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WORLD MARITIME UNIVERSITY

Malmö, Sweden



**CULTURAL SENSITIVITY EDUCATION:
LIMITING THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF
MULTICULTURAL CREWING IN SHIPPING**

By

TRAN THI THUONG

Vietnam

A dissertation submitted to the World Maritime University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

In

MARITIME AFFAIRS

(MARITIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING)

2007

DECLARATION

I certify that all the material in this dissertation that is not my own work has been identified, and that no material is included for which a degree has previously been conferred on me.

The contents of this dissertation reflect my own personal views, and are not necessarily endorsed by the University.

.....

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ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: **Cultural sensitivity education: Limiting the Adverse Effects of Multicultural Crewing in Shipping**

Degree: **Master of Science**

The trend of multinational crewing on ships has been associated with problems caused by cultural and language differences. Research has been carried out to solve the problems. However, these studies mainly focused on communication, significance of maritime English and placed less emphasis on problems caused by cultural differences which also have a significant impact on shipboard operation and safety.

This dissertation mainly focuses on challenges posed by cultural differences onboard ship, and provides an analysis of the cultural components of shipboard safety. The work is based on a critical review of the literature, case references and a survey and leads to proposals regarding cultural sensitivity education as an effective measure to help overcome these challenges. The dissertation also identifies and discusses some of the benefits and common objections to cultural sensitivity education.

Finally, some proposals are made regarding the practical implementation of maritime cultural sensitivity education. This requires the effective cooperation of International Maritime Organization (IMO), Maritime Education and Training (MET) institutions and shipping companies. MET institutions can learn from the experience of other industries in applying existing principles for maritime cultural sensitivity education. A recommendation is made concerning the need for further study in the subject.

Key words: Cultural sensitivity education, Multicultural crewing, Culture, Communication, Curriculum, Education and training.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Able Seamen
ATSB	Australian Transport Safety Bureau
GPS	Global Positioning System
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ISM	International Safety Management
ISPS	International Ship and Port Facility Security
MAIB	United Kingdom Marine Accident Investigation Branch
MET	Maritime Education and Training
NTSB	United State National Transportation Safety Board
SMCP	Standard Marine Communication Phrases
STCW	International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers
WMU	World Maritime University

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

“We don’t look so much at what or where people have studied, but rather at their drive, initiative, cultural sensitivity...”

Stephen Green, Group CEO, HSBC
Harvard Business Review, August 2003

Globalization and technology development have had a great impact on the shipping industry, making it more complex. A ship can be built in Japan; owned by Norwegian interests; registered in Panama; managed from Glasgow; chartered by an English company; crewed by Filipinos; carrying a cargo from America; be involved in a pollution incident off the Irish coast.

About 80 per cent of the world’s merchant ships have a multicultural/ multi ethnic crew composition; many have seven or eight nationalities onboard and large cruise ships may have more than thirty (Couper et al., 1999). The differences in culture and languages among crews have caused problems on board ships from minor issues such as misunderstandings to big accidents. Two Swedish captains were murdered after one of them shouted at a Filipino crew member in front of the rest of the crew which resulted in the Filipino losing face and becoming violent (Grenestedt, 2002). Therefore, it is very important to have knowledge of cultural differences in such a complex world.

Culture and communication are inseparable and culture is a fundamental consideration in the achievement of effective communication. Different languages, customs and ways of understanding gestures cause communication lapses, which contribute to many accidents and major marine catastrophes. A ship cannot be run

safely without a leadership that has a mature understanding of cultural differences. Millions of dollars spent on buying the best communication equipment can become meaningless if people onboard ships cannot communicate properly.

Education in cultural differences and using a common language are solutions for problems related to multicultural and multilingual crews on board ships. However, teaching cultural sensitivity in the maritime sector has not been developed much. In the maritime world, English is the working language in ship to shore and ship to ship communication. The Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) and the requirement for a common language to be used in ship operations under the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1995 have facilitated the use of English as a common language in the maritime world.

Cultural sensitivity education is an effective method that needs to be developed more. Because a ship is not only a workplace, but also a home for seafarers, it is crucial to understand each other through understanding each other's culture. This will reduce the risk of accidents. It appears that not much attention is paid to cultural differences in maritime education. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out research about "*Cultural Sensitivity Education: Limiting the Adverse Effects of Multicultural Crewing in Shipping*" to awaken the interest of stakeholders in the shipping industry regarding the importance of education in cultural sensitivity and to find ways of improving this.

1.1 Aim and objectives

The aim of this dissertation is to make readers (hopefully key stakeholders in the maritime industry) become aware of the issues of cultural sensitivity education in the maritime field in order to apply this knowledge to establish better cross-cultural communication and relationships onboard for the sake of reducing/limiting accidents. The five main objectives of this dissertation are:

1. To identify some problems caused by multicultural and multilingual crews on board ships

2. To analyze the causes of such problems
3. To discuss possible measures to solve these problems
4. To analyze the pros and cons of cultural sensitivity education as a possible solution to these specific problems
5. To formulate proposals on how to practically apply cultural sensitivity education in the shipping industry.

1.2 Research methods and research population

In order to obtain dissertation objectives, a literature search, a questionnaire and interviews were used. These methods were undertaken in four phases (Figure 1.1)



Figure 1.1 Illustration of the research process

In the first phase, a literature search was conducted to identify general problems caused by multicultural and multilingual crews on board ships. Based on findings and gaps identified in the literature, a questionnaire was designed to collect primary data from respondents who have worked or studied in the maritime field.

The second phase was started with the preparation of this questionnaire. The use of a questionnaire/survey as a data collection method is based on the effectiveness, simplicity and directness of this method (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007). This primary research gives data and information which are not influenced by amplification of media.

The questionnaire was designed with both open and closed questions. The questionnaire went through a draft before concluding on a final version. The transitions from the draft to final questionnaire were informed by pilot surveys. The first draft included more open questions than closed questions in order to get information from respondents who have sea experience.

In the third phase, the first draft of the questionnaire was used to interview students of the Maritime Education and Training (MET) class of World Maritime University (WMU). The interviews were conducted with individuals as well as with groups. The context of the interviews was onboard a ferry owned/crewed by Swedish/German interests and it offered an opportunity to discuss this topic in the relevant setting. It was observed that during group interviews, opinions or ideas of one member in the group often helped others to remember events/incidents that enhanced further the data obtained. This was considered a welcome benefit of the group-interviewing process. The purpose of this interview was to amend the draft of the questionnaire. Interviewees were WMU students (from 9 different nations) who have sea experience and are currently maritime educators. It was considered that this group (multicultural and multilingual) was an adequate reflection of the target sample of the final questionnaire and a good source of data. During the interviews, question structure, grammar and ambiguity in wording were also addressed and corrections made as appropriate.

After the interview process, the questionnaire was ameliorated; for example more closed format questions were included because such kind of questions can motivate people to answer and are easier for the author to synthesize (Vaus, 2002). The questionnaire was then distributed to the research population, which included students of the Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz (Netherlands), some faculty, students and staff of the World Maritime University, and students of Sainik School Kunjpura in India. The data was then collected and analyzed and the results are presented in this dissertation.

1.3 Definitions of expression in this dissertation

Words and concepts in different contexts can have different meanings or can be understood in various ways. In order to have consistent understanding, the following concepts are defined.

1.3.1 Culture

There is extensive literature focusing on the different aspects of culture and its many definitions. The studies of Geert Hofstede (example as documented in the book *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*) are significant in this field. Hofstede (1997, p.5) defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another”.

Another simple definition of culture is given by Ferraro (1998, p. 16): “culture is everything that people have, think and do as members of their society” and “culture is transmitted through the process of learning and interacting with one’s environment rather than through the genetic process”. Dahl (2004, p. 4) draws the conclusion that “culture consists of various factors that are shared by a given group, and that it acts as an interpretive frame of behaviour”.

In summary therefore, it can be said that culture consists of various factors such as learned behaviours, traditions, beliefs, and a way of life created by a group of people and it acts as an interpretive frame of behaviour. Robinson et al. (1999, p. 40) identified ten components of culture as follows:

1. Values and beliefs
2. Communication patterns (Language/ Dialect)
3. Social relationships
4. Diet and food preparation
5. Dress and other body decoration
6. Religion and religious practices
7. Family (structure)
8. Traditions and customs
9. View of time
10. Recreation/ Leisure

Despite the definitions given by Hofstede, Dahl and Robinson (with the emphasis on group dynamics), this significant place of individual personality and behaviour must

not be discarded. While acknowledging the effects of societal culture and the need to be sensitive to these group cultures, the dissertation in no way endorses stereotyping cultures and recognises the important role of individual behaviour in ship operation.

1.3.2 Cultural sensitivity

Cultural sensitivity goes by many names, including cultural competence, cultural relevance, cultural appropriateness, cultural legitimacy, ethnic sensitivity, cultural diversity, cultural pluralism, cultural tailoring, and cultural targeting. Although there are definitions and distinctions for these terms, the terminology has no internationally recognized standard (Resnicow et al., 2000, p.272).

A definition of cultural sensitivity found at website of Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice is that “cultural sensitivity means knowing cultural differences as well as similarities exist, without assigning values, i.e., better or worse, right or wrong, to those cultural differences”.

Backus (2000) also gave a similar definition of cultural sensitivity as being aware that cultural differences and similarities exist and have an effect on values, learning and behaviour.

Combining all of the above, in this dissertation, *cultural sensitivity* is defined as the awareness and tolerance of cultural differences/similarities and their effects on values and behaviour.

1.3.3 Education

Education is the preparation for careers and life in general, which involves the learning of concept, principles, and problem solving methods. Education “is the gradual process of acquiring knowledge through learning and instruction. It is much about gaining knowledge through textbooks and it is a lifelong process” while “training is the development of skills or knowledge through instruction or practice” (Squire, 2005, p. 2). Education is one of the fundamental aspects of imparting of culture from generation to generation.

1.3.4 Maritime culture

Culture can be classified by many criteria such as nation, religion, corporate and industry cultures. Maritime culture in this dissertation is culture set up on board the ship, between ship and ship and between ship and shore. Maritime culture becomes complex in parallel with the appearance of multicultural and multilingual crews on board the ship.

Maritime cultural sensitivity education is the teaching and learning of cultural sensitivity in the maritime field.

1.4 Dissertation structure

Lately, many written works have been produced to address the problems that arise from multicultural and multilingual crew compositions, primarily in regards to communication and significance of the study of Maritime English. However, less emphasis has been placed on “cultural sensitivity” and the understanding and tolerance of differences/similarities of different cultures which also strongly impact on shipboard operation and safety. This dissertation deals with this issue by identifying emergent challenges and by formulating proposals to deal with those challenges. This is done in six chapters as follows.

Chapter I, “Introduction” gives a background/general situation of the shipping industry relating to manning with multicultural and multilingual crew compositions. This chapter also includes the aim, objectives and research methods of the study. The issue is introduced from a broad cultural perspective and then is narrowed down to a focus on cultural sensitivity.

Chapter II, “Multicultural crewing: Challenges”, uses incident and accident analysis to identify challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crews. Pertinent issues are synthesized and analyzed from the literature to prove that cultural heterogeneity is a significant causal factor in those incidents and accidents.

Chapter III, “Survey Findings”, affirms challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crews indicated in chapter two through the analysis of the survey data. This chapter also presents the views and suggestions of survey respondents regarding potential measures to meet identified challenges and bring improvements.

Chapter IV, “Overcoming challenges: Cultural sensitivity education and other measures”, focuses on discussing and analyzing the benefits of and some common objections to cultural sensitivity education, as well as other possible measures to help solve the problems identified in chapter two and three.

Chapter V, “Implementing cultural sensitivity education in the shipping industry”, proposes methods/actions that stakeholders (International Maritime Organization (IMO), MET institutions and shipping companies) should do to implement cultural sensitivity education in the shipping industry.

Chapter VI, “Concluding discussion and recommendation”, concludes as well as gives recommendations for further research.

The relationship of the chapters is shown in Figure 1.2

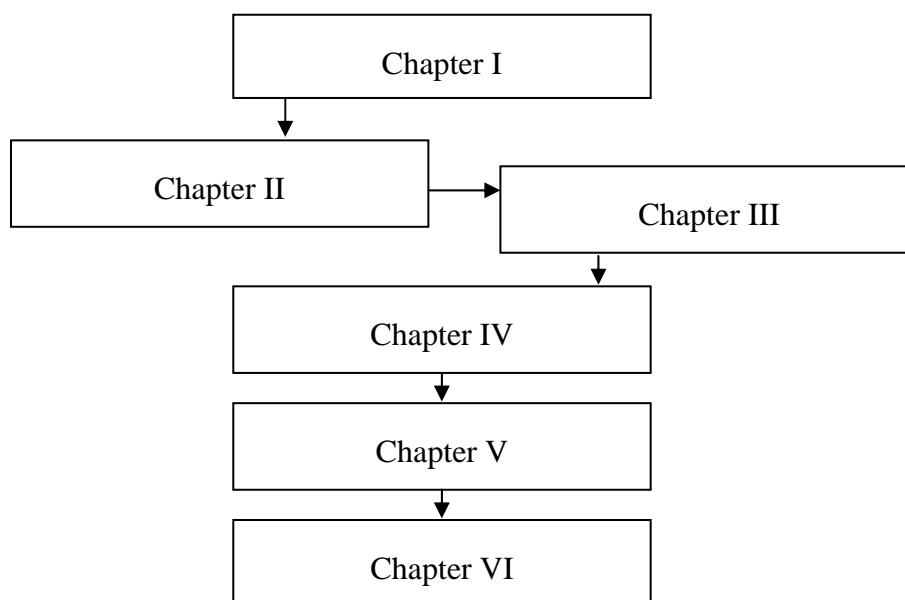


Figure 1.2 Structure of dissertation

CHAPTER II

MULTICULTURAL CREWING: CHALLENGES

“Most accidents are the result of mistakes made by people which could and should have been prevented”

William A. O’Neil, World Maritime Day 1994

2.1 Overview

In the past, a vessel belonging to one country was operated by crew from this country. Seafarers worked for a shipping company for a long time and were loyal to this company. Because of globalization, shipping companies have become multinational. With the birth of open registers (or flags of convenience) and the perceived advantages associated with them, many vessels were flagged out of traditional maritime registries and subsequently operated by multinational crews. This is a common phenomenon in the shipping industry today. Almost two-thirds of all ships sail with more than two nationalities and as many as one in ten ships operate with more than five different nationalities on board (Cross-cultural sensitivity, 2005).

Many companies use mixed nationality crews based on grounds of cost and competitiveness. It is difficult for crews from many nations to get themselves organized to agitate for higher wages and benefits and it is also cheaper to hire crew from developing countries. Therefore, to keep cost down, some companies have dozens of nationalities working on one ship (Dzugan, 1998).

The picture of the composition of crew nationalities has been changed. Developing countries (especially those from Asia) have become seafarer suppliers. The

Philippines is ranked first among countries providing seafarers for the world (see Figure 2.1).

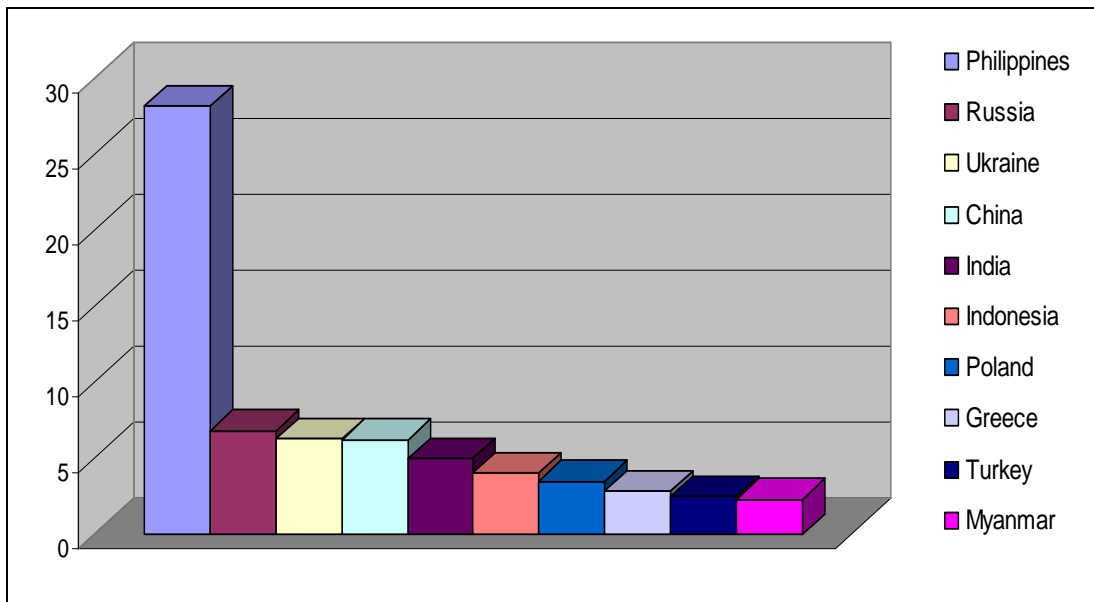


Figure 2.1 Ten largest seafarer nationality groups

Source: Zhao and Amante (2003).

This trend – the increasing use of multinational crews – has significant effects on maritime culture and poses a challenge to the shipping industry because it introduces inherent problems of social cohesion, questions of loyalty and commitment, language use, progression and promotion (Tallack, 2005). The different cultural backgrounds of the crew of a ship may cause problems in the safe and efficient operation of that ship. Reports have shown that casualties have happened more often on ships with mixed crews than on ships operated by a single nationality (IMO, 1994).

Traditionally, in all nations and under all flags, culture on a vessel is hierarchical (Shea, 1995). Crewmembers were loyal to one vessel or a company and worked with the same crew/owner for many voyages. Nowadays, seafarers come from many countries in the world. They can work for one voyage (or even part of a voyage) on one ship, then change to another ship and meet other crew. This transitory nature of modern seafaring does not give crewmembers a chance to adjust to each other's cultural styles. Temporary crewmembers suffer more stress from the highly

hierarchical ship organizational structure than permanent crewmembers. The racial, national and cultural mixes of crew are so complicated that they can lead to misunderstandings, stress and even violence. With the development of technology (which significantly reduces ship turn-around time) and the increase in international regulation (such as International Safety Management (ISM) Code, International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code), port leisure time which used to be a social release for crew is minimal or non-existent. There is also inequality between the experience, pay, working conditions and nationality of crewmembers. Seafarers from different countries doing the same jobs may be on different contracts and wage scales (Couper et al., 1999). All of these issues are challenges posed by multicultural crewing.

There are two principal approaches to looking at the issues relating to culture and language onboard ships with multicultural and multilingual crew (Pyne & Koester, 2005). The first one is a post accident approach which analyses clues/indications of cultural issues of those maritime accidents. According to Pyne & Koester, this approach tends to be quantitative in nature. The second approach is a qualitative one, studying culture and language in everyday life by interviewing and observing behaviour of crew onboard multicultural vessels. This dissertation uses the former approach.

2.1.1 Accidents caused by cultural differences onboard ships

There have been maritime accidents in which cultural differences of multicultural crew onboard ship was a causal factor. However cultural issues were apparently ignored in maritime casualty investigation reports for a long time and only became criteria for casualty-causation in recent years. For example, in the investigation of fire with loss of life on fishing vessel Alaska Spirit in Seward in 1996, United States National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) concluded that the most likely ignition source was the cooking pot in the assistant fish master's cabin (NTSB, 1996). It was an Asian crewmember's cabin. However, the report did not indicate the possibility

that the crewman's cultural preference for food obviously was not met, which led him to prepare food in his cabin, resulting in the fire and loss of life.

In the past, investigations of casualties neglected relevant cultural questions possibly because of a perceived need to protect national interests, and to avoid suggestions of racism. Recently, cultural differences have been perceived as important issues and are considered relevant in marine accident report. For instance, on 1 December 2004, the tanker Stolt Tern ran aground off the south eastern end of the breakwater in Holyhead. One identified causal factor was that the pilot did not integrate well into the bridge team during the pilotage passage. The Master and crew were Filipinos but the pilot was raised in Holyhead. In the report on the investigation of the grounding of Stolt Tern, the United Kingdom Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) concluded that "cultural differences influenced the interaction between the pilot and master on this occasion" (2005, p. 19).

The MARCOM was a project in Europe dealing with problems involving MARitime COMmunication which is one part of maritime culture. Problems with communication include non-engagement and miscommunication. Non-engagement means non-communication or communication break-off. Miscommunication is misunderstanding or incomplete understanding. These criteria were used to identify problems related to maritime communication shown in Table 2.1. The problems related to cultural factors in this project are mainly focused on insufficient verbal coordination between master and officers, officers and ratings.

Compiled from various sources, Table 2.1 shows some examples of maritime accidents related to cultural constraints. Because the role of cultural constraints is a relatively new consideration in casualty investigation and reporting, there is a difficulty in obtaining systematic statistics of accidents/casualties related to communication difficulties and cultural diversity. This could be one reason why ship owners still ignore the importance of cultural sensitivity.

Table 2.1 Maritime accidents involving multicultural communication difficulties and cultural diversify

Type of Accident	Ship/s by name		Ship/s nationality		Year	Constraints	
						Com.	Culture (**)
Fire	Maersk Doha				2006	x	
Grounding	Crimson Mars		Singapore		2006	x	
Collision	Hyundai Dominion	Sky Hope	UK	Hong Kong	2004	x	
Explosion	Bow Mariner		Greece		2004	x	
Grounding	Domiat		Egypt		2004		x
Collision	Silja Opera	Several	Sweden		2003		x
Collision	Tricolor	Kariba	Norway	Bahamas	2003	x	
Grounding	Sea Mariner		Cyprus		2002	x	
Collision	Xu Chang Hai	Aberdeen	Panama	Bahamas	2000	x	
Crew death	Sally Maersk		Denmark		2000		x
Collision	Tidan	Anglo	Sweden	Norway	1998	x	
Grounding	Algolake		Canada		1997	x	
Collision	Bright Field	Quayside shopping centre	China		1996		x
Grounding	Wealthy River		China		1996	x	
Grounding	Anjola		Antigua and Barbuda		1996	x	x
Collision	Aphrodite	Anglia	Germany	Malta	1995		x
Collision	Alexandria	Xin Hua 7	Liberia	China	1995	x	
Almost collision	Etilico	A major channel buoy	Spain		1994		x
Collision	Butt	A fishing vessel	Germany	Holland	1993	x	
Grounding	Braer		Liberia		1993	x	
Collision	Stanyslaw Kulcinsky	Kattwykbridge	Poland		1991	x	
Collision	Tuo Hai	Tenyo Maru			1991	x	
Grounding	Irving Nordic				1991	x	
Grounding	Malinska		Yugoslavia		1991	x	
Fire	Scandinavian Star		Bahamas		1990	x	
Grounding	Enerchem Fusion				1990	x	
Grounding	Lake Anina				1990	x	
Collision	Achat	Oslo	Germany	Norway	1987	x	
Collision	Seadaniel	Testbank	Panama	German	1980	x	
Grounding	Torrey Canyon		Liberia		1967	x	x

Notes: *) Communication. **) Bearing in mind that lack of cultural awareness is not clearly mentioned in casualty investigation reports.

Source: Compiled from Horck (2007) and chapter II of final report of MARCOM Project in 1999 as well as other sources.

2.1.2. Individual accidents caused by cultural differences onboard ships

The presence of different cultures of multinational crews onboard ship not only affects safety of ship but also influences safety of each seafarer. In the extreme, cultural differences have even led to homicides. Dzugan (1998, pp. 56-57) noted three cases as follows:

There was a German Chief Officer on board a ship with Filipino crewmembers. The Chief Officer was very hard on the crew that caused a nervous breakdown of one crewmember. The Filipino crewmembers reacted to this situation by getting together and *throwing* the German officer down an open hatch which led to his death. The crew was later *tried* and found guilty in a German court.

In July of 1983, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, a Southeast Asian crewmember using a marlinspike stabbed a German master in the head because the master had a hard-driving and harassing attitude toward the crew.

In 1997, a Chinese crew killed all of the Korean officers except for the master on a Korean fishing vessel because of Korean officers' harsh treatment to crew.

Another incident, involving the death of a repairman from Poland, happened on board the M/V Sally Maersk on voyage from Hong Kong to Long Beach in June 2000. He suffered from pain in his back and had a fever. Due to his poor English skills, he asked his colleague, another repairman from Poland, to act as an interpreter during the medical consultation with the chief officer. The sick repairman had injured his back few days earlier. Knowing this, his colleague assumed that the pain was caused by the injury. During the translation, the information about his fever was lost and the chief officer got the impression that the problem was caused by the injury. Mild pain killers were therefore prescribed as the only treatment. Two days later, the sick man died and the cause of death was pneumonia (Pyne & Koester, 2005).

2.1.3 Regulatory instruments and IMO courses regarding culture

Although there have been problems and potential problems due to cultural differences, there are no international regulations regarding culture. This may be because of the sensitivity of cultural issues. Only the ISM Code has a requirement related to communication. Shipping companies have to ensure that ship personnel can communicate effectively about the safety management of their ships but they ignore the influence of culture in communication.

IMO's model courses allocate very little time to cultural awareness issues on board ship. Some IMO model courses take up culture awareness such as Personal safety and social responsibilities (1.21), Ship simulator and bridge teamwork (1.22), Proficiency in crisis management and human behaviour training including passenger safety, cargo safety and hull integrity training (1.29) and Human resource management (5.04). However, the average number of hours dedicated to cultural awareness issues in these four model courses is only about 1.7 hours (Horck, 2004).

Table 2.2 Lecture hours

Model course	Subject	Hours
1.21	Human relationships	2.00
1.22	Understand orders and be understood in relation to shipboard duties	3.00
1.29	Human behaviour and responses	1.00
5.04	Establish and maintain effective communication	0.75

Source: Horck (2004)

2.2 Analysis of challenges on board ships based on ten culture components

Ten culture components as defined in Chapter I are used as the basis for an analysis of the challenges posed by cultural differences onboard ship as follows.

2.2.1 Values and beliefs

Beliefs, attitudes and other intrinsic issues related to faith, norms and values of different cultures can cause potential problems for safety of ship. Western culture seems to be largely influenced by the Judeo-Christian-Islamic religious traditions

while Eastern and Asian cultures have been dominated by Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Hinduism (Harris et al, 2004). Many of the oldest cultures, such as cultures in Asian countries, are based on fate which is difficult to understand for people from rationalistic and young cultures such as Europe and North America. For example, an Indonesian oiler on one tanker of a Dutch company believed that he saw the ghost of a young boy near the boiler in the engine room and he refused to go to the place near it to clean or work. This resulted in the chief engineer having to perform all tasks in this area for the rest of the trip. If the emotional or spiritual needs of crew from particular cultures build up and are not acknowledged or giving room for expression/release, tragedy can happen (Dzukan, 1998).

Different cultures attach different levels of importance to such values as honesty, respect, harmony and courage. For instance, some cultures may value honesty above all else while others value harmony. In Harris' opinion, North Americans have a sense of space that needs more distance between individuals while South Americans and Vietnamese will stand closer together (Harris et al, 2004). So it can be seen that seafarers who come from different countries may have different priorities in their reactions to the same event – a situation which can lead to conflict.

2.2.2 Communication and language

Effective communication is a key to the successful operation of any ship (“Effective communication”, 2007, p.1). It is a reality however, that miscommunication can happen even with crewmembers from the same culture, speaking the same language. The point being made is that these threats increase with crewmembers from different cultures using English as a foreign or second language. Miscommunication ranges from the merely irritating to the potentially hazardous. Irritations could relate to misunderstandings, for example unable to convey which tools were required for a particular job, or the way it should be carried out (Sampson & Zhao, 2003). Moreover, it is common that people in social settings with different cultures (and especially when they do not speak the common language for that setting well), tend to agree to what is

being said without full comprehension. This practice is very dangerous and can seriously compromise ship safety.

It is recognized that more things go wrong because of poor communications than any other reasons and that communication and the understanding of cultural differences have a reciprocal relation (Chaijian et al., 2003). According to research carried out by the University of La Coruna (Spain), approximately 20 per cent of maritime accidents are caused by failure in communication (Portela, 2003). Trenkner (2007, p.3) wrote that “more than 86% of all SOLAS vessels are presently crewed with multilingual personnel who, for diverse reasons, are frequently unable to render the Maritime English skills required, risking and even causing damage to lives, property and the environment”. Port State Control inspectors often face problems in getting simple information from some ships’ officers due to the latter’s often substandard English. Pilots also often voice their concern about this matter and multi-ethnic officer staffs occasionally fail to communicate effectively when managing panicking crowds on board vessels in distress.

There were many accidents caused by multicultural communication difficulty as shown in Table 2.1. Sadly, there are even more examples of such accidents to be found in investigation reports of countries like the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and Denmark.

Pyne & Koester (2005,) give two examples of casualties where such communication issues played a role - The Bright Field allision and the Scandinavian Star incident. The Bright Field case, for example, illustrates a communication problem between American pilot and Chinese helmsman. To quote them “the word “no” is a very impolite word to the Chinese. It is therefore the cultural practice of Chinese crews that they always answer “yes” – especially to an authority such as a pilot- even though they are well aware that the correct answer is “no”” (p. 11).

Moreover, the pilot did not know there was a problem with the ship’s engines. All information about this problem was communicated between the bridge and engine room in Chinese. As a result, the ship dramatically hit a dock housing among other things, a hotel.

In 1990 the ferry Scandinavian Star burned completely on a voyage from Norway to Denmark. This was considered to be one of the worst passenger ferry disasters ever in European waters due to the death of a lot of passengers and crewmembers in the fire. The problem was related to crew-passenger communication and crew-crew communication because of different languages. The captain even complained about the poor English skills of crewmember in a telefax to the shipowner before the accident happened.

One of the latest accidents relating to the communication and cultural difference problem was the grounding of Crimson Mars on Long Tom Reef at Bell Bay in Australia on 1 May 2007. There were differences between the pilot's and ship's passage plans but the pilot and master did not discuss this ("Communication problems", 2007; ATSB, 2006). The pilot was from the local port in Bell Bay. All the crewmembers of Crimson Mars at the time of the grounding were Filipinos. The pilot had "one to one communication" with the helmsman. According to Australian Transport Safety Bureau report (ATSB, 2006, p. 20):

While the purpose of the 'one to one communication' may have been to encourage 'challenge' by the Filipino helmsman, the lack of cultural awareness by the pilot made it ineffective. Such awareness provides a better understanding of the support that can be expected and the challenges that may be faced when working with the crew of a particular nationality. The rank and nationality of the helmsman made it unlikely that he would ever challenge a pilot's order.

Communication includes verbal and non-verbal expression. In verbal communication, some aspects like tone, speed, volume can affect efficiency of a conversation especially in multicultural and multilingual environment. Giving orders in a very loud voice or even shouting can lead to more confusion and even carry the risk of causing long term damage in communication. However, despite the fact that people from any culture may resent being shouted at, there are different tolerance levels for this in different cultures. This tolerance level is often related to the culture's emphasis and sense of self-esteem.

Silence is a kind of nonverbal communication which has different meanings in different countries. In many European and North American cultures, silence may connote discomfort. It can also be construed to mean “agreement” or “disagreement” in different countries.

Gestures and eye contact are also forms of nonverbal communication. The meaning of gestures on board ship obviously affects safety of ship. Asking a question of a crewmember who verbally say “yes” while moving the head slowly left to right or raising the eye-brows or dipping the head down can send mixed communication signals. Using a hand gesture to summon somebody from other culture can be misunderstood as insulting that person because in his culture that hand gesture is only used to call a dog. Gestures can have different meanings or even opposite meanings in different cultures. For example, raising (*or arching*) one’s eyebrows may suggest “interesting, surprise” for North Americans, “skepticism” for British, “you are clever!” for Germans, “hello” for Filipinos, “no” for Arabs but “disagreement” for Chinese (Gesteland, 2002)

The style of communication, - whether low context (direct) or high context (indirect) - can also cause problems. In low context communication, the meaning of conversation is contained in the words themselves. High context communication requires communicator to know the context surrounding the words to understand what is meant (Harris et al, 2004). Onboard ship officers from European cultures tend to use a direct communication style while crews from Asian cultures have indirect communication style. The former focuses on sending and receiving accurate message directly, usually by clear words. The latter seeks meaning and understanding in what is not said - in nonverbal communication or body language, in the silences and pauses, in relationships and empathy. Therefore, the two groups have a tendency to view each other as vague, evasive and equivocal or blunt, overconfident and insensitive.

Communication is irreversible and one cannot take back one’s communication. Even where one’s message can be retrospectively explained, clarified or restated, one should be careful with whatever is communicated because it can have bad effect at present and in the future.

2.2.3 Social relationships

Multicultural and multilingual crews can lead to the reduction of opportunities for interpersonal relationships, damaging social life on board and increasing integration problems and feelings of isolation among crew members (Portela, 2003).

Multicultural crew can intensify social pressures of crew on board as comparison with monoculture crew. Even having long time working with each other, there is still a minor degree of social distance which frequently exists between members of different cultures. Moreover, language is a critical issue for multinational crews. Use of mother tongue languages rather than a common language cultivates suspicion amongst multilingual crews. It is a barrier of social activities onboard ship. Normally, understanding nuances comes only after a longer experience and after gaining relationships of trust. Humour is another element of social interaction and integration. However, poor use of working language of the ship could lead to frustration and militated against the use of humour.

Discrimination and racial prejudice have always existed onboard the ship. For example, onboard one ship, ratings collected and marked their cutlery before new crewmembers of different nationality arrived. They required new shipmates to eat their meals at a separate table because of fears about contracting HIV from the new crewmembers. Ethic divisions are more prevalent onboard ships with crew from only two or three nations. Discrimination and ethic divisions diminish where crews are more ethnically diverse (Kahveci et al, 2002).

2.2.4 Diet and food preparation

Multinational crews onboard ships are a challenging environment for cooks and companies catering for a variety of tastes and dietary habits of crew. For example, Americans love beef, but it is forbidden to Hindus. Chinese and many other nationalities eat pork but it is forbidden food for Muslims and Jews. Eating habits also differ, varying from hands and chop sticks to full sets of cutlery (Harris et al, 2004). Asian crewmembers need to have rice. Often, European officers have difficulty in

understanding the dietary requirements of shipmates relying on smaller, essentially rice-based meals. Crewmembers from Thailand, Myanmar eat four or five times a day. Unfortunately, the frequency with which seafarers preferred to eat may not be well understood by Western officers. Vietnamese and Koreans mixing with Russians and Europeans have experienced health problems because of onboard diets (Couper et al., 1999). There can be tensions with crew if masters imposed bans on food preparation outside formally observed meal times.

People growing up in one country have developed their taste with the food of that country and it is difficult to change. There is a big difference about food between Asian seafarers and European seafarers because Asian people like hot food while Europeans like cold and fast food. Even in Asian countries, there are also different tastes in food. For example, Indonesians, Filipinos and Vietnamese like to eat fish with spicy taste but Japanese prefer fish a little bit sweet.

Food is not only a big challenge for cooks but also for other seafarers. Some crewmembers feel ill when they see a certain nationality eating not their typical food. It is not good for developing relationship onboard ship and can cause potential danger. Food can have profound physiological effects. For example, one Argentinean observer on a Japanese fishing vessels in Argentinean waters for an average 75 days a trip lost 20 pounds and another was found to have developed minor cardiac problems because of differences in food and bathing customs (Clements, 1996).

2.2.5 Dress and body decorations

Each culture has its own types of tradition clothes. Myanmar seafarers can use a cloth covering their legs like a skirt in their free time. It is very normal in their country but many crewmembers may feel it is abnormal and do not like it. This can cause potential problems if the crew does not have tolerance with this.

2.2.6 Religion and religious practices

Religious traditions in various cultures consciously or unconsciously influence attitudes toward life, death and the hereafter of people in these cultures. Faith is an

essential part of many seafarers' lives. In Asia, religion is very important but this is no longer the case for many Westerners. Some seafarers found it unfair when only Western religious holidays were marked aboard many vessels (Kahveci et al, 2002).

In Muslim, Christian and in particular, Roman Catholic countries, religion is crucial in every day life and in the community in general. Therefore, it has an important impact on how people behave (Horck, 2004). If there is unequal treatment or lack of respect for different religions on board ships, conflicts can easily happen.

For Muslims, Ramadan is very important. They can not eat until the sun has set. This affects their health; therefore, they should not be ordered to do heavy jobs in this time.

2.2.7 Family

Normally, Asian seafarers have closer family ties than European; therefore they have stronger need to be in contact with their families. However, it is a fact that seaman from developed countries always rank higher than seamen from other parts of the world. Because of the low rank, the ability of Asian seamen to access email and news on board has been less or non existent. This can cause tension for Asian seamen and is a potential near miss for safety on board ships.

2.2.8 Traditions and customs

It is difficult for many officers from Western nations to understand why Asian crewmembers avoid saying things that may displease. This can include information relating to safety such as whether or not equipment is working properly. This aspect of etiquette can lead to incidents. For example, when cases of piracy occurred, some masters did not report such bad news to the ship owners. This happen because masters think that bad news communicated to the vessel owners can be seen as reflecting poorly on the master. For the same reason, crew may not report mistakes to the master because the mistakes will reflect poorly on the crew. Such cultural characteristics are dangerous and are likely to cause casualties.

2.2.9 View of time

Sense of time differs by culture; some are precise while others are relative. In general, Germans and Swedes are precise while many South Americans are more casual. Misunderstandings about work and task completion can result from crew from one culture who see crew from another culture doing tasks on a later time schedule than the one they are familiar with.

2.2.10 Recreation/ leisure

Crew members live a major part of their life onboard, so they have to be treated as people, not just staff. One way to overcome stress is to provide various type of recreational equipment on board and encourage regular social activities to take place. However, there are differences in life style of seafarers coming from different countries and continents. Normally, Western seafarers do not like karaoke evenings while Filipinos love them (Cross-cultural sensitivity, 2005).

2.3 Analysis of challenges on board ships based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions

Hofstede (1997) created a model identifying five dimensions that differentiate cultures: individuality versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and Confucian dynamism or long term orientation. Three of those dimensions can be applied in analyzing maritime culture on board ships consisting of multicultural and multilingual crew. They are power distance, individualism and uncertainty avoidance.

2.3.1 Power distance

Power distance can be defined as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede, 1997, p. 28). Low power distance on board ship can help creation and maintenance of effective teams because empowerment is easier to obtain in this culture. In contrast, high power distance can make a big gap between low and high rank crewmembers. Ratings are afraid to act against or disagree with

officers. A fear of questioning the action of a superior due to high power distance on board ship can cause serious accidents.

The maritime world is full with accidents in which a subordinate crew member detected or suspected that a higher authority made an error but the subordinate did not believe that he/she had the authority, right or duty to speak up (McCafferty et al., 2004). One example is the grounding of the Malaysian flag container ship Bunga Teratai Satu on the Great barrier Reef. The Pakistani mate and his wife were having a telephone conversation at the time he should have changed course, which led to missing a waypoint. The mate did not come to the wheelhouse until about 0717 hours after making coffee. The Able Seaman (AB) from Myanmar plotted the ship's position from the Global Positioning System (GPS) every hour according to the order of the mate and kept expecting the mate to come back into the wheelhouse to alter course. The mate had come to wheelhouse later than he should have done. As a result, the vessel went aground. The accident investigator noted that there was a strict hierarchy between the Pakistani senior officer and the Malaysian, Indonesian and Myanmar junior officers and crew. Although AB knew something was wrong, he did not question the decisions of his superior. This was a reflection of a problem caused by power distance (Pyne & Koester, 2005).

The Torrey Canyon is a typical example of a hierarchy-working environment which led to miscommunication. Because the Master was intimidating his officers and crew whenever the opportunity arose, officers were afraid of communicating with the Master and the accident happened (Horck, 2007).

2.3.2 Collective versus individualistic cultures

High individualism will obstacle a team because individualist cultures are expected to act according to their own interest. Low individualism or collectivist society will create and motivate an effective team because the team spirit must surmount the individual needs (Hofstede, 1997).

Team work has been emphasized in today's maritime work. Bridge management courses are popular now and they stress the importance of team work. The maritime culture is now shifting from individualistic to collective. Crewmembers from collectivist cultures such as part of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Arab world may be faced with difficulty in voicing a conclusion or raising an opinion that differs from the group. In contrast, people from individualistic cultures such as North America and Western Europe tend to be more frank and use force on others more readily. Extremes of both of these cultural traits can be a potential problem in multicultural crews.

2.3.3 Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty situations are unknown, surprising, and different from usual situation. This can happen more frequent with crew from different countries, belonging to different cultures. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to decrease the possibility of such situations. It is better for a team to perform effectively when this index is low in order to get high level participation. Otherwise the team members will be afraid of taking any necessary decisions.

2.4 Chapter conclusion

So far, multicultural crews have been critical in the development of ship manning. Beside the benefits bringing for shipowners, multinational crews create challenges in respect of safety issues. These challenges include ship accidents, individual accidents caused by cultural differences of multicultural and multilingual crew onboard ship. There are so many aspects of culture that can cause accidents or potential problems such as values and beliefs; communication patterns; social relationships; diet and food preparation; dress and other body decoration; religion and religious practices; family; traditions and customs; view of time; recreation/ leisure. In addition, power distance, individualism and high uncertainty index can also be reasons for maritime accidents. Even if the awareness of cultural differences in the shipping industry has

increased, it is not enough because legislation and education still step outside the circle of cultural sensitivity in this field.

This entire chapter is a picture of existing and potential difficulties, problems and challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crews. These problems will be affirmed in chapter III through analyzing the questionnaire findings.

CHAPTER III

SURVEY FINDINGS

“What seems to be right, logical, sensible, important, or obvious to a person of one culture may seem wrong, irrational, silly, unimportant, or confusing to someone of another culture”

Robinson et al., 1999, p. 41

3.1 Design of questionnaire

The questionnaire contains 32 open and closed questions designed to collect information from respondents who study and/or work in the maritime field. The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out in the respondents' view, from their sea experience or from their perception, whether multicultural and multilingual crew are problems in the shipping industry nowadays; if yes, whether cultural sensitivity education can deal with the problems; and synthesize their suggestions about other measures to overcome these. The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were assured. The questionnaire and summary of the respondent's responses are presented in Appendix A and B respectively.

3.2 Respondent demographics

The questionnaire survey involved a total of 183 respondents (n= 183), consisting of both men and women of all ages and religions. Respondents working and/or studying in maritime affairs represented 44 countries from all five continents of the world as shown in Figure 3.1. This is a valuable source for research because people from different cultures have different views and various experience on each issue.

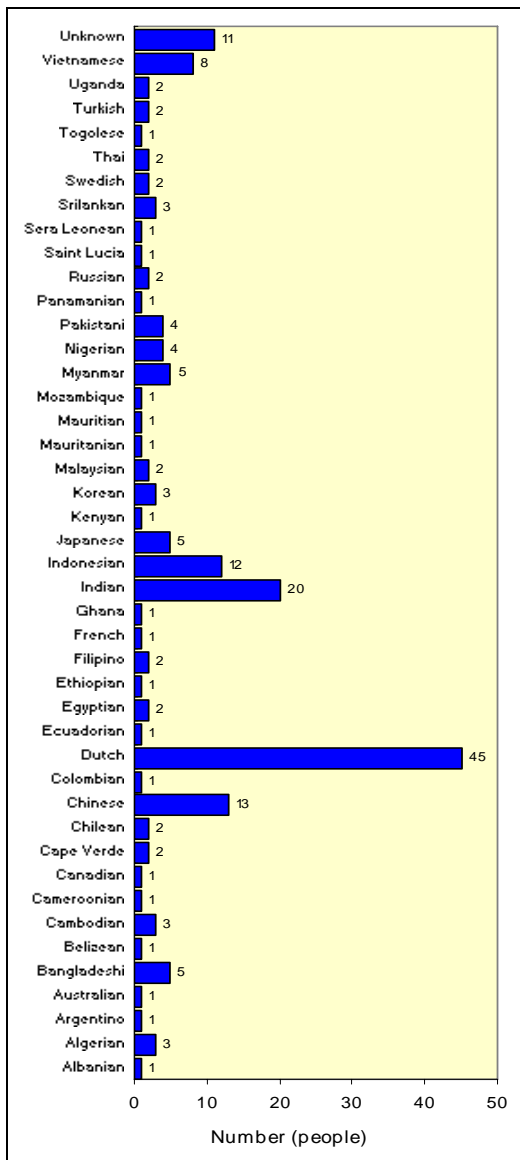


Figure 3.1 Respondent demographics

3.3 Background of respondents

Out of 183 respondents, 120 have had seafaring experience, accounting for 66 per cent of the research population (Figure 3.2).

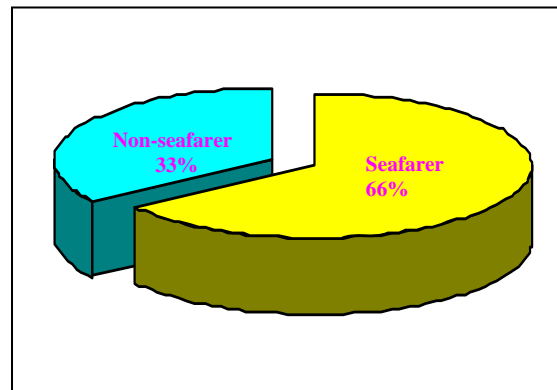


Figure 3.2 Background of respondents

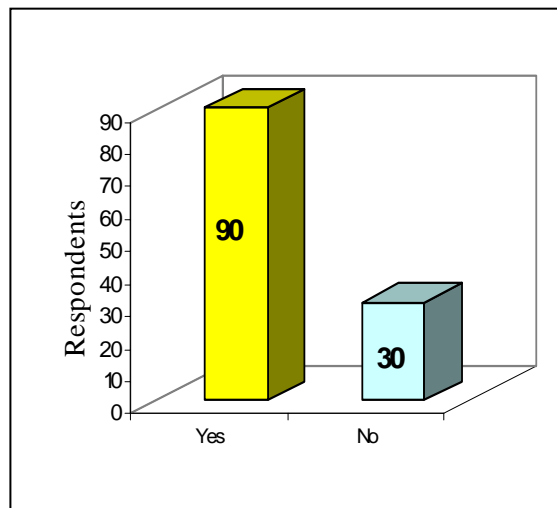


Figure 3.3 Seafarers work with different nationalities

3.4 Findings about multinational crew onboard ships

Multinational crews have become very popular nowadays. Ninety out of 120 seafarer respondents work on ships with different nationalities (see Figure 3.3). Their

workmates came from many countries in the world, in which most of them came from the Philippines, Indonesia, Russia, India and Ukraine.

Multinational crews are equal to the mix of different cultures and different languages. It is obvious that working and living onboard ships requires crew members to communicate with each other by common languages. Most seafarer respondents have worked for companies where there was a written formal communication language policy and English is the most popular common language (see Figures 3.4 and 3.5). The policy is good to facilitate communication in order to help strengthen relationship among crew member onboard ships because when shipping companies have a common language policy, seafarers who want to be employed must have ability to communicate in this language. As a result, chances for communication between seafarers increase. It is much better when the common language is English because the communication happens not only between crew onboard but also between ship and ship; and ship and shore. English is a global language and ships go everywhere in the world. Therefore, English is the best common language.

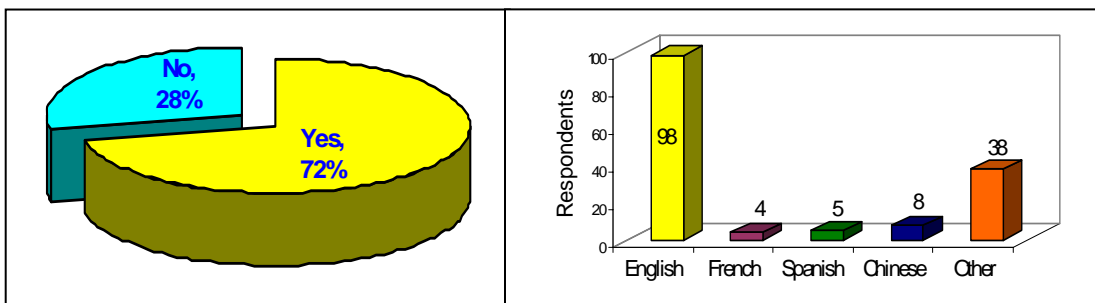


Figure 3.4 There was a written formal communication language policy in the shipping company you served/serve

Figure 3.5 Language used to communicate on board

A written formal communication language policy can help reduce but not totally avoid miscommunication in a multilingual environment. Out of 90 respondents worked with crew from different countries, 78 per cent experienced or saw difficulty, problem or conflict in communication with workmates. From this result, it can be

inferred that even language is important but it is not all. Other factors of culture also play an important role in communication. They are power distance, social affiliation, assertiveness and humour with the per cent of frequency happening as shown in Figure 3.6

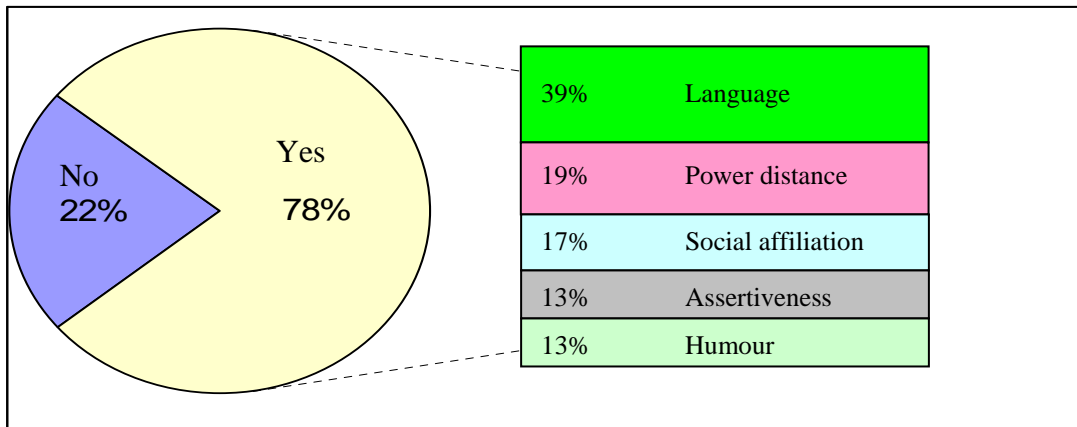


Figure 3.6 Seafarers experienced or saw difficulty (or problem, conflict) in communication between crews from different culture

Therefore, cultural differences are the main cause of communication difficulties and problems. Most respondents who experienced or saw those difficulties agree with this comment (Figure 3.7). Once again, culture affirms its importance onboard ships.

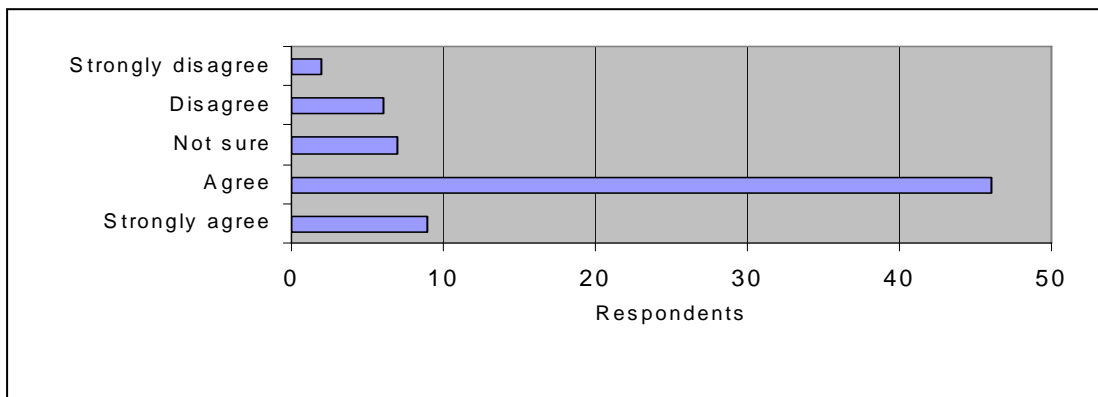


Figure 3.7 Cultural differences are the main causes of difficulties

The process of globalization requires higher level of knowledge of language and skills to apply it, which means that knowledge of vocabulary is not enough to work in multinational crew (Loginovsky, 2002). Communication can be achieved in many ways but at present the primary method for operational communication is through

speech. When undergoing operational processes such as berthing a ship or fighting a fire, it is critical for those involved to communicate effectively (Mahmoud, 2005). Unfortunately, misunderstanding in communication happens onboard quite often. More than 50 per cent of seafarer respondents experienced communication constraints and two out of three respondents did at least one time not understand correctly what their workmates wanted to say and vice versa.

As a complement to verbal communication, seafarers use non-verbal communication in both working and social time. Two kinds of non verbal communication onboard ships are hand signals/professional signals and body language. Hand signals are very useful in the noisy environment of the engine room. Body language is used to facilitate understanding among crewmembers but with smaller ratio (58 per cent) than the usage of professional signals (84 per cent) as shown in Figures 3.9 and 3.10.

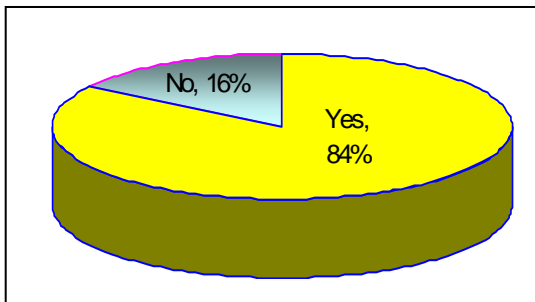


Figure 3.8 Using hand signals/professional signals onboard ship

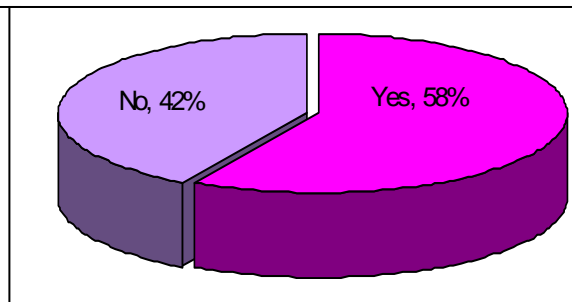


Figure 3.9 Using body language onboard ship

Many people think that sign language, especially professional signals, is an important communication method onboard ship. This proven in Figures 3.10 and 3.11

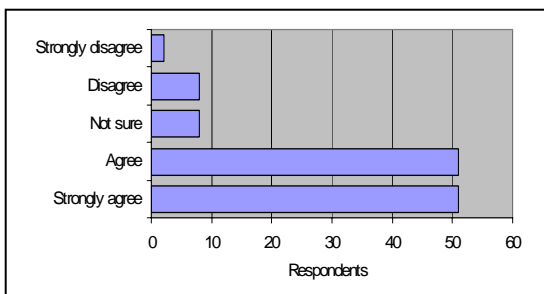


Figure 3.10 Professional signals is an important communication method onboard

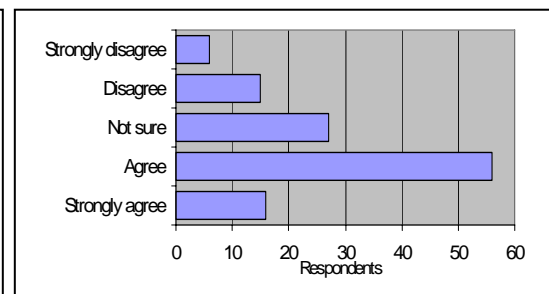


Figure 3.11 Body language is an important communication method onboard ship

Non verbal communication especially hand signs and gestures can be appropriately used as a subsidiary communication method in case of emergency because at that time seafarers who are non native English speakers tend to speak in their mother tongue language and this will make the situation worse. Hand signs and gestures are simple and reliable. Hand signs and gesture used to be effectively used in the noisy machine space until the 1950s in Japan (Nakazawa, 2004). However, non verbal signals or gestures are used in all cultures and a gesture can mean something different in different cultures. For example, most people in the United States understand that to signify something is OK or good one raises one’s hand and makes a circle with the thumb and forefinger. However, this hand gesture stands for “zero” or “worthless” to the French, “money” to the Japanese, “male homosexual” in Malta (Ferraro, 1998 and Harris et al., 2004). Understanding the differences can help seafarers become better cross-cultural communicators.

Onboard ships, seafarers meet each other both during working time and after. Nearly 100 per cent of seafarer respondents talked and socialized with crew members from other nationalities after working hours and 88 per cent of them agreed that this helped them understand each other better in the job.

Repeating an order is a good way to avoid misunderstanding in a multilingual environment onboard ship. It is a practice that 75 per cent of the seafarer respondents did during their sailing time (Figure 3.12).

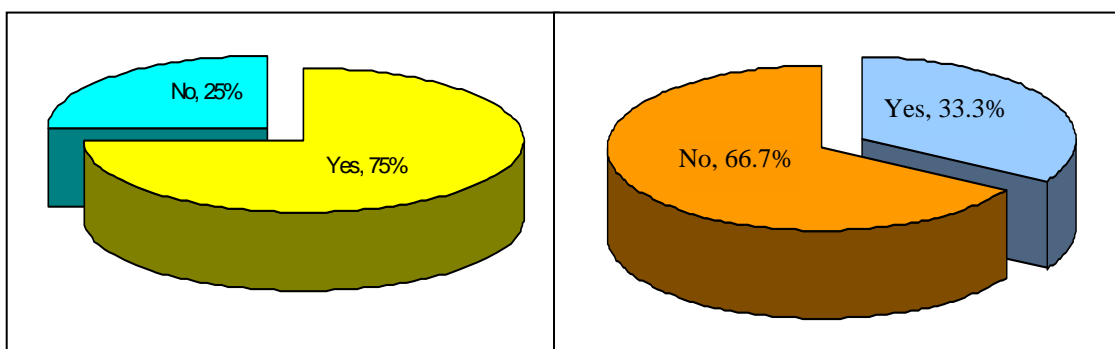


Figure 3.12 Repeating an order has been a practice onboard Figure 3.13 Acting against superior’s order

A ship is a small society and it has hierarchical structure with power distance. Juniors are reluctant to act against superiors' order even if the order is wrong. This is shown in Figure 3.13 with 66.7 per cent of the seafarer respondents answering "no" for the question "Has it ever happened that you acted against your superior's order?". This practice is very dangerous. Some accidents happened for this reason such as collision between "Santa Cruz II" and the United States Coast Guard "Cuyahoga". The whole crew was aware of the situation but when the master asked to change the course, which was a wrong decision, nobody questioned the order and then the collision happened (Schröder, 2007).

The most interesting findings from the questionnaire are comments by seafarer respondents from different countries about their workmates onboard ships. These comments are really food for thought. Some of them are extracted as follows:

Cape Verde, Brazil and Portugal have many similarities in culture due to historical reasons however onboard of merchant vessels Brazilian and Portuguese organization are close to navy organization which disciplines are harder and tighter while in Cape Verde is freer.

Crews generally need clear instruction on work duties. Initiative levels are somewhat low in some cultures.

Spanish Bosun and Indonesian AB could not work together because of strong hierarchy. Humor between Eastern and Western cultures was only possible if simplified or about common things like home, wives and the seaman life.

Some comments about crewmembers from one country under the eyes of different people were even contradicted. For example, giving comments about Filipino seafarers, one wrote that "Filipinos are very lazy. You always have to tell them what to do". In contrast, the other wrote "Filipinos crew is very hard working if you respect their feelings and appreciate their jobs". Other respondent thought that Filipinos were very sensitive and you should be very careful in saying something to them.

One respondent was aware that Indonesian crew on board did not always use the personal protective clothing because they were not fully aware of the use or protection. Mostly they did not see or know the use of this equipment. Other

appreciated Asian sailors, mates and engineers even if they did not master the English language, but they have great knowledge and need little communication to let them know what is to be expected from them.

Even if these comments reflect subjective views of the respondents and some were contradicting with others, like the comment about the Filipino seafarer, they are still valuable for research because they prove that different people have different feelings about people from other cultures. Every event is perceived in different ways through the senses of people from different cultures. Different people from the same culture have different characteristics; some are lazy and some are hard working. Stereotyping and judging people with wrong measurements are serious problems (Horck, 2005). Therefore, it is very important not to be prejudice or stereotype¹ one culture. It is necessary to know predominant features of each culture, to be aware and tolerant with cultural differences.

However, so far most seafarer's knowledge about culture of different countries has been through self-learning. It is dangerous because without systematic education, each person's perception can easily fall in stereotyping and each person can be prejudice and this can affect the safety of ships. It is unfortunate that only 27 per cent of the seafarer respondents worked/ have worked for companies which provided short courses or training programs to increase crew awareness of the different cultures onboard ships before each voyage.

3.5 View of the respondents on measures to overcome the challenges

Regarding the perception that multicultural and multilingual crews have difficulties in shipping today, 100 respondents ticked on choices of measures to deal with these challenges in which 95 ticks were for training, accounting for 45 per cent of the total poll (each respondent may tick more than one choice). The view of the respondents on measures to overcome matter of multinational crew is presented in Figure 3.14.

¹ Stereotypes are “sets of attitudes that cause us to attribute qualities or characteristics to a person based on the group to which that individual belongs” (Harris et al, 2004, p.54).

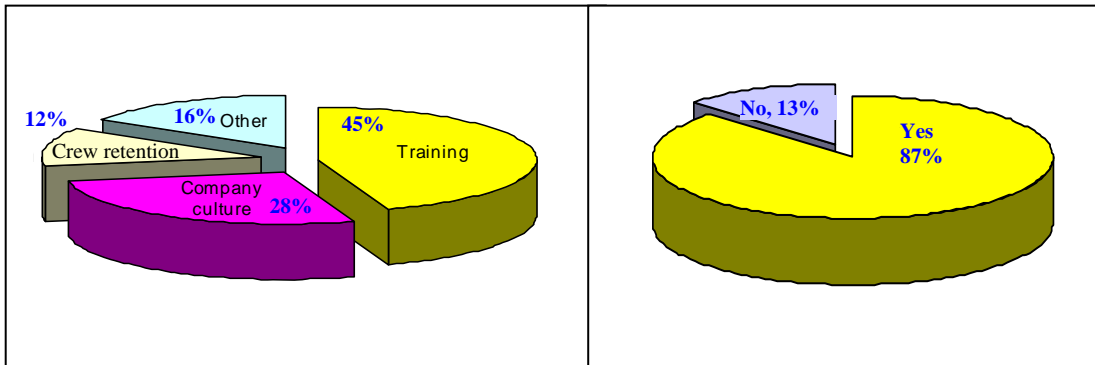


Figure 3.14 Measures to deal with matters of multicultural and multilingual crews

Figure 3.15 Cultural sensitivity education is a solution to the challenges of multicultural and multilingual crews

That education is the root of all the measures is proven again with 87 per cent of the respondents ticking “cultural sensitivity education” as a solution to the challenges of multicultural and multilingual crews (Figure 3.15) and 91 per cent of the respondents agreeing that cultural sensitivity training is useful in practical life at sea with high rating (Figure 3.16). Therefore, it can be inferred that cultural sensitivity education is an essential measure to deal with difficulties posed by multinational crews onboard ships.

Unfortunately, cultural sensitivity education in the maritime field has not yet been developed. Even if many people recognized its importance, only 43 out of 183 respondents have received this training (Figure 3.17). This fact is an explanation for accidents still happening even in today’s modern ships.

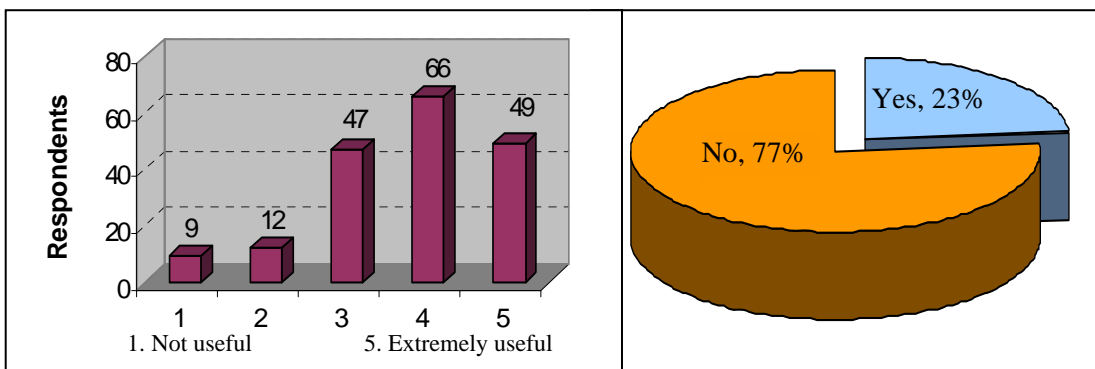


Figure 3.16 Rating cultural sensitivity training in practical life at sea

Figure 3.17 Have you ever received any training in cultural sensitivity?

Should IMO do something to facilitate this education as it did with training English for seafarers through SMCP? Should IMO issue a publication similar to the SMCP related to cultural sensitivity? The answers of survey are presented in Figure 3.18.

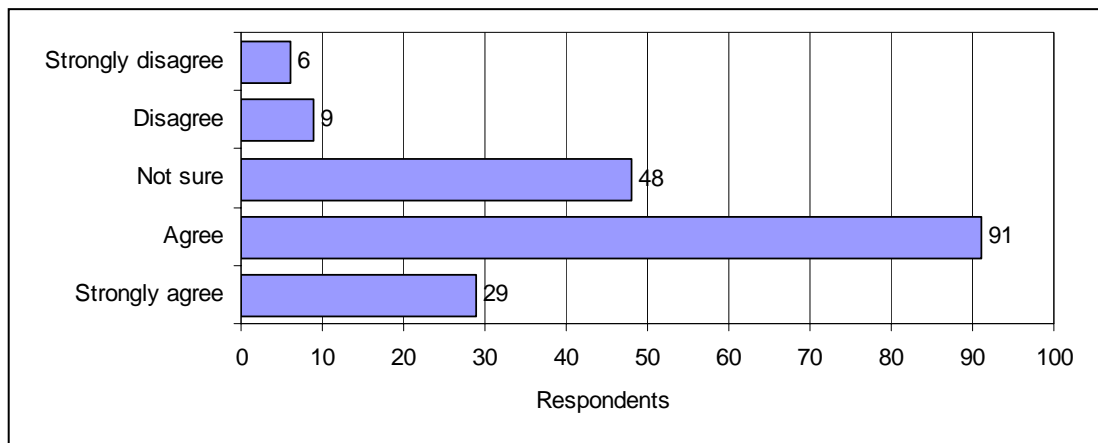


Figure 3.18 The IMO should issue a publication (similar to SMCP) related to cultural sensitivity

65.5 per cent of the respondents strongly agree and agree with this idea. A small part of the respondents did not agree with the idea because the definition of culture is broad and could be used as basis of stereotypes or because it is a sensitive issue and IMO should not touch this matter. However, it is because of avoiding stereotypes, IMO should do this job. IMO can require each country to send its unique features that this country wants the shipping world to know. IMO just acts as a collector to publish the book. It is better for a prestige organization do this job than a person because nobody understands other cultures better than the person who belongs to this culture. IMO with its representatives from all countries in the world can do this job for the maritime field better than anybody else.

The questionnaire also listed some cultural sensitivity features that are special for a culture that a foreigner should know. These features are basic and seem to be common for many countries. These features are possible to become part of the IMO's publication about culture.

Table 3.1 Features belonging to cultural sensitivity of countries in the world

No.	Cultural features	Nationalities
1	The left hand and feet are unclean, never use left hand to pass objects to others	Bangladeshi (2), Cambodian, Cameroonian, Chinese (2), Dutch (2), Indian (3), Indonesia (6), Japanese, Malaysian (2), Mozambique, Myanmar (3), Nigerian (4), Pakistani, Sera Leonean, Togolese
2	Using index finger to point or beckon is impolite	Algerian, Bangladeshi (2), Belizean, Cambodian, Cape Verde (2), Chilean (2), Chinese(5), Dutch (5), Ecuadorian, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Filipino (2), French, Indian (6), Indonesian (2), Japanese (3), Kenyan, Korean (2), Malaysian (2), Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigerian (2), Pakistani, Russian, Srilankan, Swedish, Thai, Togolese, Turkish, Vietnamese (4)
3	Don't touch the head of another person	Algerian, Argentinean, Belizean, Cambodian(3), Cape Verde, Chinese (4), Dutch (7), Egyptian, Filipino (2), Ghana, Indian (5), Indonesian (11), Japanese (4), Kenyan, Korean, Malaysian (2), Myanmar (4), Nigerian (4), Saint Lucia, Srilankan, Thai (2), Turkish (2), Uganda, Vietnamese (6)
4	Don't blame people in front of others	Albanian, Algerian (3), Argentinean, Australian, Bangladeshi (2), Belizean, Cambodian (3), Cape Verde, Chinese (7), Colombian, Dutch (13), Ecuadorian, Egyptian (2), Ethiopian, Filipino (2), Ghana, Indian (13), Indonesian (9), Japanese (2), Kenyan, Korean (2), Malaysian(2), Mauritanian, Mauritian, Mozambique, Myanmar (3), Nigerian (3), Pakistani (3), Panamanian, Russian, Srilankan (3), Swedish (2), Thai, Turkish (2), Vietnamese (5)
5	It is impolite to call a person by his/her name directly without a title unless he/she is a close friend	Algerian, Australian, Bangladeshi (39), Belizean, Cambodian (2), Chinese (5), Dutch (9), Egyptian (2), Ethiopian, Filipino, Indian (13), Indonesian (5), Japanese(5), Keynyan, Korean (2), Myanmar (4), Nigerian (3), Pakistani (2), Russian, Sera Leonean, Srilanka, Swedish, Thai, Togolese, Turkish, Uganda
6	It is impolite to say something adverse about person of your father's generation (especially in their absence)	Albanian, Algerian, Argentinean, Australian, Bangladeshi (4), Belizean, Cambodian, Cape Verde, Chinese (5), Dutch (6), Egyptian, Filipino (2), Indian (9), Indonesian (4), Japanese (2), Kenyan, Korean (2), Malaysian (2), Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigerian (3), Pakistani (3), Russian, Sera Leonean, Thai, Turkish (2), Vietnamese (5)
7	Don't wave your hand when talking with the elder	Algerian, Australian, Bangladeshi (2), Cameroonian, Chinese (2), Colombian, Dutch, Egyptian, Indian (5), Japanese (2), Kenyan, Korean, Myanmar (2), Nigerian (3), Pakistani, Sera Leonean, Srilankan, Togolese, Vietnamese
8	When receiving a telephone call, you shouldn't be the first to hang up	Algerian, Bangladeshi, Chinese (5), Colombian, Egyptian (2), Filipino, Indian (5), Japanese, Nigerian, Russian, Sera Leonean, Srilankan

Note: Number in bracket next to each nationality is the number of respondents of this nationality who ticked for the feature.

Respondents also listed other cultural features of their own countries. It is the first time for the author to know many of these features. For example, Japanese people have a different way of talking to the elder compared to people of the same age or

younger, and it is impolite to interrupt a senior when talking, to cross in front of a senior or to ask a senior to do something easy. In Russia, calling people by their surname is considered rude. It is not good to cross your legs while talking to elders in Srilanka. Some cultural features are common for everybody in the world such as not say something impolite about the religion of others. Other features can be dangerous for the safety onboard ships and show large power distance such as Bangladeshi customs not argue with superiors even if they are wrong and wishes are sent every morning, evening from junior to senior only (uni-direction).

3.6 Respondents' proposed improvements

The fact is still the fact if we do not do anything to change it. The problems will be worse if there are not any measures to deal with them. To deal with problems caused by multicultural and multilingual crew for safety of the ship, enthusiastic respondents proposed some measures that could be collected in groups such as training and quality of seafarers, language and communication, preparation before each voyage, and social activities.

3.6.1 Training and quality of seafarers

There should be pre-sea mandatory courses like “Bridge Resource Management” or “safety culture” or “social responsibility” for seafarers. These courses consist of lessons where the interaction between multicultural crews was the cause of incidents or accidents. The purpose of these lessons is to make seafarers aware of the importance of knowing cultural differences. A study on average tolerance levels of different nationalities would be very helpful.

MET should put culture awareness as part of their curriculum. Assessment of students' understanding about culture is also necessary to be done. Students should know how the others react against danger; how the others make decisions in an emergency situation; they should show a neutral position and never argue religious matters, they should show respect for other cultures and hide the negative sides.

3.6.2 Language and communication

English is an international language and understanding English is the key to multicultural understanding. Cultural differences are barriers of communication. To facilitate communication, any cultural sensitivity issues may be suitable to deliver during the English course if it does not have a specific and distinguished subject of itself. However, if transmitting cultural sensitivity lectures in the English course, the importance of cultural sensitivity subject is turned down; therefore, its purpose may not be obtained. Other barrier of communication is misunderstanding. Misunderstanding can happen even between two people coming from the same country, speaking a common language. The chance of misunderstanding becomes bigger with multinational crew. To avoid this, important orders onboard should be passed in written form. Another way to avoid misunderstanding is always repeating an order because it can confirm whether people understood what the other said. Topics are important in communication. In a multinational environment, sensitive topics such as politics and religion should be avoided. The most important thing, awareness and tolerance are the keys to success in solving communication problem or conflict between people of different cultures.

Team building activities should be held to help seafarers understand each other more and facilitate communication. Management also plays an important role in strengthening the communication among the seafarers. One respondent suggested that it is better to keep quiet when disagreeing with seafarers from other countries. It sounds interesting but it is not really good for safety.

3.6.3 Preparation before each voyage

The shipping company should organize a meeting among crew members to discuss all the matters necessary before going on board the ship/ before sailing to ensure that everybody has the same objectives or perception regarding the voyage and other related issues including cultural matters. With cultural belief some people may think that they should not do some specific jobs which are very important in view of ship

safety. Therefore, there should be motivation to overcome these restricted attitudes, to involve them and to adopt them with the working environment.

3.6.4 Social activities

A welcome party to new comers, a culture night or cultural festival should be organized onboard ships to help crew become closer, understand and learn the beauty of each culture. There should be VCD, DVD onboard ships about culture of different nations.

Food is also important and shipping company should ensure that in religious events after sunset or at certain hours such as Ramadan for Muslim, seafarers onboard are allowed to eat and drink.

3.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter is an analysis of the questionnaire and findings from it. Once again, through data and figures, Chapter III proves the conclusion of Chapter II that there have been problems and challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crew. These challenges are language, communication, power distance, social affiliation, assertiveness and humour.

This chapter also synthesizes the view of the respondents as well as their suggestions to overcome the challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crew. Even if not all of the respondents' suggestions are reasonable, they are valuable proposals for a better shipping world. All the measures and other measures to deal with problems posed by multinational crew will be discussed and analyzed deeper in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

**OVERCOMING CHALLENGES: CULTURAL SENSITIVITY EDUCATION
AND OTHER MEASURES**

“The biggest challenge facing 21st century leaders and populations may be learning to function effectively in a knowledge culture.”

Harris et al, 2004, p. 135

4.1 Learning from the maritime accidents

Learning from maritime accidents has been applied for a long time in the shipping industry. It is said that the good thing of each accident was that it gave human beings valuable lessons. From the minor and serious accidents discussed in chapter II and other research about the impact of multicultural and multilingual crew, some lessons can be learned as follows

Firstly, communication is the cause of many maritime accidents but its root cause is cultural differences.

Secondly, all aspects of each culture such as values and beliefs; communication patterns; social relationships; diet and food preparation; dress and other body decoration; religion and religious practices; family; traditions and customs; view of time; recreation/ leisure should be respected and valued. It is the ideal working shipboard environment if power distance is less, collectivism is high and uncertainty avoidance index is low. This can help to reduce potential incidents and accidents.

Thirdly, it is also very important that everyone on board has awareness and tolerance of cultural issues because work and social life overlap so much. If the nationality mix is an issue, it creates an atmosphere of suspicion on board, minorities are isolated, work output deteriorates and the operational effectiveness of the vessel decreases (Cross-cultural sensitivity, 2005).

Finally, in order to foster good social relations, seafarers should carefully avoid discussing a number of specific, “sensitive” topics and concentrate on widely acceptable subjects for “story telling” and joking.

Based on these lessons, measures are developed to overcome challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crew. The most important measure is cultural sensitivity education.

4.2 Discussion of cultural sensitivity education

Cultural sensitivity is a measure to overcome problems caused by multicultural and multilingual crew. Culture becomes a critical factor ensuring shipping business success in 21st century with the trend of multinational ship manning, increasing the number of crew nationalities onboard ships. Cultural sensitivity integrates “the characteristics of culture in general, with experiences in specific organizational, minority, or foreign cultures. Such a person understands the cultural influences on behaviour. This individual translates such cultural awareness into effective relationships with those who are different” (Harris et al, 2004, p. 26). Therefore, it is necessary for seamen to learn cultural sensitivity.

Engaging in culturally sensitivity practices means understanding your own cultural biases and respecting different cultural traditions. It does not mean knowing all about the culture of other people with whom you work. Cultural sensitivity is important because it contributes to mutual cooperation and collaboration, and it leads to a sense of belonging among people (Backus, 2000, pp. 107-108).

Cultural sensitivity has five components. They are valuing and recognizing the importance of one's own culture; valuing diversity; realizing that cultural diversity will affect an individual's communication and participation in education and work in various ways; a willingness to adapt one's communication and behaviours to be compatible with another's cultural norms; and a willingness to learn about the traditions and characteristics of other cultures (Backus, 2000). It can be inferred that cultural sensitivity education covers all cultural awareness, cultural diversity and cross-cultural training.

According to McGough, the cultural sensitivity training is an interactive process in which participants explore the worth and potential of each individual, and how to support them in growth. The effects of one's behaviour on others, and the process of looking at other possible behaviours are also explored. Stereotypes are then explored and challenged by allowing an open forum of freedom to express oneself, while respecting and valuing others.

In practice some shipping companies have recognized the importance of cultural sensitivity training and invested on it. For example, Singa Ship Management has worked together with the Swedish Merchant Marine Officers' Association to offer education in cultural differences and their significance for good leadership. This activity contributed to good teamwork between Swedes and Filipinos. Wallenius Lines and Broström are two ship owners who used CD-ROM "working together", which contains information about Swedish rules, regulations, leadership, organization theory and also equality issues, for their crew (Grenestedt, 2002).

The Swedish Club has started courses in maritime resource management which includes cultural awareness. The courses have been very appreciated both by owners and crew (Horck, 2007).

One university paying attention to this cultural education is the California Maritime Academy. It requires cadets to take courses in multiple cultures. The Academy is moving even further in this direction through the strengthening of a general

education program which is designed in traditional American universities to provide knowledge, skills, experiences and perspectives to enable students to make connections among disciplines, and expand their capacities to take part in a wide range of human interests and activities as well as confronting the personal, moral and social problems that are an inevitable part of human life. This program goes beyond elementary instruction in basic skill sets to emphasize knowledge of history and culture and of science and mathematics; skills such as logical and critical thinking and communication, and knowledge about diversity and intercultural skills (Benton, 2006).

However, these companies and university are only small drops in the vast ocean. There is a need for more and more shipping companies and MET institutions to recognize the benefits and importance of cultural sensitivity education to apply it.

4.2.1 Benefits of cultural sensitivity education

Among many obstacles facing the 21st century, there will be the need to manage differences between crew members. “The educated mariner will need to be able to understand the similarities and differences among people and to develop the capacities to solve problems that arise precisely from these differences” (Benton, 2006, p. 20). Cultural sensitivity education in maritime field provides mariners such knowledge. This is the first benefit of this education.

Cultural sensitivity education can help to eliminate one’s own cultural barriers which can hamper access to others’ thoughts or personalities. Finns can shed their excessive shyness, their bumbling modesty and their distrust of fast talkers. The Japanese can reduce or discard their ultra-politeness if the end result is only a fog of incomprehension. The French may rid themselves of their sense of intellectual superiority and the Germans can recognize that their cult of efficiency is not the only one around and may indeed have counter – productive overtones (Lewis, 1996).

Cross-cultural training is one part of cultural sensitivity education. For decades, it has been proven as necessary for adjusting to new cultural environments. It enhances

job performance, decreases the number of incorrect attributions of behaviour, increases an understanding of one's own culture, reduces stereotypic thinking, helps in intercultural team building, decreases the social ambiguity that can lead to "culture shock", builds up cross-cultural competencies, and generally leads to more fully accomplishing one's professional objectives. The value of cross-cultural training was examined in a number of studies of Black and Mendenhall (1990) as cited in "The cultural dimension of international business" of Ferraro (1998 pp. 150-151) as follows:

- Nine of ten (9/10) studies shown a positive relationship between cross cultural training and self- confidence (in terms of one's ability to function abroad).
- Nineteen of nineteen (19/19) studies shown that cross cultural training positively affected skills in a cross-cultural context.
- Sixteen of sixteen (16/16) studies concluded that cross cultural training helps in developing more accurate cross- cultural perceptions.
- Nine out of nine (9/9) studies found a positive relationship between cross cultural training and adjustment to new cultures.
- Eleven of fifteen (11/15) studies found a positive correlation between cross cultural training and job performance.

In the health care field, research made by Majumdar (2004, p. 162) found that:

Those who had received cultural sensitivity training were more open, resilient, had increased self-confidence and tolerance, were nonjudgmental, able to deal with ambiguity, and capable of better understanding of others. Those who were trained also had improved skills in assessing verbal and nonverbal cues communicated to them by people who were from different backgrounds than themselves.

With such benefits of cultural sensitivity education, all seafarers should learn it to obtain cultural competencies which are essential for those in international business like the shipping industry. When cultural differences are understood and utilized as a resource, then all benefit.

It is somewhat easy to simply call for modifications in academic curricula. However, it is much more difficult to implement such change because of several obstacles and

objections. Therefore, the number of maritime schools or MET institutions teaching cultural sensitivity subjects is very few. The response to these objections is presented in section 4.2.2.

4.2.2 Response to common objections to cultural sensitivity education

The first common objection is that some shipping companies have a number of different crewmember nationalities but they really do not have the problems related to multicultural crew. Why do they need to try to “fix” something that is not broken? The response to this objection is that multinational crew is so pervasive in the shipping industry that it is virtually impossible to find a ship that never has had any cross-cultural problems. It is unfortunate that some shipowners are not fully aware of this, underlying cultural tensions brew and fester for years before suddenly bursting out into the open. Fortunately, such out-bursts can often be prevented by proactive efforts to foster cross-cultural relationships that provide learning opportunities and help relieve underlying tensions. Moreover, nowadays there is competition of crew from developing countries such as the Philippines, China, and Vietnam, which means that the crew member of the shipping companies can be changed because of economic benefits for company. With new crew, how can a company ensure that there will be no problem with cultural differences?

For maritime universities or institutions, they may argue that they want to deal with the cultural sensitivity subject but the maritime community would not be supportive at this time. Moreover, school staff cannot afford to take away any time and money from their current academic priorities. They are having enough difficulty trying to get their students to get their current academic standards without adding more. The response is that understandably, some universities especially in developing countries are cutting back on many of their enrichment programs for students. Fortunately, cultural sensitivity curriculum can be designed relatively inexpensively and takes minimal time and energy to implement. The primary impact of the program is through positive peer influence which costs nothing. Furthermore, the concepts in the cultural sensitivity subject do not detract from academic content but actually enhance

the learning environment for all students. By discovering diversity issues and conducting projects together, students learn the concepts, skills, and benefits of developing positive relationships with people of different cultures, while at the same time strengthening academic skills. In addition, learning to live with difference and gaining the ability to cope with ambiguous, sometimes contradictory, codes and messages are arguably the most important skills of all to learn for people in the 21st century (Taylor, 1997).

Other restrictions relate to human resources. Schools do not have the “expert” or resources within schools to deal with it adequately. This difficulty can be solved easily because this subject does not require the school to hire an “expert”. Teachers can learn themselves through books and when they present this subject to students, they themselves learn more about diversity issues and skills.

The next objection is that cultural sensitivity should be taught by parents and students learn by themselves. It is not a subject to teach at school. The response is that although many personal and moral issues are perhaps best dealt with at home, the fact remains that some students do not receive factual and positive instruction on cultural diversity from their family. Students can not know the importance of this subject for their future work so they may not try to find and learn by themselves. Indeed, some students hold prejudicial beliefs from their family or self study. Therefore, it should be a subject to teach at school.

Some schools suppose that they already have multicultural focus in their school through social studies books and special memorial days. Although providing special days to highlight certain cultures can provide some extra focus and improvement on multicultural facts and issues, this approach appears to be more of a display than a serious attempt to emphasize a multicultural perspective. The topic of diversity and sensitivity is best placed in the day to day curriculum, where it can be approached in a more natural, integrated manner (Robinson et al., 1999).

Because of these objections and reluctance, the cultural sensitivity subject has not become popular or mandatory at maritime universities and maritime institutions yet and incorporating a cultural sensitivity training component into undergraduate and graduate programs remains a major challenge (Majumdar et al., 2004).

4.3 Discussion of other possible measures to overcome challenges posed by multicultural and multilingual crew

Besides cultural sensitivity education, there are other measures to deal with challenges posed by multicultural and multilingual crews. These measures can support for cultural sensitivity education to obtain better relationship among crew onboard ships.

4.3.1 Company culture/ policy

There is a link between national culture, company culture and safety. If the national and company culture are in harmony, there are no stress factors that can influence the safety. If the values in the national culture and the company culture are in conflict, this might lead to stress (Håvold, 2000 as cited in Merritt and Helmreich, 1998). Therefore, it is very important to build a safety culture in the shipping companies.

Company culture is reflected through its policy. In order to get benefits from multinational crew and reduce the risk of accidents caused by cultural differences, firstly, the company has to pay attention to recruitment policy. The shipping company should employ educated people and people with high school training should be the minimum requirement. Language and cultural issues should be considered for the selection and recruitment of ship crews. The company can also hold an examination in the communication languages on board the ship.

It is a better choice to hire the crew from compatible nationalities or crew sharing the same religion on one vessel to avoid conflicts because cultural differences have an affect on the combination of crews. For example, East European officers and Filipino ratings are good together (Culture clash, 2004).

The next policy to be considered is the salary. This policy should be fair among crews from different nationalities. Moreover, working descriptions should be reasonable. It is important to show care for the crew.

It is necessary to focus on choosing crew for each voyage. Asian seafarers still lack the means of access to higher levels of training. Therefore, officers are often East European seafarers. According to Lloyd's Ship Manager's survey, officers and ratings should be split by nationalities to avoid potential problems, that is to say that officers are not mixed. For example, Polish or Croatian officers and Filipino ratings generally make a good match while combining these nationalities as officers could lead to tensions and breakdown in communications (Culture clash, 2004).

Avoiding circulation of material that reinforces cultural and national stereotypes is crucial. A safety committee and a safety working team need to be built onboard ships. The good shipping company has policies of work enrichment whereby decisions regarding the ship community, such as leave periods and budgetary and accommodation matters, are discussed by onboard committees (Couper et al., 1999). Openness should be encouraged by the organizational culture through a high tolerance for differences of opinion.

4.3.2 Crew retention

Keeping the same crews on board one ship has become more important in the context of multicultural and multilingual crew nowadays, because it helps to minimize communication problems arising from the linguistic and cultural differences and help to build trusting relationships among crewmembers. The same crew composition benefits from both the safety and social environment.

As far as trust is concerned, if all crew work together for many voyages, officers know the ability of ratings, and they all know each other and can trust each other. When there is change in crewmembers, everything has to start from the beginning, building up from beginning. It is more difficult for mixed nationality crews. For example, Filipinos must first be able to show that they can do their job and not feel

that they are being judged throughout the tour for a mistake made at the beginning. When there are new superiors onboard, they tend to evaluate Filipino ratings first. The fear that first impressions last affects Filipino ratings' jobs and make them feel tense and nervous (Knudsen, 2004).

Having the same people on board for a long time, they can get accustomed to the way of doing things on board. Crewmembers from different nationalities can learn more about each other and the cultural differences (such as summoning someone with a gesture which insults a Filipino and complaint about Filipino's job in front of other that make them lose face) are well known and it is possible to avoid elementary misunderstandings. Therefore, it is mutual benefit.

Thirdly, each person has different expectations and limitations. Therefore, it also takes time for individuals to adapt to each other. Working with the familiar people can help everything go quietly and smoothly. Working with new workmates can take a month to learn the way the old people work.

Moreover, keeping the same people also increases employee loyalty and reduces risk of getting under-qualified seafarers, and naturally it raises employees' job security.

To obtain crew retention, the shipping company should increase salary for seafarers who have been with the company for many years and give them return bonus.

4.3.3 Number of crew nationalities onboard ships

The co-operation and integration increased amongst mixed nationality crews when the number of nationalities onboard increased. Crews composed of four or more nationalities have higher level of mixing and better collaboration than crews with two or three nationalities (Kahveci, Lane and Sampson, 2002). There can be both national and hierarchical divisions in these cases. Single large groups tend not to speak English in each other's presence, which can lead to considerable suspicion between groups where people automatically feel excluded. In case of five or six nationalities on board, the whole ship was a much more cohesive unit as they have to use English as a common language.

4.3.4 Leadership

It is said that the leadership within the sphere of an activity is of central importance for safety, in that it shapes the basis of the safety culture (Ek & Akselsson, 2005). Managers and especially captain are crucial for each safety voyage due to the hierarchical structure, the closed environment of the ship and lack of separation between work and leisure. They should ensure high levels of fluency in the ship's working and social language among officers and ratings and promote social activities where possible to break down the isolation on board (Cross-cultural sensitivity, 2005). Personnel management skills of masters and senior officers should be developed. Effective leaders can make cultural differences as resources not handicaps. They should motivate crewmembers to overcome restricted attitudes. Management training is a good method to improve leadership ability.

According to the United Kingdom Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) (2006), the criteria for good leadership in the maritime industry are confidence and authority; empathy and understanding; motivation and commitment; openness and clarity. The ten core safety leadership qualities under these criteria are instilling respect and command authority; leading the team by example; drawing knowledge and experience; remaining calm in crisis; practicing 'tough empathy', being sensitive to different cultures; recognizing the crew's limitations; motivating and creating a sense of community; placing the safety of crew and passengers above everything; and communicating and listening clearly .

Relating to cultural issues, good masters or officers are sensitive to differences in the social and behavioural norms of national cultures but at the same time value all crew members equally irrespective of their nationality. They know how to infer different behavioral signals, and how best to react. To obtain quality of being sensitive to different cultures, masters need to firstly ensure that "one language" is used even in social situations and that crew has adequate training in this language, secondly try to avoid a huge 'critical mass' of one nationality developing, where possible, thirdly learn the key features of typical behavioral signals displayed by the nationalities

represented on board and lastly consciously seek to build trust, familiarity and integration of different social groups through organized or semi-organized social activities onboard. Things that masters should not do are that established value judgments about different nationalities and overdoing 'political correctness' in regard of dealing with different nationalities so that relations become forced and unnatural (Maritime and Coastguard Agency, 2006).

4.3.5 Social focus

The ship is not only a work place but also a home of seafarers. Therefore, there is a strong need to focus on social life onboard is a strong need. The barrier of this in modern ships nowadays is cultural differences among crew from different nationalities.

Cultural differences can be overcome if an officer can differentiate between work and leisure situations with seamen from other countries. It is good if he can put himself into the lower level seaman's shoes and treat them as he would like them to treat him. Secondly, knowing how to listen to others is a good tip to overcome cultural differences. Cultural differences can be turned to an advantage when the officer knows his staff long enough to build up trust. Lastly, a good sense of humour can be a conscious survival strategy (Knudsen, 2004).

Loneliness as well as stress can cause the greatest problems. It is important to give seamen evenings to socialize with friends and colleagues and families. It is as crucial as the more serious business doing everyday (Augustyniak, 2007). Moreover social life of crew onboard ships can be improved by investigating more for facilities such as gym and table tennis in big and attractive rooms.

4.3.6 Strengthening communication

Communication is at the heart of all international relations. It is the process of circular interaction involving a sender, receiver and message (Harris et al, 2004). Effective communications are a vital ingredient to safe and efficient ship operations.

Ineffective or misunderstood communication can cause serious results in the shipping industry, which can be expressed in the sentence that “careless talk costs lives” . Therefore, in the world of international shipping, with seafarers from many countries, it is crucial to obtain effective communication between those onboard and between ship and shore. In the context of increased multilingual crewing on ships where the working language is English, the teaching of both general and maritime English is more important than ever to ensure effective communication (Johnson, 1999). Short (2007) even suggested that there should be Certificates of English proficiency recorded in the Seaman’s Record book similar to the Certificates of Competency for watch-keepers.

“The way we communicate, and what we do or do not say, may be entirely mystifying to people from other cultures, even though we believe we have made ourselves perfectly clear” (Olofsson, 2004, p. 127). It is the barrier of cross cultural communication. The barriers of communication among multinational crew onboard ship beside language and cultural differences are firstly no separation between on and off-duty life onboard; secondly discriminatory behaviour can occur and the thirdly hierarchical structure onboard. Training on use of maritime English, cultural differences and leadership may solve the communication problems between crew member onboard ships and also between ship and shore communication. Specialist training in cultural awareness can help raise awareness of how and why cultures differ (Logie, 2007).

Effective ship communication can be created also through safety committees, reporting systems, “no blame culture”, regular meetings on board and seminars ashore, free e-mail access and telephones (Augustyniak, 2007). Effective management, an improved safety culture and commercial awareness together will bring about better communication (Betts, 2007).

4.3.7 Stopping discrimination

Discrimination against foreign seamen may occur at several levels, directly or hidden. On some of the bad ships, seafarers are treated almost as slaves and do not know who

they are work for. Many sailors from different countries working on the same vessel doing the same jobs may be on different wage scales (Couper et al., 1999).

Some examples of hidden discrimination onboard are in systematic accessing to email and papers, not informing the crew about important matters, making them do other work than they have been employed to do (Knudsen, 2004).

The shipping company should have clear policies to limit discrimination at all levels of organizations. The seamen should be educated to know and protect their rights.

4.3.8 Safety at work

Certain factors in some cultures such as indirect communication and unwillingness to disagree can have negative consequences for safety at work. A fear of being dismissed and the professional pride of the seamen prevent them from admitting mistakes and reporting events and near misses. There should be requirements onboard ships that reporting accidents and near- misses can in no circumstances be regarded as punishable. The emphasis is not on negatively reinforcing or punishing seafarers for their unsafe acts as a way to eliminate them but rather to identify and praise people for their more frequent safe acts. This will increase safety at work onboard ships (McCafferty et al., 2004).

4.4 Chapter conclusion

In brief, cultural sensitivity is an important issue in the globalization process nowadays, especially for whichever field having staff from different countries like the shipping industry. Cultural sensitivity education has become more and more necessary for seafarers and its benefits are undeniable. Other measures to deal with challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crew onboard ship will strengthen the effect of cultural sensitivity education. How to incorporate this education in teaching programs at universities is a difficulty MET is facing. This issue will be discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

**IMPLEMENTING CULTURAL SENSITIVITY EDUCATION IN THE
SHIPPING INDUSTRY**

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”

Confucius

5.1 Role of stakeholders in the arrangement of cultural sensitivity education

Cultural sensitivity can become a subject of study when there is demand from shipping companies, supply from MET institutions and legal context created by IMO. However, in the fierce competition of globalization, shipowners try to cut costs especially labour costs and it does not seem as an economical benefit for them to raise demand of cultural sensitivity courses. However, shipowners should bear in mind that there is always compromise between economic benefits and safety. If they feel it is expensive to invest in accident prevention, they have accidents. Therefore, it is reasonable for shipping companies to consider cultural sensitivity course for their crew.

In the past and in many countries, MET has had habits of waiting to be told what to do. With the STCW 95 Convention, the opportunity and requirement as well for a proactive MET has increased. The MET institutions should be initiative, provide what the market needs, not what they are told to do. They should provide course on issues that tend to become difficult for the industry. The primary mission of MET should be to serve the shipping industry, not for the Maritime Administration to show that they have a functioning MET institution. The MET should also adapt their courses to satisfy the individual students and to match their wishes to build up a

career within the industry and after a career at sea (Horck, 2007). Now it is time for MET institutions to introduce cultural sensitivity course to their programs.

IMO is the United Nations' specialized agency responsible for improving maritime safety and preventing pollution from ships. IMO plays a key role in ensuring that lives at sea are not put at risk and that the marine environment is not polluted by shipping - as summed up in IMO's mission statement: *Safe, Secure and Efficient Shipping on Clean Oceans*. One of the main IMO's objectives for 2000s is to "shift emphasis onto people". In order to implement its mission and obtain its objective, IMO should facilitate cultural sensitivity education in the shipping world.

An issue can be carried out from bottom to top or upside down from top to bottom. Cultural sensitivity can also be implemented through mandatory regulations of IMO. However it will be faster and more efficient if the implementation of cultural sensitivity education is from bottom to top. Whatever process of implementing is, IMO, MET institutions and shipping companies also play important roles. The question is how these stakeholders implement their role in the most favorable way for developing cultural sensitivity education.

5.1.1 International Maritime Organization

IMO has facilitated English education as a common language in the maritime industry through mandatory SMCP. This organization can also use its power to facilitate cultural sensitivity education in several ways.

Firstly, IMO can develop IMO model courses on cultural sensitivity (awareness and tolerance with cultural differences and their effects on values and behaviours) and communication skills. Although some IMO model courses take up culture awareness such as Personal safety and social responsibilities (1.21), Ship simulator and bridge teamwork (1.22), Proficiency in crisis management and human behaviour training including passenger safety, cargo safety, hull integrity training (1.29) and Human resource management (5.04), the number of hours dedicated for this issue is too few

and it is not enough in comparison with its importance. There should be a separate model course for this issue.

Secondly, IMO can issue a publication like the SMCP. This suggestion was supported by two thirds of the respondents of the questionnaire as analysed in Chapter III. IMO country members will submit reports describing the unique and special features of their culture. IMO will collect and issue the publication based on these reports. There may be an argument that culture is a sensitive issue and IMO should not deal with this. However, in this suggestion, IMO acts as a collector based on its prestige and this can avoid stereotyping. This publication can be used as reference or text book for cultural sensitivity education. In the market, there are already many books related to culture traits of many countries in the world but most of them are for businessmen and it is difficult to check the precise of information in these books.²

Thirdly, IMO can implement a project to combine issues of cultural sensitivity in the shipping industry from countries in the world and publish in the existing bulletin like *Alert!* Alert can have one page with name “Country culture” to in turn represent specific traditional features of each country in the world.

5.1.2 MET institutions

Trenkner and Cole (2004, p. 85) commented that MET institutions “often reluctant to recognize Maritime English on an equal footing to Navigation or Marine Engineering or to dedicate more instruction hours in an already tight program, have been keen to find more effective strategies”. This action should be also applied for cultural sensitivity subjects.

Training methods and standards vary from institution to institution, from country to country. Therefore, the quality of seafarers is different between seafarers coming

² Although “Managing cultural differences” is a comprehensive book with 6th edition, it still describes wrongly a Vietnamese feature. When visiting a Vietnamese house, “acceptable gifts include flowers, tea or incense” (Harris et al., 2004, p. 417). Actually, in Vietnamese culture, the guest only brings incense if somebody in the host family dies; otherwise it means insult or damn to the hostess.

from different countries. However, this fact does not prevent all MET institutions in the world from teaching cultural sensitivity subjects. These subjects can help MET institutions to increase competitive ability in the globalization and attract more students. Because with cultural sensitivity knowledge, graduated students improve their quality to work in the shipping industry which has an inherent international nature. As a result, they have more capacity to get jobs. This in turn creates reputation for MET institutions where these students graduated. More people will want to become students of these institutions. Therefore, MET programs should include this education as a mandatory component.

The preparation for cultural sensitivity subjects need to be done carefully by situational analysis. This involves review of external and internal factors. External factors consist of legal issues, competition, and demand from the shipping industry. Internal factors include teachers, their values, skills, knowledge and experience, and perceived and felt problems and shortcomings of the existing curriculum (Lynch, 1986).

5.1.3 Shipping companies

The first step in managing cultural differences effectively is enhancing one's general cultural awareness. It is better to build a subculture upon the newcomer's cultural heritage rather than imposing old people's culture on newcomers. This is one of principles shipowners should practice when they use multinational crew.

The shipping companies should be proactive in this issue. For example, Hapag-Lloyd, a German shipping company, has taken its first cadets to sea onboard one of the largest training ships in the world. The company required that cadets need to get to know other countries, their peoples and cultures during their three or four months onboard (Horck, 2007). Other shipping companies should also learn this lesson.

Shipping companies should organize short courses before each voyage about culture of crew members of the voyage. After graduating from MET institutions with awareness and tolerance with cultural differences learned from cultural sensitivity subject, seafarers should be taught detail features of the culture of their workmates.

This knowledge cannot be taught during their time at MET institutions because there are so many countries in the world and it is impossible to learn all unique, special features of all the countries. Moreover, students only know which culture they need to understand in specific conditions, after they have worked for a shipping company and have become seafarers. The cooperation between MET institutions and shipping companies is very important in the process of implementing cultural sensitivity education. Shipping companies can hire teachers from MET institutions to continue lesson of cultural sensitivity in a specific context with the content related to culture of the company's crew. They can also do this through video shows and cultural festivals. The relationship of shipping companies and MET institutions in the process of carrying out cultural sensitivity education is shown in Figure 5.1.

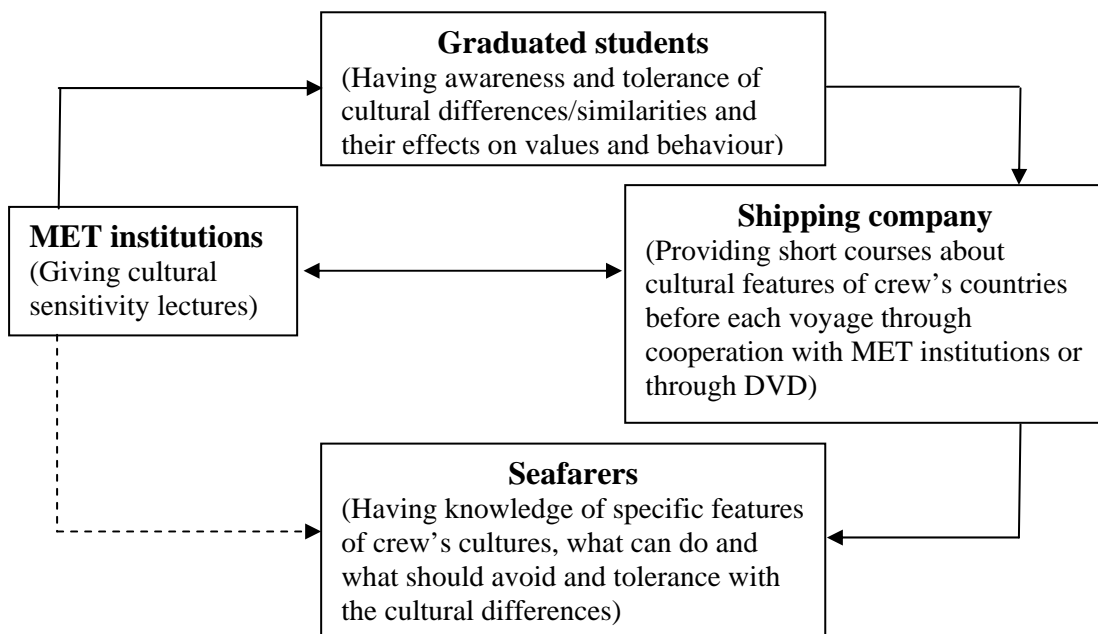


Figure 5.1 Relationship between MET institutions and shipping companies in implementing cultural sensitivity education, ©

5.2 Curriculum of cultural sensitivity subject

At the present, there is no IMO model course specializing only in cultural sensitivity or cultural awareness. Therefore, the curriculum of cultural sensitivity subject can be varied from institution to institution. Whatever the varieties are, the curriculum

designers, should pay attention to some characteristics of culture and learn from cultural sensitivity curricula of other fields.

5.2.1 Features of culture that MET designers of cultural sensitivity curriculum should consider

Firstly, the paradox of culture is the commonalities that exist in the midst of its transmission or even confusion. Certain activities happen across cultures but their manifestation may be unique in a particular society. Some form of sports or humor or music may be common to all people, but the way in which it is accomplished is typical in various cultural groupings (Harris et al, 2004). This is the view that teachers should let students know when starting the lecture about culture.

Secondly, culture is like an iceberg (part is seen but most is not). The *technical* level of culture is the part of the iceberg that is visible and the *informal* level of culture lies below “sea level”. The former level can be taught and there is little emotion attached to this level. Few intercultural misunderstanding happens at this level because the reason for any misunderstanding is usually quite easy to determine (Harris et al, 2004). For seafarers on long voyage (more than one year), it is difficult to remain exclusively at the technical level. When they come to the informal level where actions and responses are automatic and almost unconscious, the rule of behaviours are usually not known although they recognize when something is wrong. For example, when is it appropriate for workmates to make jokes about sensitive things such as their wife? If it happens too soon, it could be interpreted as overly friendly and offensive. Informal rules can be learned through modeling.

Thirdly, there are four levels of cultural awareness corresponding to a phase or phases that each person experiences in the process of adapting to a new culture. The first level is *unconscious incompetence*. At this stage, the person is unaware of cultural differences. It does not occur to him that he may be making cultural mistakes or that he may be misinterpreting much of the behaviour going on around him. He has no reason not to trust his instincts. The second level is *conscious incompetence*.

He now realizes that differences exist between the way he and other people behave, although he understands very little about what these differences are, how numerous they might be or how deep they might go. He knows there is a problem here but he is not sure about the size of it. He is not sure of his instincts anymore and realizes that some things he does not understand. He may start to worry about how hard it is going to be to figure out the people around. Then comes to third level: *conscious competence*. He knows cultural differences exist and knows what some of these differences are, and tries to adjust his own behaviour accordingly. It does not come naturally yet- he has to make a conscious effort to behave in culturally appropriate ways but he is much more aware of how his behaviour is coming across to the people around him. He is in process of replacing old instincts with new ones. The final level is *unconscious competence*. He no longer has to think about what he is doing in order to do the right thing. Culturally appropriate behaviour is now second nature to this person; he can trust his instincts because they have been reconditioned by the new culture. It takes little effort now for him to be *culturally sensitive* (The Peace Corps, p. 199).

Finally, there is the phenomenon of culture of globalization and globalization of culture in the maritime working environment. Culture is generally assigned a fixed, local particularity, therefore globalization, with its complex wisps of connectivity, weakens the ties of culture to place. Different cultures are being introduced to one another. It is the process of the *globalization of cultures*. Conversely, this internationalism and cosmopolitanism produce a new culture of hybridity and heterogeneity which is the *culture of globalization*. This phenomenon makes seafaring life very complex, vibrant and fulfilling (Benton, 2006).

5.2.2 Learning from curriculum for high school study: Building cultural bridges

“Building cultural bridges” is a text book for a subject at school written by Robinson, Bowman, Ewing, Hana and Lopez –De Fede. It is also a curriculum designed to lecture diversity within a school or other organizations by helping students and staff to become more skilful in positively relating to others whom they might perceive as “different”. Seven steps in building cultural bridges are

1. Becoming Aware (chapter I)
2. Recognizing our commonalities and differences (chapter II)
3. Investigating our prejudices (chapter III)
4. Developing positive relationships with people of different cultures (chapter IV)
5. Gaining skills to resolve cultural conflicts (chapter V)
6. Exploring how to confront the prejudices in ourselves and others (chapter VI)
7. Sharing the vision (chapter VII)

It is not enough to just feeling a need for greater cultural awareness and sensitivity. It is the fact that diversity exists around us and historically diversity has divided us. Education may be the most powerful tool for bridging the gap. Building Cultural Bridges lets students move from thinking about diversity issues to acting on them. This is the philosophy of this program.

The *Building Cultural Bridges* program incorporates three basic learning approaches. A *cognitive* or knowledge/information- based approach helps students to have broader, deeper and more accurate understanding of concepts and issues as well as themselves and other (especially those they might perceive as “different”). An *affective* or emotion-based approach is useful for students to explore and understand their feelings about multicultural concepts and issues, commonalities and differences they perceive between themselves and others. A *behavioural* or action-based approach helps students perform skills for building positive relationships with “different” people.

Each chapter is one step in building a cultural bridge. The method can be used for in each chapter are student reading and student activities about related subject in that chapter. For example, chapter II “Color me human” is for students to develop an awareness of and appreciation for the roles of culture and diversity in shaping and building relationships. Student readings include “Color me human”, “Looking at what we have in common”, “Differences that make us unique”, “The need to connect, build bridges, and work together to create unity”. The student activities are as follows:

Table 5.1 Student activities

No.	Activity	Students will
2:1	Color me human	Experience and discuss the concepts of our humanity and our interconnectedness
2:2	How are families alike?	Explore commonalities we share regardless of cultural differences.
2:3	Common ground	Identify commonalities that are part of our humanity
2:4	The hidden diversity word puzzle	Share feelings and thoughts about diversity issues
2:5	My heritage	Explore their family backgrounds, customs, heritage, and values
2:6	Understanding diversity within our families	Express through art the effect of diversity on family relationships
2:7	Stranger in foreign land	Experience what it feels like to function in an unfamiliar culture
2:8	Same or different?	Explore similarities and differences within their classroom
2:9	Another Race/Ethnic Group/ Culture	Imagine what it would be like to be born of another race/culture.
2:10	Dealing with diversity	Examine the strengths and challenges of diversity
2: 11	Unity is balancing act	Physically experience how cooperation is needed to maintain balance

Source: Robinson et al. (1999).

In chapter III “Fear no differences”, students develop an understanding of the barriers to building cultural bridges and confront common fears about human diversity. The main teaching point is the big four bridge barriers: stereotypes, prejudice, bigotry and discrimination.

The main teaching point in chapter IV “Acquiring cross-cultural communication skills” is seven key issues in cross-cultural communication:

1. There are some basic differences in the ways people of different cultures communicate, such as through the different use of words, voice and body language.

2. Within each culture, there are individual differences in the way people communicate.
3. In communicating with someone of a different culture, it is important to make sure you consider the person's background.
4. You need to be flexible in your communication style if you want to relate positively to people of different cultures.
5. There are limits to how much someone should try to shift his or her communication style to be like someone who is culturally different.
6. Openness, caring, and mutual respect for the dignity of individuals are essential qualities for effective communication, regardless of cultural differences.
7. There are great advantages throughout your life to being knowledgeable, respectful, and open toward others who are culturally different from you.

Chapter V “Resolving conflicts across cultures” helps students to explore cross-cultural conflicts and learn and practice a cross-cultural conflict resolution model.

In chapter VI “Take a stand”, students learn how to be more effective in confronting prejudice and supporting a more inclusive atmosphere in their school. Four steps to take a stand are seek self- knowledge; gain knowledge of issues; create a safe environment to build relationships; and increase assertiveness skills.

Chapter VII “Take a step” give students a chance to explore the needs of their school and community from a multicultural perspective and then take action by conducting a “Building cultural bridges” project to help meet those needs.

“*Building Cultural Bridges*” is a good program that MET institutions can take as a reference in designing a maritime cultural sensitivity curriculum. Other curricula can be considered is curriculum for paraeducators³.

³ Paraeducator is a person who assists classroom teachers and other certificated personnel in instructing reading, writing and mathematics
(http://prod031.sandi.net/personnel/pdf/Contracts/Para/05-08/NCLB_MOU.pdf)

5.2.3 Learning from curriculum of cultural sensitivity unit for paraeducators

It is a curriculum for three hour of lectures with the topic “Families and Cultural Sensitivity” (Backus, 2000) .The agenda for the lectures is as follows:

Table 5.2 Families and cultural sensitivity (3 hours)

Agenda item	Time
A1 Introduce unit and objective 1	5 min.
A2 Family-centered practices activity; Your own experience	25 min.
A3 Cultural sensitivity activity Cultural sensitivity guided discussion	25 min.
A4 Introduce objective 2 (1 min.) Activity: importance of family-centered and culturallly sensitivity practices (14 min.)	15 min.
A5 BREAK	15 min.
A6 Introduce objective 3 (1 min.). Confidentiality activity (19 min.)	20 min.
A7 Cultural sensitivity activity	45 min.
A8 <i>Knowledge review</i>	20 min.
A9 Evaluation, practicum, and preparation for the next class	10 min.

Source: Backus (2000, p. 93).

The teaching method is a combination of readings, class activities and practicum activities in order for students to get both knowledge and skills. The cultural sensitivity activity (A3) includes showing an overhead of cultural sensitivity definition and components and class discussion. The following questions can be used to guide students to the activity around cultural sensitivity:

1. What is your cultural heritage?
2. Do you identify with that culture?
3. What are some family traditions or practices related to it?
 - Food?
 - Music?
 - Holidays?
4. What, if anything, did your cultural background say to you about schooling, teachers, etc.?

5. What do you know about the cultural traditions of your co-workers and students?
6. What would you like to know?
7. In what ways did your culture affect your (or your family's) participation in school?
8. Was there ever a time when the school or service provider acted in a way that was insensitive to your culture?

The second cultural sensitivity activity (A7) relates to communication. Culturally sensitivity communication:

- Conveys empathy
- Avoids demeaning interactions
- Uses open, non judgmental communication
- Examines your cultural biases
- Expresses interest in another's culture
- Uses terms preferred by the culture
- Uses "person-first language"
- Does not compare individuals
- Views miscommunications as opportunities to solve problems.

Then discuss ways to facilitate cultural sensitivity, for example: learn more about culture of another person; improve listening or active listening; examine own biases; show empathy and be non-judgmental. The last part of lecture is knowledge review.

This can be done by multi-choice questions, for instance:

Engaging in culturally sensitive practices means

- a. understanding your own cultural biases
- b. knowing about the culture of students with whom you work
- c. respecting different cultural traditions
- d. *a and c only*
- e. a, b and c

Cultural sensitivity is important because:

- a. it contributes to mutual cooperation and collaboration
- b. it ensures quality for all students
- c. it leads to a sense of belonging among students
- d. a and b only
- e. *a and c only*

Lessons learned from this curriculum can be useful for lectures on subjects of cultural sensitivity at MET institutions.

5.2.4 Example of curriculum outline of cultural sensitivity for maritime students

Curriculum is cultural reproduction because it reflects culture of a particular society (Print, 1993). There can be different curricula of cultural sensitivity at different MET institutions in different countries. Despite of these varieties, there should be the same aim for this subject that is to make students aware of the importance of knowing and tolerance with cultural differences in the globalization of culture to adapt and have appropriate behaviors in a multicultural environment. Following is an example outline draft of cultural sensitivity curriculum for undergraduate maritime students for a period of 15 hours (1 credit).

Table 5.3 Objectives and contents outline, ©

Objectives	Content	Learning activities
1. Understand definition, features of cultural sensitivity; recognize commonalities and differences of different cultures	1. Overview of cultural sensitivity (definition, features, components) 2. Discuss the commonalities and differences of different cultures	1. Lecture 2. Group discussion based on reading materials 3. Doing individual exercise. 4. Video show Time: 1.5 hours
2. Discuss the importance of cultural sensitivity in shipping industry nowadays with the trend of multicultural and multilingual crew	Accidents and incidents caused by cultural differences onboard ship (sorted by component of culture as in chapter II)	1. Lecture 2. Video show 3. Group discussion 4. Student presentation Time: 4.5 hours
3. Discuss measures to facilitate communication in cultural sensitivity context	Ways to facilitate cultural sensitivity	1. Lecture 2. Group discussion Time: 1 hour

4. Know some regional specifics and develop positive relationships with people of different cultures	1. Regional culture specifics (North America, Latin America, Asia and Australia, Euro, Middle East, Africa) 2. Issues across culture communication 3. Getting to know real person 4. Body language	1. Lecture 2. Group discussion 3. Role play 4. Game Time: 6 hours
5. Gain skills to resolve cultural conflicts and explore how to confront the prejudices in ourselves and others	1. Cross-cultural conflict resolution 2. Personal reaction to conflict worksheet	1. Lecture 2. Student discussion Time: 1 hour Exam: 1 hour

In the conclusion, what should be emphasized on cultural sensitivity education is that there is no absolute correct way to live and each person should give a room for tolerance, respect and understanding other cultures (Horck, 2007 as cited in Ljungberg, 2005).

Assessment of student's knowledge and skills on this subject can be designed based on understanding of six stages of intercultural sensitivity defined by Bennett (Elliott et al., 1999) as follows:

1. Denial: Does not recognize cultural differences
2. Defense: Recognizes some differences, but sees them as negative
3. Minimization: Unaware of projection of own cultural values; sees own values as superior
4. Acceptance: Shifts perspectives to understand that the same "ordinary" behaviour can have different meanings in different cultures
5. Adaptation: Can evaluate other's behaviour from their frame of reference and can adapt behaviour to fit the norms of a different culture
6. Integration: Can shift frame of reference and also deal with resulting identity issues

5.3 Other conditions in need to be considered

As far as teachers are concerned, it is very good if the teacher of this subject has sea experience with crew from different nationalities and conflict resolving experience in cultural differences. Then he/she just needs to do research about this subject and teach.

Some teachers are afraid of teaching culture because they fear that they do not know enough about it, thinking that their role is only to impart facts. However, even if teachers' own knowledge is quite limited, their proper role is not to impart facts, but to help students attain the skills that are necessary to make sense out of the facts they themselves discover in their study of the target cultural sensitivity. Then, the objectives that are to be achieved in cross-cultural understanding involve "*Processes*" rather than "*Facts*". A "facts only" approach to culture for which the only goal is to collect bits of information is ineffective.

Student's negative attitude is another difficulty that teachers may face in teaching cultural sensitivity. When cultural phenomena differ from what students expect, they often react negatively, characterizing the target culture as "strange". Then teachers need to help students revise their "linguistic patterns", they also need to help them revise their "cultural patterns" (Abisamra, 2001).

Cultural sensitivity subjects do not require special equipment for the class room than other subjects. Ideal class size is around 12 to 16 students.

5.4 Chapter conclusion

Cultural sensitivity education can be carried out if there is effective cooperation of shipping companies, MET institutions and IMO. However, in the shipping industry the shipowners, for commercial reasons, continue to muster multicultural crews without giving them prior courses in cultural awareness. The MET institutions have not been proactive and taken an initiative to give their students cultural sensitivity courses. The IMO has not managed to introduce these courses as part of the curricula

in the STCW (Horck, 2007). All these stakeholders need to change their attitude and behaviour about cultural sensitivity education and have positive action to make it into a reality soon.

IMO can develop an IMO model course on cultural sensitivity and communication skills and/or issue a publication like the SMCP and/or implement a project to combine issues of cultural sensitivity in the shipping industry then publish in the existing bulletin like *Alert!*.

MET institutions should integrate cultural sensitivity subjects in their education program. The curriculum for this subject can be designed based on lesson learning from the similar curriculum in other industries like “Building cultural bridges” for high school pupils and “Families and cultural sensitivity” for paraeducators. This is a necessary, useful but inexpensive subject. Therefore, it should be managed to become a mandatory subject in MET institutions soon.

Shipping companies need to be proactive in organizing short courses about cultural sensitivity/ awareness prior to each voyage. They should also cooperate with MET institutions in providing these courses for their seafarers.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

“Never regard study as a duty, but as the enviable opportunity to learn to know the liberating influence of beauty in the realm of the spirit for your own personal joy and to the profit of the community to which your later work belongs.”

Albert Einstein

6.1 Concluding discussion

With the globalization process, ships in the world are manned with increasing numbers of crew nationalities. The cultural differences of multinational crews have contributed to many accidents onboard ships. However, these factors have just become criteria for analysis of accident causes in casualty reports recently.

The questionnaire results show that the importance of understanding and tolerance with cultural differences of crews coming from many nationalities onboard ships has been underestimated. Apparently, the shipping industry needs repeated wakeup calls before the world faces a major maritime accident for which the reason is lack of cultural sensitivity and lack of adequate communication skills (Horck, 2007).

Based on analysis of maritime accidents, findings from the questionnaire, learning on measures to deal with problems of cultural differences of other industries, it can be concluded that cultural sensitivity education is the most effective and long lasting measure to help solve challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crew onboard ship. Cultural sensitivity is not a subject that is automatically understood by everybody. Therefore, instead of investing a lot of money in technical equipment, it is better and cheaper to invest in the human being especially on cultural sensitivity education.

Figure 6.1 presents aspects around cultural sensitivity education in the maritime field.

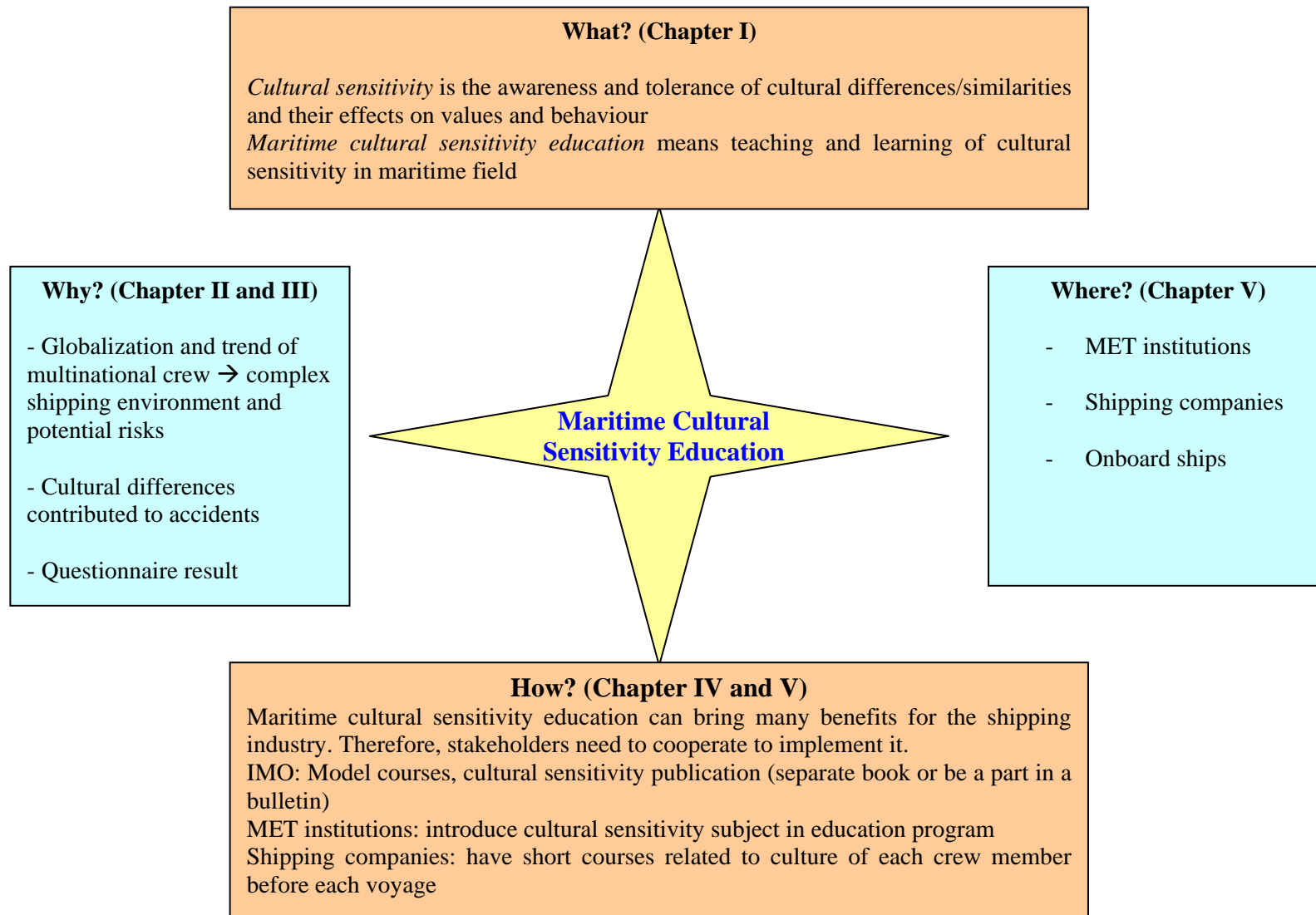


Figure 6.1: Summary of the dissertation on maritime cultural sensitivity education.

One of the interesting things about culture is that everyone is a member of at least one culture but people can rarely explain their culture very clearly to others. It is because like fish unaware of the water in which they swim, people in their own culture tend to be unaware of the principles and values that guide their behaviour. It is natural if somebody thinks that the culture he/she lived is the way of the world and that practices and beliefs are similar over the world. However, the world is not like that. Training is one of the ways to help people move beyond their own cultural boundaries to accept other cultures without becoming defensive (Merritt & Maurino, 2004).

There are many literature works written to address the problems arising from multinational crews in the shipping industry but most of them focus on language and communication while few focus on understanding cultural differences. Benton (2006) named it “cultural literacy”. He emphasized that a foundation of “multicultural literacy” which means the ability to identify, recognize, and interpret multiple cultural manifestations, helps to produce an educated citizen of the twenty first century, a citizen who is able to develop a delicate balance of cultural, national and global identifications. Study on cultural literacy “can be fostered by the free and frank exchange of ideas between academics and industrialists, and by intensifying efforts to exchange students from one maritime university to another, to make the environment these students learn in as richly diverse as the world they will soon enter” (Benton, 2006, p. 21).

Horck (2007) emphasized the importance and necessity of the same issues as Benton but under a different name “cultural awareness”. He concluded that courses in cultural awareness for shipping people is needed and suggested to mandate this course. “Cultural awareness course, which MET is urged to introduce, will reduce wrong stereotyping. After the courses, crew (ratings as well as officers) will better understand each other both socially and individually, which will increase ship safety, also on technical level” (Horck, 2007, p. 150).

Supporting ideas of Benton and Horck, learning from other fields, the author introduced the concept of “cultural sensitivity education” in the maritime field.

Cultural sensitivity used in this dissertation is the extension of “cultural literacy” and “cultural awareness” in the aspect that not only awareness but also tolerance of cultural differences/similarities and their subsequent effects on values and behaviour. Cultural sensitivity education not only provides knowledge but also goes further to action and forms skills for students to live in the globalization of culture.

Learning knowledge and skill to behave sensitivity in multicultural environment is a long process. The process starts from MET institutions where general knowledge of culture is taught then continues at the shipping companies where features of specific cultures are conveyed and comes to practice onboard ships. Therefore, there is a need of effective cooperation among stakeholders (IMO, MET institutions and shipping companies) to implement cultural sensitivity education.

IMO should develop an IMO model course on cultural sensitivity and communication skills and/or issue a publication like the SMCP and/or implement a project to combine issues of cultural sensitivity in the shipping industry then publish in the existing bulletin like *Alert!*.

MET institutions should introduce cultural sensitivity subjects in their education program. The curriculum for this subject can be designed based on lessons learning from similar curricula in other industries.

Shipping companies need to be proactive in organizing short courses about cultural sensitivity prior to each voyage and onboard vessels. They should also cooperate with MET institutions in providing these courses for their seafarers.

6.2 Recommendation

Culture in general and cultural sensitivity is a large scope for more research. This dissertation just touches a small part of human beings’ cultural treasure. The respondents of the dissertation questionnaire are from a variety in nationalities but still small in number. They are the limitations of this dissertation.

Therefore, this dissertation recommends that further research on this subject should be done to make a stronger wake up call to the shipping industry. Potential matters for further research are:

- ✓ The need for a publication of IMO on cultural sensitivity for mariners and its content.
- ✓ Development of IMO model courses on cultural sensitivity (specific content).

★ ★ ★

If one call/ring is not enough to wake up a sleeping person, more and continuous calls can do that. This dissertation is one call on the importance of cultural sensitivity education in dealing with challenges caused by multicultural crews with the hope to contribute to a series of calls that can wake up the stakeholders in the shipping industry to take appropriate action at the right time for a better shipping world.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE



Dear Sir/Madam,

Your support and help is being solicited for the completion of the attached questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to collect data for research into cultural sensitivity education and the challenges caused by multicultural and multilingual crews in the shipping industry.

This research is being carried out at the World Maritime University as part of a dissertation.

Your answers will be kept strictly confidential, you will not be identified specifically in the findings. All data will be presented as part of global findings.

Please answer by marking the tick boxes - - or filling in the required text -

Where more than one option applies, please tick all applicable boxes.

Your time and effort in answering the questions are very much appreciated and I would like to thank you very much for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Tran Thi Thuong

Your name:(optional)..... **Your age:**
Your nationality: **Your religion:**

1. Have you ever been a seafarer?

Yes No

If answer is NO, please continue from question 19.

If yes, you currently work on or have worked on:

Merchant marine vessel Coast guard
 Navy Training vessel

Others:

2. If yes, did you work in ship with different nationalities?

Yes No

3. What are those nationalities?

.....
.....

4. Was there a written formal communication language policy in the shipping company in which you served/ serve

Yes No

5. Which language did you use to communicate in your ship?

English French
 Spanish Chinese

Other languages.....

6. Did you experience or see any difficulty (or problem, conflict) in communication between crews from different culture?

Yes No

7. If yes, which kind of difficulties did you meet? (*you may tick more than one choice*)

Language Assertiveness
 Power distance Humour
 Social affiliation

8. Cultural differences are the main cause of such difficulties/problems.

Strongly Agree Agree Not sure Disagree Strongly disagree

9. Can you give your comments related to culture about crews from nationalities you worked with?
(You can be specific regarding customs and nationality)

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10. Do you use sign language onboard ship?
Hand signals / Professional signals: Yes No
Body language: Yes No

11. Sign language is an important communication method onboard ship
Professional signals: Strongly Agree Agree Not sure Disagree Strongly disagree
Body language: Strongly Agree Agree Not sure Disagree Strongly disagree

12. Did you experience any communication constraints with your communication?
 Yes No

13. Did it ever happen that you did not understand correctly what your workmate wanted to say and vice versa?
 Yes No

14. How often did you talk/socialise with crews from other nationalities after working?
 Always Often Sometimes Very seldom Never

15. Did it help you to understand each other better in your job?
 Yes No

16. Has it been a practice on board your ship to repeat an order?
 Yes No

17. Has it ever happened that you have acted against your superior's order?
 Yes No

18. Did your company have any short courses/training programmes to increase crew awareness of the different cultures on board ship before each voyage?
 Yes No

19. Have you ever heard about marine accidents that occurred because of reasons originating from multicultural or multilingual problems onboard ship?
- Yes No
20. If you remember those events, can you mention or suggest a source to find them?
-
-
-
-
-
21. What does culture mean to you?
-
-
-
22. Do you think that multicultural and multilingual crews are big difficulties in shipping today?
- Yes No
23. If yes, do you have any suggestion to deal with this matter? (*you may tick more than one choice*)
- Training Company culture Crew retention
- Other:
-
-
-
-
-
24. Do you think that “cultural sensitivity education” is a solution to the challenges of multicultural and multilingual crews? (*Cultural sensitivity is the awareness and tolerance of cultural differences/similarities and their effects on values and behaviour*)
- Yes No
25. Please indicate any unique feature of your culture (something you think is special and a foreigner should know). You may tick more than one and indicate any other.
1. The left hand and feet are unclean, never use left hand to pass object to others
 2. Using index finger to point or beckon is impolite
 3. Don't touch the head of another person
 4. Don't blame people in front of others
 5. It is impolite to call a person by his/her name directly without a title unless he/she is a close friend
 6. It is impolite to say something adverse about person of your father's generation (especially in their absence)

7. Don't wave your hand when talking with the elder

8. When receiving a telephone call, you shouldn't be the first to hang up

Other:

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.....

26. Do you think that it is better if seafarers know all issues in question 25 of other cultures prior to sailing?

Yes

No

27. Have you received any training in culture sensitivity?

Yes

No

28. In your opinion, is cultural sensitivity training useful?

Yes

No

29. How do you rate or value this training in practical life at sea? (Rate from 1 to 5) _____

Not useful (1), Extremely useful (5)

30. The IMO should issue a publication (*similar to "Standard Marine Communication Phrases" – SMCP*) related to culture sensitivity.

Strongly Agree Agree Not sure Disagree Strongly disagree

31. Seafarer population should have more women.

Strongly Agree Agree Not sure Disagree Strongly disagree

32. Can you suggest any other thing related to culture that seafarers in multinational crew setting should know to ensure safety for the ship?

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Thank you very much for your answers!

SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS' RESPONSES

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
1	Vietnamese	29	Non		Lloyd list	Culture is everything about life and it conduct your behavior in every content	Don't call your workmate's mother or father name	Should use no more than two nationalities in one ship; keep same crews on board one ship for as long time as possible; salary policy should be fair among crew; working description should be reasonable
2	Indonesian		Islam			Tradition and values that have influence on the way people think, behave and take actions		Understanding international language (English) is the key to multicultural understanding. Any cultural sensitivity issues may be suitable to deliver during the English course if it does not have a specific and distinguished subject of itself.
3	Srilankan		Buddhism		Dissertation in library	Particular group of people which use common norms and ethics as their living life		For every people their culture is crucial; anyone can't say his culture is better than others; instead of culture, usage of certain rules, regulations and procedures may much mutual.
4	Indonesian		Christian			Culture means differences		Have a meeting among crew members to discuss all the matters necessary before going on board the ship/ before sailing to ensure that everybody has the same objectives or perception regarding the voyage and other related issues including the culture matter.
5	Bangladeshi		Islam			Beliefs, norms maintained in a community		With cultural belief some people may think that they should not do some specific jobs which are very important in view of safety for ship. So there should be motivation to overcome these restricted attitudes, to involve them and to adopt them with the working environment.
6	Srilankan		Buddhism			Different behaviours and habit which people have from different human group		Seafarers should take into a same standard around the world and to be trained well....
7	Indonesian		Islam		IMO website	Something that could not be ignore even you are away from your country		Culture night
8	Indonesian		Islam			Originality, habit (the way of thinking/ living) of individual or community that is different or almost same with other individual or community		In case of communication, most of the Asian enjoy passing information/ communication/ order orally; in such work situation, specially on board, important order shall be passed in written form. This is important to level of formality and as a prove when undesired event takes place.
9	Egyptian		Muslim	Different customs and habits; difficult to cooperate or facilitate the work; complicated working environment	Lloyd's list	It is a reflection of same society and education that help turn to deal with others in a certain manner or behaviour		They have to be aware of talking about same issues related to political and religious matters.
10	Egyptian		Muslim	We did not face culture problem because of the strong company regulations about avoiding talking or discussing any religion or political issues	One Indian Bosun was killed in one tank because of misunderstanding communication between the C/O and the deck crew	A lot		

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
11	Japanese		Japanese shinto	Food: Indonesian, Filipinos and Vietnamese like to eat fish with spicy taste but fish onboard was cooked a little bit sweet		Different way of thinking and understand	Different way of talking to elder comparing with same age or younger; interrupt senior saying, explaining is impolite; crossing in front of senior is impolite; asking senior to do something easy is impolite	1) Communication in the very noisy engine room is similar to multilingual communication. I used handy white board for cadets to explain in the engine room. It helps cadets to understand my explanation. 2) Japanese pronounce "R" as "L" for other nationalities. Vietnamese pronounces "D" as "Z" for other nationalities. Writing communication can avoid misunderstand but not useful in emergency.
12	Chilean		Christian			Everything affecting our lives, behaviours, wisdoms, religious, relationships, etc...		It is about relationships among people. It is always been no observed good manners and practice them in order to avoid uncomfortable situation, specially when people is eating, in a meeting different nationalities may have different habit, which sometimes bothers others.
13	Colombian		Non	There has been a strong relationship b/w the US Navy and the Colombian Navy, so members from both navies are able in most of case to manage both languages (Spanish-English)		It means a group of beliefs, traditions, behaviours, values and principles that a certain society follow and transmit generation by generation making them a pattern of identification		Establish lessons learned where the interaction between multicultural crews was the cause of incidents or accidents that can be taught internationally
14	Mozambique		Christian	Main causes are religion and traditional food		A social way which make people to behave differently		
15	Chinese		None			Culture is the unique features of a nation or in a certain reform with a long time and stable deposit	It is deemed to be impolite to talk loudly in public; most Chinese are reserved and not as direct as those in western countries	The most important thing for ensuring safety of the ship is perhaps to enhance the intercourse between crew from different cultures in daily work and life.
16	Nigeria	38	Christian	The Capt. and Chief Engineer are the only non-Nigerian and they are good but the Indians are exploitative		A combination of attitude and values	If it is your elder or senior or boss	
17	Indonesian		Muslim			Culture is an identity of your origin but ship's culture should be applied while you are on board	Don't pretend that you know everything while you can't prove it.	I will ask to seafarers from my country to be "nice" onboard without any cultural-based conflict, or they may keep away of seafaring profession to keep their cultural behaviour. In short, be nice if you want to be good seafarer, or forget it at all, try another job.
18	Myanmar		Buddhism			Culture means everything that people deal with each other		They must at least learn from VCD, DVD or from short course that deal with multicultural (mostly, mainly) from the collection of the experienced seafarers.
19	Myanmar		Muslim			It is something to do with custom or practice of tradition and need to follow society where you live		
20	Pakistan		Islam	I have been working with under-trainees from different Arab countries. They have certain habits which are rooted in their culture.		Culture is a complex thing to describe. It is combination of traditional habits, living standards and rituals of a certain region.	Don't say something unpolite about the religion of others	Pre-sea mandatory courses are helpful in this regard i.e, course like "Social responsibility"
21	Bangladeshi		Islam	Food habits are different types; also there is a lot of variety regarding entertainment manner		The manner or behaviour of a person that reflects through everyday work, routine or duty	Don't argue even superior is wrong; Wishes (morning, evening) from junior to senior only (uni-directional)	

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
22	Indonesian		Islam	Often conflicts happened because there is no good communication channel. Company and management on board should facilitate procedure which allow crew to have open possibility to solve culture differences	In a Korean ship (fishing boat), ship officers were killed by subordinates due to unsolved conflicts	Common habit, language, custom which recognize by an community		Culture is only one of several aspects which influence in shipping operation and to deal with culture problems MET should put culture awareness as part of their curriculum. Assessment of students' understanding about culture is also necessary to be done.
23	Cape Verde		Catholic	Cape Verde, Brazil and Portugal have many similarities in culture due to historical reasons however on board of merchant vessels Brazilian and Portuguese organization are close to navy organization which discipline are more hard, tight while in Cape Verde is more liberal.	Maritime magazine, journals	Culture means the way of being or behaviour of people which is very closed related to their customs and habits		Awareness and tolerance are the keys to success in communication problem or conflict between people of different culture.
24	Algerian		Islam	Cultural differences can be more or less important. Many cultures are so close to each other that their impact can be noticed sometimes. However, cultural differences can be an enriching factor which can make life onboard very cheerful on the one hand, but can be a serious source of conflict and even can affect safety onboard if not handled with care		Beliefs, faith, language and traditions; all those factors that shape the individual behavior and his way to interact with others	Don't turn back during a conversation; Never burp during a meal	How the others reacts against danger; How the others make decisions in emergency situation; Show a neutral position when religion matters, never argue religious matters; Show respect for other cultures and hide the negative sides.
25	Indian		Hindu		Scandinavian Star	Language, habits, behaviour, religion, beliefs, traditions		
26	Myanmar				The signs were written in German and the crew onboard Filipinos speak English. Only chief officer understand German signs. When accident in Bermuda occurred, only chief officer was alive	language, behavior, perception or attitude to others		
27	Vietnamese		None			The characteristics of a group distinguishing them with others		
28	Nigerian		Christianity		Scandinavia	the way of life of a defined group of people		Respect to older people, unrespective of position, size and height
29	Filipino		Roman Catholic	Feels indifferent when in a group of a majority of single nationality; shows ill feelings when seeing a certain nationality eating not their typical food		Customs and traditions		If multinational crew could not be avoided by a shipowner, a regular "team building" activity should be held to familiarize themselves with each other's customs and values
30	Cape Verde	40	Catholic			Customs, habits, beliefs, values that identify a community, a group of people, nation, etc...		English as a common language in ships; socializing process

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
31	Cameroonian	29	Presbyterian			Cultures are practices that people do and have become use to it and are uplarged to do those practices		
32	Argentino	36	Catholic		MAIB.OC.UK-NBTS-EMSA (EU) - USCG	Values and believes that support a community		
33	Turkish	25	Muslim		Scandinavian Star	It reflects the customs, habits, traditions of one country		
34	Chinese	36	None					In China, some fishery boat tend to rush across a hug ship's bow, believing that would bring some fortune. It is a very dangerous behavior, every ship passing China to sea should know this.
35	Angerian	29	Islam			Customs, habits and a way of life		Good communication; culture differences awareness & mutural respect
36	Chinese	35	None			Mean of living		
37	Chinese	33				Language, religion, social background		
38	Chinese	30	None			Social habits, food, religion, the pattern of communication		
39	Mauritanian					Way of life, custom that we shared		
40		37	Christian			A way of life, a mind set, a way of thinking and behaviour		
41						Part of our life	Don't interrupt others when they are talking	
42	Korean	47	Catholic		Scandinavian Star	It is the way people do things		
43	Chinese	28	None					
44	Pakistani	40	Islam	People with poor English background are often shy to communicate		People from different social, economical and religious belief.		The basic safety and hygiene should be elaborated in the ship crew manual.
45					Newspaper, internet	A way of life		A common working culture is to be developed
46	Malaysian		Muslim	There is no proper training especially in English in marine vocabulary before signing crew to a multicultural ship	A collision between a Chinese ship and an Indian ship in Malacca strait in 1993, miscommunication using VHF	local custom		Proper training and reduction of multinational crew due to time constraint- we do not have enough time to get to know someone's culture within the short time period
47	Chinese	40	None					
48	Ecuadorian	48	Catholic			The way to keep yourself or other's people, traditions, behavior, way of thinking, religion		
49	Japanese	30	None			Common sense among people	If Japanese say "maybe", it means "no"	I agree that cultural difference is one of the main difficulties for seafarer, but it is not only nationality's problem. I think crew's relationship is the most important and Bridge Resource Management is very useful to train them; of course, safety culture and socialization of crew are also significant.
50	Russian	24	Christian		Risk Management lecture	Culture is something you cherish a lot and therefore have to respect and understand that all people are different	Calling people by their surname is considered rude in Rusia	Have to be as a team, have to act in distress or highly risk situation as a group of people with same goal and means to reach it.
51	Ethiopian	39	Chirstian					

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
52						Belief and ways of doing things by a particular group of people		
53	Vietnamese	28	None		Google search engine with key words: "human errors in shipping industry" and "multicultural crew on board ships"	To understand what crew behaviour is and so, to know the way to deal with it.	Don't say some sensitivity words such as shit, or others relating to religious sensitivity	Regardless of whatever culture is, following safety and security operation procedures onboard is very important SAFETY FIRST. It is better if seafarers onboard understand each other. One seaman should respect his colleague in sense of culture.
54	Vietnamese		None			Food, language, behaviours, religion	Don't make noise when eating	
55	Uganda		Chirstian	Virtually from same region so we shared almost similar cultural background		A lot but not in terms of my work		Basic education and training is enough to have them cooperate
56	Indian	46	Hindu	Main problem can arise out of different food habits	A cook was asked to clean the provision store but instead he cleared it (shifted everything to another store)	Habits and ways of doing things common among a group of people		
57						Culture includes language, behaviour of one's nationalities, religious belief etc.		
58	Russian	30	Orthodox			Language and traditions, religion, national literature, art, music		I believe they have to be trained to have respect to other nationalities. Otherwise I think to overcome language problem is the most important thing.
59	Indian	42	Hindu			Culture is the collection of good activities carried out for the benefit of a group of people called as society.		Good communication within seafarers is essential to overcome any problem. Safety of ship is not exception to this. But to know each others culture of seafarers in multinational crew will definitely help in creating healthy atmosphere on the ship.
60						It is a kind of philoshophy of reasoning of a certain group of ethnic origin, usually speaking the same language.		Food is the most important and secondly unit language culture to be used
61	Filipino		Catholic		ESSP class handout	The same thinking and belief shared together by a group of people		
62	French	24	Atheist			Set of values and behaviour making the personality of one individual		
63	Nigerian	37	Christain		In the Niger Delta region in Nigeria	The way of life of people, their believe's, the way the individuals are brought up	Don't look at the types of food one do eat like you want to punk; don't mimic someone because he or she cannot pronouce a word correctly; types of cloths, in dia a type of cloths is put on by ladies while in Nigeria that type is unisex, both see it differently	More training, more research, more capacity building.
64	Panamanian	34	Christian			A repetitive and continuous practice utilized by a society which bears the characteristics of their social, religious and economical behaviour		Establish a common language; Improve learning and communication skills; receive training in other languages

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
65	Algerian	43	Muslim	Different view on working conditions; European customs vs African customs and middle East customs; Difference in interpretation of procedures and working loads; Communication, food and hobbies, religion main concerns	False interpretation of procedures and orders regarding cargo handling and other deck/engine operations; closing valves, false maneuver or wrong interpretation of signs, orders lead to fire, overloading, overfilling etc.	High and low context zones of interpretation, sharing and learning together		Seminars; video projection on nationalities involved; group working; the use of one language (English) only is preferable to avoid conflict or misunderstanding etc.
66	Sera Leonean	34	Islam				Maximum respect must be given to elders.	Culture training of the company must be established onboard. Despite the fact that most may come from different background but with a company policy to train crew in normal communication onboard will be help
67	Mauritian	32	Hindu		MAIB	Habits and differences to safety critical situations		Habits and traditions; actually there is a need to harmonize maritime English language education on the one hand, but more importantly to consider language and cultural issues for the selection and recruitment of ship crews on the other hand
68	Chinese	42	None	I have never worked with other nationality crew but I think that the religion and eating habit should be respected		Religious, food, habit, personality		The personality integrity habit and privacy should be respected regardless of nationality of crew
69	Swedish	36	Christian			Sub-groups different perceptions of how they act, live and understand the surrounding world	Be on time; you must understand the problem otherwise you will be passive in solving it	What are the reasons behind that I think I am right, but no one else agrees. How do you solve problems in accordance with your cultural background. How do you interpret pictures/placards? Different cultural heritage will make different interpretations.
70	Ghana							
71	Indonesian	27	Islam		CHIRP, Gard (insurance) newsletter	Culture means the behaviour of society that were influenced by nature, religion, environment, beliefs, norm, social ethics		Understanding different dialects of English by different nationalities (Malay, Indian, Chinese, etc)
72	Thai	33	Buddhism			Culture is everything around you		
73	Srilankan	42	Buddhism			Significant features of a society developed over time (centuries) and then become an essential part of day to day living of that society, which are unique to that society	Don't cross legs while talking to elders (seated)	I feel that seafarers will naturally learn about each other cultures while mixing on board ship, after joining the ship. (I'm not a seafarer) but it'll be useful at the same time making them aware of each others' cultures during their free time onboard by way of sophisticated media etc: This'll be fun and interesting too.
74					The ferry Estonia			
75	Malaysian	37	Catholic		Maritime Casualty Investigation: Scandinavia Star	Customs, local belief, tradition		
76	Chinese	40	None		Scandinavia Star			
77	Korean	44	Chirstian	Myanmar radio officer eat with bare hands and wears skirt				

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
78	Saint Lucia				Books on collision regulations	The way of life of people, the norms, values and practices which one internalizes via the socialization process	1. It is impolite to say something offensive about someone's mother; 2. High level of homophobia- men should avoid as far as possible to hug, attempt to kiss (on the cheeks) or to touch other men. Normal touching to attract someone's attention is acceptable but other forms of "touching" is not acceptable. It can lead to physical confrontation. 3 It is highly offensive to use insulting words to a man about his wife or significant other.	Ensure that they are able to speak, read and understand standard English because it is the international language used at sea and having their capabilities can make the between a safe ship or a floating accident "waiting to happen".
79	Uganda	30	Analican			Culture means those beliefs unique to every social grouping or country	Don't speak in a language that others around you don't understand	They should just respect other people's culture
80	Myanmar	41	Buddhism		At one of US port, ship headed to shore with full speed at manoeuvring time because pilot is American and engine crew are Chinese who don't understand English language thoroughly	Believe and traditional behaviours		Except Asian people, others are individual and liberal type. It means that it is not easy to manage on board the ship if European crew are ratings. Therefore, most of European shipping lines appoint European crew as officer and Asian crew as rating. (I think this is not only concerned with culture but also concerned with financial problem). Asian crew has no more complaint and easy to manage.
81	Nigerian	36	Christian	1. Had problems with religion (Christain and Muslim). 2. The Bristons and Russians thought they are better than Africans	Some countries citizen especially the Russian are possessive and want to control and dominant	The interplay of customs and traditions of certain individual or a group of persons		Respect each other
82	Belizean	37	Christian	It was mandatory that everyone spoke English but the Spanish spoken tend to stay in a group (Dominicain Republic). The rest were all English spoken and got along relationship well. The Americans were the main leaders and tended to be assertive but not vindictive	Scandinavia Star	A way of life		It is very important that the crew get to know and interact with each other. There should be programs on board that allows this to happen even as a part of training. Unless they thoroughly open up and interact then the team is not strong. The leadership on board should ensure that no member is allowed to remain oloof and distant.He should foster goodwill and effective communication among the men and women under his commend.
83	Myanmar	39	Buddhism					
84	Chilean	33	Protestant					Culture sensitivity will be necessary in lower level
85	Korean	44	None					
86	Indonesian	29	Muslim			Behavior		
87	Chinese		None					
88	Thai	32	Buddhism					
89	Chinese	30	None			Sometimes, culture means fortune but sometimes different culture will result in accident		Improve the management to strengthen the communication among the seafarers.

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
90	Japanese	29	Buddhism			Difference of perspective of value. There is no culture superior to other culture.	Japanese: we have to be very sensitive to disagree a person's opinion. It is often recognized to offend the person's personality. Therefore we usually imply it in directly or follow up and care the person feel not comfortable	
91	Khmer	26	Buddhism			Culture means something that last for a long time and we have to follow		
92	Vietnamese	26	None					
93	Vietnamese	26	Buddhism		Scandinavian Shipping Gazette (October 18,2002, p.24)	It is the common way of behaviour, treating one another in a group of people		They should respect other crew member's culture. Besides, they should let them know what they want others to behave or not to do because of the cultural differences.
94	Indonesian	35	Christian	Work with different nationality on board was challenging and I enjoyed it		Something that we learned by using language		Welcome party to new crews
95	Japanese	30	Buddhism					
96	Indonesian	36	Muslim					
97	Vietnamese	30	None			Pattern behaviours		
98	Indonesian	32	Islam			Culture means a certain habit of certain people		
99	Pakistani	40	Islam			Way of living		
100	Chinese	27	None			Behaviour style and how to handle problems by certain people	Don't be late when you have a date	It is better choice to hire the crew share the same religion on one vessel to avoid conflicts.
101	Vietnamese	27	None					
102	Chinese	28	None			Way of thin, style of living, hobby, ect.		
103	Bangladeshi	36	Islam			Culture means how people behave with other and react when in trouble		It is better choice to hire the crew share the same religion on one vessel to avoid conflicts.
104	Albanian	30	Muslim	Cooperative, polite (American); Friendly, cooperative, professionals (Turkish)		It means a lot to some nationalities and not much to some others		
105	Indonesian	31	Muslim					
106	Bangladeshi	36	Islam			Culture means people behaviour, norms and customs, life style, communication which they learn from their surrounding environment and the society where they born and brought up.		
107	Turkish	29	Islam			It has a big influence on people behaviour in the way they act and think		
108						The group of customs, ideas, habits, etc, that people follow		I believe culture and religion are aspects that need to be out of our professional life. They should be more personal.

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
109				They didn't use chopstick so I think it is dirty to eat foods by using their hand	Senior officer always ordered able seamans strongly with hitting them. Able seaman opposed his superior's order without some reasons			Prior to sailing, seafarer have to study countries culture
110		45	Catholic			Traditions and behaviours		
111	Cambodian	24	Buddhism			Culture is shared with norm, value and belief		One thing that seafarers should do in multinational crew is that just keep quiet when they disagree or have conflicts with the others. I think this comment can probably be adapted with any cultures.
112						It is to respect the culture and habits of each others		Respect to each other
113	Cambodian	32	Buddhism					
114	Togolese	32	Christian			Culture means all the pattern of behaviour that are learned from the elderly people in a given society and which are in turn transmitted to another generation		
115	Pakistani	48	Islam	Bangladeshi and Indian had Asian culture. Nigerian had mixture of Asian and Western culture and British had Western culture				Crew to be dealt keeping in mind their culture value.
116	Bangladeshi	40	Muslim			Values, norms and practices evolved from the society or communities ideology and behavior	Using left hand to pass anything is impolite	The manning company or shipping company can arrange some orientation programme for the seafarer prior going to the sea.
117	Dutch / Canadian	58	Christian	Understanding nuances comes only after a longer experience and after gaining relationships of trust	Within BRM course cases	Respect for each other	Raising a middlefinger	Superstitions and religious issues
118	Australian	67	Anglican	Crews generally need clear instruction on work duties. Initiative levels are somewhat low in some cultures	MCA Accidents Reports; AMSA accident reports; Lloyds Law reports	A persons individual culture and heritage generated by his/her social world and upbringing		
119	Japanese	50	Buddhism			Culture is based on their language; behaviours, thinking methods are also based on the culture		
120	Canadian	32			Thematic material: on board cultural communication? Some of the Vessel Disaster, Project vessels were also a result of this	A set of norms, attitudes, values and beliefs a person has that reflects how and where they grew up	Canadians are usually quite concerned about being polite and "politically correct". They are also generally concerned about quality and fairness. Therefore, they would be upset if these conditions weren't met. I think they would also expect others to be the same	I think they should be aware of differences in general. Know that they will encounter different habits etc. and be prepared not to jump to conclusions.

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
121	Swedish	60	Protestant		The Scandinavian Star- fire onboard a passenger ship	Roots, traditions, upbringing	1. Not to swash the door if somebody is coming after you. 2. To stand in line, don't force yourself through a way. 3. Don't speak with food in your mouth. 4. Don't interrupt when somebody is talking. 5. Introduce yourself on the phone when calling up. 6. To be on time	1. Language training is number one. 2. Don't let crew members of the same country always sit together so that they get more familiar with language and culture. 3. Show care for the crew. 4. More safety trainings onboard the ship
122	Kenyan		Christian			Culture is ingrained in people and their customs. It is the way people act due to the way they have been brought up and the environment they have grown in. It is the way they speak, think and they way they approach new challenges.	You shouldn't look your elders directly in the eyes when speaking to them	Employ educated people- People with high school training should be the minimum. Education helps people to adapt; Give refresher course to teach cultural differences; Give psychological education teaching man's enculturation ; Give sociological education showing the influence of all cultures- not that some are superior.
123	Dutch		Catholic			It can tell you more about a person		
124	Dutch			Filipinos are very lazy. You always have to tell them what to do		A way of living		
125	Dutch					The values and habit that learned and experienced common in your country		
126	Dutch			I sailed with 2 Filipino 1st officer. He never dare to call the captain even if it was necessary because of power distance and because of power distance I was not allowed to call the captain	At school from teacher	Culture shapes your own way of life in a crowd of people, with different cultures you have to acclimate your lifestyle.		
127	Dutch			With the Russians there is a big power distance and they have no humour		your routs	Dutch are open minded. So get used to it.	Be sure or let the crew take a examination in the communication languages on board the ship.
128	Dutch					People from other region have other customs, habits and religion	Say what you think in a normal way	
129	Dutch							
130	Dutch				A third party investigation	Heritage, religion, language		Cultural festival, make sure that the people on board eat and drink enough (related to people celebrating Ramadan)
131	Dutch			It was good working together, no problems		A different way of living		
132	Dutch				www.iww.nl	Different thought		
133	Dutch		Christian	With Filipinos you have to be very careful of saying somethings. You have to be kindly and give some compliments, otherwise they will not be happy		You have to accept different culture of different people		Team work, everybody of good operating and doing the best he can be part of the team
134	Dutch		None					
135	Dutch					A style of living		How they listen to orders and how they follow them; always be polite to everyone

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
136	Dutch		None	Filipino's chief mate doesn't listen to captain				Always repeat an order. I strongly recommend more than 2 person of the same culture on board. When you are alone, it is very difficult
137	Dutch			Filipino: too polite. Dutch, Croatian, Polish, Ukrainian, Spanish are Western culture				
138	Dutch		Netherlanos	Difference between food, music, humour, religion humanity		Normal life for you where you come from		
139	Dutch			The crew I worked with all sailed quite sometime on Dutch ships so that very few problems occurred. The problems mostly were in the assertiveness	Shipping inspector	The way you live and live together with other culture		How other cultures work and work together with superior. All on board should speak English. Set good standard for training so that the role played by culture is as small as possible
140	Dutch		None			The standards you raised with		
141	Dutch					The area of a world part where you grown up	try to learn so much as possible	Try to forget your culture, land, lewane. Everybody has to be the same in social aspects
142	Dutch		None	When a crew nationality is main and ony 1 or 2 other, the other crewmembers often have to adopt to the main nationality. Then aspects of the other culture are often mistaken or received not as intended. So a 50/50 or a truly multi cultural crew is much more open to cultural differences				
143	Dutch		Anglican	Eating habits and customs, social standards, living environments completely different in Asian countries		Social standards and living habits along with religions	Giving one personal opinion without being asked for it. Speaking if something out of the ordinary is detected	How to confirm that people really did understood what you have said/explained.
144	Dutch			They say a lot of time "YES" while they mean "NO"				
145	Dutch					Different style of living		
146	Dutch			Spanish bosun and Indonesian AB couldn't work together because of strong hierarchy. Humour between Eastern and Western cultures was only possible if simplified or about common thinks like home, wives and the seaman life				Safety awareness and commitment with the shipping company and crew.
147	Dutch					Art, habit of people, way of living, customs of people, language		Learn English
148	Dutch			People from Filipino are very proud		Different ways of living		
149	Dutch					Way of living		

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
150	Dutch			Good relationship between different cultures, sometime language problems				
151	Dutch		Catholic					
152	Dutch			Sometimes you think somebody is going to do a job but actually they didn't understand it				
153	Dutch					Different in behaviour		
154	Dutch		Atheist		Indonesian crew on board my ship didn't always use the personal protective clothing because they were not fully aware of the use or protection. Mostly they did not see or know the use	The place (country), family and religion you were raised in		Awareness of both sides of culture.
155	Dutch							
156	Dutch			Filipinos have large power distance and little assertiveness, this is difficult when working together and when giving responsibilities	www.maib.org	Culture is not so strong in my country, I think		Knowledge of safeworking regulations and laws of flagstate and IMO
157	Dutch					How you think		
158	Dutch		Christain			The language, the way of life, history, religion	Shake eachother's hands; keep some food for other crew member	
159	Dutch					The different things that people believe and do		
160	Dutch		Atheist	Difficult to understand, especially due to language. Experience tells me especially Asian sailors and mates and engineers don't master the English language. Nonetheless, they have great knowledge and need little communication to let them know what is to be expected from them. Concerning culture related problem, I've seen no problems between me and the crew or among the crew themselves	Dutch department of Transport	A way in which people behave, believe and hope		Try to accept everyone as they are and make the best of it. A good safety and security environment will be enhanced when the crew and officers can get along with each other. In my view the officers play an important role to work with everyone without prejudice and the knowledge in the back of their heads that all aboard a ship have to set aside their difference in order to be able to work as a team and ensure safety
161	Dutch			Every culture has to respect the different habits from people from other cultures		The way you are raised and very often religion takes a big part in it	Keep your mouth closed while eating	
162	Dutch			With power distance crewmembers hide their own problems and also failures of ships systems. Language problems will increase this item.				

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
163	Dutch			There were different cultures but no problems occurred during my time on board. The relations between those cultures were just fine				Communication is very important and training is not useful enough
164	Dutch			Sometime it is difficult for social aspects but most it give no problem, only sometimes with the communication				It is important to communicate with people of other cultures
165	Dutch			Only the sailors were Filipinos, they had some extra holidays (all were Catholic) but there was not much difficulty concerning the culture differences because the bosun was very well assimilated in the Western culture. With the Russian (officer) there was no gap (except language difference)	MAIB reports and other accident report	The different way each group of people do the "little things". Of course sometimes the little things are big to other people		
166	Dutch		Christian	It is better when you know more about the cultures you work with before you come on board ship		It is a manner of live including aspects of behaviours, religion, eating, language, humour		
167	Indian	28	Hindu			Traits and habits, principles set from the environment in which one has been brought up		Flexibility of culture issue
168	Indian	23	Hindu	There is different in culture, food and drinking habits, these responses during social gatherings and sometimes due to difference in training standards	The accidents was due to different training standards and difference in understanding of the job due to which mainly safety of a seafares is at stake	Culture to me means that due to different in the way persons of different nationality or location are brought up		Basically understanding of ethnic different from owns and implementing to improve it.
169	Indian	30	Hindu	Nationality and customs should be borne in mind while interacting with other nationality.	Communication over radio when MSG was passed resulted in near miss due to lack of understanding of nature MSG			
170	Indian	29	Brahmin			Way of living and socialising		
171	Indian	38	Sikm			Way of living and socialising		
172	Indian	24	Hindu	If you've friendly with an Indian, you can pat his back and not with a Romanian. This is just one example.	A bow thruster accident in which there was miscommunication between shore team and bridge team while the thruster was under maintenance	Culture is a minute of custom and upbringing and also the social environment		A study on average tolerance levels of different nationalities would be very helpful
173	Indian	36	Hindu			Contain customs of society and way of living, including religion		

Respondent No.	Nationality	Age	Religion	Q9	Q20	Q21	Q25 (other)	Q32
174	Indian	24	Hindu	Russians hate it when they are told to improve because they take it as an offence and since they are not good in English they are very hard to make them understand		Means the social set up that an individual adhere to		Must communicate if order not understood and not to take repeateance of order as an offence
175	Indian	30	Hindu					
176	Indian	24	Hindu	As because Filipino customs, Bosun is consider senior than 3rd officer which is a basic problem while port watches	For Chinese: I can just say: DONT LEAVE ALONE!; For Filipino: Always repeat twice. For Burmese: Repeat twice	Culture means the way I'm brought up in my society. The kind of mannerism I have. But should not be much influenced by my religion		Specially for Filipinos: They should know that a senior is a senior irrespective of his age. And one should follow him till the time he thinks that the senior is going to but his life in danger.
177	Indian	26	Muslim		A passenger ship accident from MTI's (SCI) handout of some courseware (PSSR or Passenger Ship Fam)	Culture is how a person has been brought up. A person decides from right/ wrong with what is brought in front of him		Tone down ego of everyone
178	Indian	25	Hindu		Heard about the Chief officer giving order to open the V/v crew member of another nationality confirming to close the V/v	Culture is a way of living, of relating to other persons, interacting with other persons, having certain beliefs		
179	Indian	22	Hindu	Open minded, supportive and frank, NON POLITICAL		Way of a person's nature, acts by which a differentiation standard is formed	Hard working and result oriented	
180	Indian	28	Hindu			Culture means living lifestyle and family values		Should try to be non political and peaceful
181	Indian	24	Hindu					
182	Indian	23	Hindu	Pakistanis must pray sometimes a day, no matter what the emergency, no cultural sensitivity. Chinese can't communicate at all follow orders	Asked Chinese cadet to throttle the vacuum conditioner O/B v/v. to raise vacuum, he closed the v/v. 2-3 hours delay in discharging cargo at Kanola (Reliance port)	Social well being and taking cane of each other		Pakistanis must understand that work is workship no matter what.
183	Indian	37	Hindu	Filipinos crew is very hard working if you respect their feelings and appreciate their jobs	Merchant marine bulletin/ Radio news	Society in which he/ she was born and brought up		All onboard must be briefed about sailing prior at least one day.