

A STUDY ON FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN MARITIME SECTOR OF SRI LANKA

ABSTRACT

It is difficult to quantify the total value of the world maritime industry, and the economic relevance of a sector that affects a wide range of aspects of modern societies and their development. Seaborne trade accounts for about 90% of world trade. Historically maritime sector is a male dominated industry. Today, women represent only 2% of the world's 1.2 million seafarers and 94% of female seafarers are working in the cruise industry. Marine and maritime industry can be categorized basically such as sea going and shore based industries. Thus, marine and maritime education also divided into these two categories. The study was conducted to evaluate female participation in marine and maritime education and data collection was carried out for a three months period from October to November 2019. The information on institutions that conduct marine and maritime related training programs, details of courses, student intakes, stakeholder perception were collected through websites, telephone conversations, personal interviews and structured questionnaire survey. Thirteen (13) academic institutions (private and government owned) which offers marine and maritime courses were reported in Sri Lanka to train skilled persons for positions available locally as well as internationally. The institutes are offering 357 courses and course duration varies from 1 day to 2 years. Though, there is no any gender preference during advertising and interviewing, female participation is limited in most of the courses particularly for seafarers. Female participation was observed only in three institutes with highest female participation of 96% at OCUSL followed by Culinary Art (Pvt) Ltd (3%) and Mercantile Marine Training Institute (1%). Thus, detailed analysis was conducted at OCUSL and found that twenty one (21) marine and maritime courses are offered by the tertiary education and vocational training (TEVT) sector of the OCUSL under three major categories such as Fisheries and Aquaculture, Marine and Nautical Science and Information Technology in eight centers located in Mattakkuliya, Negombo, Kalutara, Galle, Tangalle, Batticaloa,

Trincomalee and Jaffna. In 2018, a total of 1560 students were enrolled with 14% (216) female enrolment which reported in 11 programs conducted by OCUSL. From the total enrolment, 1425 participants were completed the course with 13% (185) of females and 87% of males. The significant female enrolment was reported in shore based programs. Female participation was low for seagoing programs and results depicted that very less involvement of females in sea going programs. This is due to the cultural, social and religious situation in Sri Lanka. Detailed analysis is required to study of supply and demand of females in marine and maritime industry in Sri Lanka particularly for seagoing programs. Further, we recommend to create awareness and get more women to join the industry particularly for shore based maritime industry conducting career guidance programs for different age groups from school level to university level. It is recommended to include **Maritime Studies** for the new vocational stream of GCE A/L students to provide 13-year continuous education.

Keywords : Marine and maritime industry, Female participation, awareness, cultural and religious situation