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FACTORS INFLUENCING INTENTION TO JOIN MARITIME INDUSTRY AMONG FEMALE MARITIME STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Female students have always had a hardworking and valiant character, with high self-confidence and a powerful spirit in the university culture. The fact that there is a global gender bias in the workforce in various industries, including maritime industries cannot be denied. However, the increase in the number of female students attending maritime programmes in Malaysia's universities and colleges shows that the younger generation nowadays is becoming more aware of the changing perceptions of women at sea. Even though the Stimulus Organism Response (S-O-R) theory was highly used to predict individual future behaviour in various contexts, there is a lack of literature employing the S-O-R theory in the maritime context's studies. Thus, to fill these gaps, by adopting the S-O-R theory, this study attempts to identify what are the factors influencing the intention to join the maritime industry among female students who were studying maritime-related courses in higher institutions in Malaysia. By employing the purposive sampling method, the link to the questionnaire was distributed online, and a total of 302 respondents were gathered. The analysis with structural equation modelling with Smart PLS found that career reputation and salary expectation have a positive relationship with job image and personnel interest, and job image and personnel interest have a positive influence on intention to join the maritime industry. The findings of the study will provide insightful information that is useful for higher education institutions and employers in the maritime industry to craft better policy and recruitment strategies to attract and increase the participation of women in the maritime industry.

Keywords: Maritime industry, maritime student, intention, personal interest, job image.

Introduction

Fresh graduates nowadays are concerned about their future prospects, even though they are aware of the difficulties in obtaining graduate-level work and getting into the sector they desire. This is due to changes in the labour market. Thus, education itself does not guarantee that graduates get their desired careers. Female graduates face additional barriers and challenges to entering maritime industries as compared to male graduates. The gender-related challenges in getting work as an apprentice on board a ship are a universal phenomenon. However, the increase in the number of female students attending maritime programs in universities and colleges in Malaysia shows that the younger generation is becoming more aware of the changing perceptions of women at sea. The maritime sector is one of the most globally significant industries, as it accounts for over 90% of worldwide commerce and offers a diverse range of career possibilities for those seeking a new working environment with endless potential for progress (Arulnayagam, 2020).

The maritime industry is a term used to describe things related to the sea, the ships, the people on the shore, the institutions, and the facilities that make it possible

to transport by sea, and the people who navigate the ships (MacNeil & Ghosh, 2017). The maritime industry is one of the unique industries which society has embraced worldwide as a work for men, making it difficult for women to be in this industry and performing their work comfortably alongside men is a common issue. In technical professions, particularly those in the maritime industry, a notable gender disparity in terms of jobs and managerial positions, both horizontally and vertically is reported (Cars & Österman, 2015). As for example, to be sailors, society has created a restricted gender culture as well as distinct societal expectations for men and women (Ku *et al.*, 2017). Women working in this industry face multiple challenges, such as hardship (Vo *et al.*, 2023), gender inequalities, lack of opportunities to reach top management positions (Zinn *et al.*, 2018), and lower salaries (Ruel & Jaegler, 2021) as compared to men.

Gender prejudice has had a particularly negative impact on the marine sciences throughout the years (Gissi *et al.*, 2018). Many women are discouraged from working in male-dominated sectors due to a lack of role models, preconceptions about the nature of women's jobs, and negative workplace culture and customs. However, as a result of societal changes and growth, the problem of gender equality has become more prominent, affecting female students' choice of marine majors (Ku *et al.*, 2017). This gender difference begins at the university level when female students outnumber male students (Barahona-Fuentes *et al.*, 2020). To date, over 200 educational institutions are providing maritime education and training in more than 80 countries, ranging from basic protection and marine training to the highest standard of qualification, now equivalent to an academic degree (Cars & Österman, 2015). Over the years, the percentage of women with technical degrees have grown. The percentage of women workers in this

industry in 2016 was 36% and reached 41% in 2021 (Gartner, 2021), and the number is increasing year by year.

Therefore, a better understanding of the current situation may be critical in providing a new perspective on the problem (Cars & Österman, 2015). Previous studies were focused on factors influencing turnover intention, however, there is a lack of research focusing on female students' intentions to join the maritime industry. A previous study by Jeevan *et al.* (2020) looked at gender disparity and a seaport sector viewpoint and concentrated on exploring the basic qualities that women need to succeed in the seaport sector and also exploring the barriers for women to join the seaport sector. To fill these gaps, this study attempts to identify what are the factors influencing female Malaysian students' intention to join the maritime industry by adopting the SOR model. The findings of the study will provide useful insights for higher institutions and employers in the maritime industry to craft better policy and recruitment strategies to attract and increase the participation of women in the maritime industry.

Literature Review and Theoretical Background

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Framework

The theory of Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) was first introduced in 1974 by Mehrabian and Russell. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) demonstrated that different environmental stimuli (S) produce an emotional reaction (O) that contributes to an individual behavioural response (R). Since then, the theory has been widely used to illustrate the customer decision-making process in diverse retail environments (Changa *et al.*, 2011). Stimuli are applied to those affected individuals from the external environment, and this theory suggests that different external decision-making stimuli influence their inner state while the organism

refers to the inner state of an individual that includes thoughts, feelings, and cognitive actions. The response is a behavioural response that arises from stimuli in the body's external environment and internal processes and involves psychological attitudes or behavioural reactions (Kim & Park, 2019).

The theory states that various aspects of the environment can act as stimuli that affect people's internal states, which will then act as organisms that drive their behavioural responses. S-O-R theory is deemed suitable for this research context because various factors can be the external environment that affects their inner feelings that might influence the intention to join the maritime industry. According to Mehrabian and Russell (1974), every S-O-R theory uses different variables to represent the stimulus, organism, and response according to the research questions and research context. Hence, this study chooses career reputation and salary expectation as stimuli, job image and personal interest as an organism, and intention to join the maritime industry as response factors.

Career Reputation (S)

According to Coetzee and Villiers (2010), career reputation refers to a pattern of self-perceived abilities and skills, fundamental values, and the developed sense of motivations and needs that impact an individual's career-related decisions. Based on the S-O-R theory, an external influence such as reputation may impact the cognitive disposition of individuals and ultimately deduce their behaviour intention (Su et al., 2018). In the literature, reputation has been suggested as a key indicator that stimulates the cognitive and eventual behavioural intention of consumers (Tiamiyu et al., 2020). It is known that reputation influences the inner state, resulting in the behavioural intentions of customers (Prasad et al., 2019). Therefore, career reputation can be considered as a factor of stimuli (S).

Several investigations have discovered that a college's reputation is an influential consideration for students in the job choice process (Edirisinghe et al., 2017). According to Meddour et al. (2016), the most positive influence that impacts a student's career reputation is their personal interests. Students' personal interests in certain academic topics and essential characteristics of their desired profession, as well as the fit between their personality type and the work's demands, their confidence in landing a position, and the need to earn a fair wage, all play a role in career choice (Meddour et al., 2016). According to Edirisinghe et al. (2017), career reputation has a positive effect on job image. Moreover, Meddour et al. (2016) found that career reputation has a positive effect on personal interest. Therefore, postulated from these findings, the hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Career reputation has a positive relationship with job image.

H2: Career reputation has a positive relationship with personal interest.

Salary Expectation (S)

The study by Webbink and Hartog (2004) showed that the factors that affect expectations still influence students' realizations. Therefore, in general, the predicted earnings coefficients had the same sign and the same scale as the realized earnings coefficient (Pfeifer et al., 2014). The salary expectations will contribute to the environment of the job image. Therefore, salary expectation is considered as a factor of stimuli (S).

Salary expectation is an expectation of wages for the job done by an individual. Despite tough job realities, college graduates continue to have high expectations about their ability to obtain a good job. Job images with especially strong racial prejudices can make Black job applicants less likely to bargain because they see Blacks as less worthy of higher salaries relative to

Whites (Hernandez *et al.*, 2019). Research regarding students' job goals, especially their perspective on career features, such as salary expectations or family-friendly employment, might impact their personal interest and involvement in studying, according to future career orientation (Kang *et al.*, 2019). Hernandez *et al.* (2019) have suggested that salary expectations could affect the job image. Moreover, the study by Kang *et al.* (2019) found that salary expectation has a positive relationship with personal interest. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Salary expectation has a positive relationship toward the job image.

H4: Salary expectation has a positive relationship with personal interest.

Job Image (O)

The most fundamental and persistent construct of organisational analysis at the employee level is the job image. Ali *et al.* (2016) defined the image as an organisation's psychological personality profile that is constructed by an individual. The job image is a job description for individuals who are looking for a job. Job image is considered an emotional state arising from the perception or reflection of one's work activities or as a psychological state reflected concurrently by cognitive and affective indicators (Zhu, 2012).

According to Arslan and Altuna (2010), job image and brand image are important as the organism component in the SOR theory owing to image being retained in the memory of human interactions and providing characteristics of self-expression. Thus, this study also chooses job image as an organism factor. The job image of workers, such as meaningful work, has been demonstrated by a substantial body of observational studies (Maie Stein, 2019). The capacity of a successful image to attract the attention of more job seekers appears to be significant. (Wei *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Job image has a positive relationship with the intention to join the maritime industry.

Personal interest (O)

According to Laguador (2019), personal interest is described as an intrinsic feeling-related and value-related valence as a content-specific motivational trait. Personal interest is a motivator for individuals to do anything they want if they have the freedom to do so (Meiryani, 2020). For example, Jun Li (2018) demonstrated that having a personal interest might help with cognitive performance. According to the study, personal interest in a topic influences how people pick and process relevant information, and those with strong interests are more likely to have a selective propensity (Chen, 2018). Therefore, this study chooses personal interest as a factor of organisms (O). According to Bekoe *et al.* (2018), they found personal interest to be a positive influence on intention and highlight that students' personal interest plays a significant role in their intention to pursue a career in accounting. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Personal interest has a positive relationship with intention to join the maritime industry.

Intention to Join Maritime Industry (R)

Intention is defined as the resolve to perform a certain act, but it has not yet been carried out (Luturmas & Indarti, 2017). According to Luqman *et al.* (2017) state that real behaviour is difficult to quantify. Thus, it is reasonable to measure the behavioural intention as a proxy for the actual behaviour because the intention is a reliable indicator of the actual behaviour. Intention is considered an individual's belief, desire, and perception. Behavioural intention is an important predictor of the subjective likelihood of an individual performing a given behaviour (Lu *et al.*, 2018).

The intention should be consistent and have a certain degree of continuity, i.e., it is not possible to adjust the intention quickly (Lu *et al.*, 2018). The intention has been discussed by Suparno (2020) as a response factor in the S-O-R framework in the study of online purchase intention

of halal cosmetics. Thus, this study also chooses intention as a response factor for this study for female maritime students to join the maritime industry. Intention to join the maritime industry is the existence of a person's desire to venture into a large and well-known industry. Figure 1 illustrates the research framework of this study.

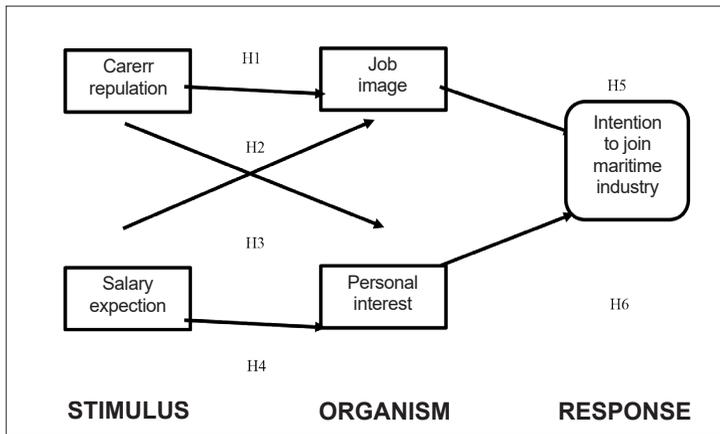


Figure 1: Research framework
Source: Authors

Methodology

The study was classified as a positivist paradigm since it used quantitative approaches and relied on data analysis to achieve its goals (Nghah *et al.*, 2021). Using surveys, data were collected from public and private universities in Malaysia which offered maritime-related courses. A purposive sampling method was employed since the study focused on female maritime students. Due to the unavailability of the sampling frame, the appropriate sampling to use is non-probability (Krause, 2019; Nghah *et al.*, 2021). Geographical constraints also became an issue for this study because it is impossible to visit all the related universities in Malaysia. To ensure sufficient sample size, the study authors used numerous online channels to spread the questionnaire to the students' representativeness from each university that offered maritime-based

programs. The students' representatives were asked to share the link through WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram with their group members, thus extending the snowball sampling method for the study (Nghah *et al.*, 2023). Out of 312 responses, only 302 questionnaire sets could be used for data analysis purposes. The reasons for discarding respondents included male subjects, high missing values and answers in a straight line (Albtoosh & Nghah, 2022).

All items used to measure the constructs in the study were adopted from previous studies to ensure item validity. Items for career reputation were adopted from Edirisinghe *et al.* (2017), salary expectation was adopted from Suomala *et al.* (2017), job image was from Wei *et al.* (2016), personal interest was from Bekoe *et al.* (2018), and intention to join maritime

industry was adopted from Lu *et al.* (2018). The respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the items for each construct based on a five-point Likert scale for independent variables and a seven-point Likert scale for the dependent variable. Thus, the data gathered came from a single source since the independent and dependent variables were from the same respondents (Halimi *et al.*, 2021). According to Ngah *et al.* (2021), single-source data could lead to the common method bias issue. To address the issue of common method bias, using the procedural method, the study employed different anchor scales to measure the independent variables (1-5) and dependent variables (1-7) as proposed by Podsakoff *et al.* (2012).

This study employed structural equation modeling with Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS). In determining the minimum sample size, as suggested by (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Jeevan & Ngah, 2023.), this study used G*power software. As proposed by (Gefen *et al.*, 2011), by using 80% power, medium effect size, with a maximum of 2 predictors

in the model, the study requires a minimum sample size of 68 to test the research model. Within 3-months of data collection, the number of respondents of the study was 302. This confirmed that the study's sample size was sufficient to test the hypotheses developed in the research framework.

Results and Discussion

The data was analysed using a total of 302 questionnaire sets. The majority of the respondents (91.4%) were between the ages of 21 and 25. Most of the respondents were pursuing bachelor's degrees (85.5%), studied maritime management courses (40.4%), were in the third year of studies (46.7%) and were from public universities (75.5%). Most of the respondents were Malay (69.9%), and the majority of the respondents claimed that they had no family members working in maritime-related fields. In this survey, most of the respondents chose their course of study themselves (56.6%), rather than family suggestions (5.6%) or simply taking up what was offered to them (37.7%). Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 1: Profile of respondents

Characteristics	Item	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Age	18-20	25	8.3
	21-25	276	91.4
	26-30	1	0.3
Race	Malay	211	69.9
	Chinese	38	12.6
	Indian	53	17.5
Institution	Public university	228	75.5
	Private university	74	24.5
Years of study	First	52	17.2
	Second	103	34.1
	Third	141	46.7
	Fourth	6	2.0

Course	Maritime Management	168	55.6
	Science (Marine Science)	25	8.3
	Science (Nautical Science & Marine Transport)	50	16.6
	Applied Science (Maritime Technology)	18	6.0
	Maritime Occupational Safety & Health	41	13.5
Level of study	Diploma	44	14.5
	Degree	258	85.5
I have family members working in maritime industry	Yes	61	20.2
	No	241	79.8
I join maritime course because	Self-choice	171	56.6
	Family suggestion	17	5.6
	Offer by University	114	37.8

Source: Authors

As suggested by (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Mohamad & Ngah, 2022), to test the hypotheses, the study utilized a two-step approach consisting of a measurement model and a structural model. Convergent validity and discriminant validity must be confirmed to establish the measurement model. Then, the structural model or hypothesis testing could be performed. The first step is to establish convergent validity:

All loading for the items in the study should be ≥ 0.5 , the average variance extracted should reach 0.5, and composite reliability should achieve 0.7 (Tuan Mansor *et al.*, 2022). Table 2 illustrates the results for the convergent validity which shows that all the values reached minimum criteria as suggested, thus confirming that convergent validity was not an issue for the study.

Table 2: Convergent validity

Construct	Item	Loading	CR	AVE
Career reputation	CR1	0.882	0.903	0.757
	CR2	0.868		
	CR3	0.860		
Intention to join maritime industry	ITJMI1	0.849	0.906	0.764
	ITJMI2	0.898		
	ITJMI3	0.873		
	JOB11	0.825		
Job image	JOB12	0.810	0.846	0.581
	JOB13	0.778		
	JOB14	0.618		
Personal interest	PI1	0.826	0.914	0.726
	PI2	0.892		
	PI3	0.800		
	PI4	0.886		

Salary expectation	SE1	0.866	0.903	0.756
	SE2	0.884		
	SE3	0.857		

Source: Authors

The second step is to establish the discriminant validity. According to Franke and Sarstedt (2019), discriminant validity may be established if the hetero-trait mono-trait (HTMT) values are less than or equal to 0.85. Table 3 indicates that the HTMT values for the construct of Career

Reputation, Intention to Join Maritime Industry, Job Image, Personal Interest, and Salary Expectation were lower than 0.85, indicating the establishment of the discriminant validity for the study. As a result, discriminant validity was not a concern in this research.

Table 3: Discriminant validity

	Career Reputation	Intention to Join Maritime Industry	Job Image	Personal Interest	Salary Expectation
Career reputation					
Intention to join maritime industry	0.824				
Job image	0.833	0.739			
Personal interest	0.760	0.808	0.676		
Salary expectation	0.840	0.716	0.719	0.780	

Source: Authors

The structural model (Figure 2) was evaluated after the measurement model has been reviewed and the model's reliability and validity had been verified. The procedure entailed assessing the connections between the variables as well as the structural model's ability to predict the outcomes. T-values using a bootstrapping approach with a resample of 5,000 and effect sizes (f2) were explored for evaluating the structural model standard beta (β), as proposed by Hair *et al.* (2019). According to Hassan *et al.* (2021), the study's hypotheses are supported if the beta values match the hypotheses' direction, t-values, and p-values, and are based on the confidence interval in which values represent the lower level (LL) and upper level (UL) must not straddle a zero between them.

Table 4 lists the criteria that the authors used to test the hypotheses that were proposed in this study. The results reveal that for the direct effect, all six hypotheses were supported. With Career Reputation -> Job Image ($\beta = 0.503$, $t = 6.006$: LL = 0.362, UL 0.626, $p < 0.001$), Career Reputation -> Personal Interest ($\beta = 0.347$, $t = 4.964$: LL = 0.241, UL 0.463, $p < 0.001$), Salary Expectation -> Job Image ($\beta = 0.228$, $t = 2.797$: LL = 0.107, UL 0.374, $p < 0.003$), Salary Expectation -> Personal Interest ($\beta = 0.43$, $t = 6.362$: LL = 0.313, UL 0.533, $p < 0.001$). Thus, H1–H4 of the study were supported. For Job Image -> Intention ($\beta = 0.317$, $t = 4.874$: LL = 0.208, UL 0.422, $p < 0.001$) and lastly, Personal Interest -> Intention ($\beta = 0.519$, $t = 8.101$: LL = 0.412, UL 0.619, $p < 0.001$). Thus, H5–H6 also were supported.

Table 4: Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	SE	T Value	P Values	LL	UL	Decision	F2
H1	Career reputation -> Job image	0.503	0.084	6.006	0.001	0.362	0.626	Supported	Medium
H2	Career reputation -> Personal interest	0.347	0.070	4.964	0.001	0.241	0.463	Supported	Small
H3	Salary expectation -> Job image	0.228	0.082	2.797	0.003	0.107	0.374	Supported	Small
H4	Salary expectation -> Personal interest	0.430	0.068	6.362	0.001	0.313	0.533	Supported	Medium
H5	Job image -> Intention	0.317	0.065	4.874	0.001	0.208	0.422	Supported	Medium
H6	Personal interest -> Intention	0.519	0.064	8.101	0.001	0.412	0.619	Supported	Large

Source: Authors

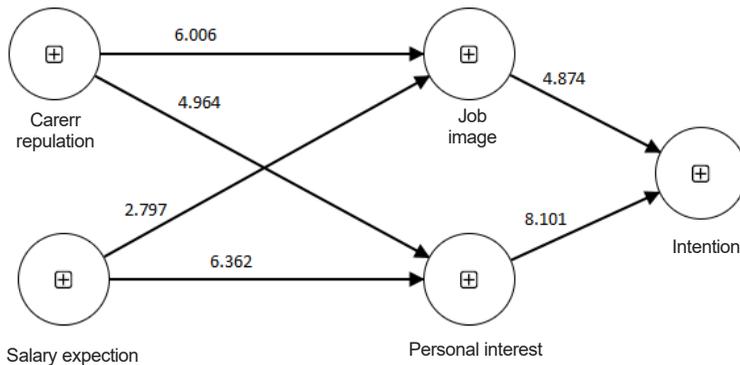


Figure 2: Structural model

Source: Authors

The focus of this study is to investigate the relationship between the variables in the SOR framework toward the intention to join the maritime industry among female maritime students in Malaysia. Six hypotheses were investigated in this

study. The study's findings indicated that all six hypotheses were supported and positively affected the intention to join the maritime industry. The findings of this study corroborate the findings of prior published research.

The analysis reveals that career reputation has been found to have a positive relationship with the job image (H1). The finding aligns with the literature, such as Edirisinghe *et al.* (2017), who also found that career reputation has a positive effect on job image. Hence, female maritime students must be visible in the maritime community and be representative in the maritime sector. This visibility can be through marketing materials to promote women in this industry and to develop a more diverse workforce. This also can create more varied portrayals of maritime careers in the media, with women as captains chief engineer, seafarer, and others. This situation will create a good image and encourage female students to join the maritime industry.

The analysis also reveals that career reputation is positively affected by personal interest (H2). This result supports the finding by Meddour *et al.* (2016), highlighting that the most positive influence that impacts students' career reputation is their own personal interests. Thus, the result indicates that high levels of personal interest are significant in terms of the attitude of students towards a career reputation. To solve this, companies must break down gendered career paths so that women do not become stranded in traditionally female-dominated support fields such as administration, communications, human resources, and others.

Furthermore, the study also found that salary expectations have a beneficial impact on job image (H3). The result of this study supports findings from earlier research by Hernandez *et al.* (2019) revealed a similar impact. The salary expectation can significantly influence the jobseeker in considering an employment offer. Therefore, women need to be more self-confident and trust in themselves, informing and portraying a good job image, thus encouraging other women to join this industry. The company also should offer them salaries in line with

the job image and qualifications that they obtained.

The study also found that salary expectations have a positive effect on personal interest (H4). The result of this study supports previous literature, such as Kang *et al.* (2019), that found salary expectation has a positive relationship with personal interest. The salary expectation of female students can significantly influence their personal interests. This means that when the salary is high, students' interest in joining the maritime industry is high. Thus, maritime companies should give competitive salaries that are commensurate with their image and reputation as drivers of global economic growth. Offering a competitive salary is also one of the best ways to attract and retain their talent.

This study found that job image has a positive effect on the intention to join the maritime industry (H5). The finding was in line with Wei *et al.* (2016), who also found that job image appears to have a significant impact on intention. The capacity of a good image to attract the attention of more job seekers and increase their intention to apply is highlighted by the organisational attractiveness perspective. Hence, maritime companies should prepare a conducive working environment for women and should understand and be aware of their needs and rights. The higher institutions should promote maritime courses to portray a good image of the maritime industry and provide training and exhibitions to encourage young women to join maritime careers.

The last hypothesis of this study was also supported since personal interest was found to have a positive effect on the intention to join the maritime industry (H6). This finding is supported by previous studies, such as by Bekoe *et al.* (2018), which found that a positive influence personal interest had on intention. This shows that female students who have a personal interest in joining this industry are

more likely to have the intention to be part of it. Thus, higher institutions should provide relevant maritime courses, programs, and training to enhance the knowledge and skills of those who have a personal interest in learning and studying related subjects in the maritime field, including female students in order to enhance competencies in the maritime context.

The relationship between career reputation, salary expectations, job image, personal interest, and intention to join the maritime industry is practically significant and contributes to female students' desire to join the maritime industry. The findings of the study will provide insightful information that is useful for higher institutions and employers in the maritime industry and can increase the participation of women.

Conclusion and Implication

Based on the SOR paradigm, this study provides support for the capability of SOR theory in the environmental and psychological field to be extended to the field of social science in determining the behavioural intention among female students in the maritime industry. The findings from this study can be understood further by taking into account a broader discussion on how psychological perspectives can influence intentions. Even though the maritime industry is labelled as a male-dominated industry, this is the time to improve opportunities for female students who are interested in pursuing maritime courses and participating in maritime activities as their careers. Changing the culture in the maritime industry is also important in preventing the biases women face daily. Hence, understanding the factors influencing the intention of a female student to join the maritime industry is crucial. The literature review suggested that female student's intention to join the maritime industry is under-explored. Therefore, the research attempted to reveal the factors influencing the intention to join the maritime

industry among female maritime students in Malaysia by adopting the SOR model. In this study, the six hypotheses tested were supported. The results have shown that career reputation and salary expectation positively affect job image, and also career reputation and salary expectation positively affect personal interest. Meanwhile, job image and personal interest are significant influences in the intention to join the maritime industry. This research contributes to the literature, but some limitations are identified for consideration by future researchers. The study is limited to the variables tested in this study, however, other crucial variables such as peer reference, family support, government commitment, and industry commitment should be explored to provide a better understanding of female students' behaviour in the maritime industry. Furthermore, the study will provide insightful information that is useful for higher institutions and employers in the maritime industry to craft better policies and recruitment strategies to attract the participation of women in the maritime industry.

Theoretical Implication

This study explores the influence of the S-O-R theory which highlights career reputation and salary expectations as stimulus, job image and personal interest as an organism, and the intention to join the maritime industry as response factors. The results of this study confirm the capability of career reputation and salary expectations as stimulus factors that affect female students internal states of job image and personal interest, which will then act as organisms that drive their behavioural responses to join the maritime industry. The findings confirm the importance of job image and personal interest to enhance the intention to participate in the maritime industry for female students in Malaysia. Personal interest also shows the largest effect size on the intention to join the maritime industry.

Managerial Implication

The research will benefit higher institutions and maritime companies by better understanding the intention of female students to participate in the maritime industry. This study provides insightful information for higher institutions to tackle this issue by choosing only interested female students for maritime diploma or degree programs. This shows that they have an interest in being part of this industry from the early stages and will stay in this industry. Maritime companies also can craft policies and better recruitment strategies to attract and increase the participation of women in this industry. The top management should support and recognise that women face challenges if they choose to be in this industry. A good support system from the management, such as good salaries and appropriate recognition, can influence women to join the maritime industry and play a better role.

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