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Department of Maritime Studies

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Analysis of satisfaction level of shore-based personnel in the shipping sector, performance appraisal and retention strategies.

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Abstract

The shipping industry is a vital component of global trade and a cornerstone of the Greek economy. Greek-owned vessels represent a significant portion of the global and EU fleets, making Greece a maritime powerhouse. Shore-based personnel play a critical role in ensuring the smooth operation of vessels through logistics, compliance, training, legal support, and more. Key factors influencing their job satisfaction include fair compensation, work-life balance, professional growth, and a positive organizational culture. Performance appraisals are essential for aligning individual goals with company strategy and identifying development needs. High employee turnover is a major concern, prompting the need for tailored retention strategies like flexible work arrangements, competitive benefits, clear career paths, and strong leadership. Comparative analyses with other maritime nations highlight varying employee benefits. Overall, investing in shore-based personnel through structured HR practices is essential for operational excellence and long-term sustainability in the shipping sector.

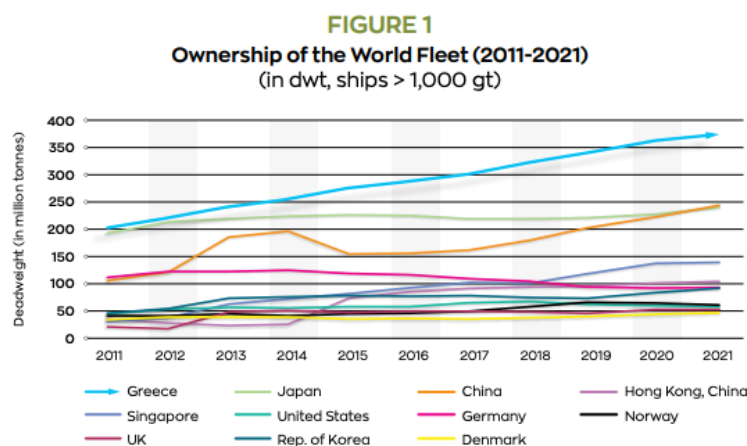
Η ναυτιλία αποτελεί βασικό πυλώνα της ελληνικής οικονομίας και έναν από τους πιο σημαντικούς κλάδους του παγκόσμιου εμπορίου. Η Ελλάδα διαθέτει έναν από τους μεγαλύτερους στόλους παγκοσμίως, με τους Έλληνες πλοιοκτήτες να κυριαρχούν σε διάφορα είδη πλοίων. Το προσωπικό ξηράς διαδραματίζει καθοριστικό ρόλο στην εύρυθμη λειτουργία της ναυτιλίας, αναλαμβάνοντας ευθύνες στους τομείς της διαχείρισης πλοίων, εφοδιαστικής, νομικής υποστήριξης, εκπαίδευσης και κανονιστικής συμμόρφωσης. Η εργασιακή ικανοποίηση επηρεάζεται από παράγοντες όπως η δίκαιη αμοιβή, η ισορροπία προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής ζωής, η επαγγελματική εξέλιξη και το υποστηρικτικό εργασιακό περιβάλλον. Οι αξιολογήσεις απόδοσης, είναι κρίσιμες για την ευθυγράμμιση των στόχων των εργαζομένων με τη στρατηγική της επιχείρησης. Οι υψηλοί δείκτες αποχώρησης καθιστούν απαραίτητες τις στοχευμένες στρατηγικές διατήρησης προσωπικού. Η επένδυση στο ανθρώπινο δυναμικό της ξηράς είναι ζωτικής σημασίας για τη βιωσιμότητα και την ανταγωνιστικότητα της ελληνικής ναυτιλίας.

Keywords: Human Resources, Performance Appraisals, Retention Rate, Shipping Industry

1. Introduction

a. Overview of the Shipping Industry

The shipping industry is a vital factor of global trade, facilitating the supply of goods across oceans and continents. It encompasses various activities related to the transportation of cargo, including shipping, logistics, port operations, and maritime services. Greece has a long-standing maritime tradition and is one of the world's leading shipping nations. The shipping industry is a cornerstone of the Greek economy, contributing significantly to the economy and providing employment opportunities both at sea and onshore. Historically, throughout the years, Greece has a rich maritime background dating back thousands of years, with ancient Greeks known for their seafaring skills and maritime trade. This heritage has laid the foundation for Greece's modern shipping industry making Piraeus one of the biggest ports in the world. Specifically, Greece is a global maritime hub, home to one of the largest merchant fleets in the world. Greek-owned vessels account for a significant portion of the world's total shipping tonnage (21% of the global fleet), with Greek shipowners dominating various segments of the industry, including bulk carriers, tankers, and container ships.

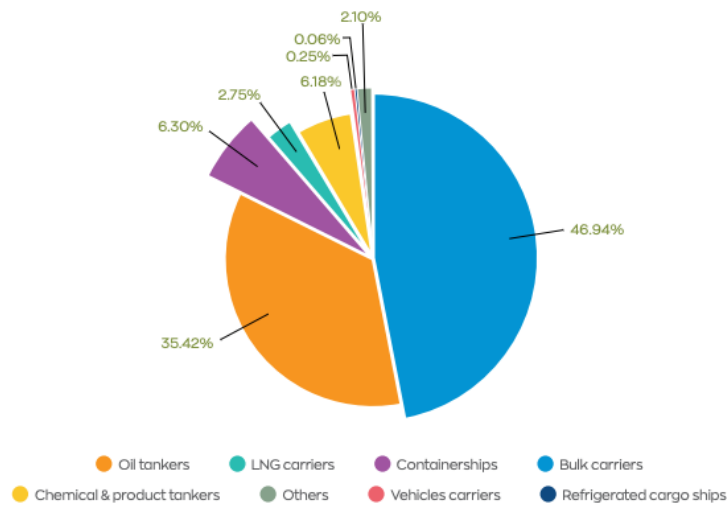


Source: UNCTAD, *Review of Maritime Transport, 2011-2021*

Greek shipowners control:

- 31.78% of the world oil tanker fleet
- 25.01% of the world bulk carriers
- 22.35% of the world Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) carriers • 15.60% of the world chemical & product tankers
- 13.85% of the world Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) carriers
- 9.33% of the world containerships

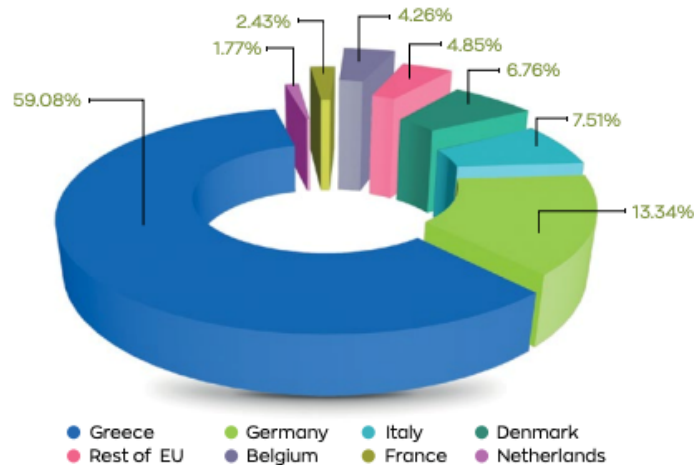
FIGURE 2
Ship Type Analysis of the Greek-owned Fleet
 (in dwt, ships > 1,000 gt)



Source: UGS calculations, based on data from IHS Global Limited, March 2022

Also, the Greek-owned fleet is the backbone of European Shipping as it represents 59% of the European Union (EU)-controlled fleet. One third of the Greek-controlled fleet flies an EU Member State flag.

FIGURE 3
Ownership of the EU-controlled Fleet
 (in dwt, ships > 1,000 gt)



Source: European Commission, *EU Transport in Figures, Statistical Pocketbook 2021*

The shipping industry is a major contributor to the Greek economy, generating considerable revenue through freight rates, vessel operations, and maritime services.

It provides employment opportunities for thousands of Greeks, and not only, both as seafarers and onshore in various maritime-related roles. In addition, Greece has developed maritime clusters in key port cities such as Piraeus, Thessaloniki, and Chios, which serve as centers for shipping activities. These clusters foster collaboration and innovation within the industry. Furthermore, the Greek government acknowledges the importance of the shipping industry and provides support through favorable taxation policies, various motivations for shipowners, as well as continuous investments and development in port infrastructure and maritime education. Moreover, Greek shipowners are the driving force of the global shipping market by participating in industry organizations, transforming international maritime procedures, and contributing to advancements in maritime sustainability and technology. Regarding technological innovations, advancements in technology are transforming the shipping industry, with developments such as digitalization, automation, blockchain, and artificial intelligence (AI) improving competence, safety, and sustainability.

On the other hand, despite Greek Shipping's strengths and dynamic, this specific industry faces challenges such as fluctuating freight rates, continuous regulatory compliance, environmental concerns, and geopolitical uncertainties. However, it also presents opportunities for growth, offshore energy support, and digitalization.

In summary, the shipping industry is maybe the highest force of the Greek economy, reflecting the country's maritime heritage and playing a crucial role in global trade and transportation.

b. Role of Shore-Based Personnel

Shore-based personnel play an important part in shipping operations. Although seafarers who work on board ships receive a lot of attention, shore-based personnel also provide important services, guidance to all the seafarers on board as well as skills that are essential to the efficient operation of marine procedures. Some of the key roles and responsibilities of shore-based employees in the maritime sector are:

- Ship management and its Operation
- Logistics and Supply Chain
- Shipping Agencies and Brokering
- Maritime Law and Insurance

- Maritime Education and Training
- Regulatory Compliance and Environmental Management
- Wellbeing, SCR and Teambuilding

In more detail, the above mentioned “functions” of a shipmanagement company are responsible for the tasks that are going to be explained below.

Ship management and its Operation

Shore-based professionals are in charge of all elements of vessel operations, such as crewing, maintenance, repairs, environmental compliance. They oversee the day-to-day operations of ships, ensuring that they run effectively and safely while complying to international regulations. Furthermore, shore-based personnel are in charge of port facilities and activities such as administration, cargo handling, berthing arrangements, and port security. They are responsible for vessel movement, optimize port operations, maximize efficiency and follow up end to end operations.

Logistics and Supply Chain Management

Shore-based personnel take part in operations related to logistics and supply chains, such as inventory control, transportation planning, warehousing, and distribution, and are managed by staff members stationed in the office. They arrange the transportation of commodities from manufacturing sites to their final locations, maximizing efficiency and lowering expenses.

Brokering and Shipping Agencies

Employees who are occupied in above-mentioned departments are held accountable regarding shipowners, charterers, and port authorities support, with transactions and communications on behalf of brokerage and shipping agencies. In addition to managing administrative duties and contract negotiations, they also set up pilotage and tug services in case of a port call as well as supporting vessels during their port calls.

Maritime Law and Insurance

Maritime lawyers, insurance brokers, and claims handling employees who specialize in shipping-related legal and insurance concerns make up the shore-based workforce.

They offer legal advice, design contracts, settle disputes, handle insurance claims resulting from maritime incidents in cooperation with the P&I Clubs.

Currently, there are twelve P&I Clubs and they provide marine liability cover (protection and indemnity) for approximately 90% of the world's ocean-going tonnage.

Those are,

- The American Club,
- Britannia P&I,
- Gard,
- Japan P&I Club,
- The London P&I Club,
- NorthStandard,
- The Shipowners' Mutual P&I,
- SKULD,
- Steamship Mutual,
- The Swedish Club,
- UK P&I,
- WEST

Maritime Education and Training

Shipping companies also occupy personnel in the training department. This department is responsible for on-board and shore-based personnel's training. Any employee has the need for further development, either personal or professional. It is very important for organizations to be able to support those needs in maritime education and training, by providing instruction and certification programs for all professionals. They develop curriculum, conduct training sessions, and ensure compliance with international standards for maritime education and certification.

Regulatory Compliance and Environmental Management

These members of the workforce monitor regulatory compliance and environmental management practices in the shipping sector. They ensure that vessels obey international laws for safety, security, pollution prevention, and environmental sustainability.

Any organization wouldn't be the same without their employees. Thus, it is crucial to understand their impact on day-to-day operations, understand their needs and cover them. Most "old-fashioned" companies believe that by training and developing their employees, they will choose to leave. Although that holds some minor truth to it, employers have to create an organization that anyone would be proud of being a member of.

c. Factors Affecting job Satisfaction

There are many reasons why an employee loses interest in his job. Those factors are the feeling of lack of recognition, not being correctly rewarded, in any form, not being managed appropriately, monotonous work resulting to limited career growth and development opportunities, work-life balance, negative work environment, not resonating with the company's mission, vision and values, or could be from any other personal issues.

All of them will be thoroughly analyzed in the main part of this paper.

d. Performance Appraisal in the Shipping Sector

HR departments frequently design performance appraisals to aid employees advance in their respective fields. They provide people with feedback on how well they are performing in their work, ensuring that they are managing and reaching the KPI'S set for them, and assisting them if they fall short.

Performance evaluations help determine how to distribute a company's limited budget for incentives like raises and bonuses. Furthermore, they provide businesses with a tool for identifying the employees who have made the most significant contributions to company growth, allowing them to properly reward their top performers.

Performance assessments additionally assist employees and managers to identify areas for growth and career progression, as well as build a strategy for the employee's development through more advanced training and increased responsibility. Performance appraisals mostly serve a dual purpose for both organizations and employees. Concerning organizations, performance appraisals provide insight into an employee's contribution, allowing management to enhance working conditions, address behavioral concerns, acknowledge employee capabilities, promote skill and career development, and make better strategic decisions.

For employees, performance reviews are a way of acknowledging and appreciating their accomplishments, identify opportunities for promotions or bonuses, assist them with training courses or education to advance their careers, identify areas for improvement, encourage and involve them in their career development, and begin discussions about long-term goals.

Performance appraisal systems also aims to:

- Provide helpful information to help make decisions regarding transfers, promotions, terminations, etc.
- Supply the necessary data to identify employee training and development program requirements.
- Help make confirmation/acceptance decisions regarding employees who have completed a probationary period.
- Help make decisions regarding raising an employee's salary, offering incentives, or changing variable pay.
- Clarify expectations and facilitate communication between managers and subordinates.
- Help employees realize their full potential performance level.
- Collect relevant employee data and keep the records for various future organizational purposes.

e. Retention strategies for Shore-Based Personnel

Every company is responsible for recruiting and maintaining its personnel. Nowadays recruiting progress is really difficult due to the big competition that exists in the shipping market. Companies offer a lot of benefits to their employees in order to keep them happy and engaged in their job. Turnover percentage keeps on growing and for that, retention strategies have been developed. More than that, those strategies are not only used in order to maintain the already existing personnel but also for other reasons. Other positive outcomes extracted from RS (retention strategies) are the

lower hiring cost, increased employee productivity, stronger work ethic and relationships amongst co-workers, less work-related stress and burnout.

2. Analysis of Satisfaction Level

a. Definition and Importance of Employee Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an unquantifiable metric, it measures how each and everyone of us reacts when doing its job or how you are feeling when you are present at our work or even how you feel just thinking about going to the office. Our system sends some signals which we recognize and categorize as either simply bad or simply good. To put it simply, it is how happy you are when doing your job.

Leading companies are now attempting to quantify this feeling, with job satisfaction surveys becoming standard in most workplaces.

It's crucial to remember that job satisfaction varies from employee to employee. In the same workplace under the same conditions, the factors that help one employee feel good about their job may not apply to another employee. For this reason, it is essential to have a multidimensional approach to employee satisfaction, covering the challenging nature of work, the flexibility of the job, the recognition that comes from the management and the organization as a whole, the compensation and the benefits as well as the career progression and if that syncs with employees personal growth and targets.

The real question is, why employee satisfaction is crucial in the workplace? If an organization actively cares about its employees' satisfaction levels it will eventually and inevitably end up with engaged, involved and a happy workforce who will not complain for any small thing that might come up.

This can benefit any organization in several ways. Firstly, voluntary turnover will come down dramatically. In some cases, turnover is healthy if the employees who leave are not contributing to the success of the company. Additionally, it can also attract new and fresh talent. But voluntary turnover, meaning people choosing to leave, affect the organization on a completely new level. The company risks losing talented people whom it has carefully trained over the years and this talent to be recruited from a competitor.

Also, satisfied employees lead to satisfied customer relationships. If employees are not happy at their job, this most likely will reflect on their daily interactions with the

customers. Some customers in the shipping sector are the agents, the brokers, the suppliers, the IT support companies. Moreover, low satisfaction levels could lead to conflicts in the workplace between co-workers.

Furthermore, satisfaction is in a direct line to the productivity of the employees. In a positive work environment, employees are more likely to bring their best to work daily. In addition, high-satisfaction workplaces prioritize employee wellness. In this case, employees who work in those environments tend to speak up easily so it is more likely to address any issues that may impact their work such as burnout, health issues, or any similar concerns. Last but not least, low satisfaction levels can increase HR costs. Recruiting costs a lot of money to the company so it is only logical that when an employee resigns due to low satisfaction levels that will cost money to the HR department trying to add a new person to the workforce.

Companies must show that they care. Meaning, communicating in various ways like informal recognition, paid incentives, and other forms of communication.

Making job satisfaction a priority allows companies to remain ahead of the curve and avoid unprecedented challenges caused by low satisfaction. Driven by these benefits, an increasing number of companies are engaging in work satisfaction programs. And this has had a significant impact on job satisfaction.

b. Factors

As it was mentioned above plenty of times, employee satisfaction is maybe the single most important thing. The key factors that control this metric are:

1. Compensation & employee benefits
2. Work-Life Balance
3. Job Stability
4. Work Environment
5. Recognition
6. Role Clarity
7. Management Style
8. Company Culture

Moving on, we will analyze each of these factors in depth.

Concerning compensation and overall employee benefits, this is the one factor that employees value the most. Salaries must reflect the quality of work for each employee

as well as industry's standards. Corporate benefits should not be overlooked and dismissed as they constitute the new normality. Some of them are health related benefits (health security coverage), retirement plans, coverage of yearly transportation cards for the employees who use public transport, in-house lunch meals or some sort of credit card to be used for their daily food/drink needs. Also, another necessity is the paid time off. Last but not least, and maybe the one "benefit" that is valued the most from the working force is the yearly bonuses.

Furthermore, companies ought to value the personal time of the employee. Especially in shipping, which never rests, it is crucial to have this balance. Everyone should leave the office when their working hours end. It is understandable that this depends on the position of the employee. Those cases can be balanced with flexible working hours and more remote work options than the "average" employee. Let's not forget that the majority of the companies offer a hybrid work model.

Additionally, clear career growth opportunities should be established and known to everyone. This can be achieved by speaking openly and freely about the company's performance status as well as its future.

Regarding the work environment, it goes without saying that this should be a safe and clean place. Policies about inclusion, anti-bullying along with a "no blame" approach must be established. Everyone must feel comfortable to be himself while respecting the people around him, in this case his colleagues. Teams should be constructed in a way that will help the company grow and achieve its vision.

Employee recognition comes in various forms. It could be just an everyday "well done" or a more formal process that embodies the company's culture. Recognition can be received from anyone. The management team, the department manager or ideally everyone in the organization should be able to give each other praise. With that being said, it comes down to the circumstances. Nevertheless, every achievement should be acknowledged and celebrated. Employees must be recognized in various ways, one of them is promotions. If employees are not promoted in a logical time-span they will most likely seek an alternative. KPI's is a good metric that aims to estimate if it is a good time for a promotion. For example, if an employee has reached his KPI's for two consecutive years then it is a good opportunity to be at least financially rewarded.

Any modern and safe workplace ought to provide freedom and the right opportunities for employee development. Every employee should have his training matrix that must be followed. Additionally, everyone must be given opportunities to prove that are eligible for career progression.

Employees have an effect if the nature of their job is clear and understood. From the onboarding procedure the company's mission and vision should be explained and also how the employee's work contributes to this. Furthermore, the responsibilities of their role should be thoroughly explained. Their qualifications ought to be well-matched to the position and every team member in a department must be able to use one's strength and skills.

All the above mentioned factors can not function without the proper management style and company culture. Let's not forget that employees don't quit jobs, they quit bosses. A poll by Gallup, found that 75% of the voluntary attrition rate is caused by the supervisors and not the job itself. The management team must trust the employees that they will act according to the company's values as well as be supportive and communicative with their subordinates. Additionally, it is important to establish an open door policy, feedback procedures, and an inclusive, diverse and respectful culture.

When above-mentioned elements are optimized, shore based personnel are more likely to feel appreciated, engaged, and content which improves productivity, retention and of course satisfaction levels.

c. Measuring Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction has been proven to be crucial, but it is equally important to measure it on a regular basis. However, because of its many facets, it is not a simple metric. Instead, companies can evaluate employee happiness using a variety of quantitative and qualitative data sets. Below, we examine a few popular measures of employee satisfaction:

1. Employee net promoter score (eNP)

Employee net promoter score is a very successful metric on how to measure if an employee is likely to recommend the organization to an acquaintance or a friend. It

shows how satisfied and engaged people really are. The questions used to measure this metric are: “On a scale from 1-10, how likely are you to recommend this organization as a place to work?” or “Based on your experience, how likely are you to recommend our organization to a friend or colleague?”.

From the extraction of the results, HR dept can divide the responses to three categories. First are the employees who love their job and wouldn't ever leave, the promoters. Those often answer from 9-10. Then, are the employees who answer 7 or 8 and they are neither happy nor unhappy but feel neutral, the passives. And lastly, are the employees who answer 6 or below, the detractors . These are the ones who are not satisfied at all.

To calculate your eNPS, the formula is:

eNps: % of Promoters - % of Detractors.

2. Absenteeism rate

What is absenteeism?

Absenteeism is the continuous absence of an employee for their job not within the legal limits (holidays, days-off, illness or family emergencies). It can be a sign of serious job dissatisfaction, ongoing mental health or medical issues. This unjustified absence most of the time is still payable. This phenomenon can cause a lot of issues in the day to day operations if an employee is out of office on “difficult” work days such as deadline days, office audit days like ISM certification and TMSA.

Why does it occur?

Some of the most common reasons are burnout that employees face, workplace harassment, and disengagement.

It can always be reduced or controlled by taking some measures. Wellbeing initiatives like mental and communication workshops can drastically benefit the employee.

Physical benefits like gym memberships are really good for the mental health of the employee.

Absenteeism at work is a reflection of a range of issues, including inadequate leadership, insufficient governance, unfavorable working circumstances, and a lack of work-life balance. Although low employee happiness levels are correlated with a high absenteeism rate, it can also serve as an indicator of employee satisfaction. A behavior that might have serious consequences is absenteeism. Employees who miss work more frequently have more work to do, which leads to increased stress and a

higher likelihood of job dissatisfaction. To calculate employee absenteeism rate, use the below formula:

Absenteeism rate = number of absent days / number of available work days in a given period.

3. Employee turnover rate

Another metric that can measure employee satisfaction is the turnover rate. One of the biggest expenses for any company is turnover, and a reduced turnover rate promotes cohesion, productivity, and less disruption. An employee's likelihood of quitting increases with their level of satisfaction. Employees are more likely to stay with a company longer when they are challenged at work, have positive relationships and are supported. To calculate employee turnover, use the below formula:

Turnover rate: number of terminations during a period / number of employees at the beginning of period

4. Surveys

As old fashioned as it may seem, surveys are one of the most easy tools to measure employee satisfaction. Anonymous surveys regarding stress levels, quality of work, work or benefits requests, and training needs can be conducted. All these parameters affect employee satisfaction.

Tracking employee satisfaction is crucial for improving retention by identifying and addressing concerns early. It increases productivity by fostering a happy work atmosphere. It improves business culture, encouraging loyalty and involvement. Better management and policy decisions are made possible by regular input. By bringing employee demands and corporate objectives into alignment, it ultimately propels overall business performance.

d. Satisfaction statistics in the shipping sector

In order to completely understand satisfaction levels in the shipping sector it is important to take a look at “The Maritime Employee Survey” that was conducted in 2021 by Halcyon Recruitment, DSG Diversity Study Group and Coracle Maritime.

The respondents of the survey come from the following geographical locations:

Europe 35%, UK 20%, USA and Canada 5%, Mediterranean 4%, Caribbean & South America 1%, Middle East 5%, Africa 2%, Asia Pacific 20% and Indian Subcontinent 15% and the business areas where they operate are:

- Broking, chartering and trading,
- Executive / senior management,

- Technical / HSQE,
- P&I / legal / insurance,
- Vessel Operations,
- HR / Crewing / Support functions.

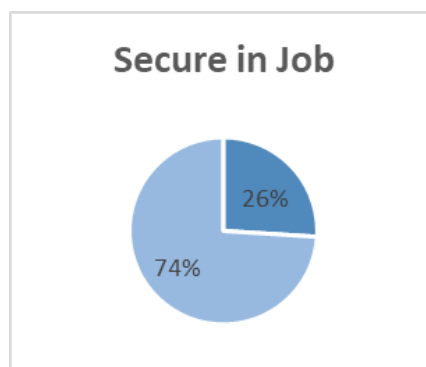
The findings of this survey were condensed within the needs of this dissertation. The nine pillars that we will examine below are:

1. Security in Job
2. Development
3. Salary
4. Bonus
5. Company Culture
6. Diverse & Inclusive Workforce
7. Internal Training
8. External Training
9. Industry opinion

- Security in Job

The probability that a person will remain employed and not experience unforeseen layoffs, dismissals, or other disturbances at work is known as job security. It offers a feeling of financial security and stability. Job security is the key component of both career satisfaction and mental health.

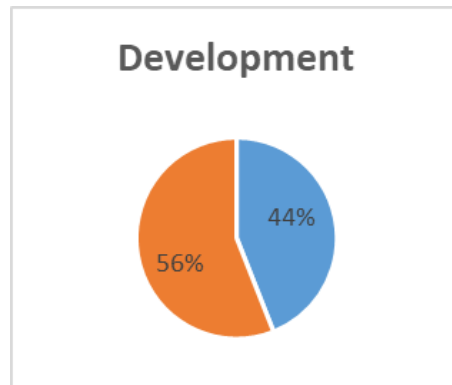
So, 74% feel this stability in their job and 26% don't.



- Development

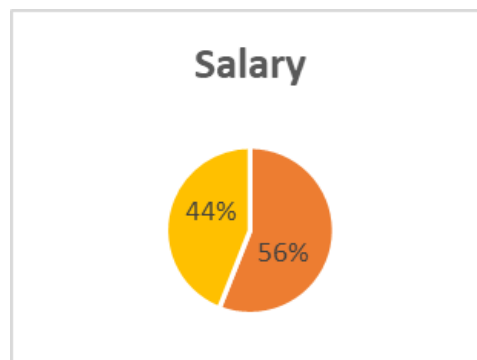
It's really important for every employee to have a serious discussion with its manager in order to define his goals and also to set a clear path for his development plan. 56%

of the employees feel that the employer offers good career progression opportunities and 44% don't.



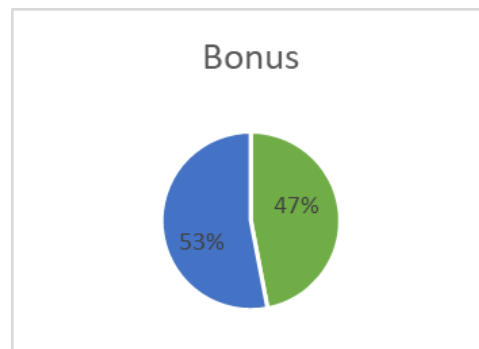
- Salary

Frequent salary increase. 44% of the employees experience that whilst 56% don't.



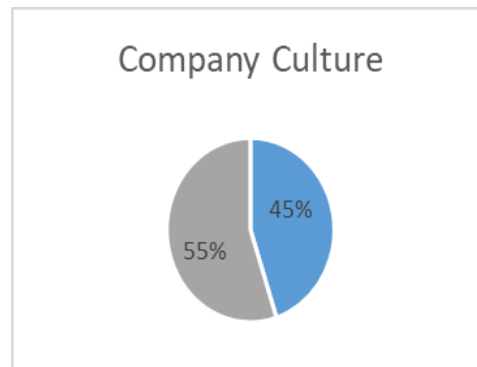
- Bonus

Same as above. Received at least a bonus in the last 12 months. 47% did and 53% didn't.



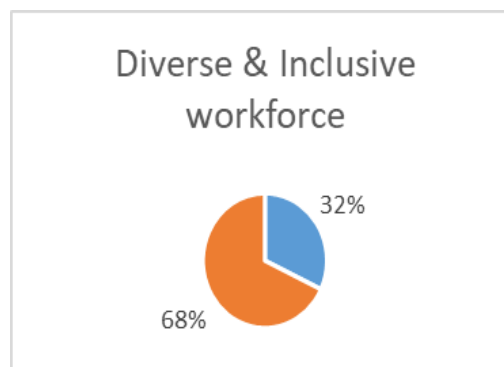
- Company Culture

Every employee should feel supported in their job. No blame policies must prevail and everyone should feel valued as well as free to express their ideas and thoughts. 45% feel that they have found this ideal workplace while 55% don't.



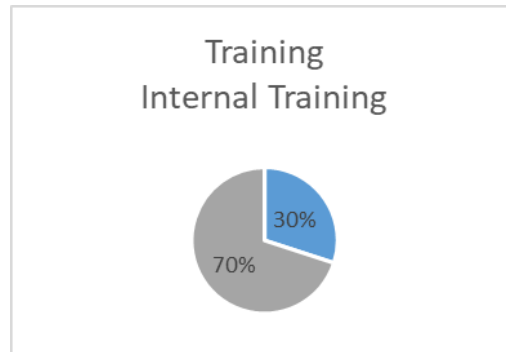
- Diverse & Inclusive Workforce

An inclusive workforce is one in which people from many origins, identities, and points of view are not just present but also welcomed, appreciated, and supported. Diversity includes distinctions in color, gender, age, sexual orientation, handicap, cultural heritage, and more. Inclusion assures that these different people have equal chances to succeed in the workplace and can contribute completely. With that being said, 32% feel that they belong in an organization like that whilst 68% don't.



- Internal Training

Regarding the training, 30% feel that they are supported by internal training processes and 70% are not.



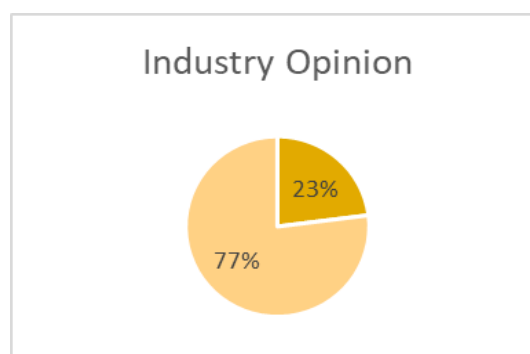
- External Training

On the other hand, 54% feel that they are supported by internal training processes and 46% are not.



- Industry opinion

77% would recommend the shipping industry to someone outside of this field for a possible career and 23% would not.



Surveys like that are crucial since they offer insightful analysis of the degrees of employee satisfaction and main issues of importance in the shipping industry.

e. Comparison with other Country Benefits

Greece's mandatory benefits include 22-26 days per year, paid maternity leave of at least 4 months although a lot more benefits have been added for new mothers. For new fathers, there has been established a 14 day paternity leave. Also, female employees have the right to take a day off per year for a gynecologist appointment. Additionally, all employees could take extra days regarding medical issues concerning them or their families. All public holidays are considered not workable days, if an employee does work on these days then he legally must be compensated for that. Not days off wise, employers cover their employees social security contributions (EFKA) and the paid amount depends on the worker's wages. These social security contributions also cover public health insurance which provides medical treatments and healthcare services. In addition to that, when an employee is being laid off then, depending on his time of service within the company, he is eligible for severance pay. On top of that, through the social security system all employees deserve a pension plan. Last but not least, employees benefit from a 13th salary, around December which equals a month's pay and a 14th pay around Easter time which equals half of a month's pay.

Since we referred to Greece's mandatory employee benefits, it is really important to compare those with other top maritime nations' benefits. The 5 nations that we will break down below are Japan, China, Norway, USA and Germany. Those five belong to the top 10 maritime nations worldwide based on the fleet's market value (USD/Billion). The ranking is as below:

No 1 - Japan with fleet value of 108,

No 3 - China with fleet value of 88,

No 5 - Norway with fleet value of 39,

No 7 - USA with fleet value of 33,

No 8 - Germany with fleet value of 27.

On this ranking, Greece is on number 2 with fleet value of 100,5.

Analytically, Japan's benefits are as follows.

Regarding annual paid days off. Employees are eligible for 10 days after the completion of 6 workable months. After that, one day is added for every year with a

maximum of 20 days total. All national holidays are considered days off. Concerning maternity leave, mothers are entitled to 14 weeks of paid leave with the condition that 6 of these weeks must be taken before the birth. Paternity leave is not covered but fathers can obtain parental leave instead. Parental leave lasts twelve months and it must start 8 weeks after paternity/maternity leave. The salary of the employee is covered by 67% from the social security services for the first 180 days and for the remaining days the 50% of the salary. The parental leave can be extended for up to 2 years for the same amount covered (50%). Also, sick leave is not established. Employers are also responsible for covering employees' social insurance. Analytically, social insurance covers health insurance (Kenko Hoken) which provides medical expenses and healthcare services. Also, pension insurance (Kosei Nenkin) which includes benefits upon retirement. Additionally, unemployment insurance (Koyo Hoken) which works as a lifeline in case of unemployment as it provides financial support. Likewise, there is the worker's accident insurance (Koji Hoken) which works as compensation insurance in case of an accident. Lastly, there is no mandatory severance pay in Japan.

Additionally, China's benefits are as described below. Regarding paid time off, all employees, irrespective of their work schedule/time (part-time or full-time) are entitled to 5 working days off per year. This number can be increased by the employees cumulative working years, which means, employees deserve five days off for their first 10 working years, for more than ten years they deserve ten days off and for more than 20 years they deserve 15 days off. The above days do not include public holidays who sum up to seven per year. Moreover, maternity leave includes 120-158 calendar days but that depends on the region. It starts 15 days before the expected birth day. The employee's average basic monthly salary is paid by the government and the employer pays the rest. New mothers are entitled to extend the leave for an additional of 15 days in cases of difficult labors. There is also the unique benefit of the "breastfeeding leave" which is 6 and ½ months and applies only with the organization's approval. During this period, the salary is paid by the employer. On top of that, there is also paternity leave. Depending on the location, new fathers are entitled from 7 to 30 days of paternity leave but only in the case of a legal contract of at least one year. These days are estimated to be taken within the first month of the child's birth. Regarding the salary of the father, nothing changes and the employer keeps paying the full amount of it. Adding to that, depending on the employee's

location, different parental leave policies apply. For example, Beijing and Shanghai employees are entitled to five days of parental leave annually until their child turns three.. This leave can be taken by both parents, who can then divide the time off however they see fit. In China, sick leave is quite complicated. Employees are entitled to paid sick leave for up to 180 days. This leave is paid at different rates and by different providers depending upon length of the leave and the length of service in the organization/company. Like the country mentioned above, China also covers social insurance. This insurance is responsible for:

- Pension (Retirement Insurance)
- Medical Insurance
- Unemployment Insurance
- Work-Related Injury Insurance
- Maternity Insurance

In China they also have the housing fund where employers are obliged to contribute to the housing fund, which was established in order to help employees save money for housing needs, either for buying or for renting a house. Both employees and employers make contributions to this fund. In the case of any employee working extra hours beyond his dedicated 40 hours per week then the employer is required to pay overtime. The rate is generally as follows:

- 1.5 times the regular wage for work on weekdays
- 2 times the regular wage for work on holidays
- 3 times the regular wage for work on weekends

Lastly, incase of a dismissal, the minimum notice period is 30 days and severance pay is based on the length of employment within the same organization/employer but it varies from region to region. For example, in Shanghai, there are two different reasons for termination of a contract. Termination without cause, less than six months of employment: half a month's salary, more than six months of employment, one month's salary for each full year, up to a maximum of 12 months salary. On the other hand, termination for a serious breach of the contract by the employee, then no severance pay is required but if the termination is mutual agreement then the severance pay is negotiable.

Flying across the ocean and landing in Europe, is time to analyze Norway's mandatory employee benefits. Employees there are entitled to a minimum of 25 days of paid time off per year. Furthermore, employees over 60 years old receive an additional five days of vacation and all public holidays are considered days off as well. Regarding maternity leave, newly become mothers, who have worked at least six out of the last ten months, are qualified to take paid maternity leave. There are two options for the employee to choose as regards her parental days. First, the pregnant employee can take either 49 weeks at 100% average salary or 59 weeks at 80% average salary and NAV (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) will be responsible for this pay. The mother has the entitlement to a maternal quota based on the whole length of leave.

- 15 weeks (if 49 weeks chosen) at 100% average salary
- 19 weeks (if 59 weeks chosen) at 80% average salary

The first 5 weeks must be taken soon after birth, with the remainder taken either immediately or later. The employee may prolong her leave for up to one year without compensation. Maternity and paternity leave have a lot of similarities. As the mothers, new fathers who have also been working for a minimum of 6 out of the last 10 months are entitled to paid paternity leave. Again, the employee's choice determines how many days of combined parental leave they are eligible for. It's either 49 weeks at 100% average salary or 59 weeks at 80% average salary. NAV (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) will be responsible for this pay and also the father has the same parental quota as the mother but fathers have the option to take the paternal quota after birth, starting in the seventh week, or they can wait until a later time. The allotted time might be split up, taken all at once, or paired with partial work. The employee can extend this leave for 1 year without any salary provided by the employer. Employees who are unable to work due to illness deserve sick pay from their employer for a maximum of 16 days. After this period, the Norwegian National Insurance Scheme (Folketrygden) covers sick pay from the 17th day onwards, usually covering 100% of the employee's wage. Furthermore, with reference to insurance, employers cover certain insurance coverage which includes work related injuries and accident insurance. Norway's National Insurance Scheme provides medical coverage for illness, injuries and other similar situations. Sometimes, employees need to work

after office hours. In the case of overtime, pay is mandatory. So, employees are paid two different rates. During weekdays, they are entitled to 140% of their salary per hour and of overtime during nights and weekends the 200% of their salary per hour. In case of a dismissal, the customary notice period is one month but the notice period changes and increases based on length of employment. For those who have been working up to 5 years, the notice period is 2 months. For up to 10 working years, 3 months notice period and from 10 years of employment onwards, the notice period is:

- Minimum 4 months after the employee is less than 50 years old
- Minimum 5 months after the employee is 55 years old
- Minimum 6 months after the employee is 60 years old

Additionally, the USA operates completely differently from the rest of the world.

There are no statutory days off for vacation purposes since there is no federal law covering that. It is completely up to the employers to provide that and some of them provide it as an extra benefit. So, whether the employees receive that, it depends on the agreement they sealed with the employer upon employment. Same as above, sick days are not provided by any law. Although, in some states like California and New York have passed legislation forcing companies to give paid sick leave. The quantity of sick leave required varies by the location, although it often runs between three and seven days per year, depending on state or local law. Regarding maternity leave, most women rely on the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This law states that the mothers job will wait for her to return from her maternity leave but it does not provide any kind of pay. Typically, maternity leave lasts 12 weeks. Some states, including California, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island offer partially paid leave as well. Most women try to save all of their vacation (if any) and sick days in order to maximize these 12 weeks. Paternity leave works essentially the same. However, under FMLA, these 12 weeks can be used for other family matters as well. Some of them are the adoption of a child, a serious health condition, or caring for a family member with a serious health condition. But FMLA applies only to employers with 50 or more employees and to employees who have worked for the company for at least 12 months and 1,250 hours. Furthermore, employers with more than 50 employees must provide affordable health insurance for their employees. Also, in the USA there is

unemployment insurance in order to cover some financial support for those who have lost their job and are able to work. On the other hand, there is workers' compensation insurance for those who can't work due to a job-related injury or illness. This insurance covers rehabilitation and health related costs. Moreover, regarding overtime in the USA, the legal working hours per week are 40. So, if this is exceeded then overtime pay is applied. The overtime pay rate is 1.5 times the employee's regular hourly rate. But same as above, there are some exceptions. Not all employees are entitled to overtime pay. Some of them are executives, administrative employees, lawyers, doctors and teachers. In case of termination of a contract by the employer, notice period is mandatory only if it was stated in the contract. Then, the employer must adhere to that and give the stated notice period. In case of a resignation, a two week notice is customary. Lastly, although severance pay is not established, it is frequently granted to the employees when their employment ends. The length of employment for which an employee is eligible upon termination is typically the basis for this.

Coming back to Europe, we will examine the number 8 in the top maritime nation, Germany's mandatory employee benefits. Let's examine maternity leave first. New mothers are entitled to 14 weeks of paid leave but 6 of them must be taken before the awaited date of birth and she will receive 100% of her salary for this time. Premature or multiple births, as well as children with disabilities, are subject to a specific law that provides maternity protection for up to 12 weeks following the birth. For new fathers there is no specific law but parental leave is optional. In more detail, parents can take up to three years of parental leave for each kid, up until the child's third birthday. A minimum of EUR 300 and a maximum of EUR 1,800 will be provided to the employee. If the employee worked prior to parental leave, they shall receive this payment, which is determined by the state parental allowance fund, or "Elterngeldstelle," using their gross wage from the previous 12 months after deducting the flat tax and health insurance rates. Before beginning parental leave, the employee must give seven weeks' notice. Furthermore, in Germany there is no specific time limit for sick leave. The employee is paid 100% of his salary and for the first 42 days of leave by the employer, after which the health insurance company covers the leave. The employee must work for a minimum of four weeks before being eligible for sick pay from the employer. If the employee becomes ill within the first

four weeks of employment, his or her health insurance will cover the time off. To claim insurance, the employee must apply and submit a sick letter to the health insurance company. Additionally, employees can receive 30 days of paid leave per parent if their child becomes ill. This payment is provided by their health insurance company. To claim leave, the employee must submit a sick note for the child and apply for it through the health insurance provider. Also, paid time off equals to 20 days per employee each year. Concerning insurance, Statutory Health Insurance is mandatory for all employees earning below a certain threshold (currently €66,600 annually). Those who earn more than this amount can change it for private health insurance. Also, in Germany, they have the so-called unemployment insurance which covers the basic needs in case of unemployment.

Comparing the above countries, gave us a good in depth perspective on other countries' benefits. We compared 6 countries, including Greece, who belong in the top ten maritime nations and belong to 3 different continents, Asia, Europe and America. By that, we analyzed and compared benefits from completely different cultures, values and backgrounds. Summing it up, among the five countries analyzed, Norway stands out as offering the most comprehensive and employee-friendly benefits. Norwegian employees are entitled to a minimum of 25 days of paid vacation annually, with an additional five days for those over 60 years old. Public holidays are also recognized as paid days off. One of the most notable aspects of Norway's labor benefits is its generous parental leave system. New parents can choose between 49 weeks at 100% pay or 59 weeks at 80% pay, funded by the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV). This leave can be shared between both parents and offers flexibility in how it is taken—either all at once, in parts, or alongside part-time work. Moreover, it can be extended for an additional unpaid year. In terms of sick leave, employees receive full salary for up to 16 days from their employer, after which the state covers 100% of the wage from the 17th day onwards. Norway also ensures fair compensation for overtime, with employees receiving 140% of their regular pay for weekday overtime and 200% for nights and weekends. Job security is reinforced by graduated notice periods based on an employee's age and tenure, offering up to six months for long-term employees over 60. Lastly, Norway's National Insurance Scheme guarantees universal healthcare, accident insurance, and pension coverage, creating a well-rounded and secure environment for workers.

Presented below is a comprehensive comparative table.

Category	Japan	China	Norway	USA	Germany
Fleet Value (USD Bn)	108	88	39	33	27
Paid Time Off	10–20 days (based on years) + national holidays	5–15 days based on cumulative years + 7 public holidays	25 days + public holidays; +5 days for 60+	No federal law; employer discretion	20 days/year
Maternity Leave	14 weeks (6 before birth); 67% pay for 180 days, then 50%	120–158 days (region-dependent); paid by govt + employer	49 wks @100% or 59 wks @80%; NAV-funded	12 wks unpaid (FMLA); some states offer partial pay	14 weeks (6 before birth) @ 100% salary
Paternity Leave	No specific; can use parental leave (12 months)	7–30 days depending on region; fully paid by employer	Same as maternity (49/59 weeks shared); NAV-funded	Same as maternity (FMLA); unpaid	No specific law; can take parental leave (up to 3 years)
Parental Leave	12 months (extendable to 2 years); 67% for 180 days, then 50%	Region-specific (e.g., 5 days/year in Beijing/Shanghai until child is 3)	Shared: 49/59 weeks split; extendable 1 year unpaid	FMLA covers 12 weeks (unpaid); may include adoption, caregiving, etc.	Up to 3 years per child; min €300 to max €1,800/month depending on previous income
Sick Leave	Not clearly defined	Up to 180 days; varied pay based on tenure and provider	16 days paid by employer; 100% covered by National Insurance Scheme afterward	No federal law; varies by state (3–7 days); unpaid in many cases	First 6 weeks paid by employer @100%, then health insurance covers it
Insurance Types	Health, Pension, Unemployment, Work Accident	Health, Pension, Unemployment, Work Injury, Maternity + Housing Fund	National Insurance Scheme covers health, injury, etc.	Health (employer >50), Unemployment, Workers' Comp	Statutory Health (or Private if >€66.6k), Unemployment, Pension
Overtime Pay	Not specified	1.5x (weekdays), 2x (holidays), 3x (weekends)	1.4x (weekdays), 2x (nights/weekends)	1.5x after 40 hrs/week (exceptions apply: executives, doctors, etc.)	Mandatory; specifics vary by sector; usually covered in collective agreements
Severance Pay	Not mandatory	30 days notice; pay based on tenure and termination type (e.g., 1 month/year in Shanghai)	Notice: 1–6 months (based on tenure/age); severance depends on agreements	Not required unless contractual; severance is customary	Required for most layoffs; amount based on tenure and salary
Notice Period	Not standardized	30 days (minimum)	1–6 months based on tenure/age	Only if stated in contract; 2 weeks customary resignation notice	Varies; usually 4 weeks; longer for senior roles

3. Performance Appraisal Practices

a. Overview and Definition of Existing Performance Appraisal Systems and Analysis of Best Appraisal Type

Performance appraisals play a pivotal role in organizational effectiveness by systematically evaluating employee contributions and aligning individual performance with strategic business objectives. In the context of shore-based personnel within the shipping sector, such appraisals serve multiple critical functions that collectively enhance operational efficiency, employee engagement, and organizational growth. Firstly, performance appraisals facilitate the alignment of individual responsibilities and key performance indicators (KPIs) with the broader goals of the shipping organization. This alignment ensures that all personnel contribute meaningfully to core objectives such as cost optimization, regulatory compliance, and service quality. Secondly, the appraisal process enables the identification of both employee strengths and areas requiring development. This is particularly valuable in a sector characterized by continuous evolving regulatory demands, and technical specialization, where continuous professional development is essential. Thirdly, by providing structured feedback and recognition, performance evaluations enhance employee motivation, satisfaction, and career progression. This, in turn, contributes to improved retention rates, which are vital in an industry often challenged by talent shortages and high skill requirements. Furthermore, appraisals

support the development of fair and transparent reward systems, ensuring that promotions, bonuses, and salary adjustments are based on merit and measurable outcomes. They also contribute to workforce planning by informing succession strategies, identifying training needs, and guiding leadership development initiatives. Also, if done right, the appraisal process also strengthens communication between employees and supervisors, fostering a culture of openness and mutual accountability. Lastly, performance appraisals encourage a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. Regular and objective evaluations promote a performance-driven ethos that can lead to increased productivity, innovation, and organizational resilience in a dynamic global shipping market. It's really important to understand that performance appraisals are not only a tool for individual assessment but a strategic mechanism for sustaining and enhancing organizational performance in the maritime industry.

Performance appraisal systems have undergone significant transformation over the decades, driven by shifts in organizational structures, cultural expectations, and technological advancements. Historically, appraisals were largely informal, manager-centric evaluations focused primarily on compliance and task completion. As organizations grew in complexity, the need for more structured and objective appraisal mechanisms became apparent, leading to the development of standardized performance reviews. Culturally, the growing emphasis on employee engagement, inclusion, and development has influenced appraisal systems to move beyond traditional top-down assessments. Modern workplaces increasingly value feedback loops, employee participation, and continuous performance management—reflecting broader societal values of transparency, fairness, and personal growth. Technological advancements have also played a critical role in reshaping performance management. The introduction of digital platforms, HR analytics, and cloud-based systems has enabled real-time feedback, data-driven decision-making, and more personalized development plans. These tools have not only enhanced the accuracy and efficiency of appraisals but have also allowed organizations to align performance metrics more closely with strategic goals.

But what is the definition of the performance appraisal? In simple words, performance appraisal is a structured process used by organizations to evaluate how well employees are doing their jobs. It involves assessing an employee's performance

based on specific goals and expectations. Performance appraisal is an important part of managing employee performance and ensuring that individual efforts support the organization's overall goals.

The purpose of performance appraisal goes beyond just evaluating performance. It also helps in:

- Measuring employee performance: It allows managers to see how well an employee is meeting their job responsibilities and goals.
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses: Appraisals help point out what an employee is doing well and where they may need improvement.
- Supporting HR decisions: Information from appraisals is often used to decide on promotions, salary increases, bonuses, and other rewards.
- Encouraging professional development: Appraisals can help employees grow in their careers by identifying training needs and setting development goals.

Overall, performance appraisals are an important tool for improving individual and organizational performance when done fairly and consistently. In the context of the shipping sector—particularly for shore-based personnel—selecting the appropriate appraisal method is critical to ensuring operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and staff engagement. The following section presents a comparative overview of key performance appraisal systems relevant to this sector.

Key performance appraisal systems:

- Traditional Appraisals (e.g., annual manager reviews)
- 360-Degree Feedback (input from peers, subordinates, managers, and sometimes customers)
- Self-Appraisals
- Management by Objectives (MBO)

- Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)
- Continuous/Real-time Feedback Systems
- Competency-Based Appraisals

Analytically, traditional performance appraisals, typically conducted annually by a supervisor, remain common in many organizations. These reviews provide structured feedback over a set period and are effective in roles with stable responsibilities. However, they may lack responsiveness to evolving performance demands in dynamic maritime environments.

The 360-degree feedback system offers a more holistic approach by incorporating evaluations from managers, peers, subordinates, and occasionally clients. For shore-based roles that require interdepartmental collaboration—such as port operations, logistics, or compliance—this method provides comprehensive insight into interpersonal effectiveness and teamwork.

Self-appraisals encourage employees to reflect on their own achievements and challenges, promoting self-awareness and accountability. While this method fosters engagement, it is often most effective when combined with other evaluation tools to balance subjectivity with managerial input.

Management by Objectives (MBO) emphasizes the setting and evaluation of specific, measurable goals. For shipping roles involving logistics planning, operational performance, or project management, MBO ensures alignment with broader organizational strategies, enabling focused performance tracking.

Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS) assess specific job-related behaviors using clearly defined criteria. In the shipping sector, this system is particularly useful for evaluating technical adherence and procedural compliance among shore-based roles such as health and safety officers or quality assurance personnel.

Continuous or real-time feedback systems address the limitations of periodic reviews by promoting ongoing communication. These are highly relevant in fast-paced shipping environments, allowing managers and staff to adapt quickly and enhance performance on a continuous basis.

Finally, competency-based appraisals focus on the assessment of predefined technical and soft skill competencies. For shore-based employees requiring specialized knowledge—such as regulatory compliance, IT systems, or customer service—this method ensures that critical competencies are identified, developed, and maintained.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of a performance appraisal system in the shipping sector depends on the nature of the role and the specific competencies required. A hybrid approach, integrating elements of various systems, is often the most effective strategy to support both individual development and organizational excellence.

Below, a comparative table containing all above performance appraisal systems is presented:

Appraisal System	Fairness & Objectivity	Employee Involvement	Administrative Burden	Alignment with Org. Goals	Adaptability to Remote/Hybrid Work
Traditional Appraisals	Moderate – often subjective to manager bias	Low – employee input limited	High – typically annual and paperwork-heavy	Moderate – may not reflect dynamic priorities	Low – relies on in-person interactions
360-Degree Feedback	High – multiple perspectives reduce bias	High – broad involvement across roles	High – complex data collection	High – encourages teamwork and communication	Moderate – can be digitized, but coordination may be challenging
Self-Appraisals	Moderate – depends on employee honesty	High – self-reflective input	Low – minimal documentation	Moderate – varies based on guidance provided	High – well-suited for remote contexts
Management by Objectives (MBO)	High – results-driven approach	Moderate – collaborative goal setting	Moderate – requires follow-up on goals	High – clear link to strategic goals	High – goal tracking can be digital
Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)	High – standardized behavioral criteria	Low – primarily manager-driven	High – time-intensive to design and apply	High – behaviors aligned with role expectations	Moderate – requires adaptation to digital tools
Continuous Feedback Systems	High – frequent inputs reduce bias over time	High – fosters dialogue and responsiveness	Moderate – ongoing updates needed	High – real-time alignment with evolving goals	High – integrated with digital platforms for remote work
Competency-Based Appraisals	High – structured around objective competencies	Moderate – involvement depends on design	Moderate – based on established frameworks	High – links personal skills to business needs	High – adaptable across formats and locations

Which performance appraisal system is this the most suited one and why?

Among the various performance appraisal approaches, Management by Objectives (MBO) has been identified as particularly effective for shore-based personnel in maritime organizations. MBO focuses on setting specific, measurable goals that are directly linked to broader organizational targets, thereby fostering clarity, accountability, and motivation. This method allows managers and employees to jointly establish objectives and assess performance based on goal achievement, making it highly relevant for roles where key performance indicators (KPIs) such as operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and cost management are essential. Empirical evidence from the shipping industry supports the effectiveness of MBO in shore-based contexts. Case studies from major shipping lines such as Maersk and

NYK Line highlight improvements in interdepartmental coordination, employee focus, and performance outcomes when MBO frameworks are consistently applied (Notteboom, 2006; Stopford, 2009). These organizations have successfully integrated MBO with digital tracking systems, enabling dynamic performance monitoring and timely feedback, even in global operational networks. While alternative systems such as 360-degree feedback and continuous performance management offer benefits in areas like team collaboration and leadership development, they are often constrained in maritime settings. Cultural diversity, hierarchical structures, and the traditionally conservative nature of maritime organizations can limit the practical implementation and acceptance of multi-rater systems. In contrast, MBO offers a straightforward, result-oriented framework that aligns well with the structured and compliance-driven nature of shipping operations. In conclusion, based on academic literature, industry case studies, and sector-specific performance demands, MBO represents the most effective appraisal method for shore-based maritime personnel. It supports strategic alignment, encourages measurable performance, and contributes to a results-oriented culture that is essential in today's competitive and highly regulated maritime environment.

To sum up, performance appraisals are a critical component of human resource management, particularly within the shipping sector for shore-based personnel. These systems align individual contributions with overarching organizational goals such as operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and service quality. Over time, appraisal systems have evolved in response to organizational complexity, cultural expectations, and technological advancement—from informal, manager-led reviews to more structured, technology-supported methods that emphasize transparency and continuous feedback. At its core, performance appraisal is a structured process designed to evaluate employee effectiveness based on predefined goals and expectations. Its purposes extend beyond assessment to include identifying development needs, informing HR decisions like promotions and compensation, and supporting employee growth. Various appraisal methods exist, each with unique applications. Traditional reviews offer structured evaluations but may lack adaptability; 360-degree feedback provides comprehensive insights, particularly valuable for collaborative roles; self-appraisals foster reflection; and competency-based appraisals focus on job-specific skills. Among these, Management

by Objectives (MBO) emerges as the most effective for shore-based maritime personnel. It supports the joint setting of measurable goals that are aligned with strategic targets, thereby promoting clarity, accountability, and performance improvement. Industry examples, such as Maersk and NYK Line, demonstrate MBO's efficacy in enhancing departmental coordination and operational focus. While other systems like 360-degree feedback have merits, MBO's structured, result-oriented nature aligns best with the demands of the maritime sector. Thus, MBO stands out as a practical and strategic performance management tool, particularly suited to the compliance-driven and operationally focused context of shore-based roles in the shipping industry.

b. Identification of Strength and Weakness of each Appraisal System

Traditional Appraisals

Traditional performance appraisals, typically conducted annually by a direct supervisor, remain widely used due to their structured and familiar nature. For shore-based personnel in the shipping sector, such appraisals provide a clear framework for reviewing job performance over a defined period, particularly in roles with stable and repetitive responsibilities. However, this method often lacks responsiveness, as feedback is delayed and disconnected from real-time events. Additionally, it may reinforce hierarchical structures and fail to capture the dynamic and collaborative aspects of many modern shipping roles.

360-Degree Feedback

The 360-degree feedback approach gathers input from multiple sources—including peers, subordinates, managers, and occasionally clients—offering a comprehensive perspective on employee performance. For shore-based maritime staff engaged in cross-functional operations such as logistics, customer service, or port coordination, this system enhances understanding of interpersonal skills and teamwork. Nevertheless, implementation challenges exist, especially in traditional maritime settings where hierarchical norms may inhibit open feedback. Moreover, without proper training, the process can result in inconsistent or biased evaluations.

Self-Appraisals

Self-appraisals encourage employees to reflect on their accomplishments, challenges,

and areas for growth. This method fosters engagement and self-awareness among shore-based personnel, particularly those in professional or administrative roles. While beneficial as a development tool, self-appraisals are inherently subjective and should be supplemented with more objective evaluations to ensure a balanced perspective. Alone, they lack the managerial insight and performance benchmarking necessary for strategic decision-making.

Management by Objectives (MBO)

Management by Objectives is a goal-setting approach that aligns individual performance with organizational priorities. For shore-based personnel in areas such as operations, compliance, or project management, MBO is especially effective due to its emphasis on measurable results and accountability. When properly implemented, it supports clear communication, motivation, and strategic alignment. However, MBO relies heavily on the quality of the objectives set. It may fall short in evaluating non-quantifiable contributions or soft skills, and can be rigid in fast-changing operational environments.

Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)

BARS involves assessing performance using behavior-based criteria tailored to specific job functions. This method is well-suited to evaluating regulatory compliance, safety practices, or technical accuracy—key areas for shore-based roles such as quality control officers or HSEQ managers. Its structured format reduces ambiguity and subjectivity in evaluations. On the downside, BARS can be labor-intensive to develop and maintain, requiring detailed understanding of each role's behavioral indicators, which may not fully capture strategic or adaptive performance.

Continuous/Real-Time Feedback Systems

Continuous feedback systems offer immediate insights into performance, promoting agility and improvement in real time. This approach is particularly relevant in the fast-paced shipping environment, where quick adaptation and continuous operational efficiency are vital. For shore-based staff involved in port operations, documentation, or regulatory updates, ongoing feedback helps maintain alignment and responsiveness. However, it demands consistent managerial involvement and digital

infrastructure, and without thoughtful implementation, it may lead to feedback fatigue or lack of prioritization.

Competency-Based Appraisals

Competency-based appraisals evaluate employees based on predefined skill sets and behavioral traits required for their roles. This method is valuable for shore-based shipping personnel whose jobs demand specific technical expertise—such as IT specialists, legal advisors, or compliance officers. It helps identify skill gaps and target professional development efforts. Despite these advantages, competency-based systems can be challenging to design and keep relevant, particularly as technology and industry standards evolve. Additionally, they may underrepresented performance outcomes or broader business contributions.

c. Recommendations for Improvement

1. Traditional Appraisals (e.g., Annual Manager Reviews)

Recommendation for Improvement:

To enhance the traditional annual manager review system, it would be beneficial to incorporate mid-year check-ins. This allows managers and employees to address performance issues earlier, before they become ingrained. Additionally, integrating data-driven insights into the review process can increase objectivity, allowing for more evidence-based evaluations rather than relying solely on managerial perceptions. To further improve employee engagement, it is recommended that employees participate in the review process by submitting self-assessments. This can increase ownership of the appraisal process, while offering a more comprehensive view of the employee's performance. Moreover, given the dynamic nature of the maritime industry, performance metrics should be adjusted regularly to account for changing regulatory and operational demands, ensuring the appraisal remains relevant.

2. 360-Degree Feedback

Recommendation for Improvement:

The 360-degree feedback process can be improved by streamlining the number of participants involved in the feedback process. Limiting raters to key individuals who work directly with the employee can prevent feedback overload and ensure more

relevant input. Additionally, providing training for raters to give constructive feedback can help minimize bias and increase the quality of feedback provided. Rather than focusing purely on evaluation, 360-degree feedback should be reframed as a tool for professional development, guiding employees toward growth by identifying strengths and areas of improvement. This shift can foster a growth mindset, making feedback more constructive and actionable for employees in maritime roles.

3. Self-Appraisals

Recommendation for Improvement:

For self-appraisals to be more effective, employees should be given clear guidelines and frameworks that align with organizational goals. This ensures that self-reflection is objective and aligned with company expectations. Additionally, self-appraisals should not be standalone processes but should be integrated with managerial feedback for a more balanced evaluation. Encouraging employees to reflect quarterly, rather than annually, can also be beneficial in promoting continuous improvement and offering an opportunity for ongoing feedback. This ensures that employees have a more dynamic and frequent understanding of their progress towards goals.

4. Management by Objectives (MBO)

Recommendation for Improvement:

To enhance the MBO system, it is important to integrate continuous tracking and monitoring of progress, not just evaluate it at fixed intervals. This could be achieved through digital platforms that provide real-time updates on the progress of specific goals. Furthermore, goal-setting should involve employees in a more collaborative manner. Rather than top-down goal-setting, involving employees in setting their objectives ensures greater buy-in and alignment with personal aspirations. It's also essential that goals follow the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) framework and are adjusted periodically to reflect the changing demands of the maritime industry. This ensures that the MBO process remains agile and adaptable to evolving business needs.

5. Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)

Recommendation for Improvement:

For the BARS system to be more effective, it is crucial that behavioral anchors are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the evolving technical and regulatory landscape in the maritime industry. Clear, specific examples of desirable behaviors should be provided to reduce subjectivity and ambiguity in ratings. Additionally, incorporating peer reviews alongside supervisor assessments could enhance the comprehensiveness of the evaluation. This is particularly important for roles that require collaboration across various departments, such as logistics and operations. Finally, to ensure its relevance, the BARS system should focus on assessing not just compliance but also innovation and adaptability to meet the challenges of a dynamic shipping environment.

6. Continuous/Real-Time Feedback Systems

Recommendation for Improvement:

Continuous feedback systems can be further strengthened by integrating feedback into everyday work routines rather than treating it as a separate or occasional process. This allows for more frequent and meaningful interactions between employees and managers. To ensure feedback is constructive and actionable, it is important that feedback is not only provided in real-time but also has clear guidelines on how to improve performance. Additionally, emphasizing positive reinforcement is essential, as it motivates employees by recognizing their efforts and achievements as they happen. Regularly acknowledging progress and rewarding small wins can boost employee morale and engagement, particularly in fast-paced environments like the maritime industry.

7. Competency-Based Appraisals

Recommendation for Improvement:

In the competency-based appraisal system, it is important to ensure that the competencies being evaluated are highly specific to the job and aligned with the maritime sector's needs. Competencies should be revisited regularly to reflect changes in the industry's technological, regulatory, and operational landscapes. The appraisal process should also focus on soft skills—such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork—that are critical in maritime roles. These soft skills

are particularly important for shore-based personnel who must navigate complex interactions across multiple departments. Lastly, integrating self-assessments and peer evaluations alongside manager assessments can lead to a more holistic view of an employee's competencies and areas for development.

In conclusion, each performance appraisal system has its strengths, but adapting them to the unique needs of the maritime industry and shore-based personnel is crucial. Combining aspects from different systems into a hybrid approach, tailored to specific roles and organizational goals, will ensure that performance appraisals remain effective and relevant. Regular review and adjustment of these systems will allow organizations to maintain a dynamic and engaging performance management process that fosters both individual and organizational growth in the fast-changing shipping sector.

4. Retention Strategies

a. Definition and Calculating Procedure of Retention Rate

The employee retention rate is a human resources metric that measures the percentage of employees who remain with an organization over a specified period of time. Specifically in the maritime industry for shore-based personnel, retention rate reflects how effectively companies are able to keep staff in roles such as operations, logistics, compliance, finance, and technical support over time.

A high retention rate indicates workforce stability, which is crucial in maritime operations where institutional knowledge, regulatory familiarity, and technical expertise are essential. Conversely, a low retention rate may suggest challenges related to job satisfaction, career development, work-life balance, or organizational culture.

In the context of maritime shore-based roles, improving retention is especially important due to the specialized skills required and the growing global competition for qualified professionals. Shipping companies often track this rate to assess the impact of HR initiatives, training programs, and leadership strategies aimed at maintaining an experienced and motivated workforce.

But how do we calculate the retention rate? For calculating the retention rate of a company, a formula is used.

The basic formula for employee retention is the following:

(# of employees who stayed at the company for the whole time period)/(# employees at the start of the time period) X 100.

Let's see the step-by-step Procedure to Calculate Retention Rate:

1. *Define the Time Period*
Decide on the time frame you want to evaluate (e.g., quarterly, semi-annually, or annually).
2. *Count the Number of Employees at the Start of the Period*
Record the total number of shore-based employees working at the beginning of the selected period.
3. *Determine the Number of Employees Who Remained*
Count how many of those original employees stayed with the company throughout the entire period (i.e., they were not terminated, resigned, or retired).
4. *Use the Retention Rate Formula*
5. *Interpret the Result*
A higher percentage indicates greater workforce stability. For example, a 90% retention rate means 90 out of every 100 employees stayed throughout the time period.

b. Identification of Factors Influencing Retention

Employee retention is a vital factor for the sustained success and growth of organizations, particularly in sectors like maritime operations, where specialized skills and knowledge are essential. For shore-based personnel, who manage crucial tasks in areas such as logistics, compliance, and planning, retaining skilled and knowledgeable employees is especially important. The maritime industry, with its complex regulatory environment and dynamic operational requirements, relies heavily on the expertise of its shore-based workforce to ensure smooth day-to-day operations and strategic advancement. Consequently, understanding the various factors that influence employee retention is key to developing effective strategies that ensure a stable, competent workforce capable of meeting the industry's evolving demands.

The factors that influence retention are:

1. Organizational culture
2. Compensation and benefits
3. Career development
4. Leadership and management
5. Work-life balance
6. Job Security
7. Recognition and rewards
8. Physical and technological work environment

Below we will analyze all these factors in depth.

Organizational culture plays a foundational role in retention. A positive culture that promotes inclusivity, trust, and collaboration fosters a sense of belonging among employees. In maritime operations, where cross-functional teamwork is essential, a culture of respect and mutual accountability can significantly enhance retention. Organizations that nurture transparent communication and support ethical practices are more likely to retain talent.

Compensation and benefits are among the most tangible factors influencing retention. Competitive remuneration—including salary, bonuses, health benefits, and pensions—are particularly relevant in the maritime industry due to the specialized qualifications required. Equitable compensation practices also enhance employee morale and loyalty.

Career development opportunities act as both a motivator and a retention tool. Shore-based roles are dynamic, requiring ongoing training and skill adaptation. Offering professional development such as compliance workshops, technical certifications, and leadership training enables employees to progress and feel valued within the organization.

Leadership and management quality strongly influences retention outcomes. Managers who provide guidance, support, and recognition can foster job satisfaction and reduce attrition. In the maritime sector, where operations are complex and heavily regulated, effective leadership is crucial to employee engagement and operational success.

Work-life balance is increasingly important in retention strategies. Shore-based personnel often handle irregular hours or intense schedules. Flexible working arrangements and predictable shifts can mitigate stress and improve retention.

Job security remains a key concern in an industry vulnerable to global disruptions. Transparent communication regarding business stability and long-term planning reassures employees and builds loyalty.

Recognition and rewards reinforce positive performance and foster a sense of value among staff. Formal programs or simple acknowledgments can increase motivation and commitment. Effective performance appraisal systems can support a culture of recognition and fairness.

Lastly, the physical and technological work environment contributes significantly to employee well-being. Clean, safe, and well-equipped offices, along with access to efficient IT systems and maritime software tools, improve both productivity and job satisfaction.

In conclusion, employee retention among maritime shore-based personnel depends on a holistic understanding of human resource practices. A proactive approach that integrates cultural, managerial, and structural elements is essential for sustaining long-term organizational performance in a highly competitive and regulated industry.

c. Statistical Analysis of Retention Rate throughout the years

Shore-based personnel form the backbone of the maritime industry's operational, administrative, and strategic functions. These roles, including port operators, maritime logistics coordinators, marine engineers, crewing managers, and compliance officers, are essential for supporting both sea-going staff and shipping operations globally. As the industry continues to evolve with technological advancements and regulatory shifts, retaining skilled shore-based staff has become a key priority for maritime organizations.

This chapter presents a statistical analysis of retention rates among shore-based maritime personnel across several years. The aim is to uncover patterns, identify

external and internal factors affecting retention, and provide data-driven insights to improve long-term workforce planning and human capital strategies.

Methodology

A quantitative research methodology was employed, using historical data collected from shipping companies, maritime logistics firms, and industry bodies. The dataset spans from 2010 to 2024 and focuses specifically on staff employed in non-seagoing roles within the maritime sector. The retention rate was calculated annually using the standard formula that was mentioned above. To provide a comprehensive analysis, both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used. These included trend analysis, linear regression, and analysis of variance to evaluate retention trends across job functions, age groups, and organizational types.

Results and Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

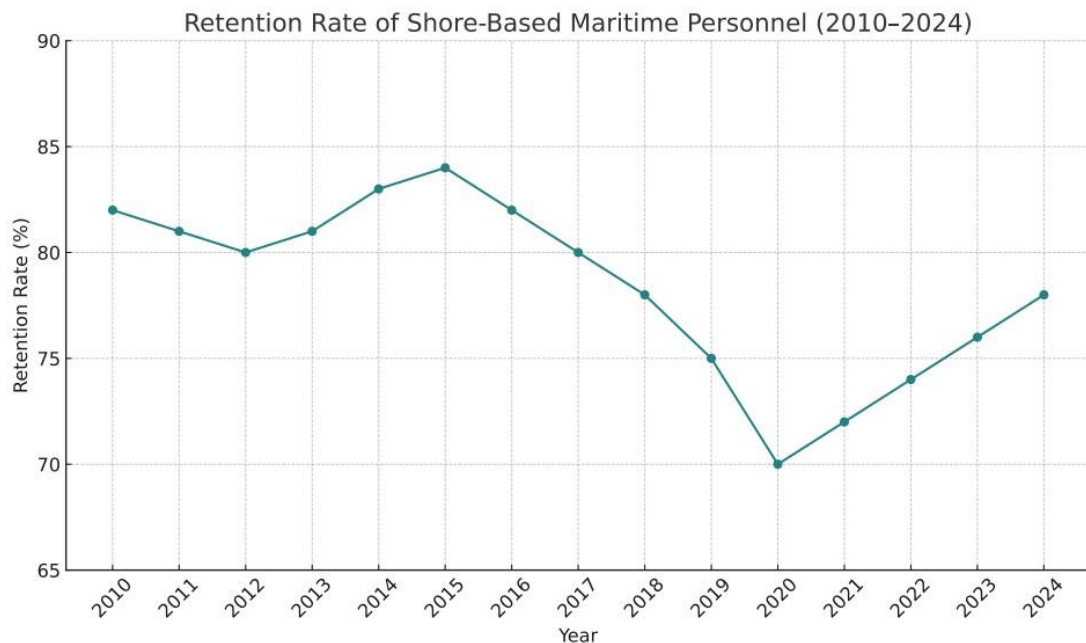
Retention rates for shore-based maritime personnel ranged between 70% and 89%, with an average of 78.6% over the 14-year period. Higher rates were typically associated with technical and senior management roles, whereas junior administrative and support positions experienced more frequent turnover.

Yearly Trend Analysis

A review of annual retention trends revealed three main phases:

- 2010–2015: High retention, averaging above 80%, supported by stable global trade and career progression opportunities.
- 2016–2019: Mild decline in retention, largely due to increased digital transformation and changing job expectations, especially among younger workers. Averaging below 80%.
- 2020–2021: Noticeable drop in retention during the COVID-19 pandemic, with increased resignations driven by remote work fatigue, job insecurity, and industry disruptions. Averaging around 70%.

- 2022–2024: Gradual recovery due to hybrid work models, improved HR policies, and renewed investment in employee engagement. Averaging below 80%.



Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical method used to examine the relationship between one dependent variable and one or more independent variables. It helps us understand how the typical value of the dependent variable changes when any one of the independent variables is varied. In simple terms, regression analysis tells you how much one thing affects another.

Statistical modeling revealed several significant correlations:

- A positive correlation between employee development programs and retention
- A negative correlation between job role uncertainty and retention, suggesting that clear role definitions and structured career paths are critical to keeping staff engaged

- Salaries and benefits also emerged as consistent predictors of long-term retention

Departmental and Demographic Analysis

Retention varied by department. Technical, IT, and legal roles showed higher retention than operations and general administration. Employees aged 40 and above tended to remain longer, often citing job stability and pensions, while employees under 30 demonstrated a higher likelihood of turnover, often due to career-switching or dissatisfaction with limited upward mobility.

d. Development of Tailored Retention Plans

The shipping industry is a vital component of global commerce, relying heavily on shore-based personnel who perform crucial operational, administrative, and management roles. Despite their critical functions, these employees face retention challenges due to unique job demands, diverse motivations, and shifting market dynamics. Consequently, traditional retention approaches often fail to meet their needs. The development of tailored retention plans is therefore essential to improve job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and maintain operational excellence.

Understanding Shore-Based Personnel Needs and Motivations

Tailored retention strategies require comprehensive understanding of the shore-based workforce's specific needs and aspirations. Unlike seafarers, shore-based employees primarily work in office settings but face high-pressure tasks involving coordination across multiple time zones, tight deadlines, and operational urgency. Career advancement, work-life balance, recognition, and compensation emerge as key factors influencing retention. To gather such insights, shipping companies should employ mixed methods such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups, enabling the identification of job satisfaction drivers and pain points.

Workforce Segmentation

The shore-based workforce is heterogeneous, encompassing technical superintendents, fleet managers, chartering officers, finance professionals, and more.

Different groups prioritize different retention factors; for example, technical staff may seek continuous professional development, while administrative personnel might value flexible working hours. Segmenting employees by role, tenure, age, or personal circumstances enables tailored interventions aligned with their expectations.

Components of Tailored Retention Plans

Retention plans must integrate multiple elements:

- Career Pathways and Learning Opportunities

Structured career frameworks clarify advancement routes and development opportunities, addressing career stagnation. Shipping companies can offer competency-based promotions, cross-functional rotations, and maritime-specific certifications to foster growth and engagement.

- Flexible Work Arrangements

Given the demands of 24/7 shipping operations, flexibility in work schedules can alleviate burnout and enhance work-life balance. Hybrid models, flexible hours, or compressed workweeks may be adapted to role requirements and employee preferences.

- Total Rewards Customization

Monetary compensation should be complemented by personalized benefits, including performance bonuses, health insurance, retirement plans, and wellness programs. Tailoring rewards to employee demographics enhances their perceived value and effectiveness.

- Recognition and Feedback

Regular, role-specific recognition strengthens employee motivation and loyalty. Feedback mechanisms like stay interviews provide ongoing insights for managers to adjust retention tactics promptly.

- Well-being and Mental Health Support

Work-related stress is prevalent in shore-based roles; thus, integrating mental health resources such as counseling, stress management workshops, and ergonomic improvements is crucial.

- Organizational Culture Initiatives

Retention plans should promote inclusive, supportive workplace cultures through team-building, leadership accessibility, and diversity programs.

Implementation and Continuous Monitoring

Effective implementation demands collaboration between HR, management, and employees, backed by clear communication and sufficient resources. Key performance indicators (KPIs) such as turnover rates, engagement survey results, and internal promotion metrics facilitate continuous evaluation. HR analytics tools can enable real-time insights and data-driven adjustments.

Challenges and Recommendations

Budget limitations, resistance to change, and alignment with corporate strategy pose implementation challenges. Addressing these requires securing executive sponsorship, promoting employee participation, piloting initiatives, and linking retention efforts to business outcomes.

Concluding, tailored retention plans are indispensable in addressing the multifaceted needs of shore-based personnel in shipping companies. By focusing on career development, flexible work, personalized rewards, well-being, and culture, companies can nurture a committed and stable workforce, crucial for sustaining competitive advantage in the global shipping industry.

e. Retention Rate decrease strategies

Retention rate decline among shore-based personnel in shipping companies presents operational, financial, and strategic challenges. High turnover disrupts workflow, elevates recruitment and training expenses, and erodes corporate knowledge. To

counteract this, shipping companies need to deploy effective, evidence-based strategies aimed at reducing attrition and enhancing employee commitment.

As it was already discussed above, some of the root causes of Shore-Based turnover that were identified from various researches are

- Limited career growth and advancement opportunities
- Non-competitive compensation packages
- Poor work-life balance and high stress levels
- Ineffective management and negative workplace culture
- Insufficient recognition and communication

Some key strategic approaches in order to reduce attrition will be analyzed below

Career Development Enhancement

Clear career progression paths and professional development programs are essential to retaining shore-based personnel. Mentorship, leadership training, and skill diversification opportunities can engage employees and reduce turnover.

Competitive Compensation and Benefits

Ongoing market benchmarking ensures salary competitiveness. Rewarding performance and longevity through bonuses, profit sharing, or other incentives supports retention. Tailored benefits that address employee needs increase loyalty.

Work-Life Balance Promotion

Flexible work schedules, remote work options, and respect for personal boundaries help reduce burnout. Policies such as “no emails after hours” and compensatory leave foster well-being.

Managerial Effectiveness Improvement

Employees commonly leave managers rather than organizations. Training managers in effective communication, emotional intelligence, and conflict management improves workplace atmosphere and retention.

Positive Organizational Culture

Transparent leadership, employee recognition, and inclusive culture-building initiatives contribute to employee satisfaction and retention.

HR Analytics for Predictive Retention

Utilizing HR data analytics enables early identification of at-risk employees, allowing targeted interventions such as coaching or workload adjustment.

Well-being and Mental Health Initiatives

Providing access to counseling, wellness programs, and stress management workshops supports mental health and reduces turnover.

Employer Branding Enhancement

A strong employer brand attracts and retains talent by fostering pride and belonging. Promoting company values and employee success stories boosts engagement.

Measuring and Sustaining Success

Retention efforts require continuous measurement using metrics such as turnover rates, engagement scores, and internal promotions. Feedback loops and regular strategy reviews ensure adaptability.

Implementation Challenges

Barriers include resistance to change, limited HR resources, and difficulties in quantifying retention program ROI. Overcoming these requires leadership support, phased program deployment, and clear communication.

Concluding, effective retention rate decrease strategies for shore-based personnel must address the multifactorial causes of turnover. Through career development, competitive rewards, work-life balance, supportive management, and data-driven interventions, shipping companies can build a stable, motivated workforce critical for operational success.

5. Conclusion

a. Summary of Findings

This thesis examined the crucial role of shore-based personnel in the Greek shipping industry, with a focus on employee satisfaction, performance appraisal practices, and retention strategies. The findings highlight that while the shipping sector remains a cornerstone of the Greek economy and a global leader in maritime trade, shore-based staff face specific challenges that impact their engagement, motivation, and long-term commitment to their roles.

The study revealed that job satisfaction among shore-based personnel is influenced by multiple interrelated factors including compensation, work-life balance, organizational culture, career development opportunities, recognition, and managerial support. Many employees expressed concerns about limited career growth, high stress levels, and a lack of adequate recognition, all of which contribute to higher turnover rates.

Performance appraisal systems were found to be inconsistently applied or outdated in several maritime organizations. Among various methods evaluated, Management by Objectives (MBO) was identified as the most effective for aligning individual performance with strategic goals, particularly in the operational and compliance-driven environments typical of the maritime sector. However, the need for more flexible, continuous, and employee-inclusive appraisal processes was strongly emphasized.

Retention strategies are increasingly necessary in a competitive maritime labor market. The findings stress the importance of tailored retention approaches that include flexible work models, competitive benefits, clear career progression paths, and enhanced organizational communication. Statistical data indicated that retention rates declined notably during the COVID-19 pandemic but have since improved with the adoption of hybrid work and better HR policies.

Comparative analysis with top maritime nations demonstrated that Greece provides relatively strong mandatory benefits, yet lags behind countries like Norway in offering parental leave, mental health support, and flexible work options. This

underlines the need for policy adaptation to meet global standards and retain top talent.

Overall, the findings suggest that investing in modern HR practices, prioritizing employee satisfaction, and developing targeted retention strategies are essential for sustaining operational excellence and long-term competitiveness in the Greek shipping sector.

b. Implications for the Shipping Sector

The shipping sector has undergone significant transformation in recent years due to global economic fluctuations, technological advancements, and evolving regulatory frameworks. While much attention is often paid to sea-based personnel, the role of shore-based employees is equally crucial to the functioning and competitiveness of maritime enterprises. As such, the implications of employee satisfaction, performance appraisal practices, and retention strategies for shore-based personnel merit detailed analysis. Understanding and addressing these factors is essential to ensuring long-term organizational sustainability, operational efficiency, and workforce stability within the shipping industry.

Shore-based employees, which include operational staff, logistics coordinators, technical superintendents, HR personnel, finance officers, and customer service teams, form the backbone of land-side operations. Their responsibilities range from managing vessel schedules and coordinating supply chain activities to ensuring regulatory compliance and handling customer queries. Despite their significance, this group often faces a range of systemic issues that impact job satisfaction and professional fulfillment. Many shore-based roles are characterized by high-stress environments due to tight delivery timelines, rigid compliance requirements, and the necessity to interface with a variety of stakeholders across geographies and time zones. Additionally, employees frequently report a lack of meaningful career advancement opportunities and limited recognition for their contributions compared to sea-going counterparts, who often receive more structured career development and higher prestige within the organization.

The implications of these challenges are multifaceted. First, low levels of employee satisfaction among shore-based personnel can lead to decreased productivity and engagement. Employees who feel undervalued or unsupported are less likely to go beyond their job descriptions, which can affect everything from customer satisfaction to internal coordination. In an industry where time and accuracy are paramount, even minor lapses due to disengagement can cause significant operational and financial setbacks. Furthermore, dissatisfied employees are more prone to absenteeism and are at greater risk of burnout, both of which have long-term implications for workforce planning and business continuity.

Another significant issue within the shipping sector for shore-based personnel is the inadequacy or ineffectiveness of performance appraisal systems. In many cases, performance evaluations are infrequent, inconsistent, or based on generic criteria that do not accurately reflect the unique responsibilities of shore-based roles. Often, appraisals are conducted as a formality rather than a developmental tool, resulting in feedback that lacks specificity or actionable insights. When performance metrics are unclear or irrelevant, employees find it difficult to understand how their work contributes to broader organizational goals, which in turn diminishes motivation and job satisfaction. Furthermore, performance reviews are sometimes subject to bias or influenced by interpersonal dynamics, making them feel unjust or arbitrary to employees. The lack of transparency in appraisal processes can also contribute to mistrust between employees and management, further eroding morale.

The absence of robust and fair performance appraisal practices carries several organizational risks. Most notably, it hinders the identification and nurturing of high-potential talent, which is essential in maintaining a competitive edge in a dynamic industry. Employees who are not adequately recognized for their efforts are less likely to remain committed to the organization. Consequently, companies miss out on the long-term benefits of retaining skilled individuals who could be groomed for leadership or specialist roles. Additionally, inadequate appraisals can result in poor performance going unaddressed, leading to inefficiencies and inconsistencies in work quality.

Retention is closely linked to both job satisfaction and performance appraisal systems. High turnover among shore-based personnel has become an increasingly pressing

issue for shipping companies. While turnover rates vary by function and geography, many organizations report difficulty in retaining skilled and experienced staff, particularly in operational and technical roles. Several factors contribute to this trend. Apart from the dissatisfaction with job roles and inadequate appraisal systems, employees are often drawn away by competitors offering better compensation packages, more appealing career paths, or enhanced work-life balance. The nature of shore-based work, which often involves long hours and limited flexibility, makes it especially vulnerable to retention issues in an era where younger generations prioritize personal well-being and professional growth opportunities.

High turnover has serious implications for the shipping industry. Operational continuity is frequently disrupted as new employees take time to reach the productivity levels of their predecessors. Moreover, the loss of experienced personnel results in a knowledge gap that can affect compliance, safety, and efficiency. Training and onboarding new hires involve significant financial and time investments, which add to the indirect costs of turnover. Repeated cycles of hiring and resignation also affect team cohesion and can demoralize remaining staff, creating a vicious cycle of disengagement and attrition.

To counter these challenges, shipping companies must adopt strategic approaches focused on improving the employee experience for shore-based staff. One critical step involves redesigning job roles and workflows to enhance job satisfaction. This includes offering greater autonomy, implementing more flexible work arrangements where possible, and recognizing the contributions of shore-based staff through formal and informal channels. Companies can also benefit from instituting regular employee engagement surveys to gain insights into staff concerns and to evaluate the effectiveness of workplace initiatives. Responding to this feedback with tangible actions helps to build trust and shows employees that their voices are valued.

Performance appraisal systems must also evolve to become more effective and inclusive. Instead of relying on once-a-year reviews, organizations should consider implementing continuous feedback models that allow for real-time performance tracking and development. Appraisals should be based on SMART objectives—goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound—tailored to each employee's role. Moreover, training supervisors and managers on how to conduct fair

and constructive reviews is crucial. Incorporating multiple perspectives through 360-degree feedback can help mitigate bias and provide a more balanced view of performance. When done correctly, performance evaluations can serve as powerful tools for motivating employees, guiding professional development, and aligning individual efforts with organizational objectives.

Retention strategies must be equally robust and multifaceted. One of the most effective approaches is to establish clear and attainable career development pathways. Shore-based employees should be able to see how they can grow within the organization, whether through promotions, lateral moves, or skills development. This requires investment in training programs, mentorship opportunities, and succession planning. In addition to financial incentives, companies should consider non-monetary benefits such as flexible work hours, employee recognition schemes, and initiatives that promote work-life balance. Internal mobility should be encouraged, allowing employees to explore different functions within the company without having to leave the organization. This not only broadens their skill sets but also increases their engagement and loyalty.

A strong organizational culture is another critical element of effective retention. Employees are more likely to stay with companies that uphold values of fairness, respect, and purpose. Shipping companies must therefore work to foster inclusive, transparent, and mission-driven workplaces. This includes clear communication from leadership, opportunities for employee input in decision-making, and a shared sense of purpose that connects day-to-day tasks to larger industry or societal goals, such as environmental sustainability or technological innovation in shipping.

In conclusion, the implications of employee satisfaction, performance appraisal practices, and retention strategies for shore-based personnel in the shipping sector are profound. These three elements are deeply interconnected and collectively shape the employee experience. Addressing the challenges in these areas is not merely an HR function but a strategic imperative. By prioritizing the well-being and professional development of shore-based staff, shipping companies can enhance operational efficiency, reduce turnover costs, and build a more resilient and adaptive workforce. Given the increasingly complex demands of global maritime operations, investing in

the human capital of shore-based personnel is not just beneficial—it is essential to the long-term success and sustainability of the industry.

c. Recommendations for Future Research

While this study has explored the requirements and implications of employee satisfaction, performance appraisal practices, and retention strategies for shore-based personnel in the shipping sector, several areas remain underexplored and warrant further investigation. These gaps present opportunities for future research that could deepen understanding and contribute to more effective human resource management within the maritime industry.

A comparative analysis between sea-based and shore-based personnel could offer valuable insights into how experiences and expectations differ across these two distinct work environments. Although both groups operate within the same organizational framework, their roles, challenges, and career trajectories differ significantly. Understanding these distinctions can help develop more nuanced and equitable HR policies.

Longitudinal studies are also recommended to assess the long-term effects of specific HR interventions, such as revised appraisal frameworks, employee wellness programs, or flexible work arrangements. Most existing research captures employee sentiment at a single point in time, which limits the ability to evaluate the sustained impact of organizational changes on employee satisfaction and retention.

Another critical area for future research is the role of organizational culture in influencing retention and performance outcomes. While this study touched on cultural aspects, more detailed exploration of which cultural attributes—such as openness, trust, recognition, or inclusivity—most significantly affect shore-based employees could inform more strategic HR initiatives.

With the increasing digitalization of the shipping industry, further investigation is needed into how technological advancements impact the work experiences of shore-based personnel. Research could explore how digital tools reshape job roles, affect performance expectations, and influence employee engagement. This is

particularly relevant as automation and AI systems become more integrated into logistics, operations, and administrative functions.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion also merit further study. The maritime industry has historically been male-dominated, and future research could examine how gender, age, and cultural diversity influence perceptions of appraisal fairness, career progression, and job satisfaction among shore-based employees. Such work could support the creation of more inclusive and representative workplaces.

Regional and cultural differences within the global shipping sector also present a fertile area for inquiry. Multinational shipping companies operate across a variety of regulatory, cultural, and economic contexts, which may influence how HR practices are perceived and experienced. Comparative studies across different countries or regions could yield insights into the contextual effectiveness of various retention and appraisal strategies.

The degree to which employee participation influences HR policy development is another valuable direction for research. Investigating how involving employees in the design and evaluation of appraisal systems or retention programs affects outcomes such as acceptance, satisfaction, and alignment with organizational goals could lead to more participatory and responsive HR models.

In addition, future research could examine the influence of leadership styles on shore-based workforce outcomes. Different styles—such as transformational, transactional, or servant leadership—may have varying impacts on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Identifying which approaches are most effective in the context of shore-based maritime operations would be valuable for leadership development programs.

There is also a growing need to explore the psychosocial risks and mental health challenges faced by shore-based personnel. While much attention has been given to the mental health of sea-going staff, the high-pressure and often isolated nature of shore-based roles can similarly contribute to stress, burnout, and emotional fatigue. Research in this area could help support the development of targeted interventions and mental wellness policies.

Finally, there is scope for the development and testing of industry-specific performance appraisal models tailored to the shipping sector. Most existing frameworks are either generic or borrowed from other industries, which may not accurately capture the performance dynamics of shore-based roles. A dedicated effort to design appraisal systems that reflect operational realities, incorporate meaningful metrics, and align with strategic goals would significantly enhance the effectiveness of performance management practices.

In sum, future research in these areas could contribute significantly to the evolving discourse on human resource management in the shipping industry. By addressing these gaps, scholars and practitioners alike can support the development of more effective, equitable, and sustainable workplace practices for shore-based personnel.

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