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Motivating Factors Influencing the Shifting of Programs among Former Marine Transportation Students

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Abstract

Program shifting in maritime education is a growing concern, driven by complex academic, economic, and psychological challenges. This study aimed to determine the motivating factors influencing former first-year Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT) students at the Asian Institute of Maritime Studies (AIMS) to shift to other degree programs during Academic Years 2023–2024 and 2024–2025. Utilizing a quantitative-descriptive design anchored in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), data were collected via a validated structured survey from 50 purposively sampled former BSMT students. The analysis employed frequency distribution, weighted mean, and Kruskal-Wallis/Mann-Whitney tests to evaluate demographic profiles and the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The demographic data revealed that shifting students are predominantly 20-to-22-year-old, first-born males (92%) from lower-middle-income urban families (74%). While autonomy and competence were acknowledged as significant motivators, the need for relatedness—specifically, the value of relationships within the program (M = 4.26)—emerged as the strongest psychological catalyst for attrition. Furthermore, while the fundamental need for autonomy and competence remained universal across demographics, significant differences in relatedness were observed based on gender (p = .026) and birth order (p = .041), highlighting distinct socialization and support needs among these groups. Ultimately, the decision to abandon the maritime track is primarily catalyzed by unmet interpersonal and social needs rather than solely academic or financial pressures. To effectively mitigate student attrition, maritime institutions must implement targeted, evidence-based career guidance models that prioritize peer support, mentorship, and deep psychological integration.

Keywords: *Program shifting, student attrition, Self-Determination Theory, maritime education, career guidance, basic psychological needs.*

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INTRODUCTION

Around the world, there has been an increasing concern about program shifting in many college and university degree programs, with maritime education as no exception. Significantly, maritime education and training (MET) keeps changing rapidly as new teaching methods, technologies, and industry regulations are upgraded to match the digital demands of the maritime sector. When the pandemic struck the globe, the rapid move to remote and blended systems demonstrated how unready MET was for hands-on learning. Online classes simply could not mirror the rigors of shipboard work. **Cariño et al. (2020)** observed that during this abrupt educational paradigm shift, the majority of maritime students felt unprepared, frustrated, and increasingly likely to abandon their programs. Students begin to have second thoughts about their chosen maritime career path due to several complex issues: technological upgrades, outdated curricula, and severely unmet expectations about life at sea—such as prolonged isolation, strict routines, and highly demanding drills (**Lee et al., 2021**). According to a recent maritime workforce analysis by **Heckmann (2026)**, many incoming students anticipate quick financial returns or straightforward training, only to find the technological and psychological demands of modern shipbuilding and seafaring much heavier than imagined. Furthermore, when many walk away, it reveals one consistent truth: poor delivery, unmet expectations, and rapid shifts in how MET operates are driving students to change programs globally (**Cariño et al., 2020; Heckmann, 2026; Lee et al., 2021**). And this global trend of attrition highlights a direct challenge to Target 8.6 of Goal 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals to *"substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training"*, for which to retain students within structured educational and training pathways to prevent underemployment (**United Nations, n.d.**).

In the Philippines, the story is much deeper. Local research stipulates that many maritime students initially choose the course for its economic promise—specifically, overseas work and large paychecks. But once reality sinks in, characterized by strict academics, expensive shipboard training, and grueling hours in simulators, students' motivation starts to diminish. During the pandemic and its immediate aftermath, many failed to complete their mandatory Onboard Training (OBT). Remote learning dimmed students' confidence and engagement, and the ensuing economic recession caused a significant number of maritime students to consider leaving their studies altogether (**Cariño et al., 2020**). Consequently, studies indicate that poor onboard placements, struggles to adjust to crew dynamics, extreme fatigue, and weak institutional support drastically increase the odds of students jumping ship, both literally and figuratively (**Galicia, 2019; Tangi, 2020**). This closely mirrors dynamics in the professional maritime sector, where a positive organizational climate and psychological safety are foundational to operational welfare, yet rigid organizational structures can reinforce communication barriers and stifle individual support systems (**Garcia & Doctor, 2026**). This phenomenon mirrors broader institutional trends in the local workforce, where structural workload imbalances and limited staff support have been empirically proven to significantly lower satisfaction and increase burnout (**Antazo et al., 2026**). Hence, program shifting in the Philippines usually comes down to four primary catalysts: tough academics, broken expectations, disrupted learning, and uneven training quality.

In a broader perspective, certain national and maritime policies are crafted to address these looming problems in education, though they are not always effectively implemented. Republic Act No. 11206, otherwise known as the Career Guidance and Counseling Act, pushes schools to guide students early toward the right track to

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minimize indiscriminate shifting and attrition (**Republic of the Philippines, 2019**). The Mental Health Act (Republic Act No. 11036) adds another stronghold; it mandates that schools must address the emotional and psychological tolls that can lead to rash course changes (**Republic of the Philippines, 2018**). However, the execution of this mandate nationwide faces systemic obstacles; for instance, an evaluation of the Mental Health Act by **Antazo et al. (2026)** revealed that institutional enforcement of the workplace well-being provisions are frequently viewed as inconsistent and inadequately resourced. Moreover, maritime regulators like CHED and MARINA actively issue rules about simulator standards, training hours, and mentorship, such as the MARINA Memorandum Circular No. SC-2022-01, which dictates strict OBT placement guidelines and cadet welfare standards (**Maritime Industry Authority [MARINA], 2022**). When these regulations are ignored or poorly facilitated by institutions, students bear the brunt of the failure, and shifting follows. These laws hint at a simple truth: give students realistic career information, accessible mental health care, and solid training—or lose them.

At the Asian Institute of Maritime Studies (AIMS), this problem has been observed as well. While national audits continually emphasize that compliance with CHED–MARINA guidelines on simulators and shipboard placements is vital, actual facility access and placement quality can remain uneven across the sector (**MARINA, 2022**). Inside AIMS, casual conversations and internal observations point to several specific triggers behind shifting. Students frequently mention the heavy financial costs, the intense pressure from rigorous drills, and the paralyzing uncertainty of securing sea assignments. Echoing broader MET challenges, third-year Marine Transportation students sometimes exhibit uneven laboratory skills and weak preparedness for actual shipboard work due to previous instructional disruptions and the inherent difficulty of the coursework (**Cariño et al., 2020**). These systemic issues keep surfacing in academic records, making it clear that AIMS needs sharper career guidance and targeted support to keep its students from shifting programs.

Nevertheless, there is still much to investigate. Existing studies have explained why students leave generally, but none have focused specifically on AIMS' former BSMT students after 2020. No localized data has captured how factors such as academic load, stress, financial constraints, and poor placements interplay within this specific institution. This information is crucial so that AIMS can design evidence-based interventions that fit its students' actual needs.

Therefore, this study aims to determine the motivating factors why former Marine Transportation students at AIMS shifted programs. Furthermore, the findings will be used as a basis for proposing a career guidance model tailored specifically for AIMS. Lastly, the study describes the profile of these students, ranks the weight of academic, emotional, financial, and institutional factors contributing to their departure, and translates the results into a working program that addresses the most critical areas of student attrition. This intervention serves as an institutional blueprint to fulfill Target 4.4 of Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to "*substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship*" ensuring that technical and vocational maritime students complete their training to meet the evolving competencies of the global maritime workforce (**United Nations, n.d.**).

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Objectives

This research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the former First Year Marine Transportation students?
2. To what extent do motivating factors influence the shifting of programs among Marine Transportation students?
3. Is there a significant difference in the personal motivating factors influencing the shifting of programs when respondents are grouped according to their demographic profile?

METHODS

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative-descriptive research design to identify the motivating factors influencing former first-year Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT) students to shift programs at the Asian Institute for Maritime Studies (AIMS) during School Years 2023–2024 and 2024–2025. This design facilitated the objective quantification and statistical analysis of students' perceptions regarding their decision to shift. Ultimately, the findings served as the empirical foundation for developing a proposed career guidance program aimed at reducing student attrition and fostering academic motivation**.**

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The respondents were former first-year BSMT students at AIMS who had shifted to another degree program during the specified school years. This demographic was selected because first-year students are in a critical transitional phase of their maritime education where issues of program adjustment and career orientation are most pronounced.

A purposive sampling technique was employed. Respondents were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) official enrollment as a first-year BSMT student at AIMS during SY 2023–2024 or 2024–2025; (2) formal shifting from the BSMT program to another degree program (internal or external) at the time of data collection; and (3) voluntary provision of informed consent. Students who did not meet these criteria were excluded to ensure that the sample possessed direct experience with program-shifting tendencies.

The use of 50 respondents perfectly aligns with the principles of purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, the goal is not to gather thousands of random people to represent the whole population, but rather to select individuals who possess a deep, direct experience with the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2015). Since the study focuses on the critical transitional phase and program adjustment issues, having 50 carefully selected students who actually experienced shifting courses provides richer, more relevant data than a larger group of randomly selected students.

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Research Instrument

Data were collected using a researcher-made structured survey questionnaire anchored on the motivational framework of Deci and Ryan's (2020) Self-Determination Theory. The instrument was divided into three parts:

- Part I: Demographic profile (age, gender, birth order, monthly family income, and geographical location).
- Part II: Assessment of motivating factors influencing the shift in programs, rated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree).
- Part III: Open-ended items soliciting student recommendations for a proposed career guidance program.

Prior to actual administration, the instrument underwent face validation by the research adviser and content validation by a panel of experts (a statistician, a guidance counselor, and an English teacher). A pilot test was conducted among 30 non-participating maritime students to assess clarity and reliability, with internal consistency confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha.

Data Gathering Procedures

Following approval from the AIMS Ethics and Research Committee, the Dean of the College of Maritime Education, and the School Administrator, coordination was made with class advisers to schedule the survey. Respondents were oriented on the study's purpose, assured of data confidentiality, and provided informed consent forms. The survey was administered via an online platform in accordance with institutional guidelines. Participants were given 10–15 minutes to complete the questionnaire during their free periods to avoid academic disruption.

Data Analyses

Collected data were encoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Results were summarized in tabular format. The following statistical tools were utilized:

- **Frequency and Percentage Distribution:** To profile the respondents based on age, gender, birth order, monthly family income, and geographical location.
- **Weighted Mean and Standard Deviation:** To determine the extent to which various motivating factors influenced the students' decision to shift programs.
- **Kruskal-Wallis Test:** To test for significant differences in motivating factors when respondents were grouped by demographic profile. This nonparametric test was appropriate given the ordinal nature of the Likert-scale data. A 0.05 level of significance was adopted.
- **Descriptive Analysis:** To synthesize the quantitative findings and qualitative recommendations into a practical, evidence-based career guidance program.

Ethical Considerations

The study strictly adhered to institutional ethical standards and the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Participation was entirely voluntary, with informed consent secured prior to data collection. Respondents retained the right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and no coercion or incentives were utilized. Anonymity was maintained by excluding personally identifiable information from the responses. Upon the successful defense and completion of the study, all electronic data and survey records were securely destroyed to guarantee participant privacy.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This section presents the statistical analysis of the data gathered from the former First Year Marine Transportation students. The findings are organized chronologically to address the demographic profile of the respondents, the extent of motivating factors influencing their program-shifting decisions, and the significant differences in these factors when grouped by demographics.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents

Category	Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	19	1	1.80
	20	12	22.68
	21	22	43.67
	22	10	20.79
	23	4	8.70
	25	1	2.36
Gender	Male	46	92.00
	Female	4	8.00
Birth Order	First Born	18	36.00
	Middle Born	10	20.00
	Third Born	8	16.00
	Second Born	7	14.00
	Last Born	7	14.00
Monthly Income	Below ₱12,030 (Poor)	10	20.00
	₱24,069–₱48,120 (Lower Middle)	27	54.00
	₱48,120–₱84,210 (Middle Middle)	4	8.00
	₱84,210–₱144,360 (Upper Middle)	3	6.00
	₱144,360–₱240,600 (Upper Income)	3	6.00
	At least ₱240,600 (Rich)	3	6.00
Region	NCR (Metro Manila)	28	56.00

Region IV-A (CALABARZON)	17	34.00
Region III (Central Luzon)	2	4.00
Region VI (Western Visayas)	2	4.00
Mindanao	1	2.00
Total	50	100.00

The data shows a high concentration of students aged 20 to 22, with the majority being 21 years old (43.67%). This suggests that the decision to shift programs typically occurs during the "*midpoint*" of the collegiate timeline—a critical period of identity formation and career reassessment. This transition is framed by a heavily male-dominated environment, as 92% of the respondents are male. This stark gender disparity is consistent with traditional maritime industry trends, reflecting a sample that accurately mirrors the professional field's current composition.

Regarding family structure, first-born children (36%) represent the largest group. Literature often links birth order to academic motivation; first-borns frequently face higher expectations to succeed and provide for the family. This sense of responsibility is further contextualized by the economic status of the respondents. Over half (54%) fall into the lower middle-income bracket, and 20% are classified as poor. The fact that 74% of the respondents come from financially challenged backgrounds suggests that the shift toward a maritime career is likely a strategic economic move, driven by the sector's promise of high-paying international employment.

Finally, the sample is largely urbanized, with 90% of respondents residing in either the National Capital Region (56%) or CALABARZON (34%). This geographic concentration highlights the role of proximity to educational hubs. Students in these regions have greater access to maritime institutions and are more exposed to the urban economic pressures that may necessitate a shift toward more lucrative or stable career paths. Collectively, these factors suggest that the "*shifting student*" is often a young man from a lower-income urban family, likely an eldest child, seeking better economic prospects through the maritime industry during a pivotal stage of his young adulthood.

Extent of Motivating Factors Influencing Program Shifting

Table 2

Extent of Motivating Factors in Terms of Autonomy

Item	Mean	SD
Personal choice in continuing or shifting programs	3.86	1.13
Course selection based on personal preference	3.96	1.23
Ability to determine academic and career direction	3.82	1.21
Freedom to express opinions about the program	3.76	1.17
Control over educational decisions	3.82	1.08
Legend: 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree		

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Table 2 presents the extent to which autonomy-related factors motivate students to shift programs. The findings indicate that students generally agree that these factors influence their decisions, though the overall means are the lowest among the three psychological needs examined. The strongest motivator within this dimension is the desire for course selection based on personal preference (M = 3.96, SD = 1.23), followed by personal choice in continuing or shifting programs (M = 3.86, SD = 1.13). Conversely, the freedom to express opinions about the program yielded the lowest mean score (M = 3.76, SD = 1.17). Notably, the standard deviations across all autonomy items are relatively high, ranging from 1.08 to 1.23. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), autonomy is the need to feel in control of one's own behaviors and goals (**Ryan & Deci, 2017**). The findings indicate that students generally agree that autonomy influences their decisions, though the overall means are the lowest among the three psychological needs examined. Researchers have extensively documented that isolation, loneliness, and a lack of communal connection are primary drivers of mental distress and attrition among future and current seafarers (**Sampson & Ellis, 2019**). In an academic setting, when a student's need for relatedness is thwarted—meaning they lack a strong peer support system or mentor connection—their overall academic motivation collapses, directly predicting their intent to drop out or shift courses (**Ryan & Deci, 2017; Slaten et al., 2018)**.

Table 3

Extent of Motivating Factors in Terms of Competence

Item	Mean	SD
Ability to meet course requirements	3.94	1.04
Confidence in accomplishing academic tasks	4.14	0.95
Effort to overcome academic difficulties	4.16	0.98
Skills necessary for academic success	4.24	0.94
Performance in challenging subjects	3.94	1.04

Legend: 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

Table 3 details the influence of competence on students' motivation to shift programs, revealing a stronger and more consistent impact compared to autonomy. Respondents indicated strong agreement that their perceived capability significantly drives their academic choices, with item means ranging from 3.94 to 4.24. The most influential factor in this category is possessing the skills necessary for academic success (M = 4.24, SD = 0.94), closely followed by the effort required to overcome academic difficulties (M = 4.16, SD = 0.98) and confidence in accomplishing academic tasks (M = 4.14, SD = 0.95). The standard deviations for these top-rated items are largely below 1.00, demonstrating a more unified consensus among the respondents.

Table 4

Extent of Motivating Factors in Terms of Relatedness

Item	Mean	SD
Sense of belonging with classmates	4.04	1.03
Emotional support from significant others	3.98	1.15
Connection with peers and instructors	3.94	1.00

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Availability of guidance from friends or mentors	3.86	0.99
Value of relationships within the program	4.26	0.88

Legend: 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

Table 4 outlines the extent to which relatedness—the need for social and emotional connection—motivates program shifting. The data reveal that relatedness contains the single most influential factor across the entire survey: the value of relationships within the program (M = 4.26, SD = 0.88). This profound emphasis on interpersonal synergy strongly echoes findings within active Philippine maritime operations, where dimensions of organizational warmth, team respect, and a shared sense of safety are highly correlated with collective resilience and performance (**Garcia & Doctor, 2026**). When educational or professional maritime environments lack these safe social anchors, individuals become highly susceptible to stress and eventual attrition. The notably low standard deviation on this item highlights a strong, unified agreement among students regarding the critical importance of interpersonal dynamics in their academic environment. Additionally, a sense of belonging with classmates emerged as a highly significant motivator (M = 4.04, SD = 1.03). While the availability of guidance from friends or mentors scored the lowest within this specific construct (M = 3.86, SD = 0.99), it remains a relevant factor.

Significant Differences in Motivating Factors by Demographic Profile

Table 5

Kruskal–Wallis Test Results of Motivating Factors by Age

Motivating Factors	H	Df	p-value
Autonomy	4.28	5	.509
Competence	2.48	5	.779
Relatedness	5.24	5	.387

Note. Grouping variable = Age; Significance at p < .05.

The Kruskal–Wallis test reveals no significant differences in Autonomy (p = .509), Competence (p = .779), or Relatedness (p = .387) across different age groups. The lack of variance by age strongly supports the foundational universality assumption of SDT. Basic psychological needs are conceptualized as innate and essential across the entire human lifespan (**González-Cutre et al., 2016**). While the specific environments or activities through which individuals satisfy these needs may evolve as they transition from adolescence to late adulthood, the fundamental magnitude and importance of desiring volition (Autonomy), mastery (Competence), and social connection (Relatedness) remain statistically stable across age cohorts.

Table 6

Mann–Whitney Test Results of Motivating Factors by Gender

Variable	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	p (2-tailed)
Autonomy	56.00	66.00	-1.294	.196
Competence	50.50	60.50	-1.501	.133

Relatedness	30.00	40.00	-2.230	.026*

*Note. p < .05. Grouping variable = Gender. Exact p-values reported.

The Mann–Whitney test indicates a statistically significant difference in Relatedness (p = .026) based on gender, whereas Autonomy (p = .196) and Competence (p = .133) show no significant differences. The significant variation in Relatedness aligns with extensive literature detailing how gender socialization influences interpersonal connection. Societal expectations and deeply ingrained socialization patterns frequently dictate distinct roles that impact interpersonal dynamics, leading to divergent levels of relatedness satisfaction across genders (Sánchez-Medina et al., 2023). Xia et al. (2022) also observed significant gender differences in the realm of basic psychological needs, emphasizing that the perception and prioritization of relatedness support often vary structurally between male and female groups due to differing interpersonal orientations cultivated from a young age.

Table 7

Kruskal–Wallis Test Results of Motivating Factors by Birth Order

Motivating Factors	H	Df	p-value
Autonomy	3.73	4	.443
Competence	2.64	4	.619
Relatedness	9.98	4	.041*

*Note. p < .05. Grouping variable = Birth Order.

The Kruskal–Wallis test highlights a significant difference in Relatedness (p = .041) across birth order groups. There are no significant differences in Autonomy (p = .443) or Competence (p = .619).Birth order inherently dictates sibling dynamics, the distribution of parental attention, and the resulting peer socialization strategies. Hollifield and Conger (2014) established that sibling support and interactions throughout development act as a critical social context that fulfills the psychological need for relatedness. Because firstborns, middle children, and lastborns experience varying degrees of parental structure and sibling interplay, their developmental pathways for establishing connectedness naturally diverge (Costa et al., 2018). For instance, later-born children often rely more heavily on peer and sibling relationships for social support, resulting in a distinct valuation of Relatedness compared to firstborns who may be more adult-oriented.

Table 8

Kruskal–Wallis Test Results of Motivating Factors by Monthly Family Income

Motivating Factors	H	Df	p-value
Autonomy	8.01	5	.156
Competence	8.06	5	.153
Relatedness	8.74	5	.120

Note. Grouping variable = Monthly Family Income.

There are no significant differences in any of the motivating factors when grouped by Monthly Family Income (all p > .05) or Geographical Location (all p > .05).The absence of significant variance across

socioeconomic and geographic lines further reinforce studies emphasize that the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are innate human requirements (Di Domenico & Ryan, 2017; González-Cutre et al., 2016). Regardless of whether a student is older or younger, from a wealthy urban center, or a lower-income rural area, their fundamental psychological requirement to feel capable and connected remains exactly the same. Socioeconomic status might dictate how they access education, but it does not change their internal, biological psychological wiring.rces the cross-cultural universality of the SDT framework.

Table 9

Kruskal–Wallis Test Results of Motivating Factors by Geographical Location

Motivating Factors	H	df	p-value
Autonomy	5.59	4	.403
Competence	4.03	4	.403
Relatedness	1.05	4	.903

Note. Grouping variable = Geographical Location.

While financial resources and regional constraints undoubtedly shape an individual's external environment and opportunities, the intrinsic drive toward Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness is an inherent psychological constant (**González-Cutre et al., 2016**). An individual's geographic location or income bracket does not fundamentally alter their biological and psychological requirement to feel competent, autonomous, and connected to others.

CONCLUSION

The decision to shift out of the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT) program at the Asian Institute of Maritime Studies (AIMS) is a multifaceted phenomenon, intricately tied to the developmental, socioeconomic, and psychological realities of the students. The typical profile of a shifting student—predominantly young, first-born males from lower-middle-income urban families—suggests that entering the maritime field is initially viewed as an economic strategy. Consequently, the decision to abandon this path during the critical midpoint of their collegiate journey is not taken lightly; it is heavily burdened by familial expectations and the pressure of securing financial stability.

Viewed through the lens of Self-Determination Theory, the thwarting of basic psychological needs drives this academic exodus. While autonomy and competence are significant motivators—as students seek control over their educational trajectory and desire environments where they can successfully master academic challenges—it is the need for relatedness that serves as the paramount catalyst for shifting programs. The overwhelming consensus regarding the value of interpersonal relationships within the program indicates that a student's social integration, or lack thereof, is the ultimate deciding factor in their retention.

Furthermore, the study confirms the cross-cultural and socioeconomic universality of these psychological needs, as factors like age, income, and geographical location did not significantly alter the students' motivations. However, the significant variances found in relatedness across gender and birth order highlight that an individual's

ingrained social socialization profoundly affects how they seek and perceive support. First-borns and male students navigate peer and mentorship dynamics differently, making them uniquely vulnerable when institutional support structures fail to resonate with their specific interpersonal orientations.

These findings expose a critical gap in current educational delivery: the psychological and social rigors of maritime education are just as challenging, if not more so, than the technical ones. To stem the tide of student attrition, AIMS must move beyond mere compliance with standard training guidelines and implement a specialized, evidence-based career guidance model. This model must be heavily anchored in fostering relatedness—prioritizing robust peer support systems, targeted mentorship, and early interventions that address the specific emotional and social needs of its demographic. By actively cultivating an environment where students feel deeply connected and competent, the institution can effectively reduce indiscriminate program shifting and better sustain its future maritime workforce.

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