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**MOTIVATION FOR OCCUPATIONAL PREFERENCE AMONG
STUDENTS OF REGIONAL MARITIME UNIVERSITY IN NUNGUA,
ACCRA- GHANA**

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to find out motivation for occupational preference among Regional Maritime University students. The cross-sectional survey design was chosen for the study and the stratified sampling technique was used to select a sample of 305 students from three departments constituting major programmes of study. Motivation for Occupational Preference Scale was used to gather data from the sampled population. The Independent samples t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to analyze the data gathered. Results showed that, extrinsic values influenced occupational preference more than intrinsic values, both Ghanaian and International students were influenced equally by extrinsic factors in their preference for occupation, there was no significant gender difference in the influence of extrinsic factors on occupational preference and there was a significant difference in the intrinsic factors that influence occupational preference among students from different programmes. It is therefore recommended that, regular career guidance and counselling sessions are held at various levels of education to inform and educate students especially at the university on the benefits of career preference based on intrinsic factors than solely on extrinsic factors. In conclusion students must be encouraged to assess their vocational interest or career preference so that they pursue programmes and courses that they have the natural inclination for and not only make a choice of vocation or career just for extrinsic values or rewards.

Keywords: Career Guidance; Career Preference; Choice of Career; Choice of Vocation; Cross-Sectional; Counselling; Extrinsic Factors; Extrinsic Values; Motivation; Natural Inclination; Occupational Preference; Rewards; Regional Maritime University; Survey Design.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Work has always been the very core of human survival (Makinde&Alao, 1987). ‘Work’, ‘job’, ‘vocation’, ‘occupation’ or ‘career’ as many individuals will call their source of livelihood, is an indispensable part of human life. To be able to work or be employed means much more than just earning some money. Individuals attach specific importance to most aspects of work and these values tend to influence how they choose specific career paths and the way they feel about the work they engage in (Wong& Yuen, 2012). Work plays a key role not only because it is the primary source of income to some people, but also because it is the foundation for social participation and inclusion as well as social status, consumption, health, family life, and so on. Work also satisfies people’s psychological needs and gives a sense of pride and worth. Work is part of life and the basis for education, whether formal or informal.

Due to the importance that individuals attach to most aspects of work, people’s preferences for occupations are influenced by certain psychological and social needs. Work satisfies some personal and family needs including economic, social, psychological and emotional needs (Nord, Brief, Atieh & Doherty, 1990).For these reasons, before a person’s occupational preference will be understood, the motivation behind that preference need to be explored. In exploring the motives behind occupational preferences it must be noted however that, the terms occupational development, career development and vocational development are used interchangeably in the literature (Thompson, 2012).In most literature, occupation and career are also used interchangeably (Joslin, 1984 cited in Pyne, 2002).There is therefore a relationship between career, occupation and vocation and the distinction sometimes unclear in the literature.

Kochar (2002) cited in Shuaibu (2010) considers career preference as the occupation with the highest positive valence among alternative form of work value. Motivational factors for occupational decision-making include societal prestige, financial rewards, personal reputation, social status, and parental expectations for their children (Denga, 2001). The process of choosing a career involves estimating one’s values, as well as skills and abilities required for success in the given occupation, and identifying the work values that will be satisfied by the various occupational alternatives available (Brown,2002).

Kankam & Onivehu (2000) asserts that, occupational preference of adolescents are influenced by intrinsic, extrinsic and interpersonal factors as well as intellectual ability, aptitudes, the school, family, personality, self-esteem, as well as values, and interests. Students’ career aspirations can be influenced by parents, teachers, peers, school environment, socioeconomic status, socialization and students themselves. Parents can have a strong impact on shaping their children’s orientation toward achievement, love and acceptance. In the school environment teachers play important role in students’ career decision making. Research has found that students, especially science majors are influenced by high school teachers and guidance counselors in making high school and college plans (Hill, Pettus & Hedin 1990).

It is worth noting that people make occupational choices based on some specific personal factors. Therefore people who enter different occupations have different outlook on work as an aspect of

life as evidenced by the fact that students who are enrolled in different programmes express stable vocational value differences (Osipow, 1983). Research has also found that, both professionals and students are significantly different across occupations in the level to which various motivational factors influence their choice or preference of occupations (Nenty, 2002). Some individuals, value work because of the opportunities it provides for them to express their personality directly. In such a case, work becomes an end in itself and not a means to an end. To others work may be a means to have benefits such as leisure and luxury or an opportunity to travel other than an intrinsic interest in the tasks or the skills associated with the work itself or just because significant people in their lives approve or value those occupations.

Several studies conceptualized work values as the criteria that individuals use for judging and selecting occupations, or what was important and desirable to them in vocational activities. Work values were viewed as personal belief systems that focused on what were important for fulfilling individuals' personal needs (Wong & Yuen, 2012). It is worth noting that people make occupational preferences based on some specific personal factors and that people who enter different occupations have different outlook on work as an aspect of life; as evidenced by the fact that students who enrolled in different programmes expressed stable vocational value differences (Osipow, 1983).

1.2. The Purpose of Working

The role work plays in the life of individuals cannot be overestimated, due to the sheer amount of time that individuals spend working (MOW, 1987 cited in Harpaz, 1990). Why do people work? This question can be answered by different people differently. Most people will probably answer that they work because they need to get paid or that every human being has or need to work. However one study found that over half of the people who accepted early retirement packages from their employers wanted to return to work after three months in retirement. They had found that a life of total leisure was not enjoyable after all, and that work, even with its negatives, also had a lot of positives (Zelinski, 1993 cited in Thomason, 1999). This is an indication that a human being will work regardless of whether he is compelled to do so or not; either for money or for leisure. In every country, occupation is part of human living and it is not possible to separate man's welfare from his work. Work provides people with meaning and a purpose in life (Nordet al., 1990). When we look at the number of years people engage in various occupations in their lifetime, the importance of a person's career life and the importance as to whether it is satisfying to him or not cannot be taken for granted.

1.3. Motivation

To be motivated means to be moved to do something or act. Motivation is not a unitary phenomenon hence individuals do not only have different quantities or levels of motivation but also different kinds of motivations. Which means that people are different not only in the level of motivation (how much motivation they have), but also in the orientation of that motivation (what type of motivation they have). Orientations of motivations are the underlying attitudes and goals that make people act. They explain the why of actions (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These are internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role, subject, or to make an effort to attain a goal.

1.4. Occupational Preference

Dawis (1991) cited in Prediger and Staples (1996) indicated that the word ‘preference’ was a basic term for defining interests and values. Some occupations allow a lot of public contact; others involve little public contact. Some require outdoor work and/or physical activity while others do not (Prediger & Staples, 1996). Some individuals prefer an environment that is outgoing and warm, while others prefer a more formal and independent workplace (Macnab, Bakker & Fitzsimmons, 2005). It is therefore important to note that the factors that motivate people’s occupational preferences are based on how compatible the attributes of various occupations are with their personal values (Prediger & Staples, 1996).

1.5. Motivation for Occupational Preference

Motivation for occupational preference is based on individual work values (Macnab, *et al.* 2005). Values are different from attitudes in that attitudes can be positive or negative, whereas values are always positive in favour of something. This concept of values has frequently been used in the domain of work in connection with vocational choice and refers to a person’s preference or liking for particular types of occupational activities (Roe & Ester 1999). Values are motivational constructs that guide the selection or evaluation of people’s actions. Desirable abstract goals that people strive to attain (Schwartz, 2006). Schwartz (1992) cited in Roe and Ester (1999) gave an elaborated definition of values as “desirable states, objects, goals, or behaviours, transcending specific situations and applied as normative standards to judge and to choose among alternative modes of behavior.” Values give direction to some of the most important decisions of life including the choice of academic discipline for making a career (Schwartz, 2006 cited in Berring, Kumari & Ahuja, 2015).

Work values just like basic values are beliefs pertaining to desirable outcomes such as high pay or behaviour such as working with people (Ros, Schwartz & Surkiss, 1999). Work values refer to only goals in the work setting. Due to this they are more specific than basic individual values. They refer to what a person wants out of work in general, and not the outcomes of particular jobs. Work value researchers believe that a number of broad orientations towards work are the basis for the ideas people have of what is important to them when making occupational choices (Ros, Schwartz & Surkiss, 1999).

When an individual is faced with a choice, he or she seeks out organizational environments that offer the opportunity for his or her values to be expressed and will avoid organizational settings that are likely to stifle or suppress his or her internalized values. Occupational choices could be viewed then as preferences for settings that allow or encourage expression of particular values or value systems (Judge & Bretz, 1992). This is possible because individuals attach varying degrees of importance to different values and because work values have hierarchical features that can be ordered by their relative importance, they form an ordered system of value priorities that set individuals and groups apart (Schwartz, 2006) making preferences and choices possible. For these reasons, a higher importance of one particular work value dimension implies a lower importance of another (Hauff & Kirchner, 2015). However, some researchers have argued that it is possible for values to be equal in intensity and thus equally high or equally low (Klages, 2002; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998 cited in Hauff & Kirchner, 2015) and therefore instead of a hierarchy,

particular relationships may exist between different work values, forming a specific value pattern, value system or value types (Roe and Ester, 1999). Most occupations involve some level of interaction with people however, an individual's personal values strongly impact both the type and quality of interaction that they will prefer to have with others whilst working (Macnab, *et al.* 2005).

There are various categorizations of work values and among the various types there is a relative consensus on two central dimensions of work values (Kyvik, Yingying & Romero-Martinez, 2012; Lyons, Higgins & Duxbury, 2010; Sagie, Elizur, Koslowsky & Meni, 1996 cited in Hauff & Kirchner, 2015). These are extrinsic values (respectively security, material or instrumental values) which refer to aspects such as job security or income and Intrinsic values (respectively self-actualization or cognitive work values) which relate to aspects such as the pursuit of autonomy or having an interesting job. Beside these two basic dimensions, there have been suggestions for additional dimensions of work values: Social or relational values which refers to relations with co-workers, supervisors etc.; altruistic values which involve the desire to help others or to have a job that is useful to society and prestige values which are related to status, influence and power (Elizur et al., 1991; Gahan & Abeysekera, 2009; Lyons, Higgins and Duxbury, 2010; Ros, Schwartz and Surkiss, 1999 cited in Hauff & Kirchner, 2015).

2. Statement of the Problem

A study by Sababa and Benson (2010) at Adamawa State University at Mubi Adamawa State in Nigeria with public administration students found that, only 1.68% of the respondents indicated they were motivated by interest in the courses leading to the profession. This may be an indication that sometimes choices are made because of ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, advice from friends, parental ambitions for them, unnecessary competition with friends and mates and the encouragement by teachers or as a result of the prestige attached to these occupations. At this time of competition in university admissions, students are sometimes compelled to offer programmes whether they meet their desired occupational goals or not. Just like all other universities, the Regional Maritime University admits students based on their academic performance without the consideration of what specific factors influenced their preferences. An empirical investigation into the sort of goals required by individuals from work is likely to throw more light on the fundamental question of why people work (Harpaz, 1990) and therefore why they choose specific work career or occupation. Although much research has been done in the area of factors that influence occupational choice and preference, little attention has been paid to how extrinsic and intrinsic values influence career choice of Regional Maritime University students' occupational preferences. This study therefore, seeks to find out the factors that motivate Regional Maritime University students in their occupational preferences.

3. Statement of Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were tested for the study;

- 1) Male students will be influenced by extrinsic values more than female students.
- 2) Ghanaian students will be more influenced by intrinsic values than International students.
- 3) There will be a significant difference in the motivational factors that influence the occupational preference of students from the different programmes.

- 4) Extrinsic values will be relatively more important to students than intrinsic values in their occupational preferences.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Design

The research design for the study was descriptive and a non-experimental cross-sectional survey design. A non-experimental cross-sectional design was used because there was no need for the manipulation of the environment while collecting the data and data was going to be collected from the students during a specific period in a one-time interaction and not over a period of time. The primary focus of the research was to describe a phenomenon. The study did not seek to answer questions about how, when and why the factors influenced the preferences of the students' occupation but rather to determine what factors influence them and to find out whether they vary according to gender, nationality, programme of study. The objective was to gain a better understanding of various influences on a variable of interest which was occupational preferences of students of the Regional Maritime University hence the descriptive and non-experimental designs were appropriate.

4.2. Target Population

The target population was made up of undergraduate students of the Regional Maritime University (RMU) comprising Bachelor and Diploma students from two faculties; the Faculty of Engineering (Marine Engineering, Electrical Electronic and Information Communication Technology Departments) and the Faculty of Maritime Studies (Nautical Science, Ports and Shipping and Marine Safety Departments).

4.3. Sampling Size and Sampling Techniques

Three hundred and five (305) out of 1448 students were selected to participate in the study. This represented 21% of the target population which was consistent with recommendations for determining size of a random sample by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Stratified random sampling was used. The target population was divided into six strata, and subjects from each stratum were chosen to get the sample size.

4.4. Instrument

The instrument used was 'Motivation for Occupational Preference Scale' (MOPS) developed by Bakare (1977). The MOPS is a 16-item scale that can be used to measure the motivation for occupational preference of both students and professionals. Evidence of its reliability is provided by a test-retest study of a sample of 28 Nigerian form 4 secondary grammar school pupils. The test-retest reliability was .89. Evidence for the validity of the MOPS was obtained from a study comparing value-orientations (as obtained from the reasons from occupational preference) of professional nurses and professional engineer

4.5. Components of MOPS

The MOPS is a self-rating scale consisting of three major sections. The sixteen reasons are classified into the following four categories:

External Influence- this category deals with sources of influence which are external to the individual. A high score in this category means an individual is influenced in his or her occupational preferences by other people or external sources.

Extrinsic-Reward Oriented Values- this category consist of reasons which deal with the outward advantages or material benefits which can be derived from the preferred job. A score in this value means a tendency to view work in instrumental terms- rewards obtained from work.

Self-Expression Values –the category consists of reasons connected with the opportunity which the preferred job offers for using one’s special skills and aptitudes. Respondents emphasizing these values tend to view work primarily as an end in itself with its own in-built satisfaction and as an opportunity for expressing one’s talents or creative potentiality.

People-Oriented Values- this category consists of reasons dealing with the opportunity which the preferred job offers for coming in contact with people rather than with things. Respondents emphasizing these values tend to view work largely as a means of obtaining the satisfaction to be derived from interpersonal relationships.

4.6. Scoring of the Motivation for Occupational Preference Scale

To rank the importance of the sixteen reasons and the four categories into which these reasons were classified, the likert-type response scale was used where 1= ‘No Importance’, 2= ‘Little Importance’, 3= ‘Average Importance’, 4= ‘Considerable Importance’ and 5= ‘Extreme Importance’, the circled numbers were summed up to get the score to calculate the relative importance of reasons in the four subscales. To find out the factors that influenced students’ occupational preferences, student indicated the factors that influenced them by writing ‘yes’ and ‘no’ in front of each factor. This information was used to calculate the importance indexes of the various factors.

An Importance Index was calculated for each reason and ranked to get the important index of all the factors.

Importance Index for each reason was obtained by the following formula:

$$I.I = (Y - n/N)$$

Where; I.I = the Importance Index for the particular reason; y = the number responding ‘yes’ to the reason; n = the number responding ‘no’ to the reason; and N = the total number responding to the reason, that is (y-n)

4.7. Procedure for Data Collection

The purpose of the study was explained to respondents and their informed consent sought.

The instruction on how to respond to the items on MOPS was explained to respondents after which they were allowed 30 minutes to complete responding to questions on the MOPS.

4.8. Proposed Data Analysis

The hypotheses were tested using Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) and Independence Sample. The findings of the testing of hypothesis are presented below.

5. Results

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one stated that, “male students will be influenced by extrinsic values more than female students. The results on the hypothesis are presented in the table 1 below;

Table 1: Independent t-test Result on the Influence of Values by Gender.

Values	Gender	M	SD	df	t	Sig.
External Influence	Male	8.75	3.50	303	0.378	0.35
	Female	8.50	3.35			
Reward Oriented	Male	14.53	3.35	303	-0.266	0.50
	Female	14.70	3.62			
Self-expression	Male	12.16	3.99	303	1.163	0.12
	Female	11.27	4.17			
People Oriented	Male	6.86	2.99	303	-1.614	0.05
	Female	7.80	3.44			

As shown in table 1 above, the total mean scores and standard deviations of the motivating factors were as follows: The mean score on external influence for males was 8.75 and the standard deviation was 3.50 whereas the mean score for females was 8.50 and the standard deviation was 3.35. With reward-oriented values, the mean score for males was 14.53 and the standard deviation was 3.35 whereas the mean for females was 14.70 and the standard deviation was 3.62. On intrinsic values of Self-Expression Values and People-Oriented Values, the mean score for males was 12.16 and the standard deviation was 3.99, whereas that of females was 11.27 and the standard deviation 4.17. On people-oriented values, the mean score for males was 6.86 and the standard deviation was 2.99 whereas the mean score for females was 7.80 and the standard deviation 3.44. These means were subjected to an Independent samples t-test to determine whether male students will be influenced by extrinsic values more than female students. Results for External Influence ($t = 0.378$, $p = 0.35 > 0.05$), Reward Oriented ($t = -0.266$, $p = 0.50 > 0.05$) and Self-expression ($t = 1.163$, $p = 0.12 > 0.05$) were found to be statistically significant at an alpha level of 0.05. On the contrary, result for People Oriented ($t = -1.614$, $p =$

0.05>0.05) were not found to be statistically significant at an alpha level of 0.05. This implies that, male students are influenced by extrinsic values more than female students.

Hypothesis two states that, ‘Ghanaian students will be more influenced by intrinsic values than International students’.

Table 2: Independent t-test Result on the Influence of Values among Ghanaian and International Students.

Values	Nationality	M	SD	df	t	Sig.
External Influence	Ghanaian	8.77	3.50			
	International	8.59	3.43	303	0.38	0.35
Extrinsic-Reward Oriented Values	Ghanaian	14.54	3.30			
	International	14.54	3.64	303	0.00	0.50
Self-expression Values	Ghanaian	12.11	3.97			
	International	11.96	4.20	303	0.28	0.39
People Oriented Values	Ghanaian	6.96	3.12			
	International	6.91	2.77	303	0.12	0.49

Results in table 2 above show that the mean scores and standard deviations of the motivating factors: External Influence, Ghanaian students scored (M= 8.77, SD= 3.50) whereas International students scored (M= 8.59, SD=3.43). With Extrinsic Reward-Oriented Values, the scores for Ghanaian students (M=14.54, SD=3.30) whereas the International students scored (M= 14.54, SD=3.64). The mean and standard deviation scores on Self-Expression Values for Ghanaian students were (M=12.11, SD=3.97) whereas the scores for International students were (M=11.96, SD=4.20). On people-oriented values, the means and standard deviations for Ghanaian students were (M=6.96, SD= 3.12), whereas that of International students were (M= 6.91, SD= 2.77). These means were subjected to an Independent t-test to determine whether Ghanaian students will be more influenced by intrinsic values than International students. Results for External Influence (t = 0.38, p= 0.35>0.05), Reward Oriented (t = 0.00, p= 0.50>0.05) and Self-expression (t = 0.28, p= 0.39>0.05) and People Oriented (t = 0.12, p= 0.49>0.05) were not found to be statistically significant at an alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis that Ghanaian students will be more influenced by intrinsic values than International students was rejected. There was no significant difference in the way intrinsic factors influence both Ghanaian and international students when it comes to their occupational preferences.

Hypothesis three, “There will be a significance difference in the factors that influence students from the different programmers.”

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Values on Programmes

Programme of study		External Influence	Reward Oriented	Self-expression Values	People Oriented Values
Port and Shipping	Mean	8.7849	14.4301	9.8817	8.0430
	N	93	93	93	93

	Std. Deviation	3.64110	3.41161	3.24657	3.22326
Logistics Management	Mean	9.3030	16.0909	10.6970	6.8788
	N	33	33	33	33
	Std. Deviation	3.44134	2.35005	3.00505	2.31513
Nautical Science	Mean	8.1034	15.1379	11.1034	7.4483
	N	29	29	29	29
	Std. Deviation	3.17743	2.44546	3.42621	3.00697
Electrical Electronic Engineering	Mean	8.9531	14.0156	14.2969	5.3281
	N	64	64	64	64
	Std. Deviation	3.60964	3.68391	3.93067	2.16798
Maritime Engineering	Mean	8.1579	14.2763	13.6053	6.1842
	N	76	76	76	76
	Std. Deviation	3.28249	3.65732	3.86119	1.98468
Computer Engineering	Mean	11.0000	14.2000	14.0000	11.8000
	N	10	10	10	10
	Std. Deviation	2.62467	2.89828	4.08248	5.55378
Total	F	1.709	2.052	16.686	15.062
	Sig.	.132	.071	.000	.000

Results in Table 3 show that the total mean scores and standard deviations of the motivating factors were, External Influence, (M=8.7279,SD=3.47662), Extrinsic-Oriented Values (M=14.5443, SD=3.37544), Self-Expression Values (M=12.0754,SD= 4.01365)People-Oriented Values (M=6.9508, SD=3.04369). These means were subjected to a One Way Analysis of Variance test. Results show F calculated values of 1.709 and 2.052 with p-values 0.132 and 0.071 greater than 0.05 significant levels respectively for the extrinsic values: External influence and Extrinsic-Reward Oriented. This meant that, irrespective of the programme being pursued by students, the differences in the way extrinsic values impact on their occupational preferences were minimal. Therefore the hypothesis that there will be a significant difference in the factors that influenced the occupational preferences of students from the different programmes was not accepted.

Hypothesis four states that, 'Extrinsic values will be relatively more important to students than intrinsic values in their occupational preferences'.

Table 4: Rank Order of Importance Index of various Influences

Statements	Rank	Yes (y)	No (n)	y-n	(Y-n)/N
Ensures stable and secure future	1 st	289	16	273	0.8951
Provides good salary	2 nd	283	22	261	0.8557
Gives an improved social status and prestige	3 rd	267	38	229	0.7508

Permits my special ability or aptitude	4 th	256	49	207	0.6787
Fondness for school subject which bear upon the profession.	5 th	247	58	189	0.6197
Provides Attractive Working Conditions	6 th	230	75	155	0.5082
Permits me to be original and Creative	7 th	194	111	83	0.2721
Direct and indirect influence of Radio, TV or Books	8 th	196	109	87	0.2852
Gives me a chance to exercise leadership	9 th	189	116	73	0.2393
Permits me to use my hands Extensively	10 th	177	128	49	0.1607
Direct and indirect influence of parents	11 th	143	162	-19	-0.0623
Gives me the opportunity to work with people	12 th	116	189	-73	-0.2393
Direct and indirect influence of friends	13 th	114	191	-77	-0.2525
Direct and indirect influence of teachers	14 th	106	199	-93	-0.3049
Gives me the opportunity to serve	15 th	22	283	-261	-0.8557
Permit me to help those less Fortunate than I	15 th	22	283	-261	-0.8557

In Table4 above, the first three most influential factors that motivated students' occupational preferences were all extrinsic ('Ensures stable and secure future', 'Provides good salary' and improved social status and prestige') under Reward-Oriented Values. It can also be observed in the table 4 that Reward-Oriented Values again was the highest influential factor with an importance index of (0.7475) a difference of 0.315 higher than the second highest of Self Expression Values (0.4328).

Table 5: Distribution of Average Importance Index of Values

Values	Rank	YES (y)	No (n)	Y-n	(y-n)/N
Extrinsic	1	203	102	101	0.3303
Intrinsic	2	153	152	1	0.0016

In table 5, the relative influence of intrinsic and extrinsic values on students is shown. It can be observed that extrinsic values with an important index of 0.3303 were again relatively more influential on students' occupational preferences than intrinsic values with an important index of 0.0016. This was as a result of the high ranking of Reward-Oriented Values. Therefore the hypothesis that 'Extrinsic values will be relatively more important than intrinsic values to students when it comes to occupational preferences is accepted.

6. Discussion of Findings

6.1. Factors that Influence the Occupational Preferences of Males and Female Students

The hypothesis that males will be more influenced by extrinsic values more than females was however rejected, meaning that extrinsic factors influenced male and female students equally. This finding is consistent with a study by Marini, Fan, Finley and Beutel (1996) which indicated that, there was no difference in the importance male and female placed on extrinsic rewards and influences. They however found out that there were persistent gender differences in the importance male and female place on intrinsic, altruistic, and social rewards in their occupational

preferences. They reported that young women attach greater importance to intrinsic, altruistic, and social rewards than young men. This implies that although males and females are influenced by extrinsic factors equally, there is evidence that intrinsic motivations influence females more than males.

Holland (1986) cited in Mudhovozi, Sodi & Amusa (2014) in a study with Scottish pupils implied that males were more likely to be influenced by extrinsic values more than females. He suggested that, boys were motivated more by utilitarian incentives (to become rich, acquire authority) since the traditional role of a man in his family is that of “protector” and “provider”. Males rated ‘earn a lot of money’, ‘work with technology’ and ‘good promotion prospects’ more highly than females.

The findings of this study was also inconsistent with Tolbert and Moen (1998) who investigated *whether or not men and women held differing preferences for particular job attributes and to what extent*. They indicated that work attributes that involve extrinsic rewards, were highly valued by men while intrinsic rewards were valued more by women.

The findings of this study was also inconsistent with the findings of a study by Beutel and Marini (1995) in which they found that men were more attracted by extrinsic values than women and women were also attracted by intrinsic values more than men.

The current research findings can be attributed to the changing trend in the family structure in Africa, where there are now a lot of single parent families and the role of women as non-bread winners is changing. Unlike previous years, women now partake in all responsibilities previously seen as the ‘duties of men. A number of studies have suggested that at least some of the contradictory findings from research works on the relationship between gender and work attitudes may be a reflection of recent shifts in women's attitudes toward work, which have accompanied large-scale changes in societal gender roles (Erez, Borochoy, & Mannheim, 1989 and Morgan & Carney, 1985 cited in Tolbert, 1998). Bruce, 2014 also observed that, it is becoming difficult for husbands to bear the cost of utility bills, school fees, family needs alone and therefore encourage women to engage in some vocation so as to support themselves and their husbands. Women merchant mariners in West Africa indicated that one of the main reasons why they chose careers at sea was for the attractive salary because, as a principle, there is no pay gaps between women and men at sea (Tifuh, 2014). Therefore women aspiring for careers in the maritime industries for example, may be aware of the opportunities to make money and have a secure future just like their male counterparts and these were ranked highly by respondents. Holland's theory of career development also stipulates that people with similar personalities are attracted towards similar occupational environments and are likely to have similar work values and this assertion was made irrespective of gender differences. The current finding of men and women with similar career preference motivation is not surprising.

6.2. Factors That Motivate Ghanaian and International Students' Occupational Preferences

The results of the study revealed that the level of influence of intrinsic values on both Ghanaian students and students from other African countries was the same. This implies that self-

expression values involving fondness of the subjects that bear upon the profession, their special abilities and aptitudes as well as opportunity to be creative and original and the opportunity to use their hands which are all intrinsic values were important to them irrespective of country affiliation. Also the motivation for people-oriented values of opportunity to exercise leadership, serve people, help the less fortunate and work with people which were also intrinsic values, were of equal importance to all students from different countries.

This finding was consistent with the findings of a research by Chan, Lee, Li and Raymond (2012) in which they found that contrary to their expectations, the influence of race and ethnicity differences on career aspirations was not significant. The researchers attributed their findings to the fact that many of the people who participated in the survey although they were not Canadians, had lived in Canada for a long time and had probably developed similar values. This same explanation can be attributed to the current findings because all the participants were from Africa with majority from West Africa and may have developed similar occupational values due to similarities of cultures in the sub region.

The rejection of the hypothesis can be attributed to the fact that most African countries have similar cultural values and therefore the difference in work values of the different societies were not that significant. Also the movement of people across the sub-region may mean that people mingle with others from different cultures and learn from each other's culture. The self-determination theory holds that motivations are learnt behaviours that develop as people interact with their environment. There are environmental factors that develop, improve, weaken or thwart intrinsic or extrinsic motivation (Ryan&Deci, 2000). Therefore the learning experiences an individual encounters in the society such as the kind of feedback the individual receives for behaviours performed determines the type of factors that will form the basis of the individual's motivation; whether extrinsic or intrinsic.

The findings confirm the assertion by Moreover, Magramo and Gellad (2009) that unlike highly industrialized countries, students from developing countries were more attracted to the maritime careers because of the extrinsic rewards they offer. Likewise, Inglehart (1997) cited in Hauff and Kirchner (2015) also asserted that materialistic values were more important in less developed countries and all the international respondents used in this study were from developing countries.

6.3. Factors Influencing Students' Occupational Preference from Different Programmes

Findings revealed that, although, there was no significant difference in the way extrinsic factors influenced occupational preferences of students from the different programmes offered at Regional Maritime University, the intrinsic factors recorded a high level of significant difference among students from the different programmes. The study found that, students offering Marine Electrical Electronic Engineering, Marine Engineering and Computer Engineering were more influenced by intrinsic values more than students from Port and Shipping Administration, Logistics Management and Nautical Science who were less influenced by intrinsic values. The finding could be attributed to the fact that engineering training involves extensive use of hands and a lot of creativity which were some of the intrinsic factors measured.

This finding was consistent with the findings of a study by Bering, Kumara and Ahuja (2015) in which they identified that People from different academic disciplines have differences in their value orientations.

Although the programmes offered at the Regional Maritime University are all in the maritime industry they are technically from different academic disciplines hence the difference in the influence of intrinsic factors. It was expected that since all of the respondents were offering different maritime programmes, their occupational preferences will be influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic factors equally. Inconsistent with these results is a research by Gokaldas (2010) in which he found that even students from different branches of engineering were motivated by varying extrinsic and intrinsic influencing factors for their job preferences. However the findings of this research also showed that students from different branches of engineering were influenced equally by intrinsic values.

6.4. Relative Importance of Factors in Motivating Students' Occupational Preferences

The rank order of the Importance Index produced by the analysis showed that among the 16 motivational factors of the Motivational for Occupational Preference Scale (MOPS) that influenced students' occupational preferences, 'Ensures stable and secure future' was ranked as the 1st factor by students followed by 'Provides good salary' as the second motivating factor. 'Gives an improved social status and prestige' was ranked the third influencing factor. 'Permits my special ability or aptitude' was ranked 4th with 'Fondness for school subject which bear upon the profession' ranking as the 5th factor that motivated students' occupational preferences. 'Provides Attractive Working Conditions' was ranked as the 6th motivational factor followed by 'Permits Me to be Original and Creative' ranking 7th by students. 'Direct and indirect influence of Radio, TV or Books' was ranked as the 8th factor and 'Gives Me a Chance to Exercise Leadership' was ranked as the 9th factor. 'Permits me to use my hands extensively' was ranked 10th with Direct and indirect influence of parents ranking as 11th factor followed by 'Gives me the opportunity to work with people' as the 12th influencing factor and then 'Direct and indirect influence of friends' ranked by students as the 13th motivating factor. 'Direct and indirect influence of teachers' ranked the 14th motivating factor among the 16 factors. 'Gives me the opportunity to serve' and 'Permit me to help those less Fortunate than I' were the least influencing factors with both ranking as the 15th factor. It appears that the relatively huge salaries paid by shipping companies have overshadowed other motivational factors in the industry. There have been studies that suggested that non-economic factors have lost their ability to motivate even people in developed nations to become seafarers (Caesar, Cahoon&Fei2015).

Among the external variables, 'Direct and indirect influence of Radio, TV or Books' ranked first, followed by 'Direct and indirect influence of parents' and then 'Direct influence of friends' with the 'Direct influence of teachers being the least influencing factors among the external influence.

With the Extrinsic Reward-Oriented Values, 'Ensures stable and secure future' was the most ranked 1st followed by 'provides good salary' and then 'Gives an improved social status and prestige' with 'Provides Attractive Working Conditions' ranking as the least influencing factor. Nevertheless 'Provides Attractive Working Conditions', being the least influencing factor in this

category, ranked 6th in the ranking of the 16 factors on the questionnaire. This is an indication of the strength of Reward-Oriented Values as motivational factors for occupational preference among Regional Maritime University Students.

Among the Self-Expression Values, 'Permits my special ability or aptitude' ranked first and was the 4th among the sixteen factors. 'Fondness for school subject which bear upon the profession' ranked 2nd in this category but ranked 5th among the sixteen factors with 'Permits me to be original and Creative' ranking 3rd with 'Permits me to use my hands Extensively, as the least motivating factor in this category.

People-Oriented Values were ranked in the following manner. 'Gives me a chance to exercise leadership' ranked 1st in this category but ranked 9th among the sixteen factors. 'Gives me the opportunity to work with people' was seen as the second most influential factor in this category but ranked 12th among the sixteen factors.

'Gives me the opportunity to serve' and 'Permit me to help those less Fortunate than I' were both ranked 15th and the last among the sixteen factors. This was an indication of how weak People-Oriented Values were in influencing student's occupational preferences apart from the need for leadership that appeared to be quite strong comparatively.

This finding is consistent with the findings of a study by Bering, Kumara Abuja (2015) in which they found that students in the business and technical streams score higher on extrinsic value orientation whilst those in arts and humanities streams scored higher on intrinsic value orientation. It was found that those in business and technical fields give more importance to extrinsic values. The results indicate that students of Regional Maritime University are more extrinsic value oriented than intrinsic value oriented.

7. Conclusion

According to the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), intrinsic aspirations include such life goals as affiliation, generativity, and personal development, whereas extrinsic aspirations include such goals as wealth, fame, and attractiveness. Numerous studies have revealed that an emphasis on intrinsic goals, relative to extrinsic goals, is associated with greater health, well-being, and performance. This study found that, extrinsic values determine career preference among Regional Maritime University students. It is likely that students may get disappointed if the rewards they expected does not materialized in case of inability to get employment in the maritime industry or are unable to get work in companies that will pay such high salaries. The possibility of high attrition rates in the industrial sector is obvious. Self-expression values which came second in the ranking of influential factors, shows that students are both influenced by extrinsic and some intrinsic factors like; the use of skills, abilities and love for leadership. These internal values can be well shaped through guidance and counseling so that students experience greater health, well-being and stable career progression in a preferred career.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made;

Counselling Centers at various levels of the educational system should lead students to discover their vocational interest areas through assessing them on various Vocational Inventories and Tests. This will motivate them to pursue courses and programmes that would lead them study their preferred careers or vocations.

Regular Guidance and Counselling of students on the benefits of career preference or choice based on intrinsic values and the implications for personal development, career progression and industrial harmony should be featured in schools, colleges and universities.

Parents should support their wards to discover their vocational inclinations rather sometimes pushing their wards to pursue a given vocation or career owing to extrinsic values of such careers.

The print, social and electronic media can be used to inform and educate students on the importance of values that determine successful career choice and preference.

Regular symposium on great achievers in industry, education, and governance can help students to learn what motivational factors influence career preference and practice. This will help students to be well informed on which motivational influence they should consider in the preference of career-extrinsic or intrinsic.

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