

Implications for Career Guidance and Family Engagement in Sea Transportation Human Resource Pipelines

(Parental Perspectives and Household Decision-Making in Adolescent Entry into Maritime Vocational Education)

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Abstract. A seafaring career, unlike most vocational tracks an Indonesian adolescent might enter, requires eventual acceptance of extended physical separation from family, a condition that begins shaping household decision-making well before a student ever completes an apprenticeship placement or enters the workforce, yet no study has examined how parents and guardians themselves understand, support, or constrain a child's entry into maritime vocational education. This study investigates parental perspectives and household decision-making processes surrounding adolescent entry into maritime vocational education in Jakarta, examining how families with and without prior seafaring background understand the career path, transmit relevant knowledge, and negotiate enrollment and persistence decisions. A qualitative design was employed, combining semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 20 parents or guardians of current maritime vocational students, stratified by prior family maritime background, supplemented by 6 school career-guidance staff and 4 community informants. Thematic analysis, cross-group comparison, and narrative synthesis identified four dominant findings: inherited versus improvised career knowledge transmission, financial necessity as a co-determinant alongside aspiration, incomplete parental understanding of the separation and lifestyle demands of seafaring, and minimal institutional engagement of families in career guidance processes. The findings extend cultural capital theory and family career development theory into Indonesian maritime vocational education and support family-facing orientation programming as an underexplored intervention point in sea transportation human resource pipeline development.

Keywords: Career Guidance; Cultural Capital; Family Decision-Making; Maritime Education; Parental Influence.

1. INTRODUCTION

A parent deciding whether to enroll their fifteen-year-old in a maritime vocational high school is making a decision whose consequences will not fully materialize for years, and whose most significant demand, the eventual acceptance of a grown child's months-long absence at sea, is not something most Indonesian parents have any comparable domestic occupational reference point for weighing. This is a structurally unusual feature of career entry into seafaring relative to almost any other vocational pathway a family might consider, and yet the research programme examining Indonesian maritime vocational education, including companion studies on student vocational identity formation, institutional curriculum governance, and instructor capacity, has consistently treated family influence as a variable observed secondhand, through what students themselves report about their family's role, rather than as a decision-making process worth examining directly at its source (Bourdieu, 1986; Young et al., 2002).

This gap is not merely an oversight of convenience; it reflects a broader pattern in career development research generally, in which the individual, rather than the household, has historically served as the default unit of analysis, even where career theory itself has long acknowledged that occupational choice, particularly during adolescence, is substantially a family-embedded rather than purely individual process. Young, Marshall, and Valach's (2007) contextual action theory of career development explicitly frames career construction as a joint project undertaken by parent and child together, in which parents actively participate in constructing career-relevant meaning through ongoing conversation, modelling, and negotiated decision-making, rather than functioning merely as a background influence a child passively absorbs. Young, Paseluikho, and Valach's (1997) earlier empirical work on parent-adolescent conversations about career specifically found that these conversations function as a genuine joint action process, with career direction emerging from repeated, mutually adjusted interaction rather than from either party's independent decision alone, a finding with direct and largely untested relevance to how Indonesian families actually navigate the decision to enter maritime vocational education specifically.

Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital, already applied within this research programme's companion research to observe its downstream effect on student adjustment during apprenticeship, supplies a second essential theoretical lens, though one this prior application used only to observe an effect rather than to examine its actual transmission mechanism. Cultural capital, in Bourdieu's formulation, is not a single undifferentiated resource but takes embodied, objectified, and institutionalized forms, embodied cultural capital referring to internalized dispositions and tacit knowledge transmitted through sustained exposure rather than explicit instruction, a distinction with direct relevance to this study's concern: a household with prior seafaring experience plausibly transmits accurate expectation and tacit familiarity with the career's demands through embodied, informal processes, family conversation, observed example, that a household without such background simply does not possess access to, regardless of how motivated that household might be to support a child's maritime aspiration through other means.

The empirical career guidance and school-family engagement literature reinforces why this gap carries direct practical consequence rather than remaining a purely theoretical concern. Epstein's (2001) framework for school, family, and community partnerships identifies parental involvement in career-relevant decision-making as a distinct partnership type schools can deliberately cultivate or, through institutional default, neglect, with neglect producing exactly the kind of uninformed or under-supported household decision-making this study's introduction

anticipates finding among families without prior maritime background. Whiston and Keller's (2004) comprehensive review of family influence on career development found that parental support, expectation clarity, and attachment quality each independently predicted adolescent career decision-making quality, while also finding that most career intervention research and practice continued to target the adolescent directly rather than engaging the family unit as a whole, a pattern this study's own research programme has, until now, reproduced rather than corrected. Bryant, Zvonkovic, and Reynolds's (2006) qualitative research on parental influence on career development specifically found that parents' own occupational knowledge and networks substantially shaped what career information they were able to transmit to adolescent children, with parents lacking direct occupational knowledge in a given field relying on secondhand, often incomplete or dated information, a mechanism directly relevant to this study's expectation that non-maritime-background families may transmit incomplete understanding of the seafaring career path specifically.

Sea transportation workforce research provides the substantive context establishing why closing this gap carries urgency beyond individual family welfare. Research documenting competency and certification gaps among traditional Indonesian shipping seafarers has established that Indonesia's domestic maritime workforce pipeline already faces significant structural strain (Sulistiana et al., 2025), and workforce retention research more broadly has established that early-career attrition is frequently traceable not to competency failure but to misaligned expectation formed prior to, rather than during, formal training (Whiston & Keller, 2004). If a meaningful share of Indonesian families enrolling adolescents in maritime vocational education hold incomplete or inaccurate understanding of the career's actual demands, particularly its separation and lifestyle requirements, then family-level expectation misalignment plausibly contributes to downstream persistence and retention challenges this broader literature has already documented at the workforce level, a connection existing research has not established empirically because it has not examined the household decision-making process directly.

The Indonesian maritime education literature within this broader research programme reinforces this concern from the student-experience side. Companion research on vocational identity formation found that students from families with prior maritime occupational exposure entered industry apprenticeship with clearer, more realistic expectations and adjusted more quickly than students without such family background, a finding this prior research interpreted through Bourdieu's (1986) cultural capital framework but could examine only as an observed downstream effect on the student, not as a process occurring within the household itself. That

research could not determine whether this advantage arose from explicit parental guidance, informal household conversation, direct childhood exposure to maritime environments, or some combination, nor whether families without maritime background actively sought to compensate for this gap through other means, questions only a study examining parents directly can answer.

Despite the clear theoretical grounding contextual action theory, cultural capital theory, and the family career development literature provide, and despite the sector-level urgency Indonesia's maritime workforce literature establishes, no study has examined Indonesian maritime vocational education entry from the household decision-making perspective directly. This is a consequential gap because family decision-making occurs prior to, and structurally outside, any point at which the school itself can intervene through curriculum, mentorship, or governance reform, the interventions this broader research programme has otherwise examined; if family-level expectation formation is where meaningful gaps in accurate career understanding originate, then school-level reform alone, however well designed, addresses only part of the pipeline this research programme is ultimately concerned with strengthening.

This study addresses this gap by examining parental perspectives and household decision-making processes surrounding adolescent entry into maritime vocational education in Jakarta. Four questions follow directly. First, how do families with and without prior maritime occupational background differ in the specificity and accuracy of the career knowledge they hold and transmit to their adolescent child? Second, what role does financial consideration play in household decision-making relative to career aspiration, and how do these two considerations interact rather than operate as alternatives? Third, how completely do parents understand the separation, lifestyle, and long-term career-progression demands of a seafaring career specifically, prior to their child's enrollment? Fourth, to what extent does the school itself engage families directly in career guidance, and does current practice address or leave unaddressed the knowledge gaps this study anticipates identifying among families without maritime background? The rationale for this study is threefold. Theoretically, it extends contextual action theory and cultural capital theory, both established substantially outside Indonesian and outside maritime-specific contexts, into a household decision-making process this research programme has previously observed only indirectly (Young et al., 2007; Bourdieu, 1986). Empirically, it closes a gap explicitly left open by companion research examining vocational identity formation, which could observe cultural capital's downstream effect but not its household-level transmission mechanism. Practically, it offers maritime vocational schools and Indonesian sea transportation workforce policy makers an evidence

base for family-facing orientation and engagement programming, an intervention point earlier in the pipeline than any reform this research programme's other studies have been positioned to examine. The remainder of this paper reviews the relevant theoretical and empirical literature, sets out the study's method, presents and discusses the findings, and concludes with their implications for family engagement policy in maritime vocational education.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Household decision-making, as used in this study, denotes the joint, negotiated process through which a family arrives at and sustains support for an adolescent's enrollment in and continuation within maritime vocational education, a construct distinguished specifically from the adolescent's own individual decision-making, which prior research within this programme has examined, by its explicit focus on parents and guardians as active co-participants in, rather than passive background influences upon, the decision process.

Three theoretical perspectives structure this study's analytical framework. Young, Marshall, and Valach's (2007) contextual action theory of career development holds that career construction during adolescence is substantially a joint project undertaken by parent and child together, with career-relevant meaning actively constructed through ongoing conversation, modelling, and negotiated decision-making rather than emerging from either party's independent judgment alone. This theory generates a specific, testable expectation directly relevant to this study's first research question: households should be expected to differ systematically in the specificity and accuracy of career-relevant meaning they are able to jointly construct, depending substantially on what raw material, direct or secondhand occupational knowledge, is available within the household to construct that meaning from. Young, Paseluikho, and Valach's (1997) empirical extension of this framework, examining actual parent-adolescent career conversations, found that career direction emerges through repeated, mutually adjusted interaction over time rather than through a single decisive conversation or decision point, implying that this study's method should examine household decision-making as an ongoing process rather than a discrete, retrospectively reconstructable event.

Bourdieu's (1986) cultural capital framework, extended here from its prior application observing a downstream student-level effect to an examination of its actual household-level transmission mechanism, supplies this study's second theoretical anchor. Bourdieu's distinction between embodied cultural capital, internalized disposition and tacit knowledge acquired through sustained exposure, and institutionalized cultural capital, formally credentialed or certified knowledge, is directly relevant here: a household with prior seafaring experience

plausibly transmits embodied cultural capital, tacit familiarity with separation rhythms, career progression norms, occupational culture, through ordinary family life and conversation, a transmission mechanism families without such background structurally cannot access regardless of their motivation or effort, a distinction this study's second and third research questions are positioned to examine directly rather than infer from downstream student outcome alone.

The family career development and school-family partnership literature supplies this study's third theoretical anchor. Epstein's (2001) framework for school, family, and community partnerships identifies career-relevant guidance as a distinct partnership domain schools can deliberately structure or, by institutional default, leave to informal family initiative alone, directly relevant to this study's fourth research question concerning current institutional practice. Whiston and Keller's (2004) comprehensive review of family influence on career development established that parental support, expectation clarity, and attachment quality each independently predict adolescent career decision-making quality, while noting that career intervention practice has historically targeted adolescents directly rather than engaging families, a gap this study's practical orientation is designed to help correct. Bryant, Zvonkovic, and Reynolds (2006) found qualitatively that parents' own occupational knowledge and networks substantially shape what they are able to transmit to adolescent children, with parents lacking direct field-specific knowledge relying on secondhand, often dated or incomplete information, a mechanism this study expects to observe directly among non-maritime-background households specifically. Hill and Tyson's (2009) meta-analytic research on parental involvement more broadly found that involvement strategies fostering academic and career-relevant socialization, rather than direct assistance with specific tasks, produced the strongest positive association with adolescent outcomes, a distinction relevant to how this study interprets the quality, not merely the presence or absence, of parental engagement with maritime career decision-making.

The empirical maritime workforce and vocational transition literature substantiates the sector-level stakes motivating this inquiry. Research documenting competency and certification gaps among traditional Indonesian shipping seafarers established persistent structural strain within Indonesia's domestic maritime workforce pipeline (Sulistiana et al., 2025), and broader vocational transition research has found that early-career attrition frequently traces to expectation misalignment formed prior to formal training entry rather than to competency deficiency discovered during training itself (Whiston & Keller, 2004). Companion research within this programme examining vocational identity formation found

that students from maritime-background families entered apprenticeship with clearer expectations and adjusted more quickly than students without such background, a finding this study's household-level design is positioned to explain mechanistically rather than merely confirm at the individual-outcome level. Companion research on curriculum governance and instructor capacity, while not addressing family engagement directly, both identified administrative and institutional capacity constraint as limiting factors across the domains they examined, raising the plausible expectation that family engagement, an institutional function requiring dedicated staff time and structured process, may face comparable capacity constraint, an expectation this study's fourth research question tests directly.

Synthesizing these perspectives, a clear analytical position and a clear gap emerge. Contextual action theory establishes that career decisions during adolescence are jointly constructed within the family unit rather than individually determined (Young et al., 1997, 2007). Cultural capital theory, applied here at the household rather than the student-outcome level, predicts that maritime-background and non-maritime-background families differ systematically in the embodied knowledge available for this joint construction (Bourdieu, 1986). The family career development literature establishes that parental involvement quality predicts adolescent career outcomes and that most institutional practice has historically under-engaged families directly (Epstein, 2001; Whiston & Keller, 2004; Bryant et al., 2006). And Indonesia's maritime workforce literature establishes the sector-level urgency of addressing expectation misalignment wherever in the pipeline it originates (Sulistiana et al., 2025). No existing study has examined Indonesian maritime vocational education entry from the household decision-making perspective directly. This is the gap the present study occupies, and its conceptual position treats household decision-making quality as a function of the embodied cultural capital available within the family, the joint, ongoing negotiation process through which that capital, or its absence, is translated into actual enrollment and persistence decisions, and the degree to which the school itself structures family engagement to address gaps this joint process leaves unresolved.

3. METHOD

This study used a qualitative research design, selected because the research questions concerned how families jointly construct career-relevant understanding and negotiate decision-making, a phenomenon requiring rich, interpretive access to household conversation and reasoning rather than predetermined quantitative measurement, an approach consistent with contextual action theory's own methodological tradition of examining career decision-making

as observed or reconstructed joint action (Young et al., 1997, 2007). The study was conducted with families of students currently enrolled at a maritime vocational high school in Jakarta, identified generically rather than by name in keeping with standard ethical practice for research involving families of minor students.

The population comprised three groups. Twenty parents or guardians of current maritime vocational students supplied the primary data source, purposively stratified to include ten households with prior family seafaring or maritime occupational background and ten households without such background, a stratification selected specifically to allow direct comparison of the cultural-capital-based knowledge differential this study's theoretical framework predicts. Six school career-guidance staff supplied an institutional perspective on current family-engagement practice, directly relevant to this study's fourth research question. Four community or neighbourhood informants, selected from the residential areas most families in the sample were drawn from, supplied a broader perspective on local, informally circulating perceptions of maritime careers that might inform household decision-making independently of either family-internal knowledge or school-provided guidance.

The primary instrument was a semi-structured interview and focus group protocol organized around four indicator domains drawn directly from this study's theoretical framework: career knowledge specificity, indicated by parents' ability to describe accurately the seafaring career's training pathway, certification requirements, and progression structure; decision-making process, indicated by parents' account of how and over what period the enrollment decision was actually reached, following contextual action theory's emphasis on decision-making as ongoing joint negotiation rather than a discrete event; separation and lifestyle understanding, indicated by parents' account of their expectation regarding voyage duration, contact frequency, and long-term family life adjustment; and institutional engagement, indicated by parents' account of what direct guidance or information, if any, the school itself had provided to them as parents specifically, distinct from information provided to their child.

Data collection proceeded through focus group discussions with parents, stratified by maritime-background status to allow within-group comparative discussion, supplemented by individual interviews with parents whose circumstances warranted more private discussion, and individual interviews with career-guidance staff and community informants. All data collection followed ethics procedures appropriate to research involving families of minor students, with informed consent obtained from all adult participants and confidentiality protections communicated clearly regarding any information that could affect a currently

enrolled student. Data analysis followed thematic analysis, coding data into categories aligned with this study's four indicator domains; cross-group comparison between maritime-background and non-maritime-background households, and between parent, staff, and community perspectives; and narrative synthesis integrating these sources into the interpretive account presented below.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Overview

Analysis of the thirty participant accounts produced four dominant findings. Table 1 summarizes the proportional distribution of coded thematic references, disaggregated by household maritime-background status.

Table 1. Distribution of Coded Thematic References by Household Background (%).

Theme	Maritime-background households (n=10)	Non-maritime-background households (n=10)	Staff/community (n=10)
Inherited vs. improvised career knowledge	34	26	22
Financial necessity alongside aspiration	19	33	21
Incomplete separation/lifestyle understanding	12	31	24
Minimal institutional family engagement	35	10	33

Non-maritime-background households weighted incomplete separation and lifestyle understanding and financial necessity considerably more heavily than maritime-background households, consistent with this study's central theoretical expectation, while maritime-background households weighted minimal institutional engagement most heavily among the two household groups, a pattern examined further below.

Inherited Versus Improvised Career Knowledge Transmission

Figure 1 presents the proportional distribution of career-knowledge sources parents across both household types described relying upon when making the enrollment decision.

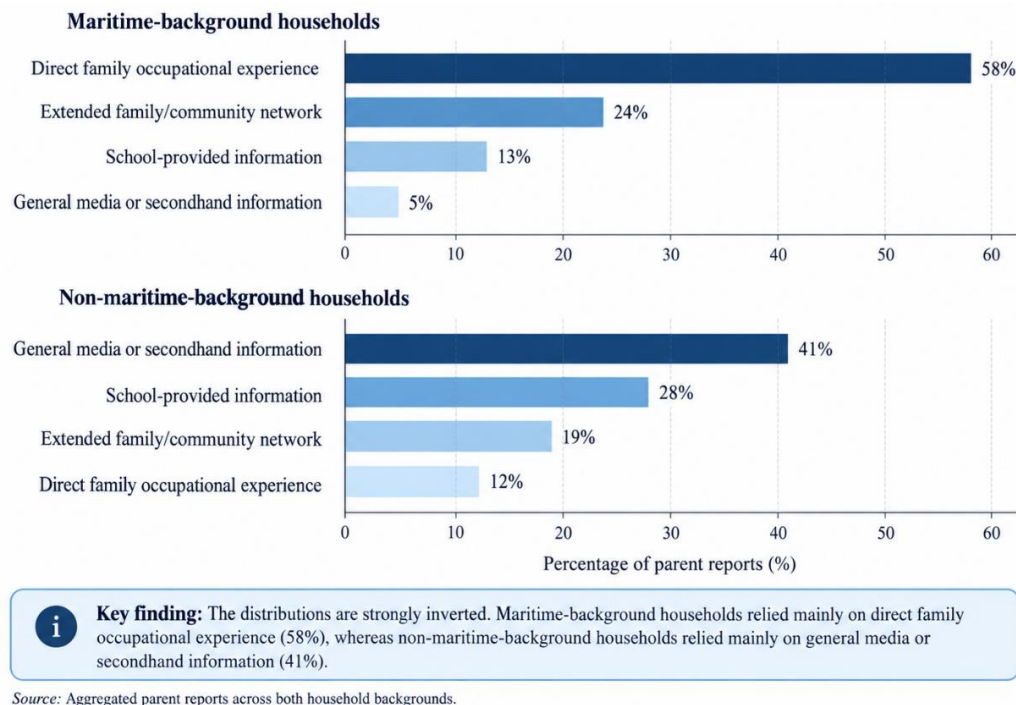


Figure 1. Proportional Distribution of Parental Career-Knowledge Sources, by Household Background.

The inversion between these two distributions is striking and directly confirms this study's cultural-capital-based expectation: maritime-background households relied predominantly on direct family occupational experience, exactly the embodied cultural capital Bourdieu's (1986) framework identifies, while non-maritime-background households relied predominantly on general media and secondhand information, the least specific and, as the following theme demonstrates, least accurate knowledge source available. Notably, the twelve percent of non-maritime-background households reporting any direct family occupational experience typically described a more distant relative, an uncle or family friend, rather than an immediate household member, a weaker but still meaningful form of the same cultural-capital mechanism.

Financial Necessity as a Co-Determinant Alongside Aspiration

The second theme, weighted most heavily by non-maritime-background households, concerned the specific interaction between financial consideration and career aspiration in household decision-making. Parents across both groups described these considerations as operating jointly rather than as competing alternatives, but non-maritime-background households described financial necessity as carrying comparatively greater relative weight, several describing maritime vocational education specifically as offering a more certain, faster

path to stable income than academic secondary tracks, a consideration that operated somewhat independently of specific enthusiasm for a maritime career itself. This finding is consistent with Bryant, Zvonkovic, and Reynolds's (2006) broader finding that parents lacking direct occupational knowledge in a given field tend to weight more generic, economically oriented considerations more heavily, in the relative absence of the specific, career-content knowledge that direct occupational exposure would otherwise supply.

Incomplete Understanding of Separation and Lifestyle Demands

The third theme directly tested this study's third research question and revealed the sharpest and most consequential disparity in the dataset. Table 2 presents parents' self-reported understanding of specific seafaring career demands, assessed through a structured set of factual prompts embedded within the interview protocol, disaggregated by household background.

Table 2. Parental Understanding of Specific Seafaring Career Demands, by Household Background.

Career demand dimension	Maritime-background households reporting accurate understanding (%)	Non-maritime-background households reporting accurate understanding (%)
Typical voyage duration and contract cycle	90	40
Realistic contact frequency during voyage	80	30
Officer-track progression timeline and requirements	70	20
Long-term family and household adjustment expectations	90	50

Non-maritime-background households showed substantially lower accurate understanding across every dimension, with the largest gap concerning officer-track progression timeline and requirements specifically, the dimension most dependent on detailed, field-specific knowledge rather than general awareness that seafaring involves absence. Several non-maritime-background parents described having agreed to their child's enrollment based substantially on general aspiration and the financial and educational opportunity they understood the programme to offer, without a clear or accurate picture of the specific career progression timeline or the cumulative separation demands their child, and by extension their household, would eventually need to accommodate.

Minimal Institutional Engagement of Families in Career Guidance

The fourth theme directly answered this study's fourth research question and, notably, was weighted heavily by both maritime-background parents and school career-guidance staff themselves. Staff consistently described current career-guidance practice as directed almost entirely at students, orientation sessions, career-planning discussions, curriculum information,

with no structured, dedicated mechanism for engaging parents directly with the same information, a pattern staff themselves characterized as a resource-driven default rather than a deliberate design choice, echoing the administrative capacity constraint identified in companion curriculum-governance research within this programme. Maritime-background parents, despite their own comparatively strong personal knowledge, described this institutional gap as a missed opportunity specifically for other families, several noting unprompted that they had observed other parents in their community appearing less informed and expressing a view that the school could and should be doing more to reach families directly rather than relying on students to relay information homeward, a relay process this study's evidence, and the broader parent-adolescent communication literature (Young et al., 1997), suggests is unlikely to transmit complex, career-specific information completely or accurately.

Taken together, these findings answer this study's four research questions directly: maritime-background households draw predominantly on embodied, direct occupational knowledge while non-maritime-background households rely on general and secondhand sources; financial necessity operates as a genuine co-determinant alongside aspiration, weighted more heavily specifically among households lacking direct career knowledge; parental understanding of separation and lifestyle demands is substantially and consistently lower among non-maritime-background households across every specific dimension measured; and the school currently provides minimal direct family engagement, a gap recognized by staff and maritime-background parents alike as a resource-driven institutional default rather than a deliberate choice.

5. DISCUSSION

These findings reconnect directly to this study's four research questions while extending the theoretical apparatus this broader research programme has built across its companion studies into a household-level empirical domain none of them had previously reached directly. The knowledge-source inversion documented in Figure 1 provides direct empirical confirmation of Bourdieu's (1986) embodied cultural capital mechanism operating specifically at the point of household decision-making, extending companion research's finding that maritime-background students adjusted more quickly during apprenticeship by identifying the actual mechanism generating that advantage. Coleman's (1988) foundational account of social capital in the creation of human capital supplies a complementary reading of the same finding: where Bourdieu emphasizes inherited cultural disposition, Coleman emphasizes the network of relationships, extended family, community, occupational contacts, through which

information and norms circulate, and this study's finding that maritime-background households also drew meaningfully on extended family and community networks, not solely on the immediate household, suggests both mechanisms operate jointly rather than as competing explanations. Portes's (1998) subsequent caution that social capital can as easily reproduce exclusion as enable access is directly relevant here: the same network structure that equips maritime-background households with accurate, embodied knowledge simultaneously and structurally excludes non-maritime-background households from that same information channel, regardless of the latter households' motivation or effort.

Lareau's (2011) sociological distinction between "concentrated cultivation" and "accomplishment of natural growth" as contrasting parenting logics offers a further, productive lens for interpreting the financial-necessity finding in Section 4.3. Where maritime-background parents in this study's sample described career guidance as something that happened through ongoing, semi-deliberate family exposure and conversation, non-maritime-background parents more often described a single, financially anchored decision point, a pattern consistent with Lareau's broader finding that families with less specialized occupational knowledge in a given field tend toward decision styles organized around clear, discrete economic logic rather than the sustained, exploratory cultivation that direct occupational familiarity affords. This reading does not suggest non-maritime-background parents care less about their children's long-term wellbeing; it suggests they are making a comparably serious decision with structurally less specific information to work from, precisely the equity concern Bourdieu's and Coleman's frameworks jointly predict.

The separation-and-lifestyle understanding gap documented in Table 2 connects directly to social cognitive career theory. Lent, Brown, and Hackett's (1994) unifying framework, building on Bandura's (1986) broader social cognitive theory, holds that career-relevant self-efficacy and outcome expectations are shaped substantially by vicarious learning, observing others in a given occupational role, a learning channel maritime-background households possess directly and non-maritime-background households largely lack. This study's finding that non-maritime-background households understood officer-track progression timelines least accurately of the four demand dimensions measured is consistent with this framework's prediction that outcome expectations requiring detailed, sequential occupational knowledge are precisely the ones vicarious, secondhand learning transmits least completely. Schulenberg, Vondracek, and Crouter's (1984) classic review of family influence on vocational development, and Vondracek, Lerner, and Schulenberg's (1986) life-span developmental framework, both reinforce that the family functions as the primary developmental context

shaping occupational expectation formation specifically during adolescence, the developmental window this entire research programme, through Super's (1980) and Savickas's (2005) career construction theory and Erikson's (1968) account of adolescent identity formation, has consistently identified as the period during which the maritime workforce pipeline's most consequential and most correctable formation occurs.

This finding reconnects productively, and complicates, this programme's earlier work in a specific and important way. Companion research on vocational identity formation found that mentorship quality, following Kram's (1985) psychosocial-mentoring framework, and Ibarra's (1999) provisional-self concept, together predicted whether apprenticeship placement consolidated a durable maritime professional identity. This study's evidence suggests that the raw material mentorship works upon, the adolescent's prior expectation and family-transmitted understanding of the career, is itself unevenly distributed before a student ever reaches placement, meaning that even excellent mentorship may be starting from a more difficult baseline for non-maritime-background students specifically, a possibility the mentorship-focused companion research could not examine because it did not measure pre-enrollment family knowledge. Blustein's (2006) relational theory of working, which argues that career development is inseparable from the relational context, family, community, institution, within which it unfolds, offers the broadest theoretical frame for why this study's household-level finding belongs squarely within, rather than adjacent to, this research programme's central concerns.

The institutional-engagement findings extend Epstein's (2001) partnership framework by demonstrating, through both staff and parent testimony, that the absence of structured family engagement reflects capacity constraint rather than deliberate institutional judgment, directly paralleling the administrative capacity limitation companion curriculum-governance research identified, using Kerckhoff's (1995) institutional linkage theory and Weick's (1976) loosely coupled systems framework, as the primary constraint limiting governance quality across every domain that research examined. Fullan's (2007) broader account of why educational change efforts fail, insufficient attention to implementation and coordination process rather than to content design, applies with equal force here: the school's career-guidance content, where it exists, may be reasonably designed, but its delivery channel, routed through students rather than to parents directly, is itself the coordination failure limiting its reach, exactly the kind of process-level rather than content-level deficiency Fullan's framework identifies as the more common and more overlooked source of reform failure.

Read alongside this programme's instructor-capacity research, which found technical currency maintenance similarly under-resourced and similarly reactive rather than systematically planned, a broader pattern becomes visible across this research programme as a whole: family engagement, instructor development, and curriculum-industry coordination each independently show the signature of a single underlying institutional capacity constraint rather than three unrelated deficiencies, a pattern consistent with how human factors and safety-systems research in the parallel maritime workforce literature has come to understand organizational failure more generally. Goerlandt, Li, and Reniers's (2022) scientometric review of the safety management systems literature found a broad disciplinary shift toward recognizing organizational and cultural, rather than narrowly technical, determinants of system performance, and Banda, Faridan, and Habibi's (2022) systematic review of systems-thinking accident models reinforced that outcomes depending on multiple interacting organizational levels resist explanation through any single-point failure, a lesson this study's family-engagement finding illustrates at the level of an educational rather than a shipboard system. Mok, D'agostini, and Ryoo's (2023) finding that the International Safety Management Code's aggregate safety benefit has plateaued despite continued regulatory expansion, and Demirci and Cicek's (2022) related finding that ISM Code effectiveness depends on company-level implementation structure rather than certification content, together offer a structurally identical caution relevant to this study: formal career-guidance policy, like formal safety policy, cannot substitute for the organizational capacity and coordination process required to actually deliver it to the population it is meant to serve.

The sector-level stakes of leaving this gap unaddressed are established directly by Indonesia's own maritime workforce literature. Sulistiana, Rachman, Jinca, and Ali's (2025) documentation of competency and certification gaps among traditional Indonesian shipping seafarers, Mantoju's (2021) finding that Indonesian port state control compliance outcomes diverge sharply by vessel age and flag category, and Park, Lee, and Kim's (2024) finding that narrowly compliance-focused organizational strategies can work against a regulation's protective intent, together establish a domestic maritime sector already managing significant structural strain in workforce competency and retention. Pantouvakis and Vlachos's (2020) finding that leadership and talent, rather than compensation alone, predict sustainable maritime performance, and Karakasnaki, Pantouvakis, and Vlachos's (2023) construction of a maritime social sustainability measure, both reinforce that human and relational factors, precisely the family-transmitted expectation and engagement this study examines, remain underexamined relative to technical and commercial determinants of sector outcomes. Comparative

organizational research on shipping company structure, finding that firms blending informal and formal management systems adapt most effectively to change (Lazakis & Van Der Meer, 2023), and corporate governance research finding that formal governance structures and lived organizational behaviour frequently diverge in shipping firms (Sheikh & Alom, 2021), together supply an organizational-level parallel to this study's educational-institutional finding that formal career-guidance policy and actual family-reaching practice have similarly diverged. Xi, Wang, Hu, Han, and Yin's (2025) empirical finding that safety-relevant behaviour among ship deck officers is transmitted substantially through organizational and supervisory factors rather than formal instruction alone extends, by direct analogy, to this study's suggestion that occupational expectation is transmitted substantially through family and social relationship rather than through formal school-provided information alone, at both ends of the pipeline this broader research programme examines.

This study's strength lies in its stratified, background-based comparative design, which allowed the cultural-capital and social-capital mechanisms to be examined directly through contrast rather than inferred from an undifferentiated sample. Its principal limitation is the single-institution design and its reliance on parental self-report for the knowledge-accuracy assessment in Table 2, which, while structured through factual prompts rather than open self-assessment, cannot fully rule out social desirability bias in parents' willingness to acknowledge gaps in their own understanding. The practical implications point directly toward structured, family-facing orientation programming addressing separation and progression-timeline information specifically for non-maritime-background households, informed by the social-cognitive-theory insight that vicarious, example-based learning, structured conversations with maritime-background alumni families, for instance, may transmit this knowledge more effectively than written or lecture-based orientation content alone (Bandura, 1986; Lent et al., 1994). Future research should test whether such programming, once implemented, measurably improves household expectation accuracy and, over a longer horizon and in coordination with this programme's tracer-study research, actual student persistence outcomes.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined parental perspectives and household decision-making surrounding adolescent entry into maritime vocational education in Jakarta. Maritime-background households transmitted accurate, embodied career knowledge through direct occupational experience, while non-maritime-background households relied on general and secondhand sources and showed substantially lower understanding of separation and career-progression

demands specifically, with financial necessity weighing more heavily in the latter group's decision-making. Institutional family engagement was minimal across both groups, reflecting capacity constraint rather than deliberate design. These findings extend cultural capital and contextual action theory into household-level maritime career decision-making for the first time, identify family expectation misalignment as a pipeline-stage intervention point earlier than any this research programme has previously examined, and support structured family-facing orientation programming as a distinct and currently unaddressed priority.

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