career. So plugging those gaps is in need of constant attention to self inspection and reflection on what's working and what isn't working. Find problems, solve them. It's a never ending cycle. So part of the problem is getting people up to speed with making that constant re-inspection part of the everyday work.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Informant 2

⁶⁶ Informant 2

⁶⁷ Informant 2

⁶⁸ Informant 1

⁶⁹ Informant 1

Another university representative writes: "[...] as to my knowledge, the audits we are subjected to (both on a national level, EU level and international) do not check specifically for gender policies."⁷⁰ The psychologist discusses the issue of implementation from a more general perspective. They explain how the problem is not to produce guidelines regarding harassment and inequality at the work place and how there even exist templates for those kinds of things. The informant emphasizes that the difficulty is: "to get some sort of systematics in it, so there exist a control system that makes sure that when there is a port state or similar, we also check the work environment. Then the shipping companies will also make follow-ups and see how everything works."⁷¹

4.1.2 The Importance of Policies

When discussing incidents involving gender inequality at sea one informant tells the following:

It is very difficult in how do you react directly when something like that happens? It is all these kinds of different situations and contexts. You might think of some immediate consequence, there is a lot going on when you get a comment like that, analyzing in your head, like is this part of the joke etc.? Although you have your feelings that you are not comfortable with that attitudes and comments but it is really difficult and I think there is a need for some kind of guidelines or standards in how to respond and what is okey and not okey. These lines are not always clear. [...] The guidelines need to clarify that the person that is being harassed needs to talk to a senior, so they can talk to the person that is causing the problem. The guidelines need to clarify the whole procedure after an incident has been reported.⁷²

Without policies and official papers people onboard stand rather alone in case of harassment or other kinds of mistreatments due to inequality. According to the previous informant the guidelines are an important tool for the person being subjected of unequal treatment, but they are also of help for the people on the ship responsible for the work environment. Another informant agrees with the statement that to be able to deal with cases like this in the best possible way, the master need to know they have the land-organization in their corner.⁷³ Policies and official guidelines provide that, they give everyone onboard the legitimacy to act properly towards one another and to dare deal with potential issues without being afraid of standing without back-up.

⁷⁰ University D

⁷¹ University D

⁷² Informant 3

⁷³ Informant 5

4.2 Representation and Diversity

The maritime institutes were asked to share information about the gender division of students in their bachelor programs in nautical science and marine engineering. Of the universities which are subjects for this study, the percentage of female students currently enrolled in maritime, technical bachelor programs varied between 3 and 25 per cent. 3 per cent being the university with the lowest percentage of current, female students, and 25 per cent being the institute with the highest percentage of current, female students. The World Maritime University have the highest percentage of female students, 33 per cent, currently studying at the university. However they differ from the other academies by being part of the IMO and offering different kinds of educational programs.

One informant claims: "The low percentage of women enrolled in maritime academies is a result of ineffective motivational policies and actions developed and implemented jointly by the IMO, ILO and the European Commission. Independent actions were delivered by each of these 3 institutions, but no effective action framework was delivered in common so far."⁷⁴ Another informant discusses not only the percentage of women enrolled at the maritime institutes, but also the possible reason to why many of them leave:

Statistics show that across the board in STEM subjects including science, engineering and medicin, up to 50% of females experience sexual harassment to an extent that cause them to disengage from their program of study or their careers in academia. When we wonder why we see, what we call a scissor curve, where as medicin we train 50% almost to Phd level gender balanced. Yet somehow by the time you get to senior surgeon, large proportion of those are bumped to the y side. Aha, because the environment is toxic, and until we remove those hurdles and challenge many of the things that make progress inequitable then we won't change us. So all of the challenges in the past where the focus are, I would say, putting a sticky plaster on things, trying to encourage people into a career, when the career was still a pretty shit place to be. We have to stop the career being the shit place to be and then people will come.⁷⁵

To make the shipping industry a more attractive workplace for all, diversity in all instances of the organization is needed. The same informant describes it as follows:

With things we tackled it's always a matter of that's where the diversity part come in. The diversity issue it's always one of you don't know what you don't know. Let's frame that in terms of perhaps privilege. People can't necessarily recognize their own privilege, because it's the lack of privilege which is the hurdle. So it is only the person that had a barrier put in front of them that can see it. So without diversity in an institution somebody won't necessarily see that a certain thing isn't a good idé or a good way of doing things.⁷⁶

The informant agrees that diversity is vital to make problems visible and consequently be able to deal with them, but they stresses the fact that: "[...] that's always difficult because it

⁷⁴ Informant 4

⁷⁵ Informant 1

⁷⁶ Informant 1

depends on how you measure diversity. For example you have to think then very carefully what you non-dimensionalize with. So that you are comparing, are we fairing well and therefore representing correctly the voice of the people we represent in this context.”⁷⁷ When asked about potential benefits of a heterogeneous workplace, the informant answer:

I strongly believe there is a benefit from many different levels, there is of course the challenge to reaching that point is that groups self replicate because they value what they see as value. In a leadership environment where lots of people are training as leaders, you can reach a point where individuals has been trained to think a little bit about their own values and perhaps their own blindspots, so that they can learn to hear and listen to the values of others. In some work environment were that not a priority of the training, because there is a lot of other schools that people need, then that can be a little more difficult to achieve, and it relies on cultural and social change and social acceptens. Both take time, some more than others. Some of these challenges, a lot of work have been put into them for many many decades with very little progress. And of course we can't forcibly change society, that takes time. But we can also see significant positive change. So the advantage of the diverse work place, well.. its some what crutiative example but the one that is often stated in public press is; The CIA is populated by ivy league trained university white men, who when they saw pictures of Usama Bin Laden sitting in a cave, dressed in what they perceived to be rags, dismissed it as a crazy individual who will be no harm to them. If they would have one person from that particular diverse minority group who could have explained to them that the clothing was extremely significant, the sitting posture was extremely significant and this individual had the power to rally people that recognize that. Then diversity would have been a great strength to them.⁷⁸

The informant underlines the importance of diversity with another example, where they describe existing university policies on travel insurance, where nobody had noticed that the insurance would be invalid if the person was pregnant. The informant claims that it probably was because the policy was reviewed by a male, and that it never even occurred to them. Again the informant explain how diversity is important to see the hurdles, so that people can start to challenge them. Another informant agrees, and when asked if a heterogeneous workplace is beneficial, they point to statistics of a research they have been part of:

This statement is confirmed by the statistics resulted from GECAMET research. Heterogenous workplace brings up the benefit of complementarities between gender diverse expertise and personalities and these complementarities are highly useful for finding best solutions to specific situations.⁷⁹

Another university representative tells that a heterogeneous workplace is something to strive for, but they are not sure if it can be achieved. They emphasizes that the industry needs more women at sea, but do not really know how to start. The informant has a contact who works to get more people to sail and to make women feel safe at sea, and they believe that actions like that might be one way to come closer to change. The informant additionally talks about the importance of role-models: ” World-wide we have like about 5 captains who are women, and

⁷⁷ Informant 1

⁷⁸ Informant 1

⁷⁹ Informant 4

you even know them by name.”⁸⁰ They continue by describing their older alumnus, people over fifty years old, and explains how they would never go onboard a ship with a female captain, since they deem it not safe. The informant explains that these alumnus are not used to female commanders and have no idea of how good the captains are. The informant continues by saying: ”Normally girls are much better because they have to fight for it so much harder, the ones who succeed, they are good.”⁸¹ The university representative finishes the interview by saying:

Society as a whole, benefits from two groups coming together, where one part takes care of what the other side is not so good at. Society as a whole is best of with women and men coming together and doing things together. We should live together, not next to each other.⁸²

The psychologist discusses the importance of diversity not only onboard, but also in the organization ashore. They explain that in the land organization it exist former seafarers who have gone ashore, but they are most of the time older men who have climbed the career ladder and now are something like a DP, designated person. The informant follows by saying that women like that are hard to find. The females in the organization ashore often have an academic background, but have never worked onboard. The informant declares their belief that it would be different if the people in the land organization also had onboard experience, then there would be another kind of insight in the real work onboard instead of assumptions about it. When asked if a heterogenous workplace is needed in all levels of the companies, they continue by saying:

Exactly, I also believe that it would make it easier for the people onboard, especially the younger generation. Maybe they would take a little bit more responsibility for the work environment and dare call the company office and tell them that this doesn’t work, we can’t have it like this onboard. I think that is buried deep.⁸³

4.3 Mental Health

When asked about the effects harassment can have on the psyche of a person, the psychologist talked about the general assumption of mental issues as something only women have. The informant proposes that it might be the reason for the industry’s general blindness for mental health, since it is a male dominated field. They continue by saying that the problem has always been there, but it is not until now it has begun to get attention. They say that it needs to be normalized since it exists with everyone, not only women, but it usually do not come up until a woman comes onboard and the solution many companies take is then to not hire

⁸⁰ Informant 2

⁸¹ Informant 2

⁸² Informant 2

⁸³ informant 5

women. The psychologist then explains that mental illness is number 10 on the list of reasons for sick leave. They are optimistic about the fact that more men dare to talk about their mental health and that the issue is starting to be seen as something that is not linked to gender. They say that it is important to start talking about it and checking the work environment onboard and that equality is not male or female, it benefits all. Another informant discusses the same issue. How, due to male dominans, the industry has been blind to certain aspects of the social work climate onboard:

There is also another side of the gender issues. If women are sexually harassed we are willing to talk about it a little bit more than if the men are being abused. What goes on between men, bullying or sexual harassment, it doesn't come out. When it comes to women it seems to be more sensitive. The industry is completely ignoring. So why are they making such a big fuzz about women coming in and having some problems, when the problems are already existing. They are just closing their eyes and ears. It is a crisis, this attitude. Whatever risk or issues there are, they either pretend they don't now anything or they don't want to have that potential risk so, before that, they just say no. There are a lot of excuses, like women don't apply so we don't have any women, and that kind of attitudes.⁸⁴

The psychologist continues to discuss the obstacles of mental illness in the industry. They explain how it is common for an individual with mental illness to often see themselves as the problem, like: "Why can I not do this? Why don't I function in this work environment? What can I do to change?"⁸⁵ Things get normalized and eventually such a person can not do it anymore. The psychologist argues that without protocols or routines for these kinds of questions, situations like this can go pretty far and end up in sick leave and often long absences. They also describe how very few people come back to the same ship after being away on sick leave due to mental illness. They might not even continue working at sea at all. If they do, it is usually under completely different conditions than before, other kinds of traffic, routes, ships etcetera.

4.4 Risk Assessment

Safety is a big part of the shipping industry, it is the foundation on which it is build. There are guidelines and regulations that are both recommended and or are mandatory along with procedures and check-lists to ensure the highest level of physical safety. More often than not there has to be some sort of accident or catastrophe to initiate new ruling or assessment in the industry. In the case of mental health however, there is not much headway in new strategies in securing a work space that is mentally safe and free of harassment. One of the informants explains it as follows:

Unfortunately sexual harassment is not really considered as part of the safety and health issues, they are more focused on classical, maritime safety and health issues like physical accidents. Mental health problems are more invisible and not treated seriously, it is obvious if someone can't work because of an

⁸⁴ Informant 3

⁸⁵ Informant 5

injured arm or leg and they will need to replace that crew member. That is directly related to their business, so therefore they would react immediately. Not because of that person, but to sustainably, continuously run their own business. That is the mindset.⁸⁶

Another informant claims that it can be wise to look at the problem of harassment and unequal treatment through a risk assessment, and that it is important to look at the well-being of the crew as the biggest risk. They continue by explaining how it is significant to instead of teaching someone what not to do, rather teach them to act if someone else does something wrong or is exposed for a risk of safety. Instead of not doing it, make sure nobody does it.

A vital part to take into consideration when assessing a risk is the factor of human perception. The same informant talks about human perception and how everyone will look at a risk differently. They do so by telling a story about a group of blind people standing in front of an elephant. They all touch the elephant and try to explain to each other what they have in front of them. Everyone describes the elephant differently, one describes the stomach as a huge wall and another person describes the leg as a tree trunk. Due to being subjective, perception makes it difficult to estimate risks. Even more so when it comes to more abstract phenomena, like feelings and psyche. Thus human perception might even play a bigger part when it comes to mental risks than it does when assessing physical ones. The psychologist breaks it down as:

If someone experiences harassment or something deviant, that is what it is all about. However, we should not create a work environment where people don't dare to speak to each other. But from that to harassment or special treatment, is a pretty big step. You are often aware if you are stepping over the line and that should not have to happen. And I think it is very much in the eye of the beholder. If I experience this in a certain way, that is not just grasped from thin air in any way. You are probably not the only one noticing it. The answer is, I suppose, that if you experience it as harassment or unequal treatment, then it is.⁸⁷

Another informant talks about harassment as a risk factor which falls on the individual rather than being an organizational issue:

All the risks are on the seafarers. They never, or seldom, look at organizational responsibility or the companies responsibility or how to prevent those accidents or risk. They might provide some support, but it is usually after the incident happened. There are no preventative measures, no such culture. [...] The gender issues are just the tip of the iceberg. It is all interrelated to the other problems of the industry.⁸⁸

The same way drifting is a phenomenon in risk assessment it is so when it comes to social relations. To have a culture onboard that allows small, inappropriate jokes, that might seem harmless but is in fact not at all, is a slippery slope for a company. If they allow one small

⁸⁶ Informant 3

⁸⁷ Informant 5

⁸⁸ Informant 3

thing, the step to the next level is very small and to next and to the next, and so on. Eventually a person will have taken hundreds of small steps leading them to drift miles away from where they were from the beginning, without them even realizing it. The psychologist describes it as follows:

There is a lot of talk about drifting to failure, within the context of human factors amongst others. That when something goes to hell the conditions for it have been there a rather long time, but you have adapted to them and overlooked routines to make it work, since the ship has to sail. It has also been that way, that it is not allowed to stop the ship for just any shit. [...] If there is a fire or if the engines are broken, they are seen as fully legitimate reasons. But if people feel like piss onboard or haven't slept in two days, is not a good enough reason to keep the ship in port. You can never make that argument. Even if it might be just as dangerous.⁸⁹

The psychologist continues the discussion about drifting. They tell how they have held a lot of CRM courses, Crew Resource Management, for ship masters. During those courses they can distinguish two types of leaders, often connected to the amount of experience. The more experienced leaders exhibit a sort of exemplary acting, according to the psychologist, when dealing with crew issues of social character. They never trivialize the problem, no matter how small it might seem, and they are not afraid of talking about feelings and they might stop the whole operation and let things take their time, and might even become targets of the shore organization themselves in doing so. They do all this because they know something small can grow and get enormous consequences if they are not dealt with immediately. The other leader type does the opposite. They trivializes these kinds of problems until they become really serious and by that time they do not longer know what to do, so they rather stay quiet and do nothing. The psychologist continues: "There has to be as well-established routines to deal with these kinds of issues as it does for dealing with CRM. And a nice paper from the company office is not enough."⁹⁰ For a more schematic overview of drifting in a context of harassment, please see figure 1.

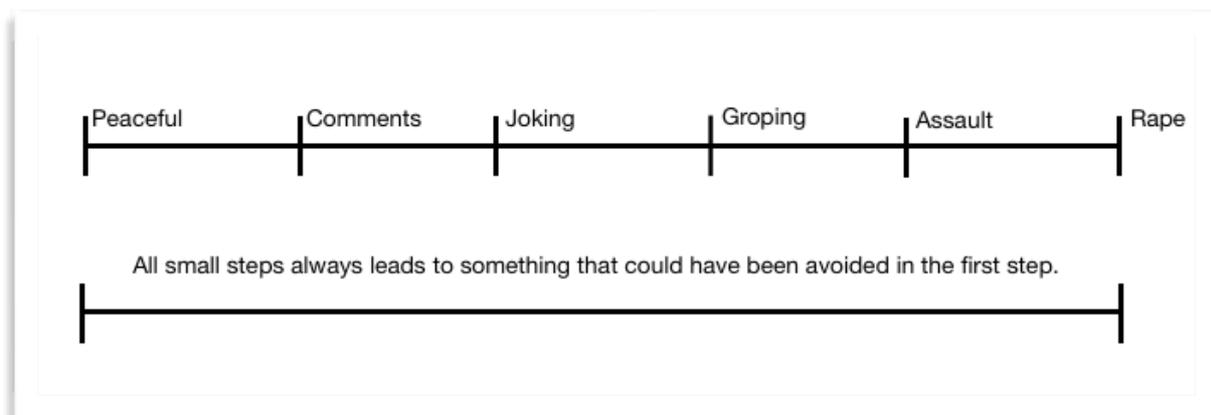


Fig. 1, Social Drifting. Shows that even tough a little thing as a comment may seem trivial, all small steps leads to something bigger.

⁸⁹ Informant 5

⁹⁰ Informant 5

The psychologist also discusses how different stress factors will affect performance of a worker. A seafarer is subject to a lot of stress factors during long periods of time, like being away from their family, not getting enough sleep and rest, uncomfortable working hours and not having access to what they are used to at home. Adding other socially stressful obstacles, like poor working environment, drugs, violence or bullying, and the performance and behavior of the seafarer will get even worse. The seafarer will not do their work tasks as well and risks putting their focus into insignificant details. The psychologist stresses the importance of rest and says that just because a seafarer is off watch, they can not immediately start resting. During their research, they found that the actual time spent resting and sleeping is very low amongst working seafarers, additionally the sleeping quality is poor. The psychologist continues by saying:

You can think like this; if the conditions for mental illness exist, it is much easier to end up in a depression and illness if you don't have the possibility to rest. For example, if there had been opportunity for improvement regarding the working environment onboard, but everything else works, then you can manage to stay away from mental issues much longer. It does not take away the problem, but you will feel considerably better if everything is where it should be and is working, if you have a good watch routine and are free when you are off duty and if the drift is working.⁹¹

4.5 Responsibility

No change can be initiated if no one takes responsibility for it. When asked who has the responsibility for the current and potential, social work climate at sea one informant said the following:

Companies blame seafarers for what happens and the seafarers generally blame the industry or the shipowners. Some might argue that it is the governments or administrations that have to do more, be stricter etc. Some also blame IMO, that they have to do more. It is this kind of thinking, it doesn't really move forward anywhere, we just keep blaming each other. So what would be the best approach to this?⁹²

Another informant asks themselves: "How are we supposed to turn this ship around?" And continues by saying that IMO has a braking effect on the progress by being resistant to science and research.⁹³ Yet another informant emphasizes the importance of the maritime academies. They believe new officers are quite influenced by their years in school, they think their own university has immense influence on their students. The informant talks about companies not wanting female cadets due to possible safety risks and the companies thinking the women are the cause for this. The informant claims that the women are not the problem, the men are, and continues by saying: "You have to take care of your men, so that they get

⁹¹ Informant 5

⁹² Informant 3

⁹³ Informant 5

educated and behave differently.”⁹⁴ Another informant agrees with the great responsibility of the universities:

I think schools have a great responsibility. If i were to look at where we are in terms of an advocacy strategy map, I would suggest that across the institutions I look at, there’s a strong appetite and understanding at the very top. There’s probably driven activity at the bottom were the people are being in-powered to form working groups to discuss things, but there is probably a gap in the middle in terms of breftul knowledge, understanding within particular institutions and a knowledge how to apply that. Building at the ends, we still have to fill in the gap in the middle. It’s complicated to unpick institutional behaviors.⁹⁵

The same informant talks about the difficulty in making a change and the possible obstacles that might appear if it is done in the wrong manner:

[...] the way the best policy for the individuals is to adopt an, how do we say that in leadership turns, you call it become a squeaky wheel. Be annoying enough to keep peoples’ attention, but not so annoying that people say; well you can stop doing that and go do something else.⁹⁶

Another informant discusses the universities’ responsibility on the social, working climate and their influence on new officers as follows:

New officers have their first impact on theory and practical learning during their years at school. Not only scientific content is relevant for their further career, but also their interaction with professor and their peers, interaction with the learning technology and simulators and lastly, with the organizational environment and culture which represent a starting point for their professional and personal development. [...] If we speak about organizational climate and specific culture met in the maritime industry, then universities and academia plays a huge role in providing necessary education and sharing knowledge that will further contribute to the development of the maritime sector. If we refer to climate as an environmental aspect, schools have the tasks, role and purpose to educate next generation of leaders to behave responsible in a common-shared environment.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Informant 2

⁹⁵ Informant 1

⁹⁶ Informant 1

⁹⁷ Informant 4

All of the universities whom are a part of IAMU have signed and agreed to a document called “Basic agreement” which came in effect at 1 April 2015. It states:

The International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) is the global network of leading maritime universities providing Maritime Education and Training (MET) of seafarers for the global shipping industry. All members of IAMU share the understanding:

- *that globalization has been progressing rapidly in the international shipping arena;
- *that Safety, Security and Environmental Protection are crucial issues for the maritime sector; and
- *that passing on maritime skills and knowledge to the following generations needs to be achieved on a global scale.

It continues:

All members of IAMU also recognize the significance of maritime education and training and note that:

- *the shipping industry is a service industry, in which human resources are the critical element;
- *it is only feasible to secure and to preserve highly qualified human resources in the maritime industries through effective education and training; and
- *effective education and training in the maritime sector derives from scientific and academic rigor and development of a clear link between practical skills, management techniques and a focus on quality.

5. DISCUSSION

A general misconception of the term gender equality is that it is something that would only benefit the female part of the population. Women do have a lot to win from a more equal society, but so does everyone else. Consequently the assumption of gender equality being a women issue is evidently wrong. The same goes for equality at the workplace, including seafaring.

5.1 Responsibility

The ones in power are the ones with the biggest possibility to make a change, therefore a lot of the responsibility lands on the men. To make these changes people in charge need to listen and put their trust in the stories and experiences told, even if they themselves can not see the the hurdles. Realizing that people have interpretive precedence in different situations is a first step towards change.

As mentioned in the theory chapter, women are the ones taking the biggest part of the responsibility in these kinds of questions. They are the ones researching and talking about these issues, while helping other women who has fallen victim to violence. Once again, this shows the position society takes in the matter, that it is to be considered a woman's issue for women alone to solve. The responsibility falls on the whole population, since the imbalance between the genders is impossible to solve unless everyone work together to make a global change.

All informants agreed to the universities having a great responsibility for the current and future social, working climate at sea. If new officers are to learn how to treat each other equally and with respect, the maritime academies have to be examples of that. The policies should mirror the academy's opinion in the matter and there should be procedures and routines to make sure the students and faculty know about these policies and understand what they entail. Like one of the informants explained it: "It is hollow if you don't work with it." Having clear rules and guidelines does not only help people in charge to deal with difficult situations, they also help the people being subject of harassment and mistreatment. It is not unusual that victims are being blamed or assumed overreacting, such an environment will make it impossible to feel safe enough to report injustice. One way to make it somewhat safer is to make sure that it is clear for everyone what is allowed and what is not.

Equal treatment should be imbued in every part of the education. A single course or lecture will not make a difference. Course material and language used in lecturers need to be genderless and not enhance gender stereotypes to open up the academic space for everyone. Truth is subjective, how people view the world depends on their upbringing and surroundings. Students spend a lot of their time at university, thus the universities have a great possibility to form a person. A new student with very little experience of the shipping industry will be extremely impressionable during their time at a maritime university. The importance of education and training is something the IAMU finds significant, as can be read in their Basic Agreement: "All members of IAMU also recognize the significance of maritime education

and training and note that: [...] it is only feasible to secure and to preserve highly qualified human resources in the maritime industries through effective education and training.” To secure a safe environment at sea, both physical and physiological, every aspect of the industry have to be included in the education and training of new seafarers.

Responsibility on an individual level is tricky. Like one informant discussed the importance of being a ”squeaky-wheel”and another talking about the risk of backfiring if a person asks for to much, meaning companies might choose to not have any women at all because it just causes more work. This is the way the world works, people will shut down and stop listening if they feel attacked, which means a change need to be gradual and low-key to not be shut down. Some would argue that such an approach should not be necessary, but to keep the momentum of change going, the fine line of progress needs to be balanced to keep from stagnation.

5.2 Rules and Legislation

In respect of all the ILO legislation mentioned in the theory-chapter, it is safe to say that all of the ratifying countries have a legal obligation to prevent discrimination and harassment based on gender at the workplace, no matter if it is at sea or ashore. Yet many women bear witness of being harassed and treated differently during their careers due to their gender.

As mentioned earlier the ISM Code states that all identified risks should be assessed. It could be argued that this includes the risk factor posed by a mistreated or harassed seafarer and if so, not putting in suitable precautions against harassment or discrimination of any kind could be considered a violation against the ISM Code.

According to the Swedish work environment act, the employer is responsible for the work environment onboard. In this case the responsibility falls on the shipping companies, it is their duty to secure the well-being of the employees or seafarer, both physically and psychologically.

Rules and legislation need to be clearer in what they entail. For example The IAMU Basic Agreement document mentions safety. The same goes for many official documents in the shipping industry. What these documents have in common is that none of them further specify what safety entails. Are they talking about mental or physical safety? Since the industry is very concerned about safety in the physical sense, it is fair to assume that when reading these documents people assume that physical safety is the default. As discussed in the results, mental health of the crew is equally important. Not only for the individual but for the shipping companies as well. Less mental illness means less sick leave, less accidents and better performance, which means more efficiency and less economic losses for the company. Hence, documents of this kind should clarify that safety entails not only the safety of the ship and the bodily safety of the crew, but also mental health.

Since it exist an imbalance between the genders in the shipping industry it is safe to assume the legislation is not doing enough. To eliminate discrimination they can not leave room for

missinterpretation. As the primary regulatory organization IMO has to take the lead and start working proactively.

5.3 Preaching to the Choir

All participants in this study are well-read up on the subject and seem to share the same view of the world and the importance of equality. Since the participants are all of different ages, gender and come from different places of the world, the idea of a gender equal shipping industry seem to have no boundaries, nationally or socially. The obstacle is that even if these ideas are shared by people all over the globe, they do not reach the people who need to hear them the most. People who share the same world view talk to each other, discussing their joint goals, but what is needed is the tools to incorporate everyone else.

To reach the majority the change has to come from the top. If the people in charge do not understand that a change has to happen it is impossible for the people at the bottom to make a difference. The important thing is that equality has to be part of all parts of life. If there are only a few people at every university working as hard as they can but having a bundle of hoops and hurdles in front of them, than the time it will take to reach an exactable level, where all can live together i harmony, will take longer than a lifetime.

If the gender equality education is optional, only already interested and well-informed students, faculty and seafarers will participate in the lessons. To reach the ones who truly need to be taught equality, the lecturers about it have to be mandatory.

5.4 The Power of the Word

The importance of language is substantial. Most of the study material and lectures still use “he” as a default for describing the person in the profession of a seafarer. This might exclude women and make them feel, from the start, that no one have them in consideration. In fairness, shipping is a male dominated industry but if the future shall be an inclusive environment for all this has to change. The use of personal pronounce is no longer necessary and it is significant that the language in education step into a new era.

The language used in legislations and polices are a huge contributor to how women are viewed. Official documents are often using words like aim when describing future commitments. Terms like these are ambiguous and keep the officials from making any concrete promises. To make a change the language in the documents can not be up for interpretation, they should say: ”this is our goals and this is how we are going to make them happen”.

5.5 Culture and Traditions

Why is culture and traditions relevant to this study? The design and implementation of policies and the value they gain onboard are entirely dependent on culture and societal expectations on the genders. Policies only gain power if they are considered important and

they will never do so unless the general view of these issues changes fundamentally in society, hence the discussion of culture and social structures is important for this study.

When being a minority at the work place, a survival strategy is to keep quiet, become invisible and hide what makes them stand out from the rest of the group. All to avoid becoming an inconvenience for their co-workers. As mentioned in the theory chapter, women seafarers often feel the need to hide the fact that they are women to be taken more seriously and not be seen as sexual objects. They dress bulky and masculine to avoid glares and comments. Women often feel pressured to be "one of the guys" and to constantly prove their competence. This shows how women often do not feel comfortable to be who they are when working at sea. To be taken seriously and seen as their profession first and foremost, they need to strip down everything that according to society makes them women. By allowing this the organization and culture onboard puts all the responsibility on the women. While feeling the need to become "one of the guys" at work, women still have the societal expectations of being a woman in all other aspects of life. As mentioned in the theory chapter, women are expected to do the biggest part of the household work and being responsible for child care. What puts the shipping industry aside from other fields of work is that at sea it is very hard for women to take that responsibility for the home even if they are expected to do so. It creates an inner conflict where society expects women to be a certain way and do certain things, while they have to leave all of that behind to be taken seriously at work. This might lead to many women seafarers going ashore early. One solution could be to offer shorter contracts for everyone, ensuring people can be a present part of both their work- and family life. It might not seem to be the most economical solution, but considering the companies will be able to keep competent crew for a longer time, it might be the most economical solution in the long run.

When it comes to sexual harassment, why is it that most women can keep their fingers to themselves but so many men can not? It has to do with how women and men are raised differently and how women are valued. As more than one of the informants discussed, the issues of mistreatment does not appear solely because a minority comes onboard. Other kinds of harassment exists at sea, but they have been hushed down and made invisible allowing them to proceed. The industry, and society in general, seem to believe that if something is invisible it does not exist. Excluding minorities is not the solution. It might be a way to avoid inconveniences but the right approach to solve a problem is to remove the cause not the affected party. Once again this is a question about the industry's focus on short-term solutions. Not allowing women onboard, takes away the symptoms quickly, but it does not solve the real issue of inequality which is a long-term project. Long-term thinking is, as the informants have made clear, not the industry's strong suit. Changing culture and behavior takes time and people are a long-term investment with high return, if handled correctly.

The culture onboard is male coded, declaring male connoted characteristics as superior to female characteristics. This might be because it is mostly men working at sea. This creates a negative circular process where the shipping industry consists of mainly men, which affects

the culture onboard to be male coded which in turns staples the industry as being a though and masculine workplace, causing primarily men to be drawn to it, which causes the industry continuously to have mostly men and the whole process starts all over again. To make a difference a united effort has to be done by all parts of the industry by stopping the cycle somewhere in the process. By getting more women to work at sea the culture onboard will change, making it a more attractive workplace for women and causing even more women to seek it out, thus breaking the cycle.

5.6 Risk Assessment and Drifting to Failure

Risk assessment should be a suitable course of action when evaluating risks of both physical and social character. To avoid unnecessary and dangerous situations caused by inequality, risk assessments should be performed before every work task posing a potential, social risk. This might help controlling social situations from getting out of hand and becoming dangerous. The same strategies used when assessing physical risks could be used when assessing social ones, and the same concepts like drifting and human perception should be taken into consideration. The matrix seen in figure 2 was constructed to evaluate social risks, while emphasizing the importance of human perception, when it comes to assessing the severity and probability of unequal treatment due to gender. In figure 2 there are examples of unequal treatment that should be considered, these are solely examples and have not been put in a ranking order.

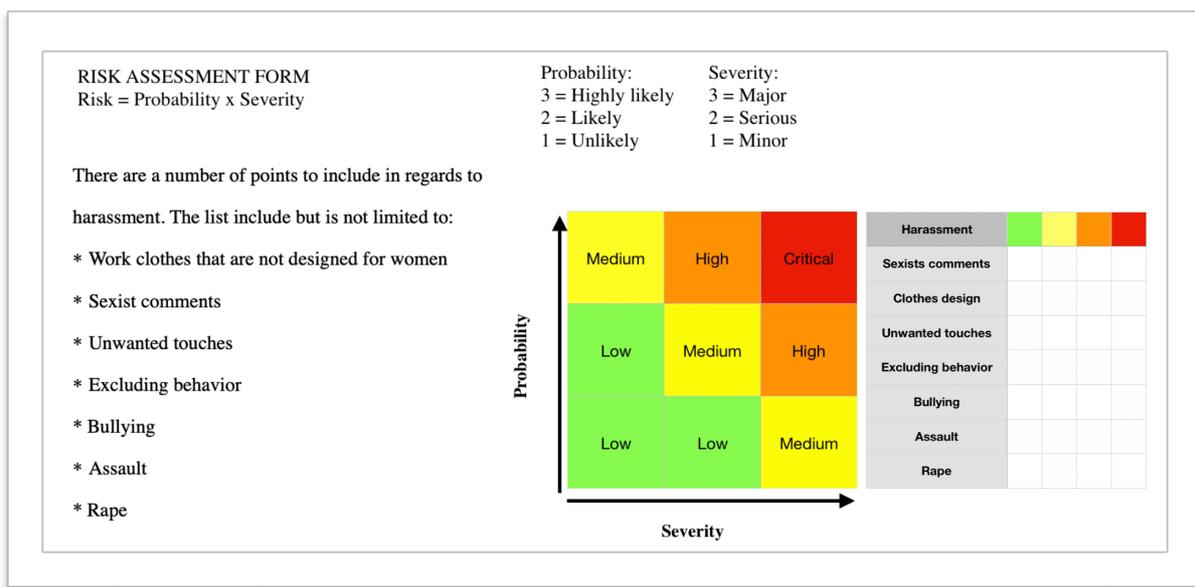


Fig. 2. Social risk assessment matrix. Risk assessment matrix over potential social risks from a gender perspective.

Drifting is an individual issue as well as an organizational. Small things like language and a perceptually harmless naked poster are important, they lead to the next more serious step. This is why companies and academies have to have clear and strict policies, education formats and rules to explain and maybe even prohibit the things people might not know are

important. If the first step is allowed, the next will follow quick and easy. Hence academies and companies need to put their foot down early, even if it might be seen as ridiculous and as if the focus is wrongly directed. People might think that the focus should be directed to more serious cases. They might claim that putting too much energy on the small things will lead to a situation of "crying wolf" where victims will not be taken seriously when they really need to be, since people have been fully fed with stories of irrelevant happenings where victims have been deemed "silly" or "overreacting". What these people have failed to understand is that it is all connected. The small things lead to bigger ones and just because the smaller things are being called out and noticed does not mean that the more serious incidents will not be. Nevertheless it is an important aspect to consider and everyone, both on an individual and an organizational level, has to remind themselves to never stop listen to what people have to say and to always take them seriously. Even if it has all been heard before and it does not seem like anything special. For example, a potential course of events: Someone makes a comment, which can seem like a joke or something not harmful. Next time there is a non consented groping, because it is all still just fun and games. Next intruding of a cabin, a little scare between coworkers can not be wrong. Escalating to the next step, rape. The step from being coworkers to becoming perpetrator and victim, is either many small steps or one big one. But the outcome is still the same. The smaller steps are just harder to define, which can make them even more dangerous.

As the psychologist emphasizes that the stress factors at sea are plenty and will affect the mental health of the seafarer, and with it their work performance and the potential risk they pose. When assessing risks of social construction, all these stress factors have to be taken into consideration. As the psychologist said, the more that works as it should, the smaller the risk of mental health issues becomes. Does the ship not have a proper sleeping schedule or a faulty drift operation and such, the risk of mental illness increases. Increasing unhealthy mental status will in turn increase the physical risks of the ship, crew and cargo.

As mentioned earlier, human perception need to be taken into consideration when assessing risks of inequality, even if it might be difficult due to feelings being subjective. Remembering the story of the elephant and the blindfolded men, the same goes for these kinds of issues onboard a ship. For example a man can seldom see the risk of being the only woman onboard, what it entails or how the smallest thing can snowball in to an unbearable environment. It is necessary to allocate women in quotes to have the width of personnel for a better coverage of perception.

5.7 Benefits of a Heterogenous Workplace

If the work force is one homogenous body of people the risk assessment will be done with that homogenous group in mind. No other perception will be considered, it is obvious all work will be done thinking of that particular kind of group. The obstacle appears when someone not fitting the norm of that group comes onboard. The new person will be forced to fit into that mould, even if it in some aspects might be impossible. For example, if the entire

crew is 150 cm, no one will consider a low beam a problem because the crew will easily go under said beam. When a new crew member comes onboard, whom is 180 cm, the low beam becomes a problem. So the question is, should the company then only hire persons whom are shorter than the height of the beam? That is what has been done in some cases described in the result chapter of this study, when women have been excluded. Like one informant said, privileged is often invisible for those who have it. It is the person with the hurdle in front of them who can see it, that is why diversity in an organization is vital. Without diversity the barriers will not be revealed.

More diversity in shipping will open up the industry for even more diversity. As mentioned in the result, the importance of role-models is essential for the industry and its foundation. People will seek out a work place where they know they are welcome. If the university or company do not have female representation there is a very small possibility that women will be there in the future. People have a tendency to hire people who mirror themselves, a homogenous organization board will be reflected in the rest of the organization. If you flip the narrative the same goes for the male population. Few men will seek out a company with low male representation. The same goes for the universities. A low amount of female professors influences the students at the scholar institutions. Without representation women have a hard time to find motivation and authority for their right to be part of the academic world.

5.8 Priorities

Social sustainability is not a term to stand alone. It is a concept in need of recognition, not only for its own value but for its impact on other parts of the sustainability spectrum. It is not only an issue of human rights, but one about efficiency and economy. A ship that is working sustainably with their social climate, will have workers who perform better and do their tasks more efficiently. As mentioned before, with a better social work environment, there will be less sick leave and less accidents of the crew, ship and cargo. A win-win situation for both the individual and the company, thus prioritizing the workers is a wise decision. Even though economic growth is the goal of the industry, money will not be made without the workers. Why prioritize, when everything is a priority?

5.9 Method Discussion

The representative of each participating academy have been selected by the academies themselves and so poses a risk of making the research somewhat biased. It is likely to assume that the representatives are the academies most knowledgeable employees when it comes to gender equality and equity and so they will give a very proficient image of the academy while their competence in the subject might not be an established competence throughout the whole institution. The static data, as statistics and actual policies and curriculums, will give a more objective description of the different academies work for gender equality.

It is important to consider the interviewers impact on the informants' responses during the interviews. Since the topic circles around serious matters about human rights it is fully

possible that the informants will assume the interviewers position in the subject and try to give answers that will please the interviewers rather than give their truthful opinions. Thus impairing the reliability of the research. Would the interviews be done again under different circumstances, with different interviewers the answers might change. Consistency is particularly hard to achieve when constructing semistructured and non-structured interviews.⁹⁸ Which have been the focus of this research.

It is also possible the informants want to put their institutions in the best light possible and thus emphasize what they deem they are doing well while withholding information they might consider not as flattering. In the same spirit, the academies choosing to partake in the research might be the ones with an established working process for gender equality, while the academies choosing not to partake might do so due to lack of interest in the matter or lack of work for gender equality. Thus the selection in this study might not be an overall image of the actual reality of the world.

The informants are anonymous to everyone except for the researchers and their own academies, which forwarded the informants contact information to the researchers when they were contacted for the study. The fact that the informants are not anonymous to their employers might affect their answers. They might not respond completely truthfully on account of not wanting to anger their employers by putting them in a bad light.

Information given during interviews are not based on actions of the informants but rather what they say, sometimes these two does not correlate, thus having a negative impact on the validity of the research.⁹⁹ As mentioned above there exist several reasons for the answers of the informants to be affected, which in turn affect the validity of the research.

The fall off of universities in this study is high. The low number of universities who chose to be a part of the study could suggest that the other universities do not find the subject important or that they do not have any policies regarding gender equality. No-answers are answers in themselves. Perhaps they know they are not meeting the standards and therefore chose to not expose themselves. However the number of academies participating is deemed sufficient to give at least an indication of whether gender equality policies and curriculums do exist at maritime universities in general around the world and if they are being implemented and if they seem to be enough to deal with the problem of gender discrimination as a workplace issue at sea.

To make the study more reliable more maritime academies would have needed to partake in the research. To give a full global picture of the issue, the study would have needed participants from all continents, in this research the Americas and Africa are not represented.

⁹⁸ Denscombe, p. 293.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

6. CONCLUSION

How the repercussions of a mental health issue is being dealt with in the industry is a pressing issue that needs to be examined to prevent further harm. Since the practical apprenticeships are such a big part of the maritime education system the responsibility for the students education is shared and it is important for the academies, the shipping companies and all other relevant parts of the industry to work together to optimize the education for all seafarers regardless of their gender. The shipping industry is a global market, which means that to change the industry there has to be change all over the world. To ensure an equal future all parts of the industry, companies, stakeholders, crews, students and academies, have to work together over the national borders to change the image of what a seafarer is supposed to be.

Diversity is one of the solutions to the problem, every organization and society have to have diversity, because it is difficult to fix a problem that is not visible. Risk assessment, and all it includes like drifting and human perception, is a powerful tool that can be used which the industry is already familiar with.

In order to get a social sustainable life at sea, the shipping industry must place social sustainability higher on their priority list. The industry know social sustainability is important, they know education, policies and legislation can make a difference, the result chapter of this study has made that clear. Yet it still do not seem to be enough, the reason must be because it is not deemed as important as other parts of the field. If it was considered as vital as the drift or security, the sea would be more gender balanced. The legislation and the policies would be less ambiguous and more forcing, and equality would not be a choice but an obligation.

Policies seem to exist, but are not effective enough. This might be because there exist no well-established procedures and routines for follow-up and people do seem to not know about their existence or what they entail. The policies and guidelines need not only exclaim what is allowed and what is not, but also how to accomplish an equal working space.

Audits and port state controls should include work of social sustainability at maritime academies and ships. For example, there are companies and flags currently not compliant with the white list of the industry, because they do not meet the standards of a safe ship. The same standards should include social sustainability.

To be the solution one have to be brave enough to see one's own part of the problem.

6.1 Recommendations for Further Research

Further research on how to achieve a better social, culture onboard is the next step. Concrete examples on how to reach sustainable goals, need to be examined.

Further research could also be to examine official documents of shipping companies from a gender perspective.

REFERENCES

Literature

Arbetsmiljölöag [The Swedish Work Environment Act] (1977:1160)

Boström Cars, Maria & Österman, Cecilia, "Mind the Gap! Maritime Education for Gender-Equal Career Advancement" in *Maritime Women: Global Leadership*, Eds., Dr. Kitada, Momoko, Williams, Erin, & Dr. Loloma Froholdt, Lisa, New York: Springer 2015

Davidsson, Bo & Patel, Runa, *Forskningsmetodikens grunder: Att planera, genomföra och rapportera en undersökning*, Lund: Studentlitteratur 2011

Davidsson, Göran; Haeffler, Liane; Ljungman, Bo & Frantzich, Håkan, *Handbok för riskanalys*, Räddningsverket 2003

Gemzöe, Lena, *Feminism*, Stockholm: Bilda Förlag 2010

Lykke, Nina, *Feminist Studies: A Guide to Intersectional Theory, Methodology and Writing*, New York: Routledge 2010

The Swedish Government Office, *Ett jämställt Europa: om Sveriges EU-politik för jämställdhet*, Eds., Johan Murray, Jeanette Neij, Marie-Helene Lindblom, Stockholm: 2000

Articles

Barahona-Fuentes, Clàudia; Castells-Sanabra, Marcella; Ordás, Santiago & Torralbo, Jordi, "Female figures in maritime education and training institutions between 2009 and 2018: analysing possible impacts of gender policies", in *WMU Journal of Maritime Affairs*, Vol. 19, Issue 1, New York: Springer 2020

Kitada, Momoko, "A Prospect for Women Seafarers", in *The Mariners' Digest*, Vol. 39, Tokyo: The Japan Shipping Exchange, Inc. 2015

Kitada, Momoko, "Women Seafarers: An Analysis of Barriers to Their Employment" in *The World of the Seafarer*, WMU Studies in Maritime Affairs, Vol. 9, Eds., V. O. Gekara, H. Sampson, New York: Springer 2021

Lefkowitz, R.Y.; Slade, M.D. & Redlich, C. A., "Rates and occupational characteristics of international seafarers with mental illness" in *Occupational Medicine*, Vol., 69, Issue 4, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2019

Paek, Hye-Jin & Hove, Thomas, "Risk Perceptions and Risk Characteristics", *Oxford Encyclopedia of Communication*, Oxford University Press 2017

Pidgeon N. & O'Leary, M., "Man-made disasters: why technology and organizations (sometimes) fail", in *Safety Science*, Vol., 34, Issues 1-3, Amsterdam: Elsevier Science Ltd 2000

Pike, Kate; Wadsworth, Emma Honebon, Sarah; Broadhurst, Emma; Zhao, Minghua, & Zhang, Pengfei, "Gender in the maritime space: how can the experiences of women seafarers working in the UK shipping industry be improved?", in *The Journal of Navigation*, Vol. 74, Issue 6, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2021

Van der Klauw, Marloes; Oude Hengel, Karen; Bakhuys Roozeboom, Maartje; Koppes Lando L. & Venema, Anita, "Occupational accidents in the Netherlands: incidence, mental harm, and their relationship with psychosocial factors at work", in *International Journal of Injury Control and Safety Promotion*, Vol., 23, Issue 1, : Taylor & Francis 2014

Conference Papers

Kitada, Momoko & Langåker, Lise, "Women seafarers as minority organizational members", *The International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) Annual General Assembly*, Hai Phong 2016

The United Nations, *World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen, 14 to 30 July 1980 : report*, United Nations Publication 1980

Lectures

Gruvefeldt, Mats, lecture Bridge Team, "Drifting", Chalmers University of Technology, 2021.09.20

Websites

International Labour Organization, "Ratifications of C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)", *NORMLEX*, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11300:0::NO:11300:P11300_INSTRUMENT_ID:312256

International Labour Organization, "C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)", *NORMLEX*, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C111

International Maritime Organization, "International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW)", <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/HumanElement/Pages/STCW-Conv-LINK.aspx>

International Maritime Organization, "IMO At Glance", <https://www.imo.org/>

International Maritime Organization, "Introduction to IMO", <https://www.imo.org/en/About/Pages/Default.aspx>

International Maritime Organization, "The International Safety Management (ISM) Code", <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/HumanElement/Pages/ISMCode.aspx>

The European Union, "Dokument 32006L0054", *EUR-Lex*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SV/TXT/?uri=celex:32006L0054>

APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire for representatives of the participating academies

Hi and thank you for your participation!

Just for record keeping please state:

Your name

Where you work

Your title/position at the school

Any other criteria or past experience that is relevant to the subject

Questionnaire:

*What do you think about when hearing “social sustainability”?

*How much do you think new officers are influenced from their years at school?

*And how much responsibility do the schools have for the current climate in the industry?

* Do your school have any policies, programs or courses regarding gender equality?

(Curriculums, During cadet period on ships, Diversity of staff and professors.)

* How do your school work with enforcing and the follow up on said policies?

*Studies shows that a heterogeneous work place have many benefits.

*What is your thoughts on that statement?

* How do you think the industry can achieve such a work place, or is it even something to strive for?

* The percentage of women enrolled in maritime academies over the world is very low, why do you think that is?

*Have you or the institution ever looked at inequality from a risk assessment point of view?

(The safety aspect of having a crew member that is being harassed while working in one of the worlds most hazardous occupations. Studies show that persons being harassed are more likely to be part of accidents in the work place.)

*Are there any more benefits of equal treatment at sea?

APPENDIX 2

Questionnaire for participating psychologist

- * What are the psychological repercussions of not feeling safe or respected at work?
- * What are the differences in working on land and on a ship? In regards to not being able to meet your safety net and social network at home.
- * How is the psyche affected when being harassed?
- * When looking at a risk analysis we have to take the human perception in consideration. In the case of psychology, where do we draw the line of whom is responsible of where that line ends up?
- * The psychological effect on your ability to work when feeling mistreated?

APPENDIX 3

Agreement of participation

CHALMERS

Informed consent for participation in Bachelor thesis project ("Social Sustainability at Sea")

Chalmers University of Technology
Department of Mechanics and Maritime Sciences
Department of Maritime Studies (program)
SE - 412 96 Gothenburg

Students:

Alexandra Andersson (anderal@student.chalmers.se / +46 (0) 761909193)
Maja Lundberg (majalu@student.chalmers.se / +46 (0) 700380538)

Supervisor:

Tomas Olsson Neptun (tool@chalmers.se / +46 (0)31 7722676)

We are writing our bachelor thesis in Nautical Science. The topic of the thesis is: Social sustainability at sea from a gender perspective.

We want to find out if and why the gap between policies and reality exist. The goal is to look at the problem from a risk analysis perspective and try to shed light on the benefits of equal treatment at sea.

If you want more information about the project, you are welcome to contact the supervisor and/or the students.

Before we ask for your participation, we want to inform you about the ethical rules that apply in the project.

- *I have read the information about participating in the study and am aware of how the data collection is performed and the estimated time it takes.*
- *I have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the study and have them answered beforehand.*
- *I participate in this study completely voluntarily and have been informed about why I have been asked and what the purpose of my participation is.*
- *I am aware that I can cancel my participation at any time during the study without having to give a reason for this.*
- *I give my consent to Chalmers University of Technology.*
- *I give this consent provided that no one other than the student/-s / supervisor / researchers associated with the study will take part of the collected material.*
- *I am aware that the study is completely anonymous and collected data will be reported without connection to person, vessel or company / shipping company.*

By signing this form, you give your so-called informed consent to participate in the study under these conditions and that you have read the information presented.

CHALMERS

I agree that the interview will be recorded for analysis purposes.

Place:	Date:
Signature:	
Name clarification:	
Contact information: VOLUNTARY	

APPENDIX 4

List of contacted maritime academies

Members of IAMU:

Europe and Africa (39 members)

- Azerbaijan State Marine Academy / Azerbaijan
- Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy / Bulgaria
- University of Rijeka, Faculty of Maritime Studies / Croatia
- University of Split Faculty of Maritime Studies / Croatia
- Svendborg International Maritime Academy / Denmark
- Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport / Egypt
- Estonian Maritime Academy of Tallinn University of Technology / Estonia
- Satakunta University of Applied Sciences / Finland
- Batumi Navigation Teaching University / Georgia
- Batumi State Maritime Academy / Georgia
- HSB – City University of Applied Sciences, Centre of Maritime Studies / Germany
- Hochschule Wismar, University of Applied Sciences – Technology, Business and Design / Germany
- Jade University of Applied Sciences Wilhelmshaven Oldenburg Elsfleth, Faculty of Maritime and Logistics Studies, Elsfleth / Germany
- Regional Maritime University / Ghana
- Italian Shipping Academy Foundation / Italy
- Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences/ Netherlands
- University of Southeast Norway / Norway
- Western Norway University of Applied Sciences / Norway
- Gdynia Maritime University / Poland
- Szczecin Maritime University / Poland
- Constanta Maritime University / Romania
- “Mircea cel Bătrân” Naval Academy/ Romania
- Admiral Makarov State University of Maritime and Inland Shipping / Russia
- Admiral Ushakov Maritime State University / Russia
- Baltic Fishing Fleet State Academy of Kaliningrad State Technical University / Russia
- Federal State-Financed Educational Institution of Higher Education “Volga State University of Water Transport / Russia
- King Abdulaziz University Jeddah, Faculty of Maritime Studies/ Saudi Arabia
- Barcelona School of Nautical Studies – Polytechnical University of Catalonia / Spain

- Chalmers University of Technology, Department Mechanics and Maritime Sciences / Sweden
- Dokuz Eylül University, Maritime Faculty / Turkey
- Istanbul Technical University, Maritime Faculty / Turkey
- Karadeniz Technical University / Turkey
- Piri Reis University / Turkey
- Yıldız Technical University, Naval Architecture and Maritime Faculty / Turkey
- Kherson State Maritime Academy / Ukraine
- National University “Odessa Maritime Academy” / Ukraine
- Odessa National Maritime University / Ukraine
- State University of Infrastructure and Technologies / Ukraine
- Liverpool John Moores University / UK

Asia, Pacific and Oceania (18 members)

- Australian Maritime College, University of Tasmania / Australia
- Dalian Maritime University / China
- Jimei University / China
- Shanghai Maritime University / China
- Tianjin University of Technology, Maritime College / China
- Academy of Maritime Education and Training (AMET) University / India
- Indian Maritime University / India
- IRISL Maritime Training Institute / Iran
- Kobe University, Faculty of Oceanology / Japan
- Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, School of Marine Technology / Japan
- Korea Maritime And Ocean University / Korea
- Mokpo National Maritime University / Korea
- Myanmar Maritime University / Myanmar
- John B.Lacson Foundation Maritime University / Philippines
- Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific / Philippines
- Maritime State University named after adm. G.I. Nevelskoy / Russia
- Ho Chi Minh City University of Transport / Vietnam
- Vietnam Maritime University / Vietnam

Americas (10 members)

- Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland / Canada
- Mexican Maritime Education and Training System, Maritime Academy of Veracruz / Mexico
- International Maritime University of Panama / Panama
- Technological University of Peru / Peru

- California State University Maritime Academy / USA
- Maine Maritime Academy / USA
- Massachusetts Maritime Academy / USA
- State University of New York, Maritime College / USA
- Texas A&M Maritime Academy, Texas A&M University at Galveston / USA
- U.S. Merchant Marine Academy / USA

Special Member (2 members)

- World Maritime University / Sweden, IMO
- The Nippon Foundation / Japan

Other maritime academies:

- Kalmar Maritime Academy, Linnaeus University / Sweden
- Aboa Maritime Academy and Training Center / Finland

APPENDIX 5

Initial email sent to members of IAMU

To whom it may concern.

We are two students at Chalmers University, writing our bachelor thesis in Nautical Science. The topic of the thesis is: Social sustainability at sea from a gender perspective.

Our wish is to collect global data of the maritime universities' influences in the industry. The focus will be to find why the gap between policys and reality in shipping still exists, from an equality point of view.

We would like you to help us in our research by sharing information about your university's policies, curriculum and work regarding gender equality together with statistics of the gender division of your applicants and current students. In addition we would like to interview the person responsible for equal treatment in the maritime department at your academy.

Hope to hear from you!

Best regards/

Alexandra Andersson, Maja Lundberg

DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICS AND MARITIME SCIENCES
CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Göteborg, Sweden, 2022
www.chalmers.se



CHALMERS