


## Cruise ship Work Readiness: Investigation of the Moderating Effect of Preventive Behavior towards Self Efficacy and Career Motivation in Cruise ship Industry

### Abstract

Empirical research explicating cruise ship work readiness and career motivation has been limited, this research examines the association between cruise ship work readiness on self- efficacy and career motivation. Subsequently, the study also investigated the moderating effect of preventive behavior towards working in the cruise ship. Consecutive sampling was employed to analyze the perceived association of respondents using PLS-SEM. Results confirmed that multiple attributes of cruise ship work readiness strongly influence the perceived self-efficacy and career motivation towards cruise ship industry. Moreover, the result of structural equation modeling presented the moderating impact of preventive behavior was evident in self efficacy and career motivation drive of the respondents. The study revealed that elevated rate of preventive behavior increases fear, anxiety and low interpersonal skills which strongly influence individual's engagement, work performance and career motivation in the cruise ship industry. Furthermore, the study provided theoretical and managerial implication in the association of cruise ship employee competency towards career motivation and employee wellbeing.

**Keywords** cruise ship employee, career motivation, preventive behavior, self-efficacy, cruise ship industry

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### Introduction

COVID 19 Pandemic has disrupted the trajectory of growth and development within the cruise industry, attributable to restricted mobility and widespread border closures affecting various economic sectors. The growth of the worldwide cruise tourism industry and the global economy has been markedly hindered for a duration exceeding two years, following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, due to the enforcement of isolation protocols, entry constraints, and travel prohibitions. In the cruise sector, a significant number of employees, particularly those considered non-essential for ship maintenance and those engaged in catering functions, have experienced termination of employment (Nhamo et al., 2020). This has resulted in a substantially altered landscape characterized by revised regulations, changing demand patterns, and evolving operational prerequisites. Consequently, the industry has had to adopt new standards to meet both guest satisfaction and workplace requirements. Although employment prospects on cruise ships are considered highly advantageous for seafarers and individuals in the hospitality industry (Chua et al., 2017). Compounding evidence expressed in the study of Raub & Streit (2006) suggests that employees on cruise ships face difficult living conditions, a restrictive work environment, stress related condition related to long duration of employment and potential restrictions away from their families. According to Brownell (2014) and Radic et al. (2020) examined the quality of well-being of employees working in the cruise ship industry, the study revealed a decline in the overall well-being of these individuals as indicated by the Seafarers Happiness Index. This decline can be attributed to various factors including excessive workloads and time constraints (Bolt & Lashley, 20215). Papathanassis (2017) argued that increasing challenges in employee turnover and crew sourcing implicates the operation of the cruise industry. According to Radić & Popesku (2018), it is anticipated that employees working on cruise ships will provide outstanding service quality by engaging with guests and collaboratively crafting unforgettable cruise experiences. Thus, the well-being and contentment of these personnel significantly influence the quality of service and overall cruise experience. Employee well-being on cruise ships is defined as a combination of positive emotions and job satisfaction (Shimazu et al., 2015). Moreover, studies have found that there is a discrepancy between the working conditions promoted by cruise ship lines and the actual experiences of many employees. Furthermore, the hedonic contentment of crew members is construed as an outcome of intricate interplays of many psychological factors (Radic et al., 2020). Cruise ship personnel find themselves confined within a luxurious environment, interacting with tourists and colleagues from diverse nationalities for extended periods. Thus, disengagement from professional roles is limited. The isolated and regulated environment, coupled with the sociocultural context within a cruise ship setting, manifests a spectrum of effects on employee motivation (Sehkan & Sevcikova, 2011).

Evidence suggests that the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, have underscored the need for future studies to investigate the psychological readiness and response of cruise ship employees during times of crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the cruise ship industry, as limited spaces and close proximity on ships have increased the risks of infection and health concerns for both passengers and crew members. The severity of the situation was further highlighted as many crew members reported experiencing heightened levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders triggered by the constant fear and uncertainty during this time. The unique environment of a cruise ship presents its own set of challenges and opportunities for both the crew members and the passengers. As posited by Bardelle & Lashley (2015), a substantial proportion of crew members aboard cruise ships encounter feelings of homesickness and melancholy during their tenure at sea. These tribulations are attributed to persistent time constraints, formidable workloads, ambiguity regarding forthcoming contractual assignments, and the challenge of achieving



psychological disengagement from professional responsibilities. Furthermore, the caliber of working conditions has been determined to wield considerable influence over the life contentment and overall well-being of cruise ship personnel. Within the context of the well-being of cruise ship workers, social support emerges as a critical determinant, with the family unit identified as a paramount source. Huffman et al. (2015) and Kalliath et al. (2018) assert that familial support serves as a foundational element, fostering confidence and a sense of security when confronted with adversarial circumstances.

Limited attention has been directed towards the examination of the experiences of cruise ship personnel about their preparedness and preventative behaviors within the workplace setting. One underexplored avenue of inquiry pertains to the application of job fit theory. According to job fit theory, individuals derive maximum satisfaction and achieve optimal performance in their occupational roles when there is congruence between their skills, abilities, and interests, and the requisites of the job (Huang et al., 2019). Within the cruise ship industry, job fit theory underscores the significance of aligning employees' expectations and competencies with the practicalities of working on a cruise ship. Notably, Matuszewski & Blenkinsopp (2011) posit that there exists a misalignment between the expectations and the actualities of work-life for cruise ship personnel. They contend that the comparison between maritime and terrestrial employment is flawed, as the distinctive physical and sociocultural conditions inherent in cruise ship labor necessitate consideration in research. Presently, there is a dearth of literature examining the intricacies of work dynamics aboard cruise ships and the development of career motivation within the cruise ship industry. The profound repercussions of the challenges experienced during the pandemic have resulted in the suspension of cruise operations and a reduction in workforce demand. The ensuing impact on the long-term trajectory of the cruise industry has become a topic of intense debate, and there is limited understanding regarding the current perspective on career motivation within the cruise line industry post-pandemic.

This study aims to analyze the dimensions of cruise ship work readiness, preventive behavior, self-efficacy and career motivations in the cruise ship Industry. Studies centered more on the investigation of motivation to travel. Thus, the current study proposed to investigate the influence of cruise ship work readiness and its connection to self-efficacy and career motivation. Specifically, this study aims to examine the factors that influence cruise ship work readiness in terms of the following dimensions: work competency, technical skills, problem solving skills, social skills and organizational awareness. Furthermore, investigation of the relationship between cruise ship work readiness to self-efficacy, career motivation and the potential moderating effect of preventive behavior. In particular, this study investigates the following three research objectives: (a) To examine determinants of cruise ship work readiness dimensions such as work competency, technical skills, problem solving skills, social skills and organizational awareness, (b) to investigate the association between cruise ship work readiness and self-efficacy, (c) to determine the link between self-efficacy and career motivation, (d) to assess the effect of preventive behavior between cruise ship work readiness and self-efficacy, (e) to investigate the effect of preventive behavior between self-efficacy and career motivation in cruise ship industry.

## Literature review

### *Cruise ship work dynamics and readiness*

Prospective seafarers need to possess a comprehensive set of fifteen essential competencies encompassing technical proficiency, awareness of technological advancements, adaptability and flexibility, proficiency in computing and informatics, aptitude for teamwork, effective communication skills, leadership capabilities, discipline, consciousness of environmental and sustainability concerns, aptitude for learning and self-development, proficiency in complexity and critical thinking, language proficiency, professionalism and adherence to ethical standards, sense of responsibility, and interpersonal and social skills (Jamil & Bhuiyan, 2021; Poláková et al., 2023). Employers also place significant emphasis on the significance of soft skills, including professionalism, oral and written communication, teamwork, and critical thinking, within the context of the workplace. Moreover, it is worth noting that these essential areas of competency are interconnected with the crucial 21st-century skills (Rios et al., 2020), including but not limited to managerial aptitude, ethical conduct in the workplace, effective interpersonal abilities, a broad understanding of global issues, and proficient communication proficiencies. These proficiencies are deemed necessary for graduates to be adequately prepared for employment and to achieve success in their professional endeavors (Hui et al., 2021). These skills contribute to a positive work ethic and effective problem-solving abilities, promoting success not only in jobs but throughout one's career. The maritime industry, particularly cruise ship work requires the integration of technical and soft skills within academic curricula, which are enriched by innovative pedagogical strategies that foster deep learning experiences (Jamil & Bhuiyan, 2021; Poláková et al., 2023).

The implementation of service innovation in the cruise sector has successfully improved the attractiveness and availability of cruise vacations to a broader demographic (Yoon & Cha, 2020). The predominant proportion of crew members engaged in cruise ship operations is directly dedicated to delivering guest services. Henceforth, cruise enterprises assign significant value to each service sector aboard, acknowledging their substantial impact on guest satisfaction and their crucial role as a major source of onboard revenue. The influence of service quality on the decision-making process of prospective cruise passengers has been identified as a significant determinant (Li et al., 2020). Österman et al. (2020) emphasize the considerable contribution of service crew members on passenger ships in shaping the overall customer experience and reinforcing safety protocols. Their study reveals that individuals employed in the service department exhibit notable levels of physical exertion. This observation aligns with prior research, such as the investigation conducted by Ljung & Oudhuis (2016), which sheds light on the detrimental effects of crew work fragmentation resulting from crew optimization within the service department. Yoon & Cha (2020) argue that an increased guest-to-crew ratio, also referred to as the passenger-to-crew ratio, positively impacts the overall quality of service provided on board. Consequently, the heightened optimization of crew members



within the service departments presents a potential challenge in maintaining a superior level of service quality for guests. Further clarification is necessary to comprehensively grasp the intricacies of this dynamic and its implications for cruise ship operations and guest satisfaction. Based on the discussion, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 1. Cruise ship work readiness has a significant and positive effect on self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 2. Self-efficacy has a significant and positive effect on career motivation.

### ***Cruise ship employee preventive behaviour***

Prior to embarking on cruise ships, a significant proportion of cruise ship personnel engage in mental preparation to meet the demanding job requirements, which in turn offer substantial financial advantages for themselves and/or their families. Cruise ship employees are subjected to extended working hours throughout the day, without any scheduled days off, within a fast-paced work setting. Consequently, the study of Arjona-Fuentes et al. (2022) revealed the consequence of Covid 19 pandemic has affected the workplace environment by heightened fear of the crisis influencing job demands that have a detrimental impact on their physical and mental well-being. According to Dennett (2018) cruise ship employees lack the ability to separate themselves from their place of work after their shift, unlike other service employees. The inherently stringent and controlling nature of the cruise ship environment results in an inability for employees to psychologically detach from their workplace, thereby exacerbating the blurred boundary between their public and private lives.

The social interactions of cruise ship employees with the outside world are limited due to the managed and restricted nature of their activities within a confined space. In addition, the multicultural aspect of the cruise industry, with employees from various nationalities, adds a layer of complexity to the working relationships. This multicultural environment brings unique challenges in recruitment and management as organizations strive to maintain a harmonious working culture among diverse employee groups. Furthermore, the extended contact with guests is a distinct feature of working on a cruise ship. Crew members must establish a sense of community onboard, blending work and recreation in order to survive the oftentimes demanding and isolating structure of 'cruise life', which requires strong cohesion among the diverse group of individuals (Yoon & Cha, 2020). Therefore, maintaining employee engagement and satisfaction is paramount in this multicultural and insular environment, and effective management strategies should address challenges in recruitment and retention while fostering a supportive community culture on board.

Existing studies have illuminated the unique stressors experienced by cruise ship workers, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic where workers stranded at sea reported feelings of heightened anxiety, stress, fear, sleep disturbance, and depression (Radic et al., 2020). Furthermore, the study revealed that cruise ship employees faced extreme circumstances while being stuck at sea, leading to increased levels of stress and psychological distress. Workers' physical isolation further exacerbated these psychological impacts and revealed gaps in human resource management strategies, particularly in contingency planning for health crises and addressing the challenges of social isolation, especially during periods of lockdown due to epidemiological events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding the challenges, extant scholarly works predominantly center on the mental well-being of cruise ship passengers. It is imperative, however, to underscore the gaps in research concerning the comprehensive understanding of the repercussions of health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, on the psychological welfare of cruise ship personnel. This imperative is underscored by the considerable potential for mental health disorders among these individuals due to their distinctive occupational and residential circumstances. Such circumstances encompass the navigation of cultural diversity, the management of prolonged separation from familial and interpersonal bonds, and the coping with protracted periods of confinement aboard the vessel. These factors collectively heighten susceptibility to mental health disorders, such as anxiety and depression, with the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic significantly exacerbating these pre-existing conditions. Consequently, a dedicated investigation into the mental health impacts on cruise ship employees is warranted to address this scholarly gap and offer insights into potential interventions and support mechanisms for this vulnerable demographic. Additionally, the inability to attend to family issues due to prolonged periods on board increases stress levels for cruise ship employees, compounding the mental health impact. As a result, cruise ship employees have been facing significant challenges in terms of their readiness and preventive behavior in the workplace. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 3. Preventive behavior moderates the link between cruise ship work readiness and self-efficacy.

### ***Employee motivation on cruise ships***

Employment on a cruise ship is widely regarded as an excellent means of global exploration, as it affords cruise ship personnel the chance to visit numerous captivating destinations across various regions of the world (Bow, 2002). The inclination to travel can be regarded as a potent intrinsic motivator for individuals who opt to pursue employment in the travel industry, setting it apart from other terrestrial service organizations. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the significance of travel motivation may vary among employees, particularly those hailing from developing nations. In such cases, the primary driving force for these individuals to seek employment on cruise ships is often the opportunity to generate higher income compared to their respective countries, which is essential for supporting their families (Bolt & Lashley, 2015; Bow, 2002; Weaver, 2005). Several research studies have presented the cruise ship industry as a rewarding work setting that offers prospects for travel and financial compensation. However, alternative research has emphasized the emotional difficulties encountered by employees, including feelings of isolation during pandemics or prolonged periods of separation from their loved ones (Radic et al., 2020).

In addition to the emotional difficulties faced, various factors including occupational injuries and living conditions significantly impact the overall life satisfaction of individuals employed in the cruise ship industry. This underscores the importance of comprehending their underlying motivations for upholding a standard of excellence in service provision aboard these vessels. Sehkaran & Sevcikova (2011) conducted a study that underscored the importance of comprehending employee motivation within the context of cruise ships, as it is a critical determinant of delivering superior service quality. Moreover, a comprehensive analysis of the work environment, particularly in the context of cruise ships, reveals a significant influence on employee motivation, which in turn affects job satisfaction and productivity. Moreover, Evangelista's (2021) research uncovered that maintaining a balance between work and personal life, along with the ability to stay connected with family while on board, significantly affected the overall life satisfaction of cruise ship industry employees. Larsen et al. (2012) found that factors such as respect, the social environment, and the quality of food and living arrangements played a crucial role in influencing employees' work-life balance and satisfaction. This aligns with the perspectives presented by Lütkenhaus (2020) and supported by Ariza-Montes et al. (2021). The study demonstrated that the presence of employment-related assets positively influenced the work engagement and overall well-being of individuals in the cruise ship industry. Additionally, a noticeable positive correlation emerged between work engagement and the well-being of this workforce. These findings align with previous scholarly investigations that explored the impact of occupational demands and resources on both work engagement and well-being (Lesener et al., 2018).

Moreover, the role of trust in interpersonal relationships is now well recognized in theoretical models of maturation. However, few studies have looked at how personal & interpersonal preventive behaviour affects professional drive or related behavioural intentions. According to Sharif's (2019) research, working is motivated by factors like improving one's social standing and responding to familial expectations. Having background info on a field is crucial for developing and keeping up enthusiasm for it. The study of Yoon (2023) revealed that a favorable service orientation contributes positively to the development of work-related values and competencies. One's choice of a career path is informed by one's prior understanding of the requirements necessary to obtain that career. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the work readiness of future cruise ship employees, as well as the factors that contribute to the development of preventive behaviour and its impact on career motivation. Considering the above discussion, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 4. Preventive behavior moderates the link between self-efficacy and career motivation.

### Conceptual framework

This study is grounded in Albert Bandura's Self Efficacy Theory, which posits that self-efficacy is a crucial internal motivational mechanism that is shaped by personal and environmental factors. It further asserts that self-efficacy has a significant impact on various motivational outcomes, including decision-making, exertion of effort, perseverance, and attainment of goals. The theory of self-efficacy holds significant importance in influencing the motivation, behaviour, and performance of individuals.

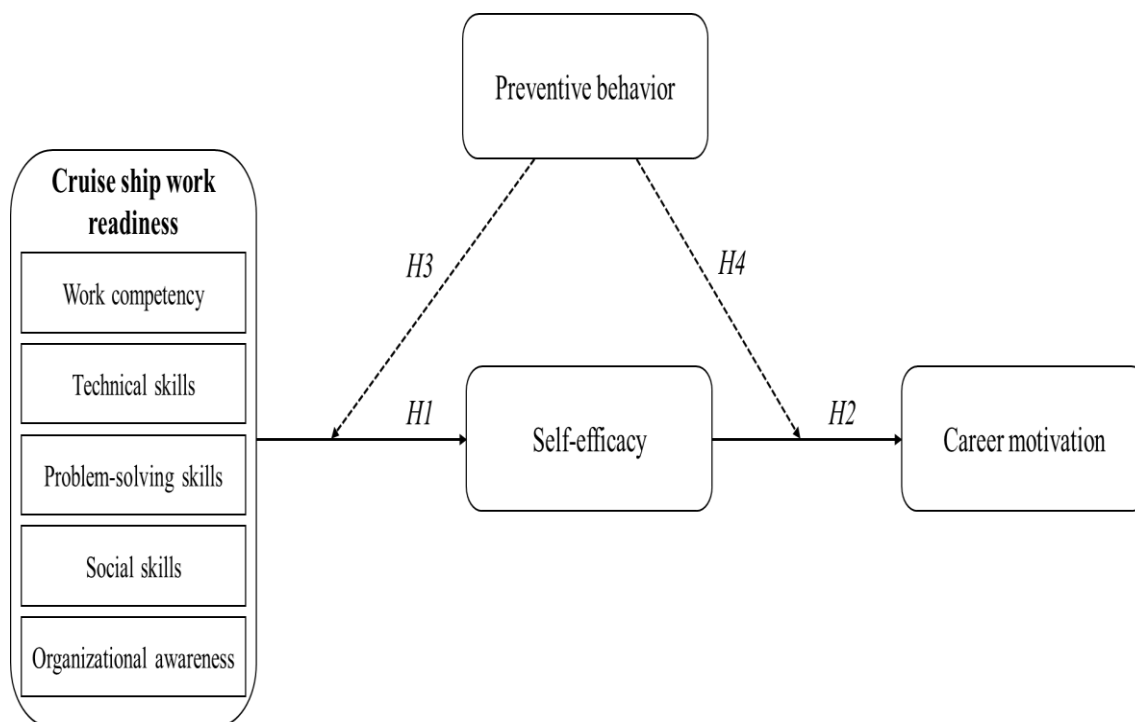


Figure 1: Cruise ship work readiness framework





Within the context of cruise ship employment, the theory of self-efficacy posits that individuals who possess elevated levels of self-efficacy pertaining to their aptitude in executing diverse tasks and fulfilling responsibilities while aboard a cruise ship is inclined to exhibit heightened motivation, competence, and achievement within their professional trajectories. The researchers incorporated this approach into the proposed framework (see figure 1), which was further supported by relevant literature on the topic of career motivation. Overall, the hypothesized framework suggests measuring the relationship of Cruise ship work readiness dimension and self-efficacy and the moderation effect of preventive behaviour towards career motivation in the cruise ship industry. The proposed conceptual framework is sought to be investigated in the study by examining the path analysis and the overall evaluation of the relationship of each dimension and variables in the study.

## Methodology

### *Participants and procedure*

This research employed a hybrid data collection methodology, incorporating a self-administered survey questionnaire and an online survey link accessible via QR code. Consecutive sampling was used to recruit participants who met the study's inclusion criteria. It included people who had completed an apprenticeship program on a cruise ship and gone on immersion tours with either domestic or foreign itineraries. Interns on cruise ships were approached personally during their brief breaks to administer questionnaires. Interns on cruise ships were given a thorough briefing outlining the study's primary aims after they agreed to participate in the survey. Only cruise ship interns participating in 5-day, 7-day, or 21-day cruise immersion and apprenticeship programs were allowed to take part in the survey. A total of 1473 responses were gathered from a self-administered and online survey. After data cleaning and screening, a total of 1326 valid responses covering the time period of January 22, 2023 through July 22, 2023 were included in the analysis.

### *Instrument*

Dimension measured were developed based on gaps identified in the literature. For the construct work competency, technical skills, problem solving skills, social skills and organizational awareness were self-made and adjusted from the literature review to match with context of Cruise ship Industry. A total of 46 construct were predicted to measure the Cruise ship work readiness dimensions. Eight items are used to measure dimension of preventive behavior and ten items are used to predict the dimensions of self-efficacy. Respondents were given informed consent and expressed their perceptions with a five-point Likert scale, spanning from 1 (indicating strongly disagree) to 5 (indicating strongly agree). In terms of the construct, all items are examined to determine the relationship towards career motivation. To ensure content validity, items in proposed framework were examined and validated by three academic faculty members in the cruise line and tourism industry. Reliability test and experts validation of the construct was implemented to measure the internal and external consistency of the construct. All factor loadings were greater than 0.7 were included.

## Research findings

### *Evaluation of the measurement model*

The hypothesize model undergone consistency and accuracy test through lower- and higher-order construct measurement. Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) are used to evaluate reliability in lower-order reflective constructs. Reliability is considered acceptable within the range of 0.60 to 0.70, with values falling between 0.70 and 0.90 deemed as satisfactory to good. Additionally, validity is ascertained through the examination of convergent and discriminant validity. In the assessment of the reliability of lower-order reflective constructs, it is imperative that both CA and CR values are at least 0.70 (Kock, 2014). According to the findings presented in Table 1, encompassing work competency (CA = 0.961, CR = 0.965), technical skills (CA = 0.924, CR = 0.940), problem-solving skills (CA = 0.913, CR = 0.950), social skills (CA = 0.961, CR = 0.965), organizational awareness (CA = 0.940, CR = 0.867), preventive behavior (CA = 0.947, CR = 0.956), self-efficacy (CA = 0.947, CR = 0.955), and career motivation (CA = 0.936, CR = 0.947), all meet the stipulated reliability criterion. The data presented in Table 2 further underscores the reliability of the indicators, as they surpass the threshold of 0.7, affirming their elevated level of reliability. Additional information detailing the criteria for reliability and the specific values associated with each construct further strengthens the comprehensive understanding of the measurement model assessment.

In the context of convergent validity, it is imperative that lower-order reflective constructs demonstrate an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and factor loadings equal to or exceeding 0.50. Additionally, each factor loading should exhibit a p-value equal to or less than 0.05 for significance (Kock & Lynn, 2012; Kock, 2014). Examination of the outcomes presented in Table 1 indicates that work competency (AVE = 0.698), technical skills (AVE = 0.724), problem-solving skills (AVE = 0.743), social skills (AVE = 0.664), organizational awareness (AVE = 0.677), preventive behavior (AVE = 0.732), self-efficacy (AVE = 0.679), and career motivation (AVE = 0.689) have successfully passed the convergent validity assessment. Furthermore, the outcomes of the convergent validity analysis reveal that all constructs within the hypothesized framework accurately represent the underlying construct's indicators, as manifested by their unidimensionality. This underscores the robustness and appropriateness of the selected measures in capturing the intended theoretical concepts, as they collectively contribute to a valid and cohesive representation of the constructs in question.



**Table 1: Convergent validity and reliability measures of the lower-order reflective constructs**

Lower-order reflective construct	Item	Factor loading	Average variance extracted	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability
Work competency			0.698	0.961	0.965
	WC1	0.858			
	WC2	0.850			
	WC3	0.833			
	WC4	0.838			
	WC5	0.796			
	WC6	0.823			
	WC7	0.826			
	WC8	0.842			
	WC9	0.838			
	WC10	0.835			
	WC11	0.846			
	WC12	0.842			
Technical skills			0.724	0.924	0.940
	TS1	0.846			
	TS2	0.866			
	TS3	0.844			
	TS4	0.867			
	TS5	0.838			
	TS6	0.846			
Problem-solving skills			0.743	0.913	0.935
	PS1	0.864			
	PS2	0.851			
	PS3	0.861			
	PS4	0.869			
	PS5	0.863			
Social skills			0.664	0.961	0.965
	SS1	0.798			
	SS2	0.820			
	SS3	0.798			
	SS4	0.798			
	SS5	0.828			
	SS6	0.736			
	SS7	0.814			
	SS8	0.847			
	SS9	0.843			
	SS10	0.779			
	SS11	0.837			
	SS12	0.835			
	SS13	0.827			
	SS14	0.836			
Organizational awareness			0.677	0.940	0.950
	OA1	0.814			
	OA2	0.840			
	OA3	0.795			
	OA4	0.822			
	OA5	0.806			
	OA6	0.847			
	OA7	0.833			
	OA8	0.827			
	OA9	0.818			
Preventive behavior			0.732	0.947	0.956
	PB1	0.761			
	PB2	0.851			
	PB3	0.839			
	PB4	0.884			
	PB5	0.900			
	PB6	0.843			
	PB7	0.884			
	PB8	0.874			
Self-efficacy			0.679	0.947	0.955
	SE1	0.826			
	SE2	0.835			
	SE3	0.809			
	SE4	0.824			
	SE5	0.816			
	SE6	0.819			
	SE7	0.811			
	SE8	0.828			
	SE9	0.844			
	SE10	0.825			
Career motivation			0.689	0.936	0.947
	CM1	0.813			
	CM2	0.822			
	CM3	0.822			
	CM4	0.848			
	CM5	0.807			
	CM6	0.846			
	CM7	0.851			
	CM8	0.833			

All factor loadings are significant ( $p < 0.001$ )

The assessment of discriminant validity for intermediate-level reflective constructs was conducted utilizing the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). According to Gold et al. (2001), in order to assert that discriminant validity exists in the model, an HTMT ratio of 0.90 must be achieved. As can be seen in Table 2, all of the reflective constructs at the lower end of the ordering spectrum have HTMT ratios of less than 0.90, indicating that the information being measured for each of these constructs is indeed unique and distinct. This proved the experiment's discriminant validity.

**Table 2: Discriminant validity of the lower-order reflective constructs**

	WC	TS	PS	SS	OA	PB	SE	CM
WC								
TS	0.858							
PS	0.813	0.874						
SS	0.809	0.847	0.839					
OA	0.815	0.812	0.849	0.829				
PB	0.212	0.165	0.298	0.204	0.254			
SE	0.716	0.730	0.713	0.720	0.714	0.360		
CM	0.713	0.737	0.757	0.725	0.751	0.353	0.738	

WC-work competency; TS-technical skills; PS-problem-solving skills; SS-social skills; OA-organizational awareness; PB-preventive behavior; SE-self-efficacy; CM-career motivation

In the assessment of work readiness of individuals in the cruise ship industry as a higher-order formative construct, this study employed a disjoint two-stage approach, as advocated by Jonson & Masa (2023). To assess the presence of a higher-order formative construct, the investigation scrutinized the indicators' weights, along with associated p-values, variance inflation factor (VIF), and full collinearity VIF (FCVIF).

Following the guidelines established by Ramayah et al. (2018), it was stipulated that each indicator weight should exhibit statistical significance, reflected in corresponding p-values below 0.05. The outcomes, as delineated in Table 3, affirm that the cruise ship work readiness construct, as a higher-order formative construct, has satisfied the requisite criteria. Additionally, adherence to the stipulation by Kock (2014) necessitates that the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for each indicator does not surpass 3.30. To confirm the absence of collinearity issues in cruise ship work readiness, both Kock (2015) and Kock (2022) have established a FCVIF threshold of 3.30. The results presented in Table 3 demonstrate that the cruise ship work readiness construct, as a higher-order formative construct, has successfully fulfilled all the criteria for measurement evaluation.

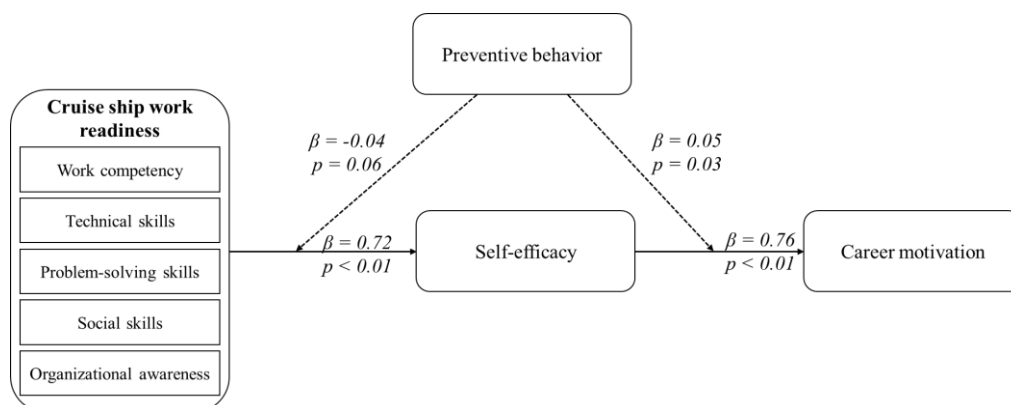
**Table 3: Higher order formative construct measurement evaluation**

Higher-order formative construct	Indicator weight	p-value	Variance inflation factor	Full collinearity variance inflation factor
Cruise ship work readiness				3.187
WC	0.219	<0.001	3.235	
TS	0.222	<0.001	3.187	
PS	0.220	<0.001	3.036	
SS	0.221	<0.001	3.080	
OA	0.218	<0.001	3.109	

WC-work competency; TS-technical skills; PS-problem-solving skills; SS-social skills; OA-organizational awareness

### Evaluation of the structural model

The assessment of the structural model encompasses an examination of path coefficients, p-values, standard errors, and effect sizes, as indicated by the work of Lacap & Sicat (2022). The outcomes of this evaluation are presented in Figure 2 and Table 4. To investigate the hypothesized relationships in the study, Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed. The overall adequacy of the model was ensured by scrutinizing the interconnections among all dimensions within the model through hierarchical component model analysis. Moreover, PLS-SEM facilitates a simultaneous analysis of the effects and attributes of the proposed construct by determining the path coefficients related to the moderating influence of preventive behavior on self-efficacy and career motivation within the cruise ship industry.



**Figure 2: The structural model with parameter estimates**

### Hypothesis testing

#### **Hypothesis 1. Cruise ship work readiness has a significant and positive effect on self-efficacy**

The results of the study demonstrated a noteworthy association between cruise ship work readiness and self-efficacy ( $\beta = 0.719$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), substantiated by a considerable effect size ( $f^2 = 0.539$ ). This suggests that people who exhibit preparedness for



cruise ship employment by possessing competencies in work-related tasks, technical prowess, problem-solving acumen, social adeptness, and organizational awareness simultaneously experience an increase in their self-efficacy. This is because cruise ship employment requires a wide range of skills, including social adeptness, problem-solving acumen, technical prowess, and organizational awareness. As a result, the empirical evidence supported the validity of hypothesis 1.

**Table 4: Hypothesis testing results**

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	p-value	Standard error	Effect size	Decision
<b>Direct effects</b>					
H1. CWR → SE	0.719	<0.001	0.026	0.539	Supported
H2. SE → CM	0.757	<0.001	0.026	0.543	Supported
<b>Moderating effects</b>					
H3. PB* CWR → SE	-0.042	0.064	0.027	0.024	Unsupported
H4. PB * SE → CM	0.052	0.028	0.027	0.027	Supported

CWR=cruise ship work readiness; SE=self-efficacy; CM-career motivation; PB-preventive behavior. Effect sizes evaluation (Cohen, 1988): 0.02 – small; 0.15 – medium; 0.35 – large

### **Hypothesis 2: Self-efficacy has a significant and positive effect on career motivation**

The path coefficient for testing the association of impact of self-efficacy on career motivation ( $\beta = 0.757$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), accompanied by a considerable effect size ( $f^2 = 0.543$ ). This outcome suggests that the activation of respondents' self-efficacy corresponds with a heightened sense of career motivation. Hence, the findings supported the validity of Hypothesis 2.

### **Hypothesis 3: Preventive behavior moderates the link between cruise ship work readiness and self-efficacy.**

The path coefficient assessing the moderating influence of preventive behavior on cruise ship work readiness and self-efficacy revealed no significant moderation ( $\beta = -0.042$ ,  $p = 0.064$ ,  $f^2 = 0.024$ ). This implies that the presence of heightened preparedness and skill competencies within the cruise ship industry negates any impact that preventive behaviors, such as anxiety, fear, and stress, may have on the development of self-efficacy. Consequently, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

### **Hypothesis 4: Preventive behavior moderates the link between self-efficacy and career motivation.**

The results indicate a moderating effect of preventive behavior on the association between self-efficacy and career motivation ( $\beta = 0.052$ ,  $p = 0.028$ ,  $f^2 = 0.027$ ). The findings suggests that the presence of preventative behavior acts as a moderating factor in the connection between self-efficacy and career motivation. This indicates that an increased level of anxiety, fear, and stress, which are predominantly determines preventive behavior, may have a significant effect on a person's sense of self-efficacy and their intention to progress their career in the cruise ship industry. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

## **Discussion**

The study investigated the relationship between the predictors of cruise ship work readiness, self-efficacy and career motivation, including the influence of preventive behavior in response to workplace condition and fear of the pandemic crisis in Cruise ship Industry. The results demonstrated that acquired work competency, technical skills, problem solving skills, social skills and organizational awareness are determinative factors of cruise ship work readiness. First, Cruise ship work readiness has a significant and positive effect on self-efficacy. This indicates that future employees with desired competencies above tend to have a higher level of commitment, motivation and performance. These findings are aligned with Maria Chala & Bouranta (2021) which found that technical skills alone are not sufficient for success in this demanding field; workers must also demonstrate strong problem-solving abilities, which can be developed through a combination of coursework and practical experience. According to Chen et al. (2018) a well-rounded skill set in the maritime industry includes not only technical and problem-solving skills but also soft skills such as adaptability, teamwork, and digital literacy. Soft skills in maritime professionals also encompass leadership, discipline, environmental and sustainability awareness, complexity and critical thinking, and inter-personal skills (Jamil & Bhuiyan, 2021). These skills are vital for effective collaboration with colleagues, communication with passengers and crew members, and the ability to navigate complex situations that may arise on a cruise ship. Therefore, in preparing youth for future employment opportunities, particularly in fields like the cruise ship industry, it is crucial to develop and prepare the, towards achieving desired work competency, technical skills, problem solving skills, social skills and organizational citizenship. Secondly, the significant and positive effect of self-efficacy on career motivation revealed that employees with higher levels of self-efficacy were more motivated to pursue their careers in the cruise ship industry and were more likely to experience greater job satisfaction and career success. Moreover, individuals with elevated self-efficacy beliefs are inclined to demonstrate heightened motivation in excelling within their designated roles. This inclination is characterized by a heightened sense of control over their individual career trajectories, leading to increased proactivity in the pursuit of opportunities for professional growth and advancement. Additionally, individuals characterized by high self-efficacy are more prone to persist in the face of challenges and setbacks, displaying a heightened level of resilience throughout their careers in the cruise ship industry, thereby contributing to elevated levels of job satisfaction.

Furthermore, it is crucial to underscore that the moderating impact of preventive behavior on the association between cruise ship readiness and self-efficacy was not evident. This demonstrates that a high level of cruise ship work readiness and competencies negates the influence of preventive behavior towards the formation of self-efficacy. This means that formation of strong competencies further strengthen link towards cruise ship work engagement, motivation and performance. This was supported by the study of Kim & Jung (2022), The study presented that individual who exhibited higher levels of preventive behavior had higher levels of self-efficacy when dealing with crisis situations on a cruise ship. This finding suggests that individuals were more prepared and proactive in managing potential crises on a cruise ship have greater confidence in their



ability to handle such situations effectively. Thus, potentially influence individual's adaptability and resiliency in the profession. Lastly, the study has shown that preventive behavior, such as fear of crisis, anxiety and depression, moderates the link between self-efficacy and career motivation. In this context, preventive behavior, such as fear of crisis, anxiety, and depression, may play a crucial role in influencing self-efficacy and career motivation among cruise ship industry personnel. Previous research has shown that safety climate and organizational support are essential factors in promoting self-efficacy and job satisfaction among employees in various industries (Sehkarani & Sevcikova, 2018). In addition, the study emphasized the importance of understanding the motivation of employees on cruise ships, as it is directly related to providing high-quality services. Moreover, their findings suggest that organizational support can indirectly affect self-efficacy and perceived fatigue among seafarers, and this, in turn, can impact their career motivation and overall quality of work-life offshore (Sehkarani & Sevcikova, 2018; Evangelista, 2021). Matuszewski & Blenkinsopp (2011) noted that the social community on a cruise ship presents unique challenges for new employees, as there is no separation between their private and working lives due to the isolated environment of cruise ships. This constant exposure to the work environment and lack of separation between personal and professional spheres can contribute to increased levels of anxiety, stress, and fear of crisis amongst employees in the cruise ship industry. These factors may have a negative impact on their self-efficacy and career motivation.

## Study implications

### *Theoretical implication*

This study provides noteworthy contributions to the extant literature, encompassing implications of both theoretical and practical significance. The study presents a model that explains the influence of cruise ship work readiness attributes of future employee on self-efficacy and career motivation, as well as the moderating role of preventive behavior between the attributes of self-efficacy and career motivation in cruise ship industry in Post pandemic. The findings of this study contribute to the limited existing academic literature from a theoretical standpoint that links multidimensional attributes that influence cruise ship work readiness and career motivation which includes the determinative attributes such as work competency, technical skills, problem solving skills, social skills and organizational awareness. Limited literature have analyzed this relationship in other context and failed to capture simultaneous and multiple intersecting attributes in understanding the relationship of workplace readiness and career motivation in cruise ship industry. The research final model's broad scope and applicability anchored in the Self Efficacy Theory and the moderating influence of preventive behavior provided a new theoretical perspective in investigation workplace readiness and career motivation. Comprehensive measurement scales for assessing work readiness, career motivation, and preventive behavior showed high levels of reliability and validity. In forthcoming research, these instruments may serve as instruments for measuring career motivation and employee well-being respectively.

### *Managerial implication*

Working in a cruise line industry requires a high level of competency in various areas, including work competency, technical skills, problem-solving skills, social skills, and organizational awareness. Technical skills are paramount for cruise ship work, as employees need to possess expertise in their specific roles. Experience on board and the resulting tacit knowledge have long been recognized as essential skills for a career in the cruise ship industry. First, the findings revealed that cruise ship employee must cultivate various competencies to be prepared in the dynamic workplace of cruise ship industry. Hence, adhering only to traditional methods of skills acquisition may not be sufficient in the modern era, and professional programs now aim to meet the need for more diverse and sophisticated competencies. Second, influence of preventive behavior towards job performance and career motivation should be carefully considered and provide strategic programs in promoting on employee satisfaction and wellbeing. Lastly, these findings highlighted the need for a deeper understanding of employee readiness and preventive behavior in the workplace of the cruise ship industry, particularly in times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and the role of effective crisis management strategies in mitigating these negative psychological effects. The findings in this study, therefore, suggest that managers in hospitality industry should:

- Lead in developing training programs in identifying and developing key competencies in potential employees, such as technical skills and problem-solving abilities, to ensure their readiness for cruise ship work. To improve the professional competency of seafarers working on cruise ships, it is essential for the management to adopt a multi-standard approach in developing a curriculum that includes not only technical, but soft skills as well as communication and teamwork, adaptability and digital literacy.
- Enhance recruitment strategies to identify individuals who display the desired competencies and motivations for cruise ship work.
- Promote cultural sensitivity in the workplace in cruise ship. This training is an example of a non-monolithic skill that adds tremendous value in social environment and promoting sociocultural adaptability. Encourage the sharing of personal experiences and insights among employees to foster a sense of community and support in the challenging environment of a cruise ship.
- Implement strategies to address and mitigate the negative impact of harsh working conditions, constant time pressure, heavy workload, and uncertainty on employee well-being. This can be accomplished by carefully designing, evaluating and redesigning tasks/jobs, incorporating socialization nights and team building activities which could inspire and motivate them to perform their roles and provide outlets to relieve their stress and fatigue.



- Develop flexible crew scheduling arrangements to accommodate the dynamic nature of cruise operations. Incorporate rotational shifts, ensuring that employees have opportunities for both work and leisure, thus facilitating a more harmonious work-life balance.
- Promote and support onboard recreation programs that cater to the diverse interests of the crew. These programs can include fitness activities, cultural events, and leisure options, enhancing the overall quality of life for employees during their time on the cruise ship.
- Recognize the importance of family connections for cruise ship employees. Implement initiatives that facilitate regular communication with family members, whether through enhanced internet connectivity or designated family visitation days during port calls or incentives to bring any member of their family for leisure travel on board the cruise ship.

### Conclusion, limitations and future research direction

This study aimed to explore the connection between self-efficacy and career motivation in predicting work readiness on cruise ships. Based on the study results, the readiness of an individual to work on a cruise ship is influenced by factors such as work competency, technical skills, problem-solving abilities, social skills, and organizational awareness. Moreover, the study's results showed a significant improvement in self-efficacy when cruise ship work readiness was considered. According to this discovery, individuals with the necessary skills for working on cruise ships tend to have greater self-efficacy, indicating a strong belief in their career performance. These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the importance of employee motivation and personal experiences in the cruise ship industry. However, the impact of engaging in preventive behavior on career motivation, including anxiety, depression, and stress, was found to influence future employee engagement. Moreover, the study recognizes the unique challenges that employees in the cruise ship sector encounter due to the blurred boundaries between their personal and work lives while on board, leading to the solitary atmosphere in such settings. These challenges highlight the importance of grasping the characteristics of cruise ship work readiness, building self-efficacy, and staying motivated to progress in one's career to enhance job satisfaction and performance. The study's findings have significant implications for both future research and current practices in the field of human resource management.

This investigation establishes a foundation for future research while simultaneously locating several limitations that must be taken into consideration. It is imperative to acknowledge a particular limitation associated with the data, as it pertains exclusively to the perceived experiences of internship practitioners and graduating students possessing prior exposure to interisland and international shipboard training, coupled with cruise tourism encounters. This limitation is associated with the fact that the data were collected from internship practitioners and graduating students. The study presents a model that explains the influence of cruise ship work readiness attributes of future employee on self-efficacy and career motivation, as well as the moderating role of preventive behaviour between the attributes of self-efficacy and career motivation in cruise ship industry in Post pandemic. The findings of this study contribute to the limited existing academic literature from a theoretical standpoint, that links multidimensional attributes that influence cruise ship work readiness and career motivation which includes the determinative attributes such as work competency, technical skills, problem solving skills, social skills and organizational awareness. Limited literature has analyzed this relationship in other context and failed to capture simultaneous and multiple intersecting attributes in understanding the relationship of workplace readiness and career motivation in cruise ship industry. Furthermore, it is imperative to acknowledge that the process of data collection occurred in a subsequent year after the conclusion of the pandemic. To attain a more comprehensive understanding, it is imperative for future research to incorporate the perspectives of individuals actively employed in the cruise ship industry. Lastly, it is recommended that forthcoming research expand the range of attributes associated with preventive behaviour, encompassing those that were not considered in the original study. This expansion is essential for achieving a more comprehensive understanding of career motivation in cruise line industry.

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