2013 International Conference
Proudly Empowering Women in Maritime

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2013 International Conference Proudly Empowering Women in Maritime

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“WOMEN ON BOARD AT SPANISH CUSTOMS SURVEILLANCE SERVICE”
ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF WOMEN ON BOARD

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ABSTRACT

A lot of efforts are being made these days both at national and international level in order to promote the presence of women in the maritime sector. Although a lot of women have had the chance to become maritime professionals, their major challenge is the same it was years ago, that is to combine work and family, especially regarding children care.

It might seem like a classic story, but the fact is, and we think it will continue being this way, regardless of their professional abilities and capacities, their educational backgrounds and the increasing awareness developed in the sector, that the labor conditions inherent to work at sea force them, either in the private or public sector, to leave their positions on board looking for work schedules compatible with family, no matter if, consciously or unconsciously, it had meant to be relegated to lower work responsibilities.

Just to illustrate, we’ll refer the present situation regarding women acting as Skippers and Captains onboard the cutters of the Maritime Branch of Spanish Customs Surveillance Service, a public service under the Spanish Tax Agency. The main purpose of this public institution is to investigate, prosecute and restrain smuggling. In the last ten years, only 19 out of the 132 official who entered this body were women, who only represent 14 per cent of the workforce. If we add up the fact that this job is dangerous and has an exigent time schedule with nightly patrols at sea, it explains that in the existing 25 naval bases, only 13 of those women keep sailing these days, and within this number 4 of them have
incorporated in the last two years, which means they’ve been performing their
tasks for a relatively short period of time.
All the above mentioned intend to reveal the fact that the main hindrance they
have to face is not linked to the concepts of training or increasing awareness, but
it’s determined by the very nature of being a woman and nothing can be done to
solve this issue.

KEYWORDS: women on board, customs surveillance service.

COMMUNICATION.

The ongoing increase of women presence in the maritime industry has prompted that a
number of organizations, both international and national, implement policies concerning
the impulse and consolidation of female presence on that environment.
IMO started its path on this field in 1988 by publishing the book *Strategy for women
integration on maritime industry*, becoming ever since 1990 a permanent point in the
agenda of the Technical Cooperation Committee.
The Organization approach to gender programs between 1988 and 2012 was developed
in two phases: the first one focused on setting up formal institutional structures and
capacity creation, and a second one on which was addressed the financing of this
capacity and the promotion of regional cooperation (1997-2012).
The strategy result has been captured by the following points:

1. Setting up political and institutional frames, including the approval of
   consecutive strategies for the progress of women in the maritime industry, as
   well as the adoption of formal resolutions on issues such as maritime training
   and the promotion of job opportunities for women in such environment.
2. Collaboration with the United Nations network for gender issues and the
   participation on governmental forums.
3. Raising awareness, including training at workplace based on personalized case
   studies and holding awareness campaigns in regions of Central America, Latin
   America and Africa.
4. Implementation of recommendations deriving from the assessment of 2001
   results made by the government of Norway as donor of the program.
5. Promotion of regional cooperation by establishing networks in regions of Africa
   and Pacific islands.
6. Support for the creation of national capacity through a scholarship program for women.

7. Nevertheless, apart from the efforts made, the major challenge women has to face in this industry, and particularly those who make their jobs on board, is to juggle their family life, specially children, and career.

Just to explain such a reflection, we are going to consider the case of professionals of the Executive Branch on Spanish Vigilancia Aduanera, acting as female captains and skippers onboard Customs patrol boats.

Customs Alertness (Vigilancia Aduanera) is a public organization within the Spanish Tax Agency through the Customs and Excise Department. Among its many functions it must be highlighted the investigation, prosecution and repression of smuggling, specially trafficking on toxic drugs, and psychotropic substances by sea.

In order to achieve this goal, this maritime service has 25 bases and a fleet of 44 boats: 2 special operations vessels for actions outside territorial waters; 18 high sea patrol boats and 24 medium size and high speed boats. The navigations are usually coastal, not beyond the territorial sea, that is, not beyond the 12-mile off-shore line, although depending on the characteristics of the action it can be extended to 24 miles (contiguous zone). The duration of patrols is usually in the range between 8 to 12 hours.

To get the position of Head of Boat (Skipper) you need to pass an opposition corresponding to an A2 group of the Spanish administration. It is required to be either in possession of a Bachelor’s degree in Maritime Navigation or a Degree in Nautical Studies and Maritime Transport. Once you’ve passed the opposition you have to pass a three-month course at the Fiscal Studies School in Madrid to get to a further three-month practice trial period onboard different patrol ships.

The position of captain or skipper implies the responsibilities of navigation (usually nightly patrols), of the performance of officers during interventions and the coordination of operations. That’s why it can be stated that the peculiarities of work at the Maritime Service of Vigilancia Aduanera are responsibility, danger and nightly hours. This combination has had an impact on the presence of women onboard.
Let’s go on analyzing the incorporation of female captains and skippers in the last ten years (2003-2013):

**Table 1. Incorporation of officials per year.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>OFFICIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>NO CALLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>NO CALLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>NO CALLS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A.E.A.T Human Resources database.

**Table 2. Breakdown of female number by year:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>FEMALE CAPTAINS</th>
<th>FEMALE ENGINEERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>NO CALL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>NO CALL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Current distribution by regions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>J. DE EMBACACION POR COMUNIDADES AUTONOMAS</th>
<th>Nº TOTAL JEFAS DE EMBARCACION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANDALUCIA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALICANTE</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASTURIAS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARCELONA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILLES BALEARS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURCIA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALAMAS DE GRAN CANARIA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Current distribution of female skippers by naval bases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>J. DE EMBACACION POR BASES MARITMAS</th>
<th>Nº TOTAL JEFAS DE EMBARCACION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D.E. BALEARES</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.E. BARCELONA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.E. LAS PALAMAS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.E. SEDE ALICANTE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.E. SEDE CADIZ</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.E. SEDE CARTAGENA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSIONS:
As already stated, the job onboard the boats of the maritime service of Vigilancia Aduanera is a long way from that of merchant marine, either related to the type of navigation or relating to the work system. It shows however, several peculiarities like dangers and nightly schedules that make women integration few and far between compared to the access to other jobs of responsibility within the Public Administration. It should be pointed out that is not so the concept of danger that has highly influenced the presence of women onboard, but the fact of nightly schedules, since those timetables make extremely difficult to get profession and family compatible, specially children care.
As a result, from the ten years analyzed, just 19 out of 132 officials who entered the service were women, what only represents 14 per cent of the incoming workforce. From the sixteen female skippers, just 13 of them keep on sailing, currently. The distribution is a round 7 Autonomous Regions, with presence in 11 Maritime Bases out of the 25 existing all around the Spanish coast.
It should be pointed out that, differently from other Public Bodies, Vigilancia Aduanera doesn’t have alternative jobs on shore to be done by those officers who cannot perform their functions onboard on special situations such as common and work-related illnesses, pregnancy, etc. That’s why in most cases to quit sailing is a tough challenge in which age becomes a great ally; interesting to remark that among the female officials currently working onboard, 4 of them are newly enrolled.
The present study highlights that the main obstacle professional women in the public sector at sea must face is not those linked to the capacity or awareness, but those determined by the very own nature of women and what it entails.

REFERENCES:

INTEGRATING INTO SHIPBOARD LIFE, WHILE SAFEGUARDING THE OWN IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

When we analyze sociologically the merchant ship from the perspective of the Total Institution, one aspect to consider is the special situation of the "newcomer" that needs to be integrated into the life on board and at the same time needs to preserve the own identity. The newcomer will have to approach the new group with the final intention to become part of it. He or she will try to adopt the rules and traditions, and by doing so she or he will often let in second term the safeguard of her or his own identity.

On the other hand we all learn to perform a specific role according to the models we had. These models teach us how to play the role to be played on board and will be very important in the integrations’ process. What happens when the newcomer is a woman, considering the merchant ship a sociological field, traditionally dominated by men? This woman will face the challenge of making its own place among colleagues in a group of men. To achieve it she will need strategies that help her to show that she can be just one more among men, while being a woman. This paper will analyze the special situation of a woman in a male dominated environment, looking to be fully integrated as equals while preserving her feminine identity.

KEYWORDS: seafaring women, newcomer, shipboard life, group, integration, safeguard of identity

INTRODUCTION:

We may describe the merchant ship as a Total Institution. A total institution can be defined as a place of residence and work in which a large number of individuals, all in the same situation and isolated from society for a significant period of time, share in their confinement a formally administered daily
routine. A merchant ship is indeed a place of residence and work, where a variable number of crew members are confined and isolated for a certain period of time. Both work and life routine is administrated by a present authority.

A merchant ship is governed by a set of rules, customs and traditions. All activities are rigidly regulated according to ship’s schedules. The crew has to serve the needs of the institution; to achieve it, there will be many restrictions, which limit privacy.

Any man or woman, joining a ship has therefore to adapt from a shore-based, larger culture to a ship-based, “micro” culture.

On the other hand, at any time and in any place aboard the ship, the role of the crew member conditions his or her relationship with others. There is a strong identification of the individuals with their role, so that very often seafarers call each other by rank, more than by their own names.

**THE NEWCOMER**

The newcomer on board a ship arrives to a closed group under a hierarchical system, ruled by traditions and norms. Some of them will be similar in every ship in any country; some will be more specific of a certain company and of certain traffic.

There can be also some differences depending of the nationality of the crew, on board those ships were there is one dominant nationality.

The newcomer needs to become as soon as possible a fully integrated member of this group. He or she has to learn the norms and traditions and also to adopt some of the typical attitudes regarding the maritime profession.
For example, it is usually said on board ships that seafaring is the worst profession in the world. So, a newcomer, even if he or she is convinced that it is a wonderful job, will not dare to express his or her feelings open.

The newcomer has either no “history” in the new group, especially if it is the first time he or she embarks. But he or she will quickly learn the histories they heard from other colleagues and will try to show that he or she is aware about them.

The newcomer has to give preference to the integration to group, before the preservation of the own identity.

A FEMALE NEWCOMER

The ship is a men’s world, especially if we consider a cargo ship.

Some crew doesn’t care much about their personal aspect. During meals they speak often about women, in some cabins and offices we may find pictures of naked girls and sometimes the crew watches porno films.

What is the reaction on board, when a woman embarks?

A female newcomer, especially if she is the only one of her gender, she will be observed. Many eyes will look at the only woman, but this woman will become just a crew member: a cadet, an officer…. She just aspires to be a colleague.

Interviewed women cadets said that there were on board two mainly reactions:

Rejection or paternalism.

As example of rejection I can mention what a female cadet explained to me: “Captain said after dinner: now women should to go to the kitchen and wash dishes.
As example of paternalism, another female cadet explained: “We were anchored. Somebody had to go down a rope ladder to see the drafts. Usually, this should be done by the cadet on duty. When Captain new that I should do it, he told the 1st. officer to send a male cadet, because it was too dangerous for a lady.”

There were of course also some nuances: young officers did accept much better seafaring women as colleagues then older officers.

In any case, a seafaring woman on board a cargo ship will be the focus of the eyes. Women can be also easily subjected to some harassment, like offensive expressions, persecution, looks, brushing against and touching. Some girls have explained that some underwear pieces disappeared.

If a woman is involved in some affair, or if two men on board compete for a woman, she will be usually in the worst position and maybe she will be forced to disembark.

What is the most common reaction?

To look as far as possible like men.

*Women in male-dominated occupations need to forget about their female qualities in order to assimilate into a man’s world. Making themselves as invisible as possible is the key issue for many women when entering a male profession* (Cockburn, 1991).

No makeup, no skirt, short hair, to act like men. The goal of a seafaring woman: To be accepted as one more in the crew. To be seen like a rank, aside of her gender.

However, by doing this, she has to renounce in some way to her identity, not only like new embarked men have to do, to integrate as soon as possible in the group, but also to be seen the same as a male crew.
How to safeguard the own identity?
One of the ways a male crew has to develop his own identity is through friendship, in
smaller circle, where he can explain in confidence his concerns, his feelings. In each
basic group we can find additionally smaller groups where people are not just a role, but
a private person.

Here we find another difficulty for a female in a men dominated group.

On board ships there is much gossip and if a girl establishes a closer relationship with
some colleague, they will immediately draw malicious conclusions. There have been
rumors that have forced women to land.

Furthermore, if a girl establishes a closer relationship with a male colleague, just
because she needs a friend, it can happen that the man interprets that she looks for
something else.

What to do?

Momoko Kitada on her doctoral thesis “Women Seafarers and their Identities” (Cardiff
University, 2010) considers that, despite the fact that the shifting patterns of women
seafarers’ identity management strategies vary from woman to woman, an
overwhelming majority of them tend to start with strategies designed to obscure
femininity, for example, strategies to change their appearance and behavior
(“negotiators”). Gradually these strategies seem to evolve over time, so that some
women slowly adopted ways of behaving which were more associated with a masculine
identity (as “constructors”). Some women attempted to preserve some elements of their
feminine identity whilst in private, or off duty (“maintainers”), and some eventually
came to redefine their gender identities to suit their own individual personalities and
feelings and felt to an extent free from the norms of gender (“reproducers”).
Some women in Marshall’s study (Marshall, J. 1984) used a ‘softer’ technique in their relationships; some played a role of a good listener; or others enjoyed their flexibility of choosing feminine or masculine strategies. While hiding femininity is one way of managing women seafarers’ identities, making use of femininity is another choice for surviving in the male-dominated environment.

Return to land:

All seafarers, when coming back home, after disembarking, need some adaptation process from the ship based micro cultures to the shoe based larger culture.

In the case of women this also means to change from a “less feminine attitude” to a social “feminine way” of behavior.

After acting and dressing in an asexually way during some weeks or months, some of these women may keep it in some way after disembarking.

Finally, some positive reactions are also reported: When a woman seafarer is on board, the language of male colleagues tended to be more polite and they may dress more neatly and pay more attention to personal hygiene.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

This paper is focused on seafaring women on board cargo ships. If we take in account the small number of seafaring women, about one or two percent of the total work force of seafarers (Belcher et al., 2003), and that most of them are employed on board
passenger ships, it is clear that if we find a female seafarer on a cargo ship, in most of the cases she will be the only of her gender and that to be as far as possible.

To feel integrated on board, women will need some strategies.

In most of the cases the strategy will be to obscure femininity and to adopt some masculine behavior.

However, there are some ways to be seen professionally like a man, but at the same time exercising a femininity. To develop some feminine characteristics, like “good listener” or exercising a special savoir faire that helps to show a good professionalism, can be helpful tools. The big challenge will be to exploit the feminine qualities that help better professional development. This should open new research ways and demands a special effort and ability.

In any case, it would be desirable to have more women on board, whenever this is possible. If the number of female seafarers is increasing, the culture will also change. On the other hand it is evident that younger people are more used to see people of other gender like a colleague.

REFERENCES


AN OVERVIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM
DEVELOPMENT GOAL ON GENDER EQUALITY AND
EMPOWER OF WOMEN (IN THE MARITIME SECTOR)

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ABSTRACT

Policies to develop female human resources and to strengthen the role of women in society are not new in the United Nations (UN) agenda. In the last years the UN has taken meaningful steps towards the acceleration of the achievement of its organizational goals on "gender equality and the empowerment of women" through the creation of UN WOMEN in 2010, the preparation of new proposals and plans to be included in the UN post 2015 agenda are underway.

The promotion of gender equality and the empowering of women has also been a goal of most UN specialized agencies, within each one’s particular scope of competencies. For example, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) created the Strategy on the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector as a comprehensive policy to expand women’s capabilities in the maritime sector. It is aimed at fostering the presence of women in developing countries’ workforces through education, training and knowledge transfer.

On the same token, the World Maritime University (WMU) has developed policies towards increasing the number women enrolled in its Masters and PhD programs, hoping to improve their chances of reaching decision-making positions in governments and the private sector throughout their careers. WMU is gradually raising the number of female faculty employees, trying to upgrade its hiring policies towards a more gender-balanced standard thus offering positive role models to its students and its faculty personnel.

The main idea of this paper is to assess the policies that have been developed and implemented on gender equality and the empowerment of women through the UN System Specialized Agencies in the maritime sector; evaluating their impact, and highlighting their achievements and challenges.

KEYWORDS: gender equality – empowering of women – development goal – maritime sector
INTRODUCTION

Policies to develop female human resources and to strengthen the role of women in society are not new in the United Nations (UN) agenda. In the last years the UN has taken meaningful steps towards the acceleration of the achievement of its organizational goals on "gender equality and the empowerment of women" through the creation of UN WOMEN in 2010, the preparation of new proposals and plans to be included in the UN post 2015 agenda are underway.

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I. United Nations Millennium Development Goals

In September 2000 the heads of 140 States gathered at the UN Headquarters in New York to adopt the UN Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets (due by 2015) that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (UN Millennium Declaration, 2000).
There are eight MDGs, aimed at encouraging development by improving social and economic conditions in the world’s poorest countries. They are: (1) Eradicate poverty and hunger; (2) Achieve universal primary education; (3) Promote gender equality and empower women; (4) Reduce child mortality; (5) Improve maternal health; (6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (7) Ensure environmental sustainability and; (8) Develop a global partnership for development.

Each goal has specific targets and indicators. The targets are, in theory, 'quantifiable' and the indicators are designed to help measure progress towards the achievement of the targets. There are currently 21 targets and 60 indicators.

MDGs are not new in the UN, they derive from earlier international development goals of the Organization. The foundations can be traced back to a series of UN-led conferences in the 1990s (the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women) focusing on children, nutrition, human rights, and women, among other issues.

With the onset of the new millennium, the UN Secretary General (SG) saw the opportunity to reengage governments in the UN development agenda. This led to a report titled, *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century*, which identified the development priorities of the UN for the next century. This set the path for the upcoming Millennium Summit that finally led to the Millennium Declaration. A year later, the UN-Secretariat published the Eight Millennium Development Goals (Peeters, 2012).

**A. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women (MDG3)**

The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is the third MDG. This goal has one target, which is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015. The indicators chosen for this goal are four: (1) The ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; (2) The ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old; (3) The share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector, and; (4) The proportion of seats held by women in national parliament. In essence, these indicators try to measure women's equal access to education, work, health care and decision-making positions.
MDG3’s origins can be found in UN's earliest days. During its first three decades, UN's work on behalf of women focused primarily on the codification of women’s rights, and the gathering of data on the status of women around the world (Harrison, 1989). The struggle for gender equality entered a second phase in its evolution with the convening of world conferences on women, where the UN concentrated on developing strategies and plans for the advancement of women (DAW, 2000).

The Fourth Conference on Women, which took place in Beijing, opened a new chapter in the fight for the advancement of women. The fundamental transformation brought about by the Conference was the conceptual shifting from "women" to "gender", with the recognition that society's structures and the relationships between men and women had to be reevaluated to fully empower women to take their place as equal partners with men in all aspects of life.

The Conference ended up adopting the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BD PfA), which states that gender equality is not only a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for development and peace, but also instrumental in the achievement of all other development objectives. It is considered as a condition for people-centred sustainable development. (UN BDPfA, 1995)

The UN has also developed a human rights treaty on gender equality. The Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and is known as the international bill of women’s rights. It describes the basis for understanding equality between women and men through ensuring women’s equal access to and equal opportunities in political and public life as well as in education, health and employment. The significance of this convention lies in the first and foremost awareness of the violation of women's human rights. (UN CEDAW, 1979)

**B. Progress towards the achievement of MDG**

Progress has been uneven in the accomplishment of MDGs. Since 2005, the UN Secretariat started issuing its annual *Millennium Development Goals Report* and last year's issue stated that some important targets were met ahead of their deadlines. Among others, the reduction of extreme poverty by half has been achieved. The same applies to the target of halving the proportion of people without access to improved sources of drinking water and the upgrading of the living conditions of 200 million slum
dwellers. There has been progress in reducing both child and maternal mortality rates and primary school enrolment of girls equalled that of boys. While gender equality has been reached mostly at the primary education level, parity at the secondary and tertiary education remains a challenge in some regions of the world. It is also worth highlighting the SG's statement about how the gender equality goal remains unfulfilled, with broad negative consequences, given the fact that achieving all other goals depends highly on women's empowerment and gender equality (UN Millennium Development Goals Report, 2012).

Efforts to achieve an intergovernmental consensus regarding the post-2015 development agenda are taking place (UNGA, 2012). According to UN Assistant SG, the post 2015 development framework should capture the three interconnected objectives: economic development, social inclusion and environmental sustainability, as highlighted at the 2012 Rio + 20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNDP, 2013).

II. The International Maritime Organization

The integration of women into all levels of political, economical and social development has become a major objective for the UN System over the past 35 years. During the so called United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) many specialized agencies of the UN sought to implement programmes to assure the advancement of women and to promote gender equality (Tansey, 2000). This mandate was reinforced at the Beijing Conference, where the Platform for Action called all Specialized Agencies and other organizations of the UN System to set out specific actions to meet the global priorities identified in the PfA.

A. IMO Women in Development Programme

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) created its own strategy for the integration of women into the maritime sector in 1988 and a year later began implementing IMO’s Women in Development Programme. The aim of this programme was to make the concept of women’s advancement an integral part of IMO’s Technical Co-operation Programme, which assisted the strengthening of national and regional maritime capacity building through a variety of maritime related-projects (Tansey, 2000).

The WID Programme’s main objectives were: to integrate women into mainstream maritime activities; to improve women’s access to maritime training and technology; to
increase the percentage of women at the senior management level within the maritime sector; and to promote women’s economic self-reliance, including access to employment (IMO, 2005).

Its main activities were the implementation of fellowship programmes for women in the maritime sector, sensitization workshops to promote gender awareness in the maritime sector, and the fostering of regional co-operation and partnerships. Other activities that took place were in-house training for IMO technical personnel involved at the planning stages of co-operation projects, in-house workshops on gender-planning methodology and co-operation with other UN agencies on gender balance issues (Tansey 2000).

The WID programme integrated women into IMO’s governing bodies and into technical co-operation planning structures. As a result of the strategic planning framework, there was an increased percentage of women students enrolled at some of IMO’s maritime training institutions. WMU can be cited as an example of the Programme’s success.

**B. MDG3: Strengthening Maritime Resource Development**

The MDG3: Strengthening Maritime Resource Development is IMO’s new Programme for integrating women into the maritime sector. The role of the MDG3 can be described as a driver of the Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme in the Organization. It represents the symbiosis between MDG 3’s objectives and those technical co-operation activities which reinforce capacity-building in the maritime sector as a whole.

One of the outcomes of this approach is the identification and selection of women, by their respective authorities, for career development opportunities in maritime administrations, ports and maritime training institutes. The main objective is to facilitate access to high-level technical training for maritime official women. It would be difficult to assess its impact so far due to its recent creation (IMO, 2013).

**III. World Maritime University**

The World Maritime University (WMU) has been working hard to bring about sustained change in gender imbalance. Among the policies implemented to reach those goals are: the stimulation of the participation of female students in its programmes, the improvement of their faculty composition in terms of gender balance, and the organization of conferences, workshops and research projects on gender equality issues.

**A. Increasing Women’s Enrolment**
Since 1996, WMU has adopted a proactive role in increasing the number of women in its Masters and PhD programmes, which has helped to achieve a more balanced composition of the student body (Jones, 2008).

Several factors must be taken into consideration in order to increase the number of women enrolled at WMU’s programmes. Rather than lowering academic standards for female admission, more funds must be made available for them. In this regard, donors are encouraged to allocate funds to support female students, and by the same token WMU has funded and increasing number of fellowships for qualified female students. Likewise, governments and private employers are encouraged to nominate and support qualified women to pursue studies at WMU (Jones, 2008).

Table 1: Enrolment by Gender and Year of Admission – (Malmö Campus)

The success of WMU’s enrolment can be judged by the increase of female population in the Malmö Campus. At the start of enrolment in 1983, there were only two females out of 71 total students, and the percentage of women admitted at WMU was 2.8 %.

In the late 1990s, however, a significant increase can be observed, for example, 11.8 % of female student representation in 1997 was recorded and it rose up to 26.2 % in 2000. This was the result of the donors’ strategic focus on encouraging women to enrol at WMU. The peak of female enrolment at WMU was in 2007 when there were 30 females out of 103 total students, at 29.1 %.

By increasing the number of women enrolled in its programmes by more than 10 times from 2.8 to 29.1 % in WMU’s 30 years history, the University has made a contribution
towards providing opportunities to educate a number of highly qualified women who are serving the maritime sector worldwide.

B. Hiring Gender Balance

The University was aware of the fact that in order to reach a gender-balanced target of professional women staff, an increase in the number of women among its faculty was necessary. This policy was reflected in WMU’s Strategic Vision Plan 2010-2015, where WMU expressed its determination to improve its faculty’s gender balance. (WMU, 2011)

In 2011 WMU hired the first female assistant professor and two years later, the number has increased to two. This is a milestone event for gender balance in the maritime training sector, since it portrays women as role models for students, showing everyone that women, too, can become professors in this professional field.

Table 2 shows the ratios of gender balance by professional positions at WMU. The higher the positions become, the lower the percentages of represented women. This clearly indicates the existence of a glass-ceiling inside the world-leading maritime university and such tendencies can be observed in other maritime universities in the world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>10 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>7 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Hiring by Gender in 2013 (Malmö Campus)

C. Organization of Conferences, Workshop and Research Projects

The University has been engaged in the organization of conferences and workshops on the subject. In 2008, WMU hosted the International Conference for Empowering Professional Women, highlighting the success of WMU-female graduates across the global maritime industry.

In 2014 the University will host its second international conference called Maritime Women: Global Leadership. The call of the conference is for strong leadership and mentoring: the recognition and sharing of ‘best practices’ and the encouragement and development of new initiatives, not only to promote employment opportunities, but also to strengthen women’s roles once they are recruited.

Finally, the WMU faculty has been carrying out research activities on gender balance and has participated in international conferences delivering speeches and presenting papers. (Kitada, 2012; 2013a; 2013b)

CONCLUSIONS

The UN has been engaged in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women for several decades and its role has been emphasized by its inclusion as the
Third Millennium Development Goal. Even though progress in achieving some of the MDGs, equal access by women to education, work and decision-making positions still remains a challenge across the globe.

Strategies and policies have been developed and implemented throughout the entire United Nations System to promote this goal. In the maritime sector, the IMO’s Women in Development Programme significantly increased women participation in capacity building programmes, therefore opening working opportunities in governments and industries, which has benefitted the entire maritime community. Effects of this Programme can be seen in WMU’s data for female student enrolment over the last 30 years and in WMU’s awareness of the need for gender balance in professional hires.

Achieving parity in education at all levels remains one of the most important factors towards equal opportunity for men and women in the social, political and economical sectors of the today’s world and efforts in this direction must be continued and improved, keeping in mind that global development depends enormously on the advancement of women in society.

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THE ROLE OF SPANISH WOMEN IN THE MERCHANT MARINE IN XXI CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

On an international level only between 1 and 2 % of the seafarers are women, and only 7 % of them are employed in command positions, opposite to 42 % of men who realize this type of management jobs. In Spain, in spite of the fact that women have access to maritime studies for just three decades, their participation in the students group exceeds 20 %, clearly over the international average. Unfortunately nowadays women of maritime sector are in a position of disadvantage compared to men of this sector in relation to the access to the labor market. Also they have to confront more unfavorable situations in the performance and maintenance of their jobs on board due to the traditionally masculine attribution of this type of activity. Under these circumstances the promotion of these women up to command positions on board is always slow and complicated. It may prevent a high percentage of them from reaching their initial professional goals.

In the present article the motivations of women to choose a maritime career, their professional expectations, and the reasons why these women do not obtain the same level of labor success as their male coworkers are analyzed. Lastly we will propose some measures that could help to change this situation, which allow to improve the women's recruitment and retention to work on board, to rise their promotion possibilities and, in the end, to offer them an access to the labor market on equal terms.

Key words: labor market, career planning, mentoring, glass ceiling
INTRODUCTION

According to a study published by the International Labour Organization, only between 1 and 2% of more than one million worldwide seafarers are women (Zhao et al., 2003). Regarding the distribution of women working in shipping, most of them belong to the crew of passenger ships. According to the aforementioned research, 94% of women seafarers work on board these ships, mostly as waitresses, cleaners and cabin service, while only 6% work on board cargo ships. On the other hand, only 7% of women held positions of marine officers. Both data clearly reflect the horizontal and vertical segregation of women in this field.

Women difficulties to gain access to the maritime labor market, in which they are clearly under-represented, are shown in the results of several studies that reflect the shipping companies’ point of view. In this sense, although many shipping companies with experience in the employment of women are very positive about their job performance, many other companies do not seem to have developed specific policies or regulations with respect to women employment and working conditions (Business Times, 2003), what is more, employment of women on board is subjected to a number of myths and misconceptions about women in the maritime sector, such as the misconception of what is considered a suitable work for men and women based only on gender (Thomas, 2003).

Regarding the recruitment of women seafarers in Spain, we have to note that although there are in the Spanish Merchant Marine women officers for over 30 years, their presence on board remains minimal, and their promotion to senior levels of command is always slow and complicated. We must not forget either that Spanish women did not enter to maritime studies until the early 80’s, coinciding with the adoption of the Spanish Constitution Act.

With regard to the opportunity of women’s access to maritime studies there is no intrinsic reason why women cannot participate and benefit from employment in the maritime industry, however this industry is traditionally considered as masculine, in fact, many maritime training institutions spread all over the world, only allow men or a very limited number of women among their students (Tansey, 2000; Popescu and
Varsami, 2010). Fortunately this is not the case in Spain, where women’s access to maritime studies is not limited in any way. Other countries like China and India have changed their recruitment policies in order to increase the number of female students (Zhao et al., 2003).

Moreover women who gain admission to maritime studies have to overcome, in the performance of their professional career, a series of gender related barriers, which greatly impede them from gaining access to the labor market and to the command positions on board (de la Campa, Bouza and Rodríguez, 2010). This situation is specifically hard to marine engineering women.

Also research on the socio-labor situation of women seafarers is very limited, both worldwide as on the national level. Worldwide we can highlight the studies in this field of Zhao et al. (2003), Thomas (2003), Chin (2008), Kitada (2009 and 2010) and Bigot et al. (2010). The studies of Jong and Ye (2009) and Aryeetey (2012) analyze the role of women in countries where their participation is this sector is almost non-existent, such as Taiwan and Ghana. Also the article of Edodo-Emore (2012) analyses the integration of women in the maritime industry in Africa, and the role of WISTA (Women in Shipping and Trading Association) in such process. In addition the review of articles realized by Fotinopoulo (2010) treats several labor and social security aspects of women seafarers in Spain and France. On the Spanish national level we emphasize the study of De La Campa, Bouza and Rodríguez (2009a) centered on questions relating to gender discrimination, sexual and moral harassment in the workplace, the article of De la Campa et al. (2010) on the promotion of the incorporation of women in this sector, and the study of Fotinopoulo (2012) on pregnancy detection and health care of women seafarers.

In the same way few studies focus on matters such as the motivations of women who follow nautical studies, the difficulties arisen from the entrance conditions to such studies, their experiences as students within a strongly masculine setting, and their career expectations. Among the scarce publications on this field we can emphasize the article of Brickman (2008) on the women seafarers training in The United States, the papers of Ibáñez and Díaz (2010) and Ibáñez et al. (2012) on the access of women to the nautical studies in the Basque Country, and the articles of De la Campa, Bouza and Rodriguez (2009b) and De la Campa et al. (2012) on the experiences of women in the
nautical studies of University of A Coruña and on the differences of motivations and expectations between women and men who follow these studies. Udosen (2008) analyzes the adaptability problems of women who follow nautical studies in Nigeria, and the consequences of their low representation in the classrooms, while Elsaeed and Abdelgalil (2008) deal with the participation of women in maritime education and training in Egypt and the efforts to improve the status of women seafarers in this country. Also Buckley (2008) performed a research to determine the leading style differences between men and women cadets of the California Maritime Academy, concluding that there are not statistically significant differences in the command style depending on the gender.

In the present article the motivations of women to choose a maritime career, their professional expectations, and the reasons why these women do not obtain the same level of labor success as their male coworkers are analyzed. Lastly we will propose some measures that could help to change this situation, which allow to improve women's recruitment and retention on board, to rise their promotion possibilities and, in the end, to offer them an access to the labor market on equal terms.

WOMEN IN NAUTICAL STUDIES IN SPAIN: THE UNIVERSITY OF A CORUÑA CASE.

Nautical studies in Spain are traditionally masculine; in fact there is no evidence of any female student in these studies before the approval of the current Spanish Constitution in 1978.

In Galicia, particularly, the first woman registered in the Higher Technical University College of Nautical Science and Marine Engineering (HTUCNSME) of A Coruña dates from the year 1979-1980.

Since then, the presence of the woman in these studies, though faintly in the first years, has been increasing progressively, registering historical peaks of more than 30 female students registered in the first course during 1995-1996 and 1996-1997 years, to become stable in the last years with an average register of 10 female students per year. However though women students’ average in the University of A Coruña exceeds 50%, the group of women who follow nautical studies in this university is about 20%,
reinforcing the status of these studies as strongly masculinized ones. In addition we have to highlight the alarming decrease in the demand of this type of studies suffered in the last 30 years as well as the extremely low percentage of graduates that reach the maximum professional qualifications.

With relation to this point, Figures 1 and 2 show a comparison between the access of men and women to command positions on board. The data shown belong to the men and women who have studied in the specialties of Marine Engineering and Nautical Sciences in the HTUCNSME of University of A Coruña between the years 2002 and 2009. In the marine engineering students’ case, though 34 % of men reached the Chief Engineer qualification, only 18 % of women reached such a professional qualification. In the nautical sciences students’ case, 69 % of men reached the Captain qualification, whereas only 12 % of women reached it.

According to the information offered by the Occupational Observatory of University of A Coruña (Freire, 2013) there does not seem to exist a reason based on the competences that men and women acquire during the development of their studies to explain these differences to join and remain in the labor market on board, since according to the above mentioned information men and women acquire very similar generic labor competences. The data also show that women stand out in the aptitude to adapt to new situations, the aptitude to generate new ideas and the foreign languages managing.

All that leads us to state that gender related barriers really exist and such barriers prevent women from reaching command positions on board under the same conditions than men. Therefore it is necessary to enquire which are the motivations and
professional expectations of these women at the moment of choosing a maritime career, which are the life and working conditions on board, which are these barriers that prevent or impede the access of women to the maritime labor market and if there are or could be developed strategies that facilitate, favor and make this activity more attractive for women.

In addition, this imbalance between the number of women who follow these type of studies and those who finally acquire qualifications and experience on board means a double-faced waste of talent: on the one hand the economic one derived from training high degree female graduates with low possibilities of access to the labor market; on the other hand the professional projection one, since these female graduates that have difficulties in their access to the on board labor market will not be able to gain the professional experience that will qualify them to occupy top-level command and management positions ashore inside the maritime sector, such as Popescu and Varsami (2010: 184) indicate: “The relevance of sea experience for many shore-based jobs means the resource of women with appropriate skills is limited and will continue to act as a long-term constraint on the representation of women in the maritime sector as a whole”.

In this way and taking into account the aims previously mentioned, we will use diverse statistical studies on these questions in order to obtain clear information on:

1.-The motivations of the women to follow nautical studies, as well as the comparison of these reasons with their male classmates ones.
2.-Women labor expectations in the short and long term, also compared with those of their male classmates.
3.-The women preferences on the labor market, that is to say the most important job characteristics to work in a particular shipping company.
4.-The professional experiences of women who have finished their studies and have joined to the labor market.

Once analyzed this information we will obtain which are the main obstacles that impede women to join to and remain in the maritime labor market.
**Women motivations to follow maritime studies.**

First of all it is necessary to consider if men and women who choose to follow nautical studies have the same prior degree of knowledge on the qualifications and the profession, if they have identical sources of information and if the choice of these studies was their first option.

The analysis of several studies and researches published in this field shows us that though men and women who choose the nautical studies depart from a similar initial lack of knowledge about the qualifications and the profession, their sources of information are lightly different, since men receive more information on the part of their relatives and friends whereas women stand out in using the self-information through Internet. The statistical information obtained by the Occupational Observatory of the University of A Coruña (Freire, 2013) contributes to reinforce these statements showing that familiar influence is very important in men’s decision to choose maritime qualifications, while this is not women case.

Also the percentage of men who chose these studies as their first option is higher than the percentage of women whose vocation is linked to maritime studies, lightly in the section of nautical sciences with a difference of 13 percentage units, but notably in marine engineering specialty, where the difference is 29 percentage units.

The liking for the sea and for sailing, the interest in the subjects and the professional opportunities are the common reasons that motivated women to follow nautical studies. Particularly special reference is done to the wide career opportunities and the "peculiarity" of the profession, that is to say, the possibility of being employed at a profession different from the “usual ones” for women, and to the variety of work options related to the profession, on board and ashore. Though men stand out in all the motivations related to the sea and to the navigation, especially in marine engineering specialty, women stand out widely in their initiative to do something different.

Sanchez et al. (2011) agree on the existence of significant differences at the moment of choosing a career depending on the gender, because of the stereotyped gender associations of some professions. They also state that the lack of information and self-knowledge contributes to professional indecision.
Career expectations of women

Regarding the labor expectations, we can emphasize that, generally speaking, more than a third of the students, men and women, do not have a clear idea about their professional future, and more than a quarter of them think that they will not have real chance to practice command on board as captains or chief engineers. In this latter point marine engineering women are the most sceptical about their possibilities of reaching higher management positions on board, whereas men of nautical sciences specialty are the most self-confident about reaching such managerial positions.

Asked about their academic and professional future in the short-term, marine engineering men answers are distributed almost equally between the options: to continue studying, to begin to work and to do training periods on board, whereas women of this specialty barely consider this latter option. This comes to confirm the little attraction that work on board draw on marine engineering specialty women, who prefer, almost all them, to opt for a work ashore without obtaining the first professional qualification. Nevertheless in the nautical sciences section most women want to do professional training on board once their studies are finished, just like their male classmates.

With regard to their professional future in the long-term, the information comes to reaffirm the lack of interest of marine engineering specialty women about the possibility of working on board, whereas most of nautical sciences women and men of both specialties want to sail a few years and then work ashore, probably having in mind that these years of on board experience will become a curricular added value.

Likewise it is necessary to indicate that data obtained shows a high degree of uncertainty or lack of knowledge about the job options and the socio-labor conditions bound to work on board, mainly among marine engineering specialty women.

Also the study of De la Campa el al. (2012) offers information on labor market priorities, that is to say the most important job characteristics to work in a particular shipping company, concluding that there are no important differences in the conditions that men and women consider to be basic to work on board. This is a positive information for shipping companies, because it shows that an increase in women recruitment to work on board does not mean a change on the company operational management system, on crew employment conditions, on ships characteristics, or on the
socio-labor conditions offered to on board personnel. The authors conclude that women neither wish a special workplace on board nor more profitable sociolabor conditions, they simply wish the same employment opportunities.

**Career experiences of women seafarers**

In this section and based on the studies of Camblor et al. (2004), de la Campa (2007) and De la Campa, Bouza and Rodríguez (2010) the experiences of professional women that already have integrated into the job market will be revised. This revision helps us to establish the possible barriers that impede or prevent their recruitment and/or their continuity working on board.

The results are organized around four items: the fact of being a woman determines employment possibilities, the difficulties to exert command, the inability to fulfill the professional expectations and the work-life balance difficulties.

The main problems in the integration and continuity in the job market on board are related to more difficulties to enroll, more difficulties in the promotion on board and the exigency of higher skills in comparison with male coworkers. Also it is stated that work demands are higher for women, they have to continually demonstrate their value and their mistakes are more emphasized.

Likewise it is asserted that there are a stereotyped image of women abilities and aptitudes to work on board since it is assumed that women have less strength, fewer aptitudes and fewer command qualities. Also it is emphasized that there is a lack of confidence in their professional performance. Professional women indicate that, besides demonstrating their value for the position and having an extensive experience with the company, woman only promote if there are no male candidates to the position. These difficulties in the promotion to the senior positions on board are one of the most important reasons of not having fulfilled their professional expectations. In this respect though there are institutional reasons that prevent women from reaching command positions, known as "the glass ceiling ", there are also other women self-imposed reasons which self-exclude them, such as the lack of self-confidence.

On the other hand these professional women consider that maternity is always or almost always incompatible with working on board, also asserting that maternity is incompatible with professional promotion. Nevertheless it seems that the employment
hindrances generated by maternity are rather of personal than company origin, since the majority of these women consider that their shipping company would not raise objections to their re-enrollment after maternity.

Another added problem that comes from work-life balance difficulties relates to the promotion to command positions since to sign up as captain it is necessary to have a huge working experience that women are barely able to reach, since they usually leave the professional life for family reasons sooner than their male coworkers. These career related barriers, which complicate the professional development process (Suárez, 2008), are interactive, changing, can be both personal and environmental and can appear in different ways and in different phases of life.

All these circumstances greatly impede that women who finish their nautical studies and incorporate into the labor market manage to fulfill their professional expectations, mainly due to the disappointment with the profession, to the promotional difficulties and to the lack of employment opportunities. Also the inability to harmonize work and family life pushes many qualified women to leave the work on board.

**SOME PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE**

It is therefore evident that women in the maritime sector are currently at a disadvantage compared to men in the sector in relation to labour market integration, as well as they have to face more adverse situations in the performance and maintenance of their jobs on board, due to the traditionally male allocation of such activities. Consequently it is necessary to look for strategies that improve the job environment and the women seafarers’ acceptance and support by the part of their male co-workers. The establishment of policies that improve the recruitment and retention of women on board is essential. This task should be a challenge to all maritime business parties such as shipping companies, seafarers’ unions and education and training institutions.

Jones (2008) goes beyond affirming that increasing the proportion of women in the maritime sector is a business decision and not only a question of political correctness or well meaning inclusiveness. The maritime sector, this author asserts, has become increasingly dependent on talent and modern expertise, rather than physical strength or traditional knowledge and women are being denied from contributing their skills and
competencies to a vital global industry which supports the transportation of over 90% of world trade. Also it is important to emphasize that women work in different way, they have some innate characteristics that it is necessary to give value with the aim of encouraging shipping companies to employ them.

The possible measures to be taken on the part of shipping companies and other institutions interested in maritime business, in order to facilitate and improve the labor and social integration of women in the merchant marine should be centred in the following areas:

- The fight against labor discrimination
- To improve the Work-life balance
- The fight against moral and sexual harassment
- The professional or career planning
- The mentoring
- The associativism
- To break the glass ceiling
- To improve the insertion of women into maritime education and training

From our point of view, and having into account the aforementioned results, we consider that the biggest barriers in the labor integration of the Spanish women seafarers to the merchant marine relate to the lack of prior information about the maritime studies and the professional prospects, the professional promotion difficulties narrowly related to the glass ceiling, and the problems arisen at the moment of harmonizing work and family life.

Therefore we will center our improvement proposals on aspects related to the professional planning, the improvement of the organizational culture breaking through the glass ceiling, and encouraging mentoring, as tools to change towards the integration and employment promotion on equality.

**Professional planning and mentoring**

Perhaps the two biggest barriers that lead women to abandon their professional career on board are the promotion difficulties and work-life balance problems.
To face up these two problematic areas and achieve a greater continuity of women on board, as well as greater professional success, there are two strategies that can be perfectly applied in this field such as career planning and mentoring.

Career planning or career mapping is to manage or design the career path of workers, establishing long-term goals and the necessary steps to achieve those objectives (Messmer, 2003). This strategy facilitates the employees’ career development, allowing him/her to reach higher positions within it, through the acquisition of expertise. Career planning, as Do Ceu y Rodríguez (2010) state, helps to raise the compatibility between individual and company aspirations, objectives and competences. The professionals that achieve mastery, Farren (2009) indicates, will be leaders, mentors and innovators in their field.

Professional planning systems benefit both workers and company. To the first ones it helps them to discover their interests and skills and to increase their satisfaction giving them the chance of identifying and moving to the most suitable positions according to their objectives and plans. From the company perspective, the professional planning reduces the time needed to cover vacancies, it helps to identify the employees with managerial talent and provides all workers with the opportunity to discover their professional goals and to develop plans to reach them (Fernández, 2002).

Figure 3 shows an example of professional planning applied to the maritime sector.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Nº of YEARS</th>
<th>WORKING PLACE</th>
<th>CUALIFICATION OR POSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Graduate and Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-30</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>On board</td>
<td>Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-32</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-40</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>Ashore: Shipping company, naval industry, administration, etc.</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>On board</td>
<td>Captain or Chief Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-58</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>Ashore: Shipping company, naval industry, administration, etc.</td>
<td>Engineer/Surveyor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Example of career mapping developed by Basurko (2007)
Such planning would facilitate women in the sector to develop a professional career by combining periods of work on board and work ashore, even offering the possibility of facing motherhood in conditions closer to those of women who develop their work ashore (between 30 and 40 years old), to return later to work on board.

With the purpose of career planning would be really effective it should be done with a gender perspective, that is to say, considering separately men and women conditions. This comparison allows to make inequality visible, and to plan measures to reach gender equality (Mateo, Lerma y Bolea, 2013).

Only the commitment of employers and their willingness to provide employment to women would encourage them to develop similar plans with the aim of converting the work of women in maritime transport in the career of women in the maritime transport: “take a job and you’ll work for a day, master a profession or a trade and you’ll work for a lifetime” (Farren, 2009:1).

Mentoring, meanwhile, is a two-way strategy between mentor and protégée that allows professional promotion and exchange of skills and knowledge. According to Bell, McDonald and González (2009) professional support can help the protégée to adapt to the workplace, increasing their self-confidence, skills and understanding of the workplace functioning. The mentor gets, in turn, the satisfaction of the protégée progress.

This strategy would be very beneficial for women in the maritime sector with the purpose of career development, helping female seafarers to perform their job, to adapt their navigation life and to solve work related problems (Jong y Ye, 2009). However it is quite difficult for these women to find a mentor, firstly those most experienced in the field are men, and they prefer mentoring men instead of women, and secondly, many women who reached responsibility positions in the maritime industry are not encouraged to mentor other women for fear of being branded as “feminist”, that’s to say, they do not want to emphasize the fact that they are women (Lee, 2007).

Sometimes women themselves disregard mentoring value, assuming that hard work and talent will lead them to success in any case, regardless of the price they will have to pay for it.

With the aim of obtaining a correct mentoring and this could not be confused with favouritism, the protégée needs to be able to offer something to his/her mentor, but
women, say Bell, MacDonald and González (2009) tend to underestimate their abilities, so they often reject the help of a mentor worried because the relationships may be unilateral due to the difference in status between mentor and protégée.

Another problem for women in the maritime domain is the lack of role models, as indicated by Lee (2007), in Europe women who occupy management positions, for example in shipbuilding companies, are often daughters, sisters of wives of the original owner of the company, so probably they have not achieved this position on own merits, and therefore they lack the necessary characteristics to be potential mentors.

**Breaking through the glass ceiling**

According to the report issued by Wirth to the ILO (2002) women occupy only between 1 and 3% of senior executive positions from leading companies in the world.

We can suppose that things are not different in the shipping industry ashore, although there are not studies or detailed statistics that allow us to affirm it categorically. On board, as we stated before, only 7% of women seafarers held management positions.

Chinchilla et al (2006) indicate that there are four basic reasons that prevent women’s access to management positions:

- Lack of self-confidence of women directives
- Lack of support from their superiors
- Family responsibilities, and
- The so called “glass ceiling”: a corporate culture adverse to women promotion.

The glass ceiling may be defined therefore as the artificial, invisible barrier hindering the careers of women and preventing them from rising to positions of decision making (Wirth, 2002). The glass ceiling, as Barberá, Estellés and Dema (2009) indicate, is a barrier that affects women as a collective and complicates, and in some cases impedes, their promotion due to the fact of being women. Among the factors that form this barrier we can find (ILO, 2004; UGT, 2005):

- The exclusion of networks and informal communication channels where important information on organizational policy and decision-making is shared
- Stereotypes and prejudices about the role and abilities of women, their dedication capabilities, and their command style. For example it is believed that women do not have the same training or do not carry out the same activities as men.
- It is demanded from women to work harder than men in order to prove their worth.
- Women often have more difficulties to find a mentor who support their career advancement.

In addition to be and evident social injustice, women discrimination in senior positions turn invisible women potential and miss the talent they could offer to management area, as Ramos (2005) states, the glass ceiling represents the loss of female contribution to labor market and the miss of the social value that women can offer to companies and society.

Nowadays the glass ceiling is supported by two bases, firstly the predominant organizational culture characterized by the persistence of stereotyped social believes about gender, and secondly the family responsibilities assumed mainly by women (Barberá, Estellés and Dema, 2009). As previous data shows, the presence of these two barriers is evident in maritime transport sector.

To break these barriers and facilitate the promotion of women to leadership positions, it is necessary, according to Chinchilla, Poelman and Leon (2005) to make known the qualities that women can bring when they are offered the opportunity to fill this type of positions. In an executive position women often rely more in cooperation than in competition. Also, women like to promote teamwork among colleagues and co-workers. Unlikely many men, women do not see participation and delegation as a thread to their authority, but as an integral part of their leadership role.

Similarly these authors argue that the duality work-family, typical of female performance, must be seen as an advantage and not as an inconvenience, since the family environment reinforces certain personal skills that then revert to the work-place such as communication, optimism, integrity, self-criticism, self-awareness and emotional balance.

Actions aimed to raise women presence in management teams, as Sarrió et al. (2002) indicate, require, as unavoidable condition to be effective, to lighten family responsibilities, promoting to share domestic responsibilities between men and women. Meanwhile, these authors state, it is necessary that women with management goals assume a series of strategies aimed to overcome professional barriers, such as training in management skills, developing a solid career planning, going in depth self-knowledge,
reinforcing energy and enthusiasm and, above all, to get involved, to stand out more, to be more visible, to make contacts and to be part of working networks.

Finally, with specific relation to the maritime sector, the report “Profile of women executives in the maritime sector” (Palita, 2002), recommends companies of the sector to encourage and give opportunity to women with potential and excellence who occupy leadership positions, to strengthen their skills and promote higher positions: “programs should be developed that will help them move along, giving high visibility assignment and offering them opportunities for line Management to prove their capability”.

CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays the maritime transport sector is, undoubtedly, one of the most masculinized labor sectors, with less than 2% of female participation. From the academic point of view, and in spite of the lack of information and the gender stereotypes that still prevail at the moment of choosing a maritime degree, Spain is a good example of women inclusion to this activity, since in only 30 years women have managed to represent more than 20% of the students body registered in the spanish maritime education and training institutions. Nevertheless their integration into the job market is still very complicated, since a high percentage of graduated women has not the opportunity to accede to a working position on board or has serious difficulties to remain on this labor market and to promote up to the highest responsibility positions. These difficulties derived from sexist schemes of shipping company organization, joined to work-life balance problems are the biggest barriers that end in discouraging women to follow a career at sea. Bearing in mind that maritime transport professionals play a very important role in certain jobs ashore directly related to the safety of the above mentioned sector, and that to develop such jobs they need a previous working experience on board, it becomes necessary to make the employment conditions on board more attractive in such a way that these women, who have had the dream of being sailors and the courage of demonstrating their talent in a strongly masculinized world, have also the opportunity to develop their job abilities and to grow professionally in equality of opportunities.
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WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION ON BOARD OF MERCHANT SHIPS IN VENEZUELA AND THEIR RELATION INLAND – SHIP

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ABSTRACT

This paper is aimed to study the women´s participation on board of merchant ships in Venezuela and their relation in the inland – ship environment. It is used a hermeneutical vision from the gender perspective, in order to produce theoretical contributions regarding the equality of opportunities regardless of gender. Traditionally been marine was restricted to men, and the female’s presence was inconceivable. Nowadays, different organizations propose strategies for women’s inclusion, since the transcendence of their incorporation has turn into a worldwide concern. In Venezuela, the women admission to high nautical studies started in the year 2000, with the transformation of the nautical school, founded in 1811, into a
university (Universidad Marítima del Caribe). The study is based on the socio constructive paradigm, within the hermeneutical – phenomenological flow, with a qualitative point of view. The data collection techniques were the profound interview and notebook registration. Reliability was obtained from data triangulation serving as base for theorization. Information was process through the Atlas –ti Software, allowing to define the following categories to characterized women participation on board: professional performance; physical conditions; equality of opportunities; attitude; discrimination; acceptance; physical force; women inclusion; women´s role on board; adaptability and believes. Some of the conclusions were that performance on board is subject to safety and comfort and it contributes to professional growth and learning; The vessel´s physical conditions are considered as basic, but hygienic; the cabin sharing is consider a problem as well as the lack of a private bathroom equipped with women´s hygienic materials. The equality of opportunities is linked to equality in treatment besides a chauvinistic culture, which causes work pressure but does not damage work performance. There are demonstrations of a limited acceptance when the men work position on board is jeopardized. Physical force is not a limitation since the advances in technological tools support working activities.

**Keywords**: High Nautical studies in Venezuela; Women´s on board; Gender equality in shipping.

**INTRODUCTION**

Women´s invisibility in historic process is closely related to the subordinated position given to them in social relations, specially, the sexual labour division, which drives to social differences of tasks according to sex. This division could be explained as “tasks prohibition according to sex” (Lévi-Strauss, 1969). This idea shows how through historical - cultural facts, men of different societies have forbidden women to participate in activities of higher value.

Gender, as a social category, is one of the most significant theoretical contributions of the contemporary feminism. This analytical category emerged to explain dissimilarities between men and women, making emphasis in the knowledge of multiplicity identities. Feminine and masculine are conform from a reciprocal, cultural and historical relation. Gender is a transdisciplinary category that develops a globalizing point of view, remits to features and psychological - sociological functions that are attributed to each sex in each historical moment and society (Peraza, 2009).

To accomplish gender equality is a goal for all societies and its governments. Reason why to promote the gender equality and women autonomy is one of the millennium
goals. To achieve that goal it is necessary that problems such as poverty, and lack of education opportunities, social security services and few job’s offers stop to fall to women.

Rights extension to women does not involve worsening men’s privileges; it benefits all, since the advances in rights universality are transforming the potentiality of collective new groups, promoting a harmonic and sustainable development.

Worldwide, the presence of official women on board of merchant ships has been notorious since the year 1870. In those days, they were hired as chambermaid in coastal, passengers and steam ships. Their admission as merchant marines to have a live on board or in large voyages was not allowed, since that activity was traditionally performed by men. Nevertheless, that situation changed as years pass by, since feminism movements fought for women’s rights and created a different conscience toward women capacities.

In Venezuela, those process reflections and practices contributed to a different conscience toward women, their capacities and potentialities. Notwithstanding, in the maritime field, women’s accepting process took a longer period: their inclusion in high Nautical Studies was since the year 2000, when the Nautical School, dated from 1811, was given the level of National University and changed its name from Escuela Náutica de Venezuela to Universidad Marítima del Caribe (UMC), allowing women to study maritime engineering.

The first UMC promotion of 2006 graduated two maritime engineer women on its mention: Marine Installations. The second promotion of 2006, graduated four women on its mention Operations (deck) and three on its mention Marine Installations.

Number of UMC students graduated from maritime engineering, specifying women’s number is showed in table 1. At the UMC there are two graduation acts per year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of graduation of Maritime Engineers</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES (both sexes)</th>
<th>Mention Operations (Deck)</th>
<th>Mention Marine Installations (Engineer)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 shows how graduated women from nautical studies in Venezuela have been increasing year by year, since 2006 to 2012.

In this context, this study presents the image of an emergent reality and a new knowledge: the inter subjectivity that characterized women participation in different working and professional activities, especially, in this case of study, in maritime shipping.

The study also shows the women – profession and working market relation, represented in this case by official women on board of merchant ships in Venezuela and their inland – ship relation. It is showed the participation of some students and graduated official women from Maritime Engineering, at the Universidad Maritima del Caribe (UMC). They constitute the sample of study and main information source to evaluate the opportunity equality advances in time, the treatment that women receive on board in different tasks and their relation inland – ship. The hiring in maritime shipping, the role they play, their contribution and academic preparation.

The investigation was performed in the shipping scenario integrated by: the Port Authority of Pampatar port, at the Punta de Piedras dock, in Margarita Island; The Vargas State (La Guaira and Catia La Mar: One of the most important areas of La Guaira’s Port Umland); The Carabobo State (port of Puerto Cabello); Falcon State (on board of some shipping companies vessels).

It is necessary to underline that the geographic region where this qualitative – phenomenological study was performed, gather special characteristics where women on board and inland accomplish different roles as merchant marines officials. The women’s
sample was interviewed at the Universidad Maritima del Caribe and on board of merchant ships where they were working.

Finally this study was aimed to generate theoretical – reflexives contributions regarding the women’s participation on board of merchant ships in Venezuela and their relation inland – ship.

CONTEXT APPROACH TO THE SUBJECT OF STUDY

A historical, theoretical, and legal review regarding the women’s admission in Nautical Studies in Venezuela started this investigation. Nevertheless, it was also consulted the international women’s contribution in the culture field, finding one of the most remarkable works in history written in the XVIII century by a woman, (Wollsstonecraft, 1972), and titled *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, a classic in the feminine genealogy, as well as the foundational base for this movement (Peraza, 2009).

According to Wollstonecraft (1972) “the essence to emerge from women’s submission was education”. New educated women would not just accomplish an equality level linked to men, but would also get their economical independence, accessing to remunerative activities.

The millenium goals 2003, also remarks on its objectives, that women’s incorporation into the economical development should be a fundamental and decisive support to reduce poverty and enhance live wellbeing (Sistema Económico latinoamericano SELA, 2003).

In Europe, studies reveal countries Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increase thanks to the fact that women have had the same rate participation at work as men (Garcés, 2009). Regarding maritime field, there have been changes permitting a considerable women access to work on board of merchant ships in the last 50 years (International Labour Organization ILO, 2003). Nevertheless, Statistics show that women’s participation in this area represents between 1% and 2% of the total personnel on board (International Maritime Organization, IMO, 2000).

In Venezuela, shipping activities on board are dominated by men, as it occur worldwide (International Labour Organization ILO, 2003). The Constitution of the Venezuelan Republic (1961) and the Admission Rules of the Nautical School, (1973) did not specify
differences of acceptance regarding the gender, but women were not accepted until the
year 2000.

Notwithstanding, in 1980, it was performed a study looking for the possibility of
admitting women in nautical studies, following previous requirements established in the
Venezuelan Nautical School Admission Rules of 1975. Such study specified the
quantity of women to be admitted, facilities allocation, areas to be used, equipment to
be acquired, uniforms, and legal reforms, among other themes.

The Constitution of the Venezuela Republic, at its Article 21, establishes that all
persons are equal in front of the law, and consequently, there are not going to be sex
discriminations that could go against people freedom, acknowledgement or equality
right condition…

As previously said, in Venezuela, changes regarding nautical studies changed from the
year 2000, with the transformation of the Venezuelan Nautical School into a University
level, changing its name to Universidad Maritima del Caribe (UMC) according to the
National Decree Nº 889, from July 6th, 2000, published in official Gazette Nº 36.988
specifying:

The transformation of the Merchant Marine University Institute, Nautical School
of Venezuela conformed by the Nautical School of Venezuela as a pre graduated
level and the High Studies Merchant Marine School as a postgraduate level, into
the Universidad Maritima del Caribe (UMC).

In order to go deep into the subject of study: Women` s participation on board of
Merchant Ships in Venezuela and their relation Inland – Ship (an hermeneutical
vision from the gender perspective), it was considered to interview and interact with
women on board to understand, interpret and reflex about how have been their
adaptation, acceptance, and experience on board of merchant ships, as well as their
inland work.

Once the preliminary interviews were typed, it followed the data interpretation. In
the interview`s answers, it was clear that women/men participation is not equal;
besides, testimonies reveal that rejection attitude from men are present in some cases;
they always feel been observed by everyone. They have a sense of having to
overcome activities as a proof and it generates stress situations. In addition, certain
vessels present limitations regarding spaces for personal cleanliness, causing discomfort for both sexes.

In addition, it is present a skepticism regarding their strengths and capacities; creating obstacles in their activities performance.

Maritime area is not the unique area where women are a minority in Venezuela. They are a minority in governmental charges as well, since there are socio-cultural factors that diminish or limit political participation of women (Reverón, 2004).

**FEMINISM, A THEORETICAL APPROACH**

First essays regarding “women affairs” criticized their role, but did not mention responsible for their disadvantages. It was though women had a considerable power over men (Wollsstonecraft, 1972). Such position allowed that in the year 1791, Olympe de Gouges had written the “Women´s and Citizenship Rights Declaration”, but it was in the XX century when the feminist movement derived benefits, creating concepts as the following: “feminism is a political ideological flow that radically question the patriarchal society domination and chauvinism…and the historical construction of subjectivity that establishes roles according to gender” (Brito & Kohan, 2006).

Feminism´s movement was a fight that finally had a concept, a goal to accomplish. Feminism´s expert (Valcárcel, 2000) presented at a conference held in Peru in 2000, a document prepared for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) where they divided feminism in three waves:

The first wave of feminism corresponds to the illustrated feminism, where the patriarchal genesis is located as a historical success, documenting through it the women’s subordination principles in political, cultural legal, religious, and social systems. Simultaneously, it is promoted the equality speech with the work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* by Wollstonecraft, Mary (1792), which is plenty of force nowadays and is considered as a feminist literature classic.

As the century pass by, emerged in North America a group conform by middle class educated women that, in time, became the first feminism driving force. It July of 1848, it was created in New York city, the first American feminism document called
The Seneca Fall where it was firstly written what could be considered as a feminism philosophy of history, a document denouncing women humiliation through history. Then, after the Secession War, during 1861 and 1865, the feminist movement suffered a disappointment when the IV amendment of the Constitution was approved, denying women to vote. Such decision inspired two ladies from the American Society to create the National Association for Women’s Vote (Elizabeth Candy Staton and Susan B. Anthony), independently from political parties and reform movements.

Thus, the second feminism wave was in the XX century, with the Suffragist Liberal Feminism. The main events were the female suffrage and the educational right that had been a veto for women and could be accomplished after a fight of almost 80 years.

The third feminism wave occurred after the year 1980. Women were not satisfied with the last century inclusion success (suffrage and education), and continued fighting for additional rights in different fields: social, legal, moral, creating what was considered as a revolution in those three elements. The result was new sexual freedom, allowing women to have premarital relations and to use contraceptives.

Regarding women inclusion to education, a selected group succeeded in entering university studies. It was the case of Concepción Arenal Ponte, who entered the Madrid University as a listener in law studies between 1841 and 1846. (Peña, 2010).

In maritime shipping, the most notorious women’s participation was in 1870, when they were accepted as chambermaid in steam, passenger and coastal vessels. An exception occurred in 1931, when Lena Ringbom - Lindén, born in 1914, was accepted on board at the age of 16 years old. Such act was incomprehensive, since working on board was an exclusive men’s work (Deern, 2005).

Then, at the beginning of the XIX century, a woman, Anna Ivanova Shetina, of 22 years old, broke the traditional scheme of a men’s profession and got on board as a soviet merchant marine. She got the Captain degree in 1935, having a remarkable career during World War II (Deern, 2005).

In Venezuela, it was in the year 2006 when two women got their degree as Merchant Marine Officials, studying the five years career of Nautical Engineering and presenting the legal documentation at the national maritime organization responsible
of maritime affairs: Instituto Nacional de los Espacios Acuáticos (INEA). It is important to remark that other women obtained the nomination as merchant marines after a test performed by a maritime administration board of specialists, which could be made until the year 2000 and is not possible nowadays. This event motivated to perform the present investigation.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY
The objective of this study was to generate theoretical and reflexive contributions regarding Women’s participation on board of Merchant Ships in Venezuela and their relation Inland - Ship

METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS
It was performed a qualitative investigation, immerse into the post – positive paradigm, since it was not establish a hypothesis, but a reflexive analytical position was assumed by the authors.

The method to collect the information was the interview. The sample was integrated by 8 women studying maritime engineering (specialized on Operations (Deck) or Marine Installations (Engine Department)) and two women already graduated from the UMC (students make their apprenticeships on the 4th year of 5th that is the career’s duration). Women’s population by the year 2009, when the data was collected, was 32, and the criterion to choose the sample was those students already on board of ships.

In the analyzing and classification phase, the obtained and processed information was presented though a network structure that conciliated the conceptual ideas regarding each category given by the Atlas – Ti software and its relations.

It was also used the constant comparison method to establish questions and answers regarding the network elements (Straus & Corbin, 2002): documents – interviews and vice versa. It was a permanent dialectic action among the interpretative integration of participants, which facilitated the theory construction through the interactive structural process of progressive depuration as it is showed in figure 2:
In this research, theorization arose from the constructive management of basic concepts, pertinent to the structures and relations given by the Attlas – ti software and according to the study questions and significance of the obtained data.

Theorization is a cognitive process that consist on discover, manipulate categories at an abstraction level and relate its derivations, in a way to facilitate development and to explain the phenomenon reasons (Goetz & Le Compte, 1998).

The phenomenon systematization and description generated knowledge that allowed, by its logic relation, its demonstration and verification. This assured the certainty of the information (Yuren, 2000).

Validation and verification effects practiced in the study were based on the referential arguments of (Bisquerra, 1989), (Goetz & Le Compte, 1998), (Martínez, 1999), (Rusque, 2004) and (Mucchielli, 2001). According to this information, the following techniques were developed:

- Data triangulation, where each group, derived from primary sources, were verified with its protocolar procedures from different points of view, in order to generate explanations that revealed originality and coherence of the obtained results.
- A high grade of inner reliability is accomplished by the application of the methodological procedures: a) construction of specific descriptive categories, generated from data obtained in primary sources (not manipulated) proving the observations made in a real context; b) various instruments and techniques to collect information; c)

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**Figure 1:** Interpretative process of Theoretical Construction

![Theoretical Construction Diagram](image-url)
employment of appropriate techniques resources to keep the observe reality (photograph, recording); d) to interpret, analyze, process, and present in matrices, the information, using categorization and codifying techniques; e) information triangulation through constant comparison methods.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY
When using the phenomenological method, peculiarity and nature of realities could only be capture from the subject point of view, the one that lives and experiments it (Martínez, 2009). Thus, results showed are based on the responses of the interviewed sample (subjects of the study), mixed with the researchers interpretation and analysis.
The following information corresponds to stories exposed by informants, according to the way they live and observe their participation in the maritime activity, in each one reality.
Regarding the main objective: to generate theoretical and reflexive contributions regarding women as deck or engine officers on board of merchant ships in Venezuela, the findings are:
There is a negative tendency, represented by an oppositionist – chauvinistic culture of some men, who “deny to see the reality of the woman they have in front, because they do not bear that a woman could be at their same level or even more, better than they are at their jobs”.
This position is a proper factor of our society culture and is closely linked to professional barriers, highlighting that the maritime profession is only for men. This is explained because there is the latent fear by some men, of been displace by women. They do not say it, but their actions say many things. Even though, I feel, confirm the subject interviewed, that some bosses create barriers for women not to scale positions or hierarchies where they could be replaced.
That is why I (the interviewed subject) corroborate discrimination as a segregation distinction that steel exists toward women in on board activities, attempting this against equality of opportunities, obviating that women are able to perform the same jobs that men could do. Nevertheless, since we are women, of course there is a physiological condition that “makes us more sensitive” and some times, this could interfere in labor performance.
In addition, physical conditions on ships are not comfortable, it is not possible for women to have their own cabin, but they have to share it with men, reason why sometime women are not accepted on board. Even more, there are not hygienic conditions accessories on ships, not providing the minimum habitability conditions, which would be the ideal.

Thus, one of the interviewed considered that hiring women could improve and harmonize working conditions on board, benefiting both sexes.

Once presented the prior general ideas observed, is essential to specify the results obtained from the network created by the software Attlas – Ti, a program to analyze qualitative data, which gave us categories to characterized women´s participation on board.

The given categories are:  a) professional performance; b) physical conditions; c) equality of opportunities; d) attitude; e) discrimination; f) acceptance; g) physical force; h) women inclusion; i) women´s role on board; and j) adaptability and believes. Regarding each one of these categories results were as follows:

a) Professional performance: defined as daily working actions performed by official women on board and inland. Women interviewed link real situations with the desire of obtaining higher salaries, which implies to keep their training and professionalization to improve their live quality. As personal conditions, working on board generates learning results and priceless growth. Regarding inland personnel, they are unsatisfied with salaries since there are not too many benefits and remuneration is very low.

b) Physical conditions: understood as the minimum infrastructure requirements on board to stimulate women´s optimum capacities and skills that allow them to perform efficiently their working activities.

Physical conditions are related to an exclusive cabin. There is present a contradiction because of a lack in women´s hygienic accessories. Relating laundry, it is considered as acceptable. Cleaning is good. Notwithstanding the contradiction regarding the lack of hygienic accessories, women consider this is not an obstacle to work, since those are personal things each one can carry with. Women considered physical conditions as not the best, but if a man can manage those conditions, they also can.

c) Equality of opportunities: a concept that implies the same job access opportunity for all persons. Data obtained showed that there is still a chauvinistic culture; women acceptance is limited because sexism persists,
not only because of the challenge for women to be incorporate, but it is still seen they are discriminated at the moment of applying for a job. One of the interviewed expressed that some shipping companies prefer to hire men. There is an impolite attitude toward women since men try to make invisible the accomplishments and actions of women already on board of merchant ships.

d) Attitude: refers to personal human being’s predisposition or tendency to act depending on the situation or the involved persons interacting. The sample considered attitude changes as acceptable, but perceive some unfair treatments because there are men that do not bear a women to be at their same level. There are men on board that do not agree with women presence, but shipping is not an exclusive job for men. Rigidity is consider a negative factor, but respect is consider as a positive one, as a greater women’s acceptance through years. Ships with Venezuelan flags only had men crew, reason why denying women’s acceptance on board was comprehensive.

e) Discrimination: distinction or segregation that attempts against equality of opportunities. Discrimination attempts against labor training. There is a chauvinistic culture and it contradicts the require respect: sometimes men have aggressive and humiliating treatment toward women. But women should be treated respectfully and obtain recognition for their jobs, not suffering any discrimination. We are surrounded of a high percentage of chauvinism.

f) Acceptance: to assume by own decision and without prejudice women’s presence in working activities on board. Barriers related to perform a job traditionally for men are present. Acceptance is contradicted by the existing fear of men to be replaced by women on their jobs. Assertive communication among men and women on board is part of the acceptance process as well as the given support.

g) Physical force: Physical capacities to accomplish their functions in activities on board. There is an strength thanks to the existence of management and administrative systems, as well as tools and technological advances to help perform usual activities. There are some cases where women, as well as men, required help. Sometimes women have had to call men for help, but others,
men have had to call women for help. It is a joint work and mutual help is common.

h) Women inclusion: changes and transformation in the family model, economic independence and working roles that helps professional and personal women’s development. Women’s incorporation supports live quality. Inland work is associated with motherhood role. It allows projection. There is a weakness, which is the talent runaway. When women are incorporated on board, family suffers separation periods, but it is the same with men. To learn other languages is a characteristic.

i) Women’s role on board: women’s participation on board of merchant ships. It contributes to a better hygiene. Their presence humanized the crew. Change on men’s habits is seen as strength, as well as the creation of a greater acceptance for those coming women. It is associated with working opportunities and characterized by organization. They offer a growth opportunity thanks to their knowledge contributions and organization habits.

j) Adaptability: process by which people adapt or adjust their behaviour to the social environment where they interact. On this specific case, this category is associated with the harmonic cohabitation between women and men on board. It is associated with natural cycles: women consider a period to be on board since they change on board work by inland work in order to form a family. It is associated also with physiological conditions and the maritime psychology is part of the adaptation process.

k) Believes: Personal affirmation regarding women presence on maritime activities which could affect the perception some people has of us as women. It is associated with myths, presages and taboos. Women consider such ideas as simply lies, and say it is used as an excuse to avoid women’s presence on board. Maritime women have demonstrated those are just myths.
CONCLUSIONS

- A negative tendency because of an oppositionist – chauvinistic culture of some men, “denying to see the reality and not accepting that women could be at their same level or more”
- Culture of Society links sex to professional barriers
- There is the believe that maritime profession is only for men
- There is a latent fear by some men, of been displace by women
- Discrimination as a segregation distinction still exists toward women on board
- Physical conditions on ships are not comfortable, lack of own cabin.
- There are not women hygienic accessories on ships

Researchers of this investigation recognized that the qualitative method used could had a deeply study of categories in order to obtain more behavior explanations.

Figure 2: Two first women Graduated from Maritime Engineers at the Universidad Marítima del Caribe in 2006, as Marine Installations Officers (Engine Department).
Left: Olivo, Maryori
Right: Rodríguez, Daniela
Source: UMC, 2004

REFERENCES


ANNEX

Screenplay of in-depth interviews performed by Prof. Emma Peraza

1. How long have you been sailing?
2. Your incorporation in the merchant marine improved your living conditions?
3. Merchant ships, do they have the physical capacity to accommodate a woman sailor?
4. How do you interpret the incorporation of women into the maritime sector and if
you have the same opportunities as men in the work on board ships and in ashore position?

5. Referring to merchant marine officers, what conception takes you to possible changes of attitude regarding women’s participation on board?

6. How is the performance of the women officers of engines and/or navigation to carry out their work on board a ship?

7. What do you think of the belief that work performed by women sailors on board and ashore, in the maritime chores were considered unique to the opposite sex?

8. What can you argue about the possible sexual harassment toward women on board vessel or land?

9. How do you read the differences in the condition of physical force between women and men to carry out an activity in which it is required, both on board the vessel and/or inland operation?

10. Have you been submitted to any particular circumstance in the treatment given by your colleagues in work, study, that you could comment on?

11. Do you know any agency, public or private that has incorporated into the merchant marine women at sea or ashore?

12. What you believe, the changes have been derived by bringing in the nautical studies to women and how has been the adaptation between women and men on board the ships?

13. Women are accepted aboard without any difficult?

14. How can companies to improve the conditions of the women sailors?

15. Which are the benefits of the presence of women on board ship?

16. What measures can be taken to improve conditions for women at sea and attract them to the exercise of the seamanship?

17. What do you think about the traditional belief that women bring bad luck at sea?

Other questions that came up in the interview

1. - Does another woman labour on board the ship where you work?

2. – Why do you think I am doing this research?
“MUJERES MARINERAS Y SUS REDES SOCIALES: UN ANÁLISIS DE LAS DINÁMICAS Y LAS APORTACIONES A LA EQUIDAD EN EL SECTOR MERCANTE”.

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A pesar de que este proyecto recién comienza y que aún se delimitan cuestiones teóricas y metodológicas, su objetivo principal es conocer cuáles son las dinámicas de interacción de las mujeres marineras del sector mercante de México a través de sus redes sociales, con el fin de determinar de qué manera éstas expresan sus historias de vida y sus experiencias en ellas, y cómo es que tales expresiones se vinculan con el tema de la equidad en el ámbito laboral en el que se desempeñan.

Pareciera que el tema de las redes sociales ya ha sido constantemente investigado en años recientes en el campo de las ciencias sociales, y no es para menos, pues han ocupado un lugar trascendental para la difusión de temas relativos a los derechos civiles, la conservación ambiental, la educación, la cultura y otros ámbitos del desarrollo humano, a través de diversas herramientas como las bitácoras electrónicas, las páginas y foros web, y las muy conocidas plataformas sociales como Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, entre otros.

Sin embargo, a pesar de la gran expansión tecnológica que se observa en las redes sociales en los ámbitos ya citados, existen sectores que forman parte de un espectro social y comunicativo poco explorado hasta ahora y un ejemplo de ello lo constituyen las redes sociales de mujeres marineras del sector mercante, en el caso particular de México.
¿Por qué es importante analizar las redes sociales de estas mujeres? Basta recordar que la inserción de las marineras mercantes en México en el ámbito laboral y académico, es relativamente reciente (las primeras cadetes ingresaron a la Escuela Náutica de Tampico por primera vez en 1984, hace apenas 29 años), por lo tanto, la información relacionada a la forma en que expresan sus experiencias y narrativas de vida --ya sea en los buques o durante su permanencia en tales academias náuticas—es, prácticamente, nula o poco difundida en México, es decir, no existen documentos ni reportes que aborden el tema de las marineras mercantes desde un punto de vista social o antropológico, ni se encuentra en el cotidiano o en el imaginario colectivo de nuestra sociedad el ser marinera mercante de manera común o frecuente como una actividad que resulta vital para el desarrollo social y económico de nuestro país.

Esto puede tener sustento en el hecho de que México no posee una flota mercante sobresaliente en el ámbito internacional, sin embargo, las mismas redes sociales nos han permitido contabilizar hasta el momento más de 50 usuarias que se encuentran laborando en embarcaciones turísticas y de recreo, en ferries, en transbordadores, en las propias empresas de reclutamiento, entre otras actividades relativas al sector marítimo mercante de nuestro país.

Tan sólo al ingresar a la blogósfera, en enero de 2013, se pudieron encontrar cerca de 386 mil sitios y foros de habla hispana con contenido naval que refieren igualmente noticias o información sobre mujeres marineras, y en el caso de México, en los perfiles de Facebook se pueden rastrear --dependiendo de los contactos y usuarios inscritos a cada perfil--., decenas de mujeres que trabajan en diversas actividades en la marina mercante, contratadas por diversas empresas privadas y/o en instituciones oficiales del sector, o bien, que todavía se encuentran en fase de preparación en academias y universidades de sus países de origen.

Existe pues, la necesidad de conocer cómo socializan y comunican las marineras de este sector porque junto con sus compañeros varones, son actores sociales importantes en este intercambio comercial que trae consigo la marina mercante, ya sea a menor o
mayor escala en nuestro país; por lo tanto, es importante conocer qué pasa con estas mujeres que técnicamente son minoría y cuyos derechos como la maternidad y la lactancia no se encuentran estipulados con claridad en la actual Ley Federal del Trabajo en México, particularmente en el capítulo de trabajadores de mar. Así, las redes sociales generan espacios comunitarios digitales que nos permiten conocer cuáles son las formas de expresar su percepción sobre la equidad y derechos a los que en teoría deben tener acceso, entre otros indicadores que pudieran mostrar la situación de estas mujeres en la actualidad.

Las redes sociales, por otro lado, no sólo cumplen un propósito meramente comunicativo: sus usuarios intercambian y generan información de manera que se originan a su vez, contenidos nuevos que serán intercambiados en una secuencia intermitente en la medida en que dichos usuarios continúen sus procesos de socialización tecnológica. En el caso de las mujeres marineras este proceso puede traer consigo repercusiones positivas para la difusión de sus derechos y la búsqueda de la equidad en su trabajo.

A manera de conclusión, tenemos la hipótesis de que las redes tecnológicas permiten que las marineras mercantes generen foros y compartan historias, fotografías, textos, publicidad y diversas manifestaciones digitales a través de las redes sociales en las que están inscritas y a las que acceden diariamente para expresar su sentir con respecto a su trabajo y su forma de conceptualizar la realidad del mundo en el que se desenvuelven. Además, las mujeres marineras que aún no cuentan con asociaciones civiles tradicionales que las representen, hacen uso de las redes sociales como herramienta de difusión de sus experiencias en el sector y sus comentarios siempre hacen hincapié en lo importante que es generar el respeto de los colegas varones a partir de sus propias acciones y no por su apariencia física.

 Esto es un bagaje cultural y social muy interesante, porque a partir de estos contenidos se pueden detectar parámetros que describan cuáles son las necesidades e inquietudes, de las marineras mercantes del país, y de esta manera lograr objetivos determinados a largo y mediano plazo, que tendrán influencia en los tomadores de decisiones sobre sus
condiciones de vida y trabajo en el mar. La empatía que se genera con los contactos de amigos, familiares y compañeros de trabajo, así como empresas reclutadoras, organizaciones civiles y otras instituciones con las que interactúan las marineras mercantes en sus redes sociales, puede ser determinante para tratar de resolver los problemas sociales que estas mujeres presentan, lo cual genera un probable e interesante poder de convocatoria de esta herramienta para propagar ideas de igualdad y equidad en las minorías de mujeres de las diferentes naciones, no sólo de México sino de otras partes del mundo.
ABSTRACT

In Spain, the acceptance of women in the Merchant Navy took place late in the day, as it was only made possible during the transition to democracy, with the approval of the Spanish Constitution (1978). In 2009, we began to study their integration in the Merchant Navy, through the analysis of academic and professional aspects of those who qualified at the Nautical College of Bilbao. One of the conclusions we reached then was that female students' expectations regarding the development of their professional careers had changed over time. We designed a questionnaire to substantiate these observations, and, in 2010, we interviewed thirty-two women graduates. A second questionnaire was passed to undergraduate students (2010, 2012). The results of these surveys show that changes have not only taken place in relation to expectations but also in relation to opinions, suggesting, moreover, that facts and beliefs do not always progress hand in hand.

KEYWORDS: Women Seafarers, Merchant Navy, Seafaring, Gender, Spain.
INTRODUCTION

In the final decades of the Nineteenth century, a handful of women were recruited to work in steamships as waitresses or health personnel. Their contracts, mainly restricted to coastal and passenger traffic, were, in all cases, occupations of a domestic type. Marine professions as such constituted an activity reserved for men until the first half of the 20th century, when the first women seafarers were employed aboard merchant ships. The names of the Russian Soviet Anna Ivanova Schetinina (1908-1999), who in 1935 became the first captain of an ocean-going vessel, and the British woman, Victoria Drummond (1896-1978), who sailed from 1959 as Chief Engineer, have gone down in history as pioneers of gender equality on the bridge and in the engine room, respectively.

Research conducted in the early 2000s by the Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC) has shown that since those early pioneers, the number of women employed aboard the world’s merchant navy fleet has steadily increased. Nevertheless, the study concludes that women continue to constitute a very small proportion of the total labour force of seafarers and that their distribution is highly skewed. On the one hand, there are much higher proportions of women from some parts of Europe than from other parts of the world. On the other hand, there are significantly higher numbers of women working in the passenger sector of the shipping industry, although largely employed in rating grades, particularly as hotel personnel. Few women work on the deck or in the engine room in these passenger lines and they are seriously under-represented in the commercial sectors. Furthermore, only a small percentage of women are officers -only 7% of women seafarers covered by the SIRC survey, while the remaining 93% are ranked as rating grades-, which contrasts with 42% of all male seafarers ranked as officers. This fits in perfectly with one of the conclusions of a study carried out by the International Labour Office: there are only a few, isolated cases of women occupying leadership positions in male-dominated professions (OIT, 2004, p. 15).

In Spain, the incorporation of women into the Merchant Navy occurred much later on, when they were finally admitted to attend Nautical Schools to receive the necessary training. This occurred for the first time during the academic year 1979-80.
and it was not until 1982 that the first woman embarked on a Spanish vessel as an assistant deck officer. In 2009, three decades after the first women registered at a Spanish Nautical School, we began to study their incorporation into the Merchant Navy, through the analysis of academic and professional aspects of those who graduated at the Nautical College of Bilbao. We noted that, after a timid start, the presence of women in these studies was consolidated, in the years that followed the incorporation of the centre in the University of the Basque Country, on 1 July 1994. From then on, up until the academic year 2009-10, 202 women enrolled mainly for deck section degrees (69%), representing a 17.5% of total new enrolled students.

We also observed that a significant number of women graduates, mainly from the engine section, had not succeeded in achieving any professional qualifications, which primarily occurred from the integration into the university onwards. Furthermore, we noted that only one portion of women who had obtained the first professional certificate, minimally developed their professional career at sea.

In our view, these results reflected the cultural changes that have taken place in our society since the restoration of democracy. They suggest that female students' expectations regarding the development of their professional life have changed over time. We designed a questionnaire, in order to substantiate all these aspects further, and in 2010, we interviewed thirty-two graduate women, who had enrolled on courses between 1979-80 and the 2003-04 academic years. For comparative purposes, a second questionnaire was designed and passed to undergraduate students in 2010 and again in 2012.

This whole study had a three-fold objective. Focusing on the highest professional qualifications and positions within this traditionally male-dominated economic sector, we firstly attempted to obtain a comprehensive overview of the incorporation of women in the Merchant Navy, through the quantitative analysis of enrolment, graduation and professional qualification of those who had previously enrolled at our Nautical College. Secondly, we aimed to learn about women’s expectations and professional experience both, at sea and ashore; the personal and social difficulties they have gone through; and to identify the factors that affect the development of their professional careers. In third place, but no less importantly, we attempted to objectify the existence of some sort of occupational segregation and sexual
discrimination, as well as to document the perceptions of those experienced by women. We also aimed to appreciate whether there have been any changes in this area over time. Finally, we discuss the main results of the survey in this paper.

SKETCHING OUT THE FRAME

Paving the Way: the Necessary Legislative Changes

As mentioned above, in Spain, women were not allowed to follow seafaring professions until the 1980’s. In fact, the Fundamental Law of 22 July 1961, which aimed *inter alia* to modernize the external image of the Franco dictatorship (Ruiz, 2003), opened up new professional avenues for women, as it established the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of gender in the tenure and exercise of political, professional and labour rights (art. 1). However, it expressly excluded, among others, qualified personnel of the Merchant Navy (art. 3.2)*x*.

The approval of the Spanish Constitution of 1978, during the transition to democracy, proved a turning point. Women soon started to claim their rights, as was the case of Lucila Sanz, who requested the right to take the exam to qualify as a deck rating, and Rosemary Suárez, who expressed a desire to enrol at the Nautical School to take a degree. Their wishes were soon to come true. In February 1979, a circular of the Ministry of Transport on the professional rights of women was received at the Nautical Schools, including the legal report prepared in response to the request of Lucila Sanz. Her rights were recognized based on the provisions of articles 14, 35 and 53 of the Constitution vi.

However, women were not even allowed to enrol in June 1979, and had to wait, with no guarantees, until September. Finally, during 1979-80 the classrooms of the Nautical School of Bilbao welcomed nine women. Once the necessary legislative change had been introduced, the way was paved for women's access to marine occupations.

Requirements to Obtain the Highest Maritime Professional Qualifications in Spain

To serve on board as officer, holding a professional sea-going qualification is a must. These licenses are authorised and issued by the Ministry responsible for the Maritime Administration, which regulates the professional qualifications for entry to the Spanish Merchant Navy and sets the requirements for their approval -academic degrees, periods
of embarkation, etc.-, and their scope. The exercise of these professions therefore requires a double qualification: one academic and another professional.

A three-year university degree -Diploma in Nautical Studies- and a minimum sea service of twelve months as cadet officer is required for the award of the first professional certificate –Piloto de Segunda de la Marina Mercante–, the first career step for the holder to sail as a junior deck officer. Graduates will obtain the next certificate –Piloto de Primera de la Marina Mercante– after serving twelve months as sea-going deck officers. In order to be awarded with the highest level of professional qualification –Capitán de la Marina Mercante– a BSc. (Hons.) degree and a further period of two years of sea service as deck officer must be accredited.

Likewise, graduates of the Diploma in Marine Engineering are awarded with the first professional qualification –Oficial de Máquinas de Segunda de la Marina Mercante– after a sea service of six or twelve months as assistant engineers. Holding a BSc. (Hons.) degree and at least two years of approved work experience onboard ship as officer is required to qualify as a Chief Engineer.

Women at the Nautical College of Bilbao (1979-2009), in Figures

During the first fifteen years after the lifting of the enrolment ban for women, their incorporation to the Nautical School of Bilbao remained at a low but steady level. In this period, fifty women registered representing, on average, the 4% of total new enrolled students. It can be said that the consolidation came from 1994-95 onwards, when the center became a College of the local public university. From then onwards the 80% of registered women in the period considered (1979-80 to 2009-10) enrolled, representing a 17.5% of total new enrolled students.

Taking into account the total number of registered students each academic year, the percentage of women at the Nautical College tended to converge with that of women taking technical degrees at the University of the Basque Country, reaching a peak of 22.3% in 2001-2.

Although women’s enrolment rates vary widely from one country to another, these figures are well above those reported by Maritime Education and Training (MET) Institutions in other western European countries and in the USA. Despite this, it can be said that women still occupy a token position in these studies and professions. According to Kanter (1977), the large preponderance of men shapes interactions within
these ‘skewed groups’ and the perceptual phenomena associated with tokens can help to explain some observed behaviors, attitudes and perceptions.

The achievements of women registered at our Nautical College from 1979-80 to 2009-10 are shown in Table 1. Generally speaking, it can be said that women prefer the deck section (69%). The graduation rate is slightly higher among those who choose the engine section (58% obtain the Diploma, one percentage point more than those enrolled in the deck section), but their progression up the academic and professional scales is worse: 48.8% of engine graduates (Diploma) obtain the BSc. degree and 44.2% obtain a professional certificate; whereas 70.7% of the deck graduates (Diploma) obtain the BSc. degree and 77.7% obtain a professional license.

The expectations of the female students in the development of their professional life seem to have changed over time, as we found that a large number of graduates do not obtain their first professional certificate, especially those who graduate in the engine degrees. In addition, among the women who have minimally continued their professional career at sea, we found that only a small part serve on board as officer a minimum period of one year: 49.4% in the deck section and 31.6% in the engine section; and just a handful of them continue sailing until they succeed in holding the highest professional license: 14.3% and 10.5%, respectively.

Table 1. Summary of academic and professional achievements of women enrolled at the Nautical College of the University of the Basque Country (from 1979-80 to 2009-10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1977 SYLLABUS</th>
<th>1999 SYLLABUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deck</td>
<td>Engine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holding the Diploma degree</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holding the BSc (Hons.) degree</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining any professional certif.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ploto de Segunda / Oficiala de Máquinas de Segunda</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ploto de Primera / Oficiala de Máquinas de Primera</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE SURVEY: METHODOLOGY

Pursuing the goals stated in the introduction, a survey was performed in order to gather information from women who graduated from 1982 onwards and from current undergraduate students. In order to do so, different questionnaires were designed after reading some other studies on similar topics (Martínez de Osés; Camblor, 2005 or Belcher et al., 2003).

The questionnaire addressed to graduate women consisted of sixty-one questions organized into five areas, namely: personal profile, studies and professional expectations, professional experience -on board and ashore-, opinion and satisfaction. Our intention was to interview all graduate women at our centre, which meant we had to identify them, in the first place, and then locate and contact them. None of these tasks were simple. As a result, between November 2009 and November 2010, we collected information from thirty-two graduate women xvii, who were enrolled from 1979-80 to 2003-04.

At the time we contacted them, the majority were in their 30s. All interviewees had logged a minimum of six months experience at sea as assistant officers. Seventeen women had embarked as officers: sixteen in the deck department and one in the engine section. Currently, seven women are still navigating and twenty-two are working ashore. There are two women who are continuing with their studies and one more that stopped sailing but did not work ashore. Only five women have not obtained any professional certificates. Altogether, these thirty-two women have amassed a total period of embarkation of ninety-four years, twenty-five of which holding positions of the highest responsibility on board: Chief mate or Captain.

The questionnaire, addressed to undergraduate students, consisted of twenty-two questions organized into three areas, namely: personal profile, studies and professional expectations, and opinion. In 2010, it was firstly presented to students attending the old 1999 syllabuses, and in 2012 we passed it once again to students registered on the two
years of the new syllabuses adapted to the European Higher Education Area. On both occasions, we tried to reach all the registered students, by going to the lecture-rooms where and when maximum attendance was expected. The questionnaires were distributed in February-May 2010 and in February 2012. Twenty answers were collected in 2010 and fourteen in 2012. Survey respondents represented the 46.5% and the 70% of the total registered women, respectively.

THE SURVEY: RESULTS

Graduate Women

Personal profile. Most of the female interviewees are from coastal zones (87.5%), particularly the Bilbao area (78%). At the time we contacted them, the majority (59.4%) were between thirty and thirty-nine years old. 59.4% were living with a partner, of whom 55% shared a profession related to the marine sector. On the whole, they do not have children (62.5%), of whom 41% affirm that their job has influenced this decision and 45.5% say that they are considering having children in the future.

Studies and professional expectations. Although their parents’ jobs are unrelated to the sea, 87.5% say they held some knowledge of professional aspects of the marine sector before they enrolled at the Nautical College and 62.5% chose these studies as their first option.

Table 2. Reasons for graduate women’s choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why did you start this nautical degree?</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>%TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional reasons: better job opportunities</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep rooted idea</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family tradition</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To see the world</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reply</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asked for the reasons behind their choice of nautical studies, 75% thought they would have better job opportunities or the idea had taken root earlier in their life, although nobody affirmed that it was because of family tradition (Table 2).
In relation to the expectations they had about their future professional career when they enrolled at Nautical College, 90.7% affirmed that it would develop at sea to a greater or lesser extent. Significantly, the option “no” obtained zero answers (Table 3).

### Table 3. Career expectations of graduate women when enrolling on nautical studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you think then that you would develop your career at sea?</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>%TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, but only temporarily, over some years</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, but only temporarily, until I obtained the highest professional certificate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhaps, but I am not sure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reply</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, most women did not report any discriminative treatment on the part of teaching staff or male-classmates during their studies. The 16% of women who did, referred solely to sexist comments from the part of the teaching staff.

**Professional experience at sea as cadets.** All female interviewees had logged a minimum of six months experience at sea as assistant officers, with the Merchant Navy, of whom 81.3% had embarked for the first time more than six years ago. Only five had not completed the twelve months of logged experience at sea needed to obtain the first professional certificate. Four of these women explained that they decided not to continue navigating to obtain their professional certificate for professional reasons: they were offered a job ashore at the time they finished their studies.

At total of 40.6% women experienced difficulty when embarking as a cadet, like their male classmates. In the five cases where the difficulties were due to gender reasons, the women referred specifically to the fact that certain shipping companies actively applied a policy of gender discrimination in order not to appoint women.

During the period spent on board as cadets, they generally felt accepted by the crew (84.4%). Many even found other women officers on board (59.4%). They were mainly of the opinion (90.6%) that women on board can perform tasks and assume responsibilities in the same way as men.
However, twenty-two women (68.8%) reported sexist behaviour, mainly of a paternalistic type, on the part of the Captain, the Chief Engineer, Officers and subordinate crewmembers.

**Fig. 1.** Net periods that female interviewees have worked as officers in the Merchant Navy (*).

(\*) In the above Figure, the 7 women who continue to navigate are depicted in grey.

**Professional experience at sea as officers.** Seventeen women embarked as officers (53.1%): sixteen in the deck department and one in the engine section. Altogether their logged experience at sea in these positions amounted to sixty years, of which 57% corresponded to five women. The lengthiest embarkation periods were by women who have been navigating for many years since their first voyage (Fig. 1).

These embarkation periods were with twenty different shipping companies, but only involved eight different types of ships. In Figures 2 and 3, women’s embarkation periods are depicted by shipping company and type of ship xviii.

**Fig. 2.** Periods that female interviewees have worked as officers, by shipping company
Fig. 3. Periods that female interviewees have worked as officers, by type of ship (*)

(*) Embarkation periods in Ro-Ro, Ro-Pax and Ferries are aggregated as women officers made no distinction between them. Ro-Ro (Roll on-Roll off) vessels are built to transport only rolling load (cars, trucks...). Ro-Pax vessels, also known as Ferries, are Ro-Ro vessels with capacity to transport more than 12 passengers.

In relation to embarkation periods, the shipping companies that stand out are Conoco-Teekay with 136 months, followed by Repsol-Campsa with 125, and Trasmediterránea with 110.3. As expected, this reflects the types of vessels with the longest embarkation periods for women: Oil tankers (302 months), followed by Gas tankers (206.5 months) and Ro-Pax and Ro-Ro passenger and freight vessels (176.3
months). The largest number of women embarked with Conoco-Teekay (six), followed by Naftomar (three), Trasmediterránea (two), as well as a further five shipping companies. A total of five women found employment with the group of firms involved in passenger traffic (Trasmediterránea, Schembri, Armas and Euroferries).

On the other hand, 47% of women reported having experienced difficulties when trying to embark as an officer, although 17.6% mentioned that their male-mates also had problems obtaining a contract, due to economic difficulties experienced in the maritime sector at that time. On the whole, they also felt accepted by the crew during their embarkation as officers (88.2%). 76.4% worked for companies that had appointed other women and 58.8% even navigated with other women officers.

As for the work performed on board, 47.1% considered that the same was expected from them as from male officers and an equal number believed that women had to work harder to achieve parity with men, although even that was not assured.

With regard to discrimination, women mainly thought that the positions they held on board were in the right place on the promotion ladder (82%) and that they received the right salary in line with the responsibility attached to their position (53%). Moreover, 88% thought that they would have received exactly the same salary had they been men. Two of the five women who denied that their salary corresponded to their responsibilities on board, emphasized that it was not due to their being women, but to the poor economic situation at that time.

59% mentioned that they had experienced sexist attitudes when appointed as officers, mainly of a paternalistic type, on the part of their male-officer mates. They also noted that treatment towards women on board improved as they added stripes to their rank.

Finally, when asked about their professional future, seven women who still navigate answered that their intention was to continue developing their career in the Merchant Navy (57%) and they saw opportunities in their companies to occupy the posts with the highest responsibility on board (57%).

**Professional experience ashore.** Twenty-two women worked ashore after finishing their nautical studies. On the whole, they report few or no difficulties in finding jobs ashore and only one was unemployed at the time of her interview. In most cases (82%) their jobs are related to the maritime sector.
A simple majority (59%) believe that they may be promoted to higher responsibility positions in their firms. Moreover, half of them consider that they have exactly the same opportunities as their male colleagues. 73% affirm that they have not experienced sexist attitudes within their work environment ashore.

They also consider (59%) that the positions they occupy are in the right place on the promotion ladder, and 50% think that they receive the right salary in accordance with their responsibilities and that this would have been the same had they been men.

**Opinion.** The majority of female interviewees (59%) expressed the belief that the Merchant Navy was prepared for the presence on board of women officers. This percentage rose to 71%, when we considered only the responses of women who have logged more experience at sea, i.e. the fourteen women who hold the highest professional certificates: 10 *Piloto de Primera de la Marina Mercante* and 4 *Captitana de la Marina Mercante* (50% of respondents from the deck section, who represent 44% of all interviewed women).

However, when asked about the presence of women who hold positions of the highest responsibility on board –Captain or Chief Engineer–, only a 47% considered that the Merchant Navy was in general prepared for it. Again, this percentage increased to 57%, when only the responses of women who have logged more experience at sea were considered.

A total of 47% think that women experience salary or promotion inequalities in the shipping companies, but only 28% think that this is the case in the maritime sector ashore. If we consider only the opinion of those who have logged more experience at sea, those percentages dropped to 36% and 14%, respectively.

Instead, a large majority (75%) believes that in the maritime sector there are shipping companies that are more appropriate for acceptance and equal treatment towards women. They mention, in particular, those involved in the transport of passengers and some European shipping companies. The fact stands out that some women report that some shipping companies actively discriminate against the employment of women on board their vessels.

**Satisfaction.** Women are mainly satisfied with the development of their professional career (75%) and are even more pleased about the way their social and family life develop as a result of their profession (81%).
A total of 75% express the opinion that, if they had the opportunity, they would choose to take the nautical studies again, but only 56% would recommend that other women to choose these studies.

**Undergraduate female students**

**Personal profile.** Undergraduate female students usually come from coastal areas (95% in 2010 and 86% in 2012) and live with their parents (70% in 2010 and 86% in 2012), whose jobs are by and large unrelated to the sea (85% in 2010 and 86% in 2012).

**Studies and professional expectations.** As far as their previous education is concerned, they are mainly High School graduates (95% in 2010 and 93% in 2012). They knew about the nautical studies before they finished their Secondary Education (67% in 2010 and 71% in 2012) through family and friends (70% in 2010 and 65% in 2012) and, for a growing number, this was their first choice when completing pre-registration at the University (47% in 2010 and 79% in 2012).

Forty-five percent of the survey group said in 2010 that the main reason for their choice was to have better job opportunities in the future, a percentage that increased to 50% in 2012. This is notable as the main reason especially for female students of the engine section (83% and 80%). It confirms the fact that holding an engine section degree is considered to entail better job opportunities than those associated with the deck department degree. It is also worth pointing out that the romantic attitude towards the professional life at sea, represented by the option “To see the world”, is also on the increase (from 35% in 2010 to 50% in 2012), mainly among female students of the engine section (+ 43 percent points).

As far as female students’ career plans are concerned, most of them expect to develop their professional career at sea, although there has been a clear decrease in this tendency (90% in 2010 and 72% in 2012). As shown in Fig. 4, it is also remarkable that the expected achievement levels for gaining a professional certification have decreased (15% affirmed in 2010 that their career goal was to obtain the highest professional certificate, and only 7% said so in 2012), while students who do not want to navigate but wish to work in the maritime sector ashore are on the increase (from 10% to 21%). The former tendency is a prominent feature among engine section’ students (from 33%
to 0%) and the latter is more noticeable among those of the deck section (from 7% to 17%).

**Fig. 4.** Female students’ career expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, but only temporarily, during some years</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, but only temporarily, until I obtain the highest professional certificate</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, my goal is to work in the maritime sector ashore</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I only want to hold a degree</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opinion. As for the students’ opinion on the presence of women in the Merchant Navy, 55% declared, in 2010, it was prepared for it, a percentage that grew up until 64% in 2012, although they considered that the tendency was to accept them (35% in 2010 and 36% in 2012).

Similarly, there is a growing number of female students who believe that the Merchant Navy is also prepared for the presence of women holding the highest responsibility positions on board –Captain or Chief Engineer–. In this regard, the movement in women’s opinion caught our attention as it changed in this direction from 25% in 2010 to 72% in 2012.

The answer to the questions about salary or promotion inequalities towards women was predominantly “No reply”, in 2010, both in maritime transport and in the maritime sector ashore (53% in 2010 and 36% in 2012, on average). The tendency to believe that inequalities are disappearing is clearly accentuated among female students: 22% in 2010 and 50% in 2012 were of the view that there was no discrimination in maritime transport, while 26% in 2010 and 57% in 2012 believed that the same was true of the maritime sector ashore.
Finally, once again students admitted their absolute ignorance in relation to the existence of shipping companies that may be more appropriate for the acceptance of women and their equal treatment (65% in 2010 and 36% in 2012). The percentage of women who thought that there were no shipping companies that may be more appropriate for the acceptance of women and their equal treatment rose from 10% in 2010 to 43% in 2012.

CONCLUSIONS

In Spain, the acceptance of women in the Merchant Navy did not occur until 1979, when they were allowed to attend Nautical Schools to receive the education and training needed for maritime professions. A total of 252 women registered at the Nautical School of Bilbao between 1979-80 and 2009-10, to study for degrees in the deck and the engine sections, although mainly in the former (69%). In that period, 142 women (56.3%) obtained an academic degree, but only ninety-six (67.6% of those holding a degree) obtained a professional certificate, and just thirteen (13.5% of these 96) went on to gain the highest professional certificate.

For this study, we have consulted a significant sample of thirty-two women, accounting for 28% of graduates from the Nautical School who have gone on to gain a professional certificate. The group comprises the initial to the most recent graduates, whose age and experience add value to the results. In order to identify changes and/or to confirm tendencies throughout this period, we also asked current undergraduate students: we consulted 46.5% and 70% of registered female students in 2010 and 2012, respectively.

In relation to the career expectations of graduate women when they began their studies, they affirmed, to a greater or lesser extent, that it would be at sea. Although most of them obtained a professional certificate, their real professional experience revealed that only 53% have ever worked on board as officers, and only a small portion (seven women) currently continue to navigate. They claim that the main reason for giving up was professional, as they found jobs ashore, but in most cases they were not just offered the jobs: the majority decided to stop navigating to search for new employment or to improve their education, for instance, by taking a Master degree, in order to start working in the shipping sector ashore.
A large portion of women who affirmed that they experienced problems finding employment to embark as officers claimed that it was because of their gender. However, once on board, most women had the feeling they were accepted by the crew, held a fair position and earned a fair salary. On the other hand, although they appear to have experienced fewer difficulties finding jobs ashore, a small percentage of those that did find employment ashore felt that they held the right position and earned a fair salary.

This contrasts with the opinions of the women in the interviews regarding salary or promotion inequalities towards women: 47% thought that discrimination still continues in employment on board whereas only 28% believed this happened in the shipping industry ashore. Along the same lines, all women that still navigate believed they could be promoted to the highest positions on board, while only 59% of those working ashore believed the same thing.

If we look at the shipping companies in which a larger number of women officers had found employment, Conoco-Teekay and other companies involved in passenger traffic are prominent. This is consistent with the view of the large majority, who believe that there are shipping companies that are more prone to accept and not to discriminate against women, in particular, those dedicated to the transport of passengers and some Northern European shipping lines.

In an attempt to depict the variation over time of certain key aspects, we compared the answers given by undergraduate female students in 2010 and 2012 with those of graduate women, who were divided into 3 groups, according to the year of their enrolment.

They share some personal characteristics, as most came from coastal areas, were aware of nautical studies before they finished High School, although their fathers and mothers’ jobs were unrelated to the sea. However, regarding the reasons for the choice of their degree, it was mainly a deep rooted idea for the early pioneers, while professional reasons and the romantic idea of seeing the world have guided the choice of female students over recent years.

When it comes to career expectations, graduate women claim that at the time they registered they thought their professional life would be connected to the sea, although the expectation that it would be temporary tended to increase as the years passed by. The main body of female students also expected to navigate, but there was a
significant and growing percentage of women that aimed to work in the maritime sector ashore.

As for their opinions, there was a clear growing tendency to believe in the readiness of the Merchant Navy to accept the presence of women on board, whether or not they hold the positions of highest responsibility. The percentage of women is also growing who believe that there are no promotional or salary inequalities between men and women in the maritime transport and the same holds true with regard to belief in the existence of occupational segregation on account of their gender.

Summarizing, the results of these surveys show that, in these 30 years, changes have not only taken place in relation to expectations but also in relation to opinions, suggesting, moreover, that facts and beliefs do not always progress at the same rate.

REFERENCES


NOTES

i In this research, maritime professions are considered to be those related to the operational sections of the ship, like the deck and the engine departments. In the same line see, for instance, Kitada (2009) or Thomas (2004).

ii In 1930, Anna Ivanova Schetinina became an officer of the Soviet Merchant Navy (Brooks, 2006, p.8).

iii Victoria Drummond set sail as an Assistant Engineer in 1922 (Drummond, 1994, p. 75).

iv It should also be mentioned that the first woman working as a rating was the Finnish Lena Ringbom who embarked in 1931, when she was sixteen (Kirby and Hinkkanen, 2000, pp. 252-253). There are previous cases like that of Mary Lacy who in 1759, when she was 19, enrolled as an apprentice shipwright in H.M.S. Sandwich, but she did it hiding her female status (Lacey, 2008).

v At this point, it is worth mentioning that until relatively recent times, the relationship of gender and seafaring has been ignored. In this regard, some attention has been paid since the late 1980s mainly from women scholars. The related outstanding publications include: Stanley (1987); Dugaw (1992); Lefebure (1995); Creighton and Norling (1996); and Cordingly (2001). Since the late 1990s significant research on women seafarers is being carried out at the Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC) at Cardiff University (UK) by Minghua Zhao, Michelle Thomas and Momoko Kitada, inter alia. Their publications are listed at: http://www.sirc.cf.ac.uk. In Sweden, Jan Horck studies the gender perspective in maritime education, at the World Maritime University. In Spain, a research group led by Rosa de la Campa is working on the same topics at the Nautical College of the University of A Coruña.

vi This research conducted by the SIRC was commissioned by the International Labour Office (Belcher et al., 2003).

vii This study was partially conducted within the context of the Research Project “The incorporation of women in the Merchant Navy” sponsored by EMAKUNDE - Instituto Vasco de la Mujer (17/2009PRO). Partial results of this study can be seen in Ibáñez and Díaz (2010).

viii As stipulated by Royal Decree on 2 December 1988, the long-awaited transfer to the Basque Autonomous Region and, consequently, the integration of the Nautical School into the University of the Basque Country, took place on 1 July 1994, on the basis of Royal Decree 1546/1994 (Boletín Oficial del

ix To make this statement we considered possession of the second professional certificate, to obtain which it is necessary to have navigated for a minimum period of 12 months as an officer.


xi This circular is preserved at the Historical Archive of the Nautical College of the University of the Basque Country (HANCUBC), Binder ‘Subsecretaría Recibidas: Enero 1979 - Junio 1979’. A further letter was received at the Schools two months later, in April, which included the answer given along the same lines to Rosemary Suarez (Ibid.). The Constitution of 1978 was published in the BOE on 29 December 1978.

xii The Ministry of Transport -in its various denominations- regulates these professional qualifications. The current requirements for the expedition of Merchant Navy’s professional certificates were fixed by Royal Decree 973/2009 (see BOE 02/07/2009).

xiii However, big differences are also observed among the different degrees: in 2000-01, 34.5% of total students taking the navigation undergraduate degree were women, whereas at the engine one the peak reached the same year was only a 17%. The figures have been worked out from data collected in UPV/EHU (2010, pp. 14-98).

xiv In Spain, there are seven Nautical Colleges that belong to the following public universities: Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña (Barcelona); Universidad de Cantabria (Santander); Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (Bilbao); Universidad de Oviedo (Gijón); Universidad de A Coruña (A Coruña); Universidad de Cádiz (Cádiz); Universidad de La Laguna (Santa Cruz de Tenerife). Relative numbers of women enrolment in these seven institutions are quite similar, and it has been reported that women taking nautical degrees represent 22.5% of all registered students on a national basis (Campa et al., 2010, p. 127).

xv In 1998, 5% of students at Nautical Schools in the Netherlands, and 4% in both Germany and the United Kingdom were female (Zhao, 1998, p.16). In 2001, 13.4% of all students registered at The Antwerp Maritime Academy, in Belgium, were female, and 9.3% of those enrolled at the École Nationale de la Marine Marchande de Marseille, in France (Belcher et al., 2003, p. 13). In Sweden, the MET Institutions in Göteborg and Kalmar experienced a record enrolment in 2008, when women taking nautical courses represented 7% of total students (Horck, 2010 b). Even at the World Maritime University, in Malmö Sweden, where postgraduate programmes are offered and only some students have seafaring experiences, female students are also in minority as they constitute about 20% of the total student annual intake (Horck, 2010 a, p. 38).

xvi Since women first enrolled in the Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, in 1974, their recruitment levels linger between 10 and 12% (Brickman, 2008).

xvii We interviewed the women personally whenever possible, otherwise the information was gathered via e-mail.

xviii Some shipping companies have been grouped together: Campsa and Repsol, Conoco Philips and Teekay, as well as Iscomar and Contenemar:
- Campsa was dissolved in 1992, and their assets distributed between oil companies that were in operation at that time in the Spanish market. The Campsa brand was then incorporated into Repsol.
- The relationship between Conoco Philips (before Tosco Corporation) and Teekay began in 2001. In 2008 Teekay bought 6 Conoco ships that were transferred with the Spanish officers who manned them.
- Iscomar forms part of the Contenemar Group.