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**AN INVESTIGATION OF WORK, LIFE
AND COMMUNITY ON-BOARD CRUISE
SHIPS: A HOSPITALITY PERSPECTIVE**

ADAM DENNETT

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in
partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Business School

The University of Huddersfield

May 2013

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Abstract

This research provides a sociological understanding of front line hospitality staff, focusing particularly on waiters and pursers that are employed on cruise ships. Its purpose is to evaluate the complexities and richness of their work and social experiences as they negotiate, create and justify their identities and community formations in the unique and under-researched environment of a cruise ship. Conceptually, the research investigates the inevitable and inextricable links between identity, work and community to explore their perceptions of themselves, others and their world.

To comprehend some of the complexity of work and life, the study uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods through online questionnaires and interviews. The methods used are both guided and to some extent restricted because of the lack of co-operation from the firms involved towards carrying out research on cruise ship workers. An online questionnaire, able to reach a mobile and transient population, is exploratory and descriptive in focus offering a preliminary opportunity to highlight key indicators of relationships and patterns in a field where there has been little research. To further develop understanding, data was gathered from twenty semi-structured interviews and was analysed thematically and metaphorically.

The broader thematic analysis identified how space, time and the system of the ship had an impact upon one's occupation and relationships, while the deeper metaphor analysis was able to creatively gather an "insider's" view of the participant's work, community and cruise ship environment. What is clear, from this study, is that all participants created a ship-based identity, which was different from how they perceived themselves on land. Being an environment that is unique, workers have to adapt, adopt and sacrifice - their previous identity has to be reshaped to meet the criteria of the place and system of the ship. Waiters were significantly more likely to define themselves and their world based upon their occupational perceptions and relationship with management, while pursers reflected upon their social and personal opportunities as a tool for self-definition.

The outcomes of the research present an exploratory, in-depth account of the working lives of hospitality workers on cruise ships. The findings will be of value and relevance to cruise ship operators when tackling social issues relating to the employment of cruise ship workers.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore and evaluate the transient and temporary working lives of front line hospitality workers on-board cruise ships. This is a field of research which is relatively unknown, particularly from a sociological and behavioural perspective (e.g., Gibson, 2008; Papathanassis and Beckmann, 2011). In particular, an important and under-researched issue is that of cruise ship employees and how they make sense of their work and life on-board. It is this area which constitutes the focus of this study. When most people go to work, they are in the knowledge that they can go home at the end of the day or the end of their shift, insomuch that they have a life outside of work, including friends and family. The cruise ship industry is in contrast to this. The organisation not only invades one's working life, but also one's social life. Ultimately, to be employed on cruise ships, is in a sense to dedicate one's life, albeit temporarily, to an occupation or line of work and the people attached to that work.

From an operational standpoint, hierarchy, efficiency and bureaucracy are prominent, a diluted form of its naval cousin. To work on a cruise ship is to be arguably more tied to an occupation than one would be on land. The occupational position an individual is employed on-board has an overarching determinant on the type of life one can expect. One's occupation will not only determine aspects such as the level of pay, status and number of hours worked, but also where one lives on the ship, where one can eat and socialise, and also influence the people one socialises with. Essentially, an occupation can be the forefront of how an individual comes to define oneself and others while on the cruise ship, thus creating a ship-based identity. This noted, to capitalise upon a fuller understanding of the sociological and behavioural nature of cruise ship work, efforts should be made to explore the totality of work and life, encapsulating not only the work one does, but also the surrounding community and social activities which are inextricably linked.

1.2 Rationale

Employers have historically found it difficult to retain employees in the hospitality industry. While operational success may lie centrally with the efforts of employees, employers are offering less security than ever before. This is particularly evident in the cruise ship industry. A growing demand has put a strain on the human resources required to offer the premium service that most cruise goers expect (e.g. Gibson and Walters, 2012). A key issue recognised by the industry is the challenge of acquiring and retaining quality talent that will benefit their operations (e.g., Larsen *et al.* 2012; Lukas, 2010; Raub and Streit, 2006). Wiscombe *et al.* (2011, p.195) recognise the ‘challenge’ of recruiting and retaining hospitality staff on-board, maintaining that it is not only managers or individuals with specific key technical skill-sets that are required but also front line staff. Larsen *et al.* (2012) acknowledges staffing issues at the operative level, and although admitting that the area is complicated, maintains that work is required concerning retention of employees, for reasons other than just cost cutting of recruiting and training staff, but also the upholding of high service quality. Such an issue is amplified in a highly structured and competitive environment, while also operating within a transient and rapidly changing environment. It has been argued, because the cruise ship is a unique work environment, that existing theory or knowledge within the organisational and occupational behaviour literature may not be applicable (Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp, 2011). Advocating that research carried out in relatable fields, although interesting and useful, is not able to grasp the truisms of working and living on a ship. Therefore it is important to understand how employees make sense and attach meaning in context to the work on-board and also the social society of the ship.

Chin (2008, p.1) takes note of how the ‘profile of seafarers has changed dramatically since the early twentieth century’, since the days when there were single nationality crews. The 21st century provides a stark contrast, employing nationalities from all over the world, as a means to primarily reduce operating costs. Additionally, there is little stability as far as personnel are concerned in service occupations with no job security and few benefits. Brownell (2008, p.140) adds that ‘line staff are seldom guaranteed a position with the same ship from one contract to the next’, indicating that the temporary nature and insecurity are a permanent characteristic of their employment status. This leads to asking the question “what motivates or encourages individuals to come back or renew their contract?” And, “what are the important characteristics which individuals derive from their work in order to make this decision?” Despite such questions or queries Millar (2010, p.17) states that ‘recruitment within the

industry will be an endless task' and a task that will remain 'tricky' (Raub and Streit, 2006: p.279). It is not the intention of this research to attempt to solve the issue of turnover in the cruise ship industry, as this may debatably be an ever present characteristic of the nature of this type of work. But rather, this research focuses on the workers themselves, thus creating a new perspective for what it is like for hospitality cruise ship workers to be employed in the 21st century. Therefore, this research attempts to explore the perceptions of this type of worker relative to their work, community and life, but also their motivations, expectations and ultimately their ship-based identity.

Of late, efforts have been made by organisations to improve training and development and to further grasp an understanding of what it takes to work on-board a cruise ship. It is evident that the industry has focused on efforts to enhance an individual's technical ability with the introduction of training schemes and schools. However, the work on cruise ships involves more than one's technical competencies. Work has to be done to understand the social dynamics and interactions of working and living on-board a cruise ship. Given the nature of the industry it may be unrealistic to expect individuals to have a long lasting career in a hospitality role. However, understanding their social environment and influences may provide attributes which can be distributed in the training and recruitment phase. Therefore a "softer" approach may be necessary to generate further understanding of this rather unexplored segment of the hospitality, tourism and leisure industry.

Human Resource Management has been identified as one of the key issues and challenges within the hospitality industry (King *et al.* 2011), particularly in the pursuit of retaining talent, combined with a perceived poor image and limited career opportunities. The industry is typically competent in acquiring employees, although alternatively is frustrated in pursuit of retaining employees. Although difficult to calculate, there is a suggestion from Wiscombe *et al.* (2011) that the cruise industry alone is estimated to have a staff shortage of 60,000, whilst current demand and supply projections suggest that by the year 2020 the industry will require an extra 250,000 employees. In terms of employment, the numbers associated with the cruise industry may not seem drastic, particularly when in the context of the hospitality industry as a whole. This considered, research conducted by the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) spans 30 years of statistical data relating to retention figures and indicates that retention of hospitality and catering crew on-board cruise ships has dropped drastically since the 1970's (ITF, 2002). This is a clear concern for the industry.

Due to the unique nature of working on a cruise ship whereby seafarers work and live within organisational boundaries, it raises complex issues significant to the concept of community and the relationship of the work and non-work divide upon an individual or a collective identity. Further investigation into these dynamics may provide an enhanced view of the 21st century cruise ship worker. The context of the cruise ship, not only poses constraints on behaviour, but also provides a sense of freedom from the outside world, whereby individuals can derive a new identity relative to the context of the cruise ship. The working environment may therefore play an important role in employee motivation and satisfaction.

To comprehend some of the complexity of work and life, this study uses the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods through online questionnaires and interviews. The methods used are both guided and to some extent restricted because of the lack of co-operation from the firms involved towards carrying out such research on cruise ship workers. This is a common hurdle for most cruise-based research (e.g. Larsen *et al.* 2012). To overcome such difficulties the research is carried out in two sequential phases. Phase one, using the quantitative method of an online questionnaire, is implemented to reach the mobile and transient population of hospitality workers on cruise ships. Being exploratory and descriptive in focus, this preliminary phase of the research offers an opportunity to highlight key indicators of relationships and patterns in a field where there has been little research. Furthermore, the results can also provide a basis which can be explored more intensively in the next phase of the research. Phase two, using qualitative interviews, provides more in-depth and richer understanding of cruise ship workers. Building from the findings of the online questionnaire and also being guided by theory from the literature, this phase of the research seeks to explore and evaluate the perceptions and identities these types of workers create and maintain while on cruise ships.

1.3 Research aim and objectives

The overall aim of the research is to explore the community and occupational experiences of hospitality workers on-board cruise ships.

This research aim will be explored through six specific objectives:

1. To measure the importance of occupational and social communities on-board cruise ships

2. To assess the extent and the effects that an occupation has on the lifestyle/social community
3. To explore the importance of organisational structures in the construction of community and identity dimensions on-board cruise ships
4. To discuss the nature and influence of individual perceptions of the occupation and lifestyle on-board a cruise ship, and how these relate to self-perception and social identity
5. To evaluate the role and possible influence of ‘significant others’, such as co-workers, relatives and employers, on issues such as motivation and retention
6. To contribute knowledge on the working lives of front line hospitality workers on cruise ships

This research will take an occupational viewpoint to understand the behavioural variability of the workplace. Furthermore, it will evaluate how a given line of work can influence one’s social conduct and identity, in and out of work. The occupation, although organisationally created, is not organisationally limited whereby an occupation may offer more to individuals than a source of income, but an identity, which is occupationally specific within the given context. This study investigates the interactive identity factors that impinge on the hospitality worker due to the environmental conditions of working on-board a cruise ship. Such working conditions have unique characteristics which have remained prominently unexplored. This study seeks to fill this sociological gap.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1: An introduction to the thesis which sets out the rationale for the proposed study area and also presents the research aim and objectives.

Chapter 2: A literature review that provides an overview of the work, life and community factors of working on a cruise ship. The international cruise ship industry is explored which shows the growth of the industry in terms of passenger numbers, finance generation, and also ship size and ship numbers. Moreover, this chapter discusses the operational and social truisms of working on cruise ships, highlighting the importance of one’s occupation and surrounding community.

Chapter 3: A literature review that explores how hospitality cruise ship workers can make sense of themselves and their environment. Drawing upon the theory of ‘Social Identity’ (e.g. Tajfel, 1978) this chapter investigates how one’s occupation not only provides purpose and worth, but how one’s occupational status and membership has implications upon one’s community formation and self definition while working on cruise ships. To evaluate the work of seafarers on cruise ships it is deemed important that the ‘totality’ of factors should be considered, which accounts for the work or role one does and also the social/community aspects.

Chapter 4: Explains the methodological route adopted to achieve the aim and objectives of this study. As stated earlier, the most suitable approach for this study was argued to be a mixed methodology, taking advantage of the use of both quantitative and qualitative techniques. In an under researched area, additional to the difficulties of actually carrying out the research on cruise ship workers, a mixed-method approach was thought appropriate to grasp both breadth (online questionnaires) and depth (interviews).

Chapter 5: Presents the findings of the online questionnaires. The findings quantify how the lives of hospitality cruise ship workers are shaped and influenced by their occupational role. The questionnaire is guided by the concept of ‘Job Embeddedness’ (Mitchell *et al.* 2001), which is a construct that seeks to explore both work and non-work factors. From the findings, it was decided to limit the focus of the research in the main phase to just the occupations of waiters and pursers. These occupations, differing in status, pay and practices, can offer an interesting base upon which to explore the concepts of identity and community further.

Chapter 6 & 7: Presents the findings of the qualitative interviews. This is divided into two parts, which allows the investigation of data through different “lenses” in which to gather a more all encapsulating understanding. Chapter 6 discusses the findings of the thematic analysis and chapter 7 presents the findings of a discourse analysis, through the exploration of metaphors used by participants to make sense of themselves and their world.

Chapter 8: Provides a discussion of the major findings from chapters 5 – 7 and the conclusions that can be drawn from these findings. The objectives of the study are reintroduced in terms of how they have been achieved, and the limitations and future research directions are discussed.

1.5 Relationship between research objectives and the structure of the thesis

Table 1.1 shows the research objectives of this study and the chapters within the thesis that explore or assist in achieving those objectives.

Table 1.1 Objectives linked to thesis

Objective	Chapter (s)	Research process
To measure the importance of occupational and social communities on-board cruise ships	2 & 5	Chapter 2 explores the literature surrounding occupation and community relative to the cruise ship industry. Chapter 5, through the findings of the online questionnaire, identifies some of the critical factors in the development of community and one's attachment to their occupation.
To assess the extent and the effects that an occupation has on the lifestyle/social community	2 - 7	The literature chapters (2 & 3) review research that discusses some of the implications for hospitality workers on cruise ships. The findings in chapter 5 present some preliminary findings, while chapters 6 & 7 assess this in more detail and specifically to the positions of waiter and purser.
To explore the importance of organisational structures in the construction of community and identity dimensions on-board cruise ships	2, 3, 6 & 7	The literature chapters (2 & 3) explore how the cruise ship itself (physical structures and organisational practices) impact on identity and community formation. The qualitative findings in chapters 6 & 7 investigate this in more depth to the positions of waiter and purser.

To discuss the nature and influence of individual perceptions of the occupation and lifestyle on-board a cruise ship, and how these relate to self-perception and social identity	3 & 7	Chapter 3 explores the literature of identity and how this relates to this study. Chapter 7 through metaphorical illustration discuss how participants make sense of themselves and others while working on-board.
To evaluate the role and possible influence of significant others, such as co-workers, relatives and employers, on issues such as motivation and retention	6 & 7	These finding chapters will discuss how significant others impact upon the lives of hospitality cruise ship workers.
To contribute knowledge to the working lives of front line hospitality workers on cruise ships	5 - 8	The findings chapters (5, 6 & 7) of this study and the subsequent discussion and conclusions chapter (8) will make reference to where this research has contributed to knowledge.

Chapter 2 – The Cruise Ship Industry: Work, Life and Community

2.1 Introduction

To work on a cruise ship involves elements of sacrifice, restriction and confinement, but alternatively it can provide individuals with freedom and exploration. This chapter seeks discovery and evaluation in terms of the conditions of work and life for front line hospitality cruise ship workers. To work on-board a cruise ship is to sacrifice a level of “normality”, cast away with strangers from friends, family and social networks. Although to some degree this implies isolation, there is also a freedom to explore the world and one-self and to create a new identity in the confines of the ship. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the cruise ship industry and some of the research that has been undertaken in this field, leading to the positioning of the focus of this particular research. The conditions of employment are then explored, which gives an insight to what it might be like to work and live on a cruise ship. Following this exploration there is a discussion about key theories, which can be useful when attempting to understand the perceptions of work and life for hospitality workers on a cruise ship. Finally there is a summary of the chapter.

2.2 A brief overview of the cruise ship industry

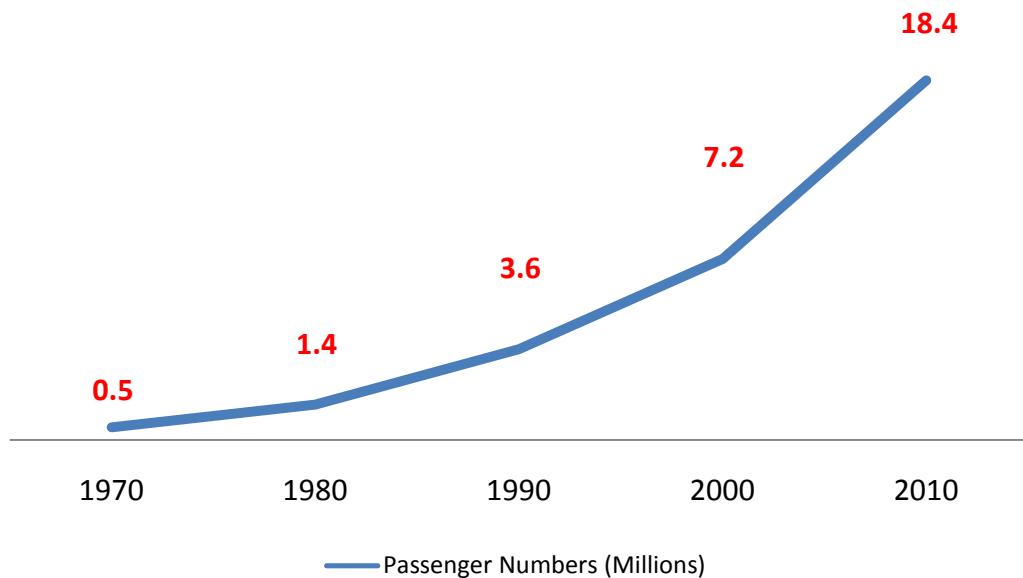
The cruise industry finds itself straddling a unique segment of the hospitality and tourism sector, entangled within a production and service environment, and underlined by maritime and international law. In its entirety a cruise ship is a floating hospitality, leisure, and tourism hub, demonstrating a multitude of industries intertwined within one entity. The ship itself is a social container, encroaching physical and symbolic boundaries, a controller of social action and interaction. In this sense, cruise ships have often been regarded as floating ‘cities’ or ‘hotels’, and could arguably be further categorised as their own floating society. An argument for this categorisation revolves around a ship’s self-sufficiency when out at sea. Once a ship is sailing, it could be hundreds of miles away from the nearest port, and hence must be self-contained, at least for the projected journey. Guests and employees needs are required to be taken care of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; not only on the hospitality side of operations

such as feeding, entertaining and sleeping for passengers and crew, but also taking care of their health, including the requirement of doctors, dentists and therapists, while also being equipped with services such as morgues and custodial facilities as well as operations such as dry cleaning services and waste disposal, engineering operations and so on. Almost everything is designed to keep the passenger inside the ship, or for as long as possible, to spend money and so increase on-board revenue (Ward, 2010). This is one element that illustrates the focus on profitability in the cruise ship industry.

Cruise ships are no longer just a method of transportation. For many consumers, the cruise ship itself is the destination and a significant factor in the purchase decision (Kwortnik, 2008). Modern market strategies are structured with this as a significant consideration which highlights not only the wide range of itineraries of call, but also what the ship itself has to offer in terms of entertainment facilities, dining options and accommodation. Ice rinks, climbing walls, internet service, swimming pools, alternative dining options, libraries, movie theatres just to name a few, are facilities that most modern day cruise “goers” expect. The industry is continuously changing and adapting, while enhancing novel ideas, which is key to attract and retain customers. Diverse design innovations are a driving force behind the growth of the industry, particularly from a hospitality perspective (Vogel and Oschmann, 2012). These have increasingly been teamed with flexible strategies; confronting changing demands, and enabling the modern day cruiser the ability to choose the theme, length and destinations of cruise ships.

Research on cruise ships has gathered pace over the past 30 years, with increased intensity in the last decade or so. The lack of social and cultural knowledge and rising media attention surrounding the industry are calls which have challenged researchers alike to focus on this successful fragment of the tourism and hospitality sector. The modern cruise ship industry is a strategic key player in the hospitality and leisure industries, and has changed markedly in recent years. It is ‘expanding rapidly’ (Millar, 2010: p.17), predominantly influenced by technological advances in vessel and operational design and changes in social perceptions, making cruising more accessible to individuals from wider socio-economic backgrounds. Such changes have evidently impacted on demand and according to the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the industry has experienced a continuing upward trend (see *Figure 2.1*) with average annual growth figures of 7.4% since 1980 (CLIA, 2010a). The CLIA is a representative body for over 80% of the world’s cruise ship industry (Vogel and Oschmann, 2012).

Figure 2.1 Worldwide cruise passenger data



Adapted from: CLIA (2011a) and Cruise Market Watch (2013)

Although annual growth figures have averaged 7.4%, growth has been sustainable, which has become more fast paced in the last decade or so. This supports an ambitious and developing industry. As *Figure 2.1* shows, around 50% of the total passengers have been generated within the last 10 years or so. A major factor for this growth has been a ship building boom in the 1980/90's where a growing demand was met by an increase in supply in an ever reaching industry exploring avenues to all corners of the globe (CLIA, 2010b). Not only are there more ships on offer with a wider choice of itineraries, but there is a dramatic increase in ship size to cater for the increasing mass market. The largest cruise ships to date (Royal Caribbean International's 'Oasis of the Seas' and 'Allure of the Seas') are able to cater for over 6000 passengers, additional to over 2000 crew members. According to the Institute of Shipping Economics and Logistics (ISL) this is a growing trend amongst the world's cruise fleet, with 56% of capacity catered by ships that can carry 2000 passengers or more (ISL, 2010). This shows the growing importance of "mega ships", emphasising a clear strategy for targeting the mass market, while effectively utilising economies of scale.

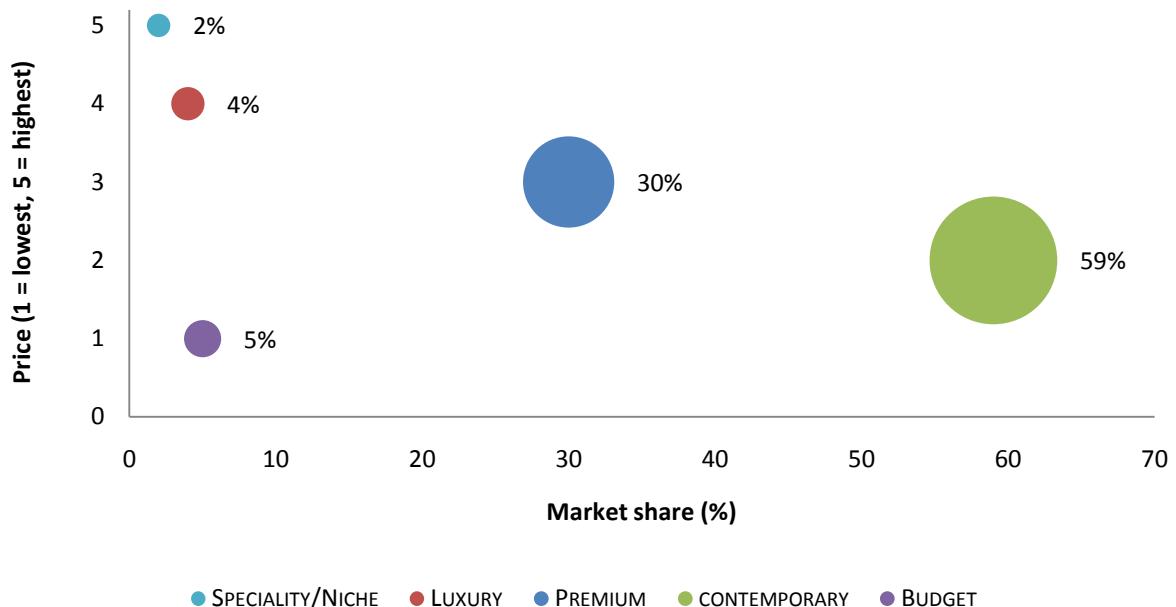
Based upon data and estimates from the CLIA, major cruise ship companies and other cruise-based organisations, the Cruise Market Watch (2013) reported that there were 20.3 million passengers in 2012, which is forecast to grow to 20.9 million passengers in 2013. Although

cruise tourism, in terms of figures, registers less passengers than in other tourism sectors, the growth rate of cruise tourism far outreaches tourism rates overall, and the industry holds a significant economic portion of the world tourism business (Swain, 2006). Forecasts have remained positive in the foreseeable future, despite global uncertainties. The leisure industries have particularly been subject to recent obstacles, such as the recession in most economies and also the continuous rise in oil prices. Furthermore, the perception of the cruise ship industry has been damaged by the worldwide coverage of the sinking of the Costa Concordia. These difficulties noted, the industry is optimistic, married with continuous investment in ship building (13 new ships to be built in 2014-2015), passenger figures are still expected to reach more than 23.5 million by 2017 (Cruise Market Watch, 2013).

Similar to other industries, the cruise ship industry is heavily competitive with organisations seeking to position themselves within the market. Barriers to entry are relatively high and growth strategies are predominantly influenced by company mergers and acquisitions, expanding the cruise market to new emerging economies in order to gain global recognition and branding (Gibson, 2012). The international cruise customer market is dominated by the United States of America with 56% of the market share, although this has declined from 70% in 2000 (European Cruise Council, 2012). The popularity of cruises in Europe, and for Europeans, is a major contribution to this relative decline. This noted, the core market of cruising is in the Caribbean, which claims just under half of the market, although recent figures have indicated a reduction in growth rates. A saturation of the Caribbean market has encouraged cruise lines to relocate some of their ships to the fast growing European-cruising segment and also Asian markets. The latter is a relatively untapped multinational market with potential to expand (Peisley, 2006).

The industry is dominated by the major players. A consolidation process has been motivated by a history of mergers and acquisitions that has led the industry to become an oligopoly (Veronneau and Roy, 2009). This has resulted in the creation of two substantial corporate identities: Carnival Corporation (48.4%) and Royal Caribbean Cruises (23.3%), which together with Star Cruises (9.0%), account for 80.7% of the total market share (Cruise Market Watch, 2013). There are a wide variety of types and size of ships, all with different itineraries, amenities and level of service, as organisations endeavour to distinguish and separate themselves from competition within the market. A segmentation strategy exercised by the industry is to classify their ships into different categories. One widely accepted classification system used is that shown below in *Figure 2.2*.

Figure 2.2: Positioning of the cruise industry



Adapted from: Dickinson and Vladimir (2008).

The ‘Y’ axis represents price (1=budget, 2=contemporary, 3=premium, 4=luxury, and 5=speciality/niche), 1 demonstrating the lowest cruise fares while 5 indicating the highest cruise fares. Certainly this is a guide and price fluctuations depend on season and destination. The ‘X’ axis is representative of the market share of each classification. Such classification is useful for cruise operators and potential cruisers as classification categories are generally associated with specific itineraries, products and services, target market, ship size and price (Gibson, 2012). A noteworthy figure is that of the contemporary and premium market, the classifications much targeted by the mass market.

The industry is not only expanding geographically, but also demographically. Traditionally, the cruise ship industry is renowned for catering for the needs of the “older generations” and although this market still retains these numbers, industry changes have encouraged younger passengers and families to see cruising as a holiday choice (Gibson, 2012). The cruise ship product is more tailored to meet the needs and desires of passengers from which individuals have a wider range of options in terms of the facilities on-board ships (accommodation, food and beverage, leisure activities), the length of a cruise ship vacation, and also more choice of itineraries (Vogel and Oschmann, 2012). The industry boasts of a “multi-generational” product, and one that has seen the average age of passengers drop from 65 in 1995, to 45 in

2006 (Dowling, 2006: p.5). Although this drastic drop in the average age of cruise passengers is supported in contemporary literature (i.e. Kwortnik and Rand, 2012), recent cruise ship reports, while agree with the reduction, suggest that this figure is more realistically between the ages of 48 - 55 (CLIA, 2011b; PSA, 2012). This reduction in age has been affected by numerous variables: a perception of value, different direction in marketing strategies which targets the young/family markets, wide ranging offer of child/family friendly facilities, an increase in specialty/budget cruises such as ‘booze cruises’ and ’18-30s cruises’, but also the changing trends in the flexibility of the industry. Relative to the information supplied above regarding the international cruise ship industry, it can be seen as an industry that is ambitious, growing, and successful.

2.2.1 *Cruise ship research: gaining momentum*

Research within the cruise industry is recent and the majority of investigations tend to serve the purpose of exploring the economic contributions of cruise tourism, establishing passenger figures and customer perceptions, and also recording the environmental impacts cruise ships cause. Despite the practical and academic importance of this research, there is an apparent research gap regarding the sociological knowledge of cruise ship workers (e.g., Brownell, 2008; Gibson, 2008; Papathanassis and Beckmann, 2011). This is particularly surprising as on-board work offers a unique research opportunity whereby an organisation encapsulates, dominates and permeates multiple aspects of an individual’s life. This is not a relatively new realisation, as Hopwood (1973, p.101) notes ‘little is known of the sociological perspective of the ship’. Hopwood’s (1973) investigation was not directly focused on cruise ships, but on the British Merchant Navy. He recognised the importance of the shipboard environment on the institutional life of a seafarer. In a more recent study, Bocanete & Nistor (2009, p.6) comment that due to the global nature of operations, ‘serious attention’ should be paid to the ‘human and social dimension’ of seafaring. As the growing supply and demand of cruise tourism has increased, there has been a categorical shift in interest towards the shipboard life of cruise ship employees. Whilst not an exhaustive list, *Table 2.1* summarises some recent key literature that acknowledges the scarcity of sociological enquiry for workers on-board cruise ships.

Table 2.1: Examples of sociological enquiry of cruise ship workers

Author/s (Date)	Short Summary of Study	Example Quote
Brownell, J. (2008)	Explored hospitality leadership competencies between land-based and ship-based leaders. Study supported that organisational contexts are likely to influence the relative importance of specific skills and attributes.	'Virtually no studies have focused specifically on the cruise industry as an organisational context' (p.140)
Coye, R. and Murphy, P. (2007)	Explored a historical approach in service delivery on transatlantic ocean liners. Findings show that stable and loyal workforces were elements in the successful nature of service delivery.	'Little has been recorded about the daily lives of service providers' (p.184)
Gibson, P. (2008)	Study acknowledges the scarcity of research on the lives of cruise ship workers, and explores the work environment of a modern cruise ship.	'...very little research to reveal the insights into this complex and seemingly unique world' (p.42)
Papathanassis, A. and Beckmann, I. (2011)	Identifies cruise tourism theory and literature as a niche, while analysing pre-existing cruise research.	'The study of social life and human behaviour on-board is a rarity in cruise research literature' (p.164)
Thomas, M. Sampson, H. and Zhao, M. (2003)	Focuses on the impact of seafaring on family life. Findings conclude that a change in policies may be required in order to improve such variables as employee retention and 'stress'.	'...the dearth of research on seafarers in general' (p.59)
Thompson, E. (2004)	Explores how the divide in mess areas as a mechanism and influence in the cognitive and emotional components of a cruise workers social identity.	'Almost no empirical studies have focused on cruise workers' (p.16)

Research indicated in *Table 2.1* varies in academic focus but recognises that there is little research, so far, that has explored the working and social world of the cruise ship industry. This is particularly existent from a hospitality occupational viewpoint, in which service roles account for the majority of positions on-board a ship (Wu and Winchester, 2005). Gibson and Walters (2012) argue that although the cruise ship industry is a blend of industries, it is foremost related to hospitality. This is predominantly evident whilst passengers are on a cruise ship. While on-board, their needs, demands and satisfaction are heavily dependent upon hospitality operations; their food and drink, sleeping arrangements, and social activities are all catered for by the organisation. This is not only true for its passengers, but also its workers. Cruise ship organisations not only have to meet the needs of their passengers, but this is also extended to their workers. This investigation seeks to go beyond the guest areas and to further explore, understand and evaluate how hospitality cruise ship workers make sense of their work and world.

2.2.2 A hospitality perspective

Through the historic meaning, understandings and practices of hospitality, King (1995), describes four general definitional attributes, as: (1) the relationship between individuals, taking the role of host and guest, (2) which can be either commercial (paid) or private (social), (3) having the successful knowledge of how to deliver service, (4) and also involving the social rituals of interaction (i.e. greetings). Brotherton (1999, p.168) further extends this by stating that hospitality is beyond the active behaviour of hospitableness, arguing that the ‘product’, combined with the ‘process’ and ‘motive’ should be taken into consideration. The products of hospitality are often referred to as being tangible and intangible, but in an overall sense are generally assumed to be shelter (accommodation), food and drink. The motive should be a voluntary act, while the process is the social exchange and overall act of the interaction. Therefore, considering the definitions above, the practice of hospitality is consciously a social interaction, in which the reciprocal and voluntary relationship of individuals, definable by social status (host and guest), involves the exchanges of psychological (e.g. social rituals) and physical (e.g. accommodation) commodities. Hospitality is therefore a process which is social and cultural in makeup.

The business of hospitality is becoming ever more global, with increasing globalisation and international competition. There is more of an emphasis to manage resources effectively,

recruit the right staff and retain members that add value to the organisation, insofar that competitive advantage is created (Nadiri and Tanova, 2010). It is often said that an employee is the most valuable resource to an organisation (e.g. Pfeffer, 1998), and this is often replicated within the hospitality field. Cheng and Brown (1998, p.136) in their study of labour turnover in the hotel industry state that success is ‘dependant on the calibre of its employees’. This has been further stressed in more recent studies by Lundberg and Mossberg (2008, p.44) who explain the ‘importance’ of ‘front-line’ staff to create ‘successful service encounters’. Baum (2007, p.1383) reiterates this statement by commenting that people ‘are a critical dimension’, in the service sector. The agreeable notion whereby human resources play a crucial process in the success of hospitality enterprises is in no doubt due to its operations and focus. There is an inseparable element towards the role of a service worker and the customer, which technology would find difficult to replicate. The worker has an influencing impingement on the enjoyment or the successful nature of the performance, a factor which is applicable to a wide range of occupations and industries, but maybe more of a significant factor in the service industry due to the intensive and prolonged interactions that occur.

An industry known for its labour intensive workforce, demanding emotional displays while physically challenging, it is continually tarnished for poor working conditions, low levels of pay and high turnover. Numerous studies have sought to understand and navigate the employment of staff in this field (e.g., Riley *et al.* 1998; Robinson, 2008; Roper *et al.* 1997). Brownell (2008, p.137) comments that ‘service organisations are characterised by particular high levels of change and uncertainty’ suggesting that working environments in the service field are unstable, caused by variables such as the interchangeable nature of employee tenures, and also adjustments in seasons and fashion. A workforce that is generally construed by having little attachment to the organisation (Cho and Johanson, 2008); recruiting, training, motivating and retaining a talented workforce will continue to challenge the hospitality industry in future years. Lashley (2007, p.217) notes that there are ‘conflicting needs of employers and the employed, linking pay, costs and profits, and terms and conditions of work’. Therefore, to be successful, it is important to gain access to a worker’s perspective of their role and viewpoint. This may be increasingly more relevant to workplaces that have extended responsibilities for their workers, such as the cruise ship industry.

2.3 Working on-board a cruise ship

The nature of a cruise ship, being physically isolated and encapsulated, is what sets it apart from many other industries, organisations and places of work for an employee. Workers are ‘confined to their ships’ (Sampson, 2003: p.266) entangled by psychological, social, political and economic contracts. The cruise ship is a place of work, a temporary home, and offers a base for leisure pursuits, which are ‘locked into patterns of interaction with whoever is on-board’ (Sampson, 2003: p.266), forming a contained floating society. The enclosed nature of a ship fosters a community atmosphere, while the physical boundaries can create a sense of belonging (Weeden *et al.* 2010). Belonging denotes value connotations within a given territory, which reinforces an identity with oneself to similar individuals in a collectivity. Employees spend months working full time and living together, separated from the usual social networks, forming short, yet intense relationships. Working seven days a week, up to 16 hours a day, for months at a time can severely strain employees, especially in occupations with direct customer contact such as those in hospitality positions. This on-board life offers little opportunity for socialising and activities outside of the occupation (Lukas, 2009; Sehkaran and Sevcikova, 2011), thus developing a sense of community revolving around a specific line of work. This is not only a contemporary thought, as Aubert and Arner (1958, p.202) state:

‘each man on board has his identity, his feeling of who he is, verbally linked to his occupation and position, not only during his working time, but also outside of it [sic]’.

This differentiates it from many other types of working environments; when a worker finishes their shift, they can’t go home, see their family or separate themselves from the place of work. When work is over, workers still have to adhere to the rules and regulations of the ship and organisation, suggesting that an individual could not completely “let go”, being “constantly on”, as Larsen *et al.* (2012, p.4) note:

‘the fact that most crew have separate areas for work and leisure time onboard does not mean that these are distinctly separated at the psychological level’.

When working on land, individuals can go home and base their identities around other variables, while individuals on-board are restricted to certain communities, certain subcultures, which could well be centred around the type of work or a specific occupation. It is the lack of separation from organisational boundaries that blurs the margins of work and

leisure, whereby the type of occupation will control the direction and flexibility of these margins, as Sampson and Thomas (2003, p.172) remark:

'the unique occupational settings where divisions of occupational status extend to dominate not only work but also leisure time'.

Therefore, depending on the type of occupation, this will detrimentally have an effect on the lifestyle a worker endures. An occupation determines the amount of hours worked, the amount of money earned, whether the individual has permission to use customer facilities, where the individual's cabin is based, and how many people (if any) they will share a cabin with, amongst other variables (Wood, 2000). Thus so far, due to organisational and occupational boundaries, it can be surmised that an officer, an engineer and a waiter will all vary in the type of life they can expect to partake on-board a cruise ship, and thus differentiate groups of individuals in which they may derive a sense of identity. The rest of this section will explore the organisational and occupational variables affecting one's work, life and community while working on a cruise ship.

2.3.1 Labour Structure

Cruise ships are '24 hour societies' (Antonsen, 2009: p.1122) and while this is not unique to hospitality operations, the cruise ship needs a self-reliant labour force all day, seven days a week to cater for the every need of the passenger. Work on-board can be very demanding and extremely labour intensive (Wood, 2000) due to the prolonged periods of time between guest/passenger interactions (Raub and Streit, 2006). In this sense, the success of operations lies 'crucially' with its workers (Chin, 2008: p.5), which has an essential impact on the satisfaction of customers (Xie *et al.* 2012). In a competitive market and an industry notorious for a strong service culture, cruise ship labour is central in its operations.

Due to the self-sufficient nature of operations and a focus on customer satisfaction, there is often one employee per two/three customers, highlighting the centrality of labour operations on-board (Raub and Streit, 2006). The number of workers will often depend on the type of the cruise. At the luxury end of the cruising scale, passengers expect to be pampered and so there would be generally more staff to adhere to organisational promises. At the opposite end of the scale, for example budget operators, more emphasis is placed on cost cutting, and so minimal staff is required, much like land based organisations. Historically and arguably stereotypically, the image of sailing off on a cruise ship into the sunset paints a very luxurious

and extravagant picture, enjoyed only by the rich. Today, more of an emphasis is placed on value, and not to detract anything away from the very impressive and innovative structures of cruise ships in the 21st Century, economies of scale are utilised more tactfully in the contemporary cruise market to attract the masses. This has prompted cruise organisations to not only acquire bigger ships that accommodate more passengers, but also reduce the passenger/guest ratio, as shown below in *Table 2.2*.

Table 2.2: Passenger/crew ratio on cruise ships

Ship Name	Market Segment	Passenger Capacity	Crew Capacity	Passenger/Crew Ratio
Bahamas Celebration	Budget	1,500	312	4.8
Oasis of the Seas	Contemporary	6,296	2,165	2.9
MS Seabourn Odyssey	Luxury	450	330	1.4

Adapted from: Oasis of the Seas, http://www.oasisoftheseas.com/presskit/Oasis_of_the_Seas.pdf, accessed 01.09.10; Cruise News Weekly, <http://www.cruisenewsweekly.com/seabourn/odyssey/>, accessed 01.09.10; Travel Weekly News, <http://www.travelweekly.com/Cruise/Celebration-Cruise-Line/Bahamas-Celebration>, accessed 21.01.13.

The ships shown above were selected at random, but it clearly demonstrates the differing passenger/crew ratios depending upon the target market segment. The more luxurious a ship, the more crew there are to cater for the needs for its passengers. Notably, this will also have implications for the crew, not only in terms of occupational pressures such as the expectations in service requirements, but also in terms of living and social arrangements. Shown in *Table 2.2*, Oasis of the Seas may have over 8,000 people contained on a ship. This poses not only logistical and practical questions, but also social and cultural questions. Being able to control this amount of people within a given boundary is impressive and also central to operations, but what implications does this have for cruise ship workers, particular from a hospitality perspective?

The labour structure of a cruise ship can be divided into hotel and marine operations represented by a three class social structure of officers, staff and crew (e.g. Lee-Ross, 2004). Occupations categorised as ‘crew’ are at the bottom of the hierarchy and are typically

positions in the dining room, custodial operatives and cabin stewards. ‘Staff’ occupy positions such as shop assistants, gym instructors, and entertainment. Most front line service staff are recognised as crew, although the position of purser (somewhat similar to that of a front desk/concierge in a hotel) for example, is categorised as officer. Employment is characterised by a ‘pyramid style’ structure (Wu and Winchester, 2005) separated by department and rank, with communication lines traditionally formal and passed vertically to the head of the department (Wood, 2000). The captain at the top of the hierarchy has due care for all with ship operations controlled under his/her law. The captain’s main task is the actual running of the ship, namely navigation, engineering and authority, while the hospitality region of operations are consequently supervised by well respected personnel in that field.

The marine side of operations could arguably be perceived as being more ‘professional’ and a more suitable career choice, while on the hotel side, particular service occupations may be filled by individuals from less developed countries and reliant on a flexible and peripheral workforce (e.g. Gibson, 2008). On cruise ships there needs to be a ready and available supply of labour. If an individual does not appear for work it would be difficult for an organisation to fly out new recruits, so the workforce must therefore be sustainable and flexible. It would appear that cruise ship organisations use multiple strategies in terms of labour practices. Foremost, it would seem that organisations operate with a “just-in-time” approach, which due to an individual both working and living on-board, would be more beneficial to operations for greater flexibility. Within this understanding, most front line staff will work in a split-shift system. This ‘split-system’ approach allows for greater flexibility in terms of organisational practices, but furthermore has implications when individuals have “free time” and who this can be spent with, which may be reduced to individuals working at similar times on-board, insofar, their occupational fellows. Furthermore, cruise ship organisations would also benefit from ‘numeric’ and ‘functional’ flexibility (Kelliher, 1989). Initially, being able to adjust the number of employees due to demand may be seen as problematic. Of course, there are difficulties in this practice, but organisations are able to transfer workers from ship to ship, within the organisation, to meet demand. This may be exercised as a last resort, mainly due to the financial and logistical challenges of moving one worker and his/her belongings to a different ship. More frequently, workers are generally able to multi-task (Gibson, 2008). This is particularly evident as workers are not only allocated their main role, but are also given a safety role on the ship.

2.3.2 *Hierarchy*

A contemporary cruise ship may have over 2,000 employees, in over ‘160 occupational positions’ (Wood, 2000: p.353). With this magnitude of employees and an overshadowing number of passengers compacted in a contained area, formality and tradition maintain high importance. A sense of formality urges control mechanisms to extend predictability towards work procedures and safety direction, which seems apparent to the successful operations of the ship and a factor in the profitability of the industry. One such dominant control mechanism is the hierarchical system that is in place. To be part of the hierarchy and follow practised norms and rules infers a sense of belonging and acceptance, which can be transferred to the sub-sections of the work base. Rigid hierarchical structures can also be a source of conflict, which may impose similarities and differences at an occupational or group level, whereby members of an occupational group form “cliques” due to the similarities of their own group and perceived differences of other groups.

Authority on-board can be compared to ‘paramilitary’ (Nolan, 1973: p.88) or ‘quasi-military’ (Wood, 2000: p.365) in which social relations are much more hierarchical than in most workplaces and power structures are closely linked to the specific division of labour (McKay, 2007; Nolan, 1973). The social structure is in principle constricted to one’s position held on-board the ship. In this sense, a worker could be strangled to their occupation as an important dimension that expresses their identity. In other words, due to the importance placed on occupational status, which directly influences the type of life an individual may endure, an occupation may be a central factor in their expression of identity, albeit amongst other variables such as nationality and gender.

As mentioned previously, the occupation an individual performs consequently determines variables such as cabin size/location and hours worked, but can also stipulate where workers can eat. Thompson (2004) in his study of cruise ships particularly focuses on how mess areas have a definitive influence on an individual’s social identity. A mess area can simply be viewed as a dining room for employees, although in this case there were three mess areas each catering for officers, staff and crew. All three have different decoration, services and food types, and restrictions were placed that refrain individuals from using mess areas above their hierarchical level. Thompson’s (2004, p.25) findings confirmed that although the hierarchical structure is an ‘effective management tool’, it also ‘re-affirms boundaries’ preventing the mobilisation in the social structure, and therefore influences ‘self-identification’. Although not all cruise ships have this strict regime of mess area segregation, officers will eat separately

from the rest of the staff and crew, while staff members have privileges that allows them to eat and socialise in guest areas, unlike crew, which again fosters segregation depending on the status of the occupation.

Hierarchy on-board is expressed symbolically, not only through the obvious symbolic artefacts of uniform, but also through such embodiments as cabin location and size. Aubert and Arner's (1958) seminal work on the social structure of the ship, focusing on oil tankers, states that the location of cabins symbolises the distinction in rank. This is still prominent in the structures of cruise ships today. Bow (2005, p.32) notes that officers and senior employees will have single accommodation with en-suite facilities, staff have cabins that house two employees, while crew residences can often house around 3 or 4 employees. Furthermore, workers are generally grouped together in cabins and along corridors with others of the same department and occupation. Most worker cabins are located below the waterline with no portholes and crew accommodation is located on the lowest levels, whereas officer and staff housing is located on higher levels.

There are many variables which re-affirm hierarchy on-board a ship, none of which is so symbolically expressed as through the use of uniforms. Every member of the organisation will have a uniform, which not only sets them apart from the paying customers, but also further segregates workers into positional and departmental roles. The uniform on-board is a powerful tool which tells a story about that particular worker. Nickels' (2008) study on the colour of a policeman's uniform expresses that a symbolic artefact such as uniform can have an effect on an individual's psychological dimensions, whereby an individual's self-identity is influenced. There is a link between clothing and social perceptions, in which the cultural use of uniform can play a key role in the definition of self and collective identity. On a cruise ship, officers and senior employees are separated from the rest of the ship through the use of maritime style 'stripes'. The colour and accompanying symbol signifies their department of work (Bow, 2005: p.46). The use of clothing and uniform employed by the cruise industry not only upholds social control, but may also be indicative of collective identities directed by the "meaning" of the uniform.

2.3.3 Pay and terms of employment

Contractual arrangements are difficult to specify and each organisation will generally have their own approach to how they employ individuals for positions. It is a common theme that

permanent contracts will only be offered to senior officers, while staff and crew are employed on fixed term contracts. The pay and terms of employment in the cruise industry is a complex arena, and will vary between positions, departments, ships, organisations, the representative country under which the ship flags itself, and so on. Highlighting these variables presents practical issues for researchers, and is beyond the scope for this particular project, to cement an industry wide database for seafarers. Mitroussi (2008) explains that to research a seafarer's employment situation is quite a difficult task due to the availability of limited information and statistics, and Wu and Winchester (2005, p.8) further state that 'while a regular labour survey is available for the cargo sector, no such work has been done for the cruise sector'. One such survey is the 'Life at sea survey' undertaken in 2007/8 by 'Ship Talk', a recruitment company dedicated to seagoing jobs. This particular survey focuses on the attraction and retention of working at sea. Although there are some fruitful findings, over 70% of respondents were of senior rank and only 17.9% worked on a cruise ship. This further takes note how meaningful data within the cruise industry is lacking with concern to the social and human element, in particular the hospitality or front line worker.

The wage system is highly differentiated. At one end of the scale the captain and senior employees can earn a very good salary with privileges such as bonuses after each voyage and regular 'leave', while at the other end of the scale a waiter may only expect around \$50(US) a month with gratuities expected to compensate the remaining wages (Klein, 2002; Chin, 2008). In this sense, pay is another example of how the industry uses control mechanisms as a predictor for behaviour. In order for a waiter to gain a good monthly wage, which can be achieved while working on-board, the waiter must perform to a high standard to overcome a low static income and gain 'tips'. Although pay may be relatively low, or similar to that of on land, employees have free room and board, and are also exempt from tax on pay, which supported by the 'Life at sea survey' findings was a major factor in the motivation for working at sea. Sehkaran and Sevcikova (2011, p.75) revealed that employees acknowledged their low pay, but alternatively embraced the money saving capabilities for working on a cruise ship, which consequently influenced their motivation in a 'positive way'.

Length of contracts vary and depend on stipulations such as nationality and rank, reflecting company policies and different market labour values (Thomas *et al.* 2003). Unlike much work on land, contracts are generally lengthier for low status workers (Chin, 2008). International cruise operators recruit international labour, in which men and women from all over the world are contracted to work on-board cruise ships characterising a 'multinational' or 'mini UN'

crew (Chin, 2008: p.1). Wood (2000, p.365) states that ‘cruiseship crews are probably the most globally-diverse yet physically compact labourforces anywhere’. Other authors suggest that organisations employ individuals based on their nationality and argue that some are culturally better suited to certain occupational positions (e.g. Chin, 2008; McKay, 2007; Testa, 2007). The international cruise industry tends to employ Western European maritime officers and senior staff, American, British and Canadian entertainment (e.g. dancers) staff members, while crew are generally recruited from Asia and Eastern Europe. Testa *et al.* (2003, p.137) calls this a ‘cultural class system’ whereby officers and staff can be segregated dependant on national culture.

Despite this notation by some authors, the multi-cultural element of the industry has received attention, in which debate has occurred. Some authors and organisations such as Klein (2002), Testa *et al.* (2003), and the ITF (2002) have demonstrated evidence and literature in which the nationality of seafarers has been immorally exploited. There are some researchers who advocate the contrary, establishing that multinational crews are viable and successful (Alderton *et al.* 2004) and a model which is ‘good practice’ that land-based communities could learn from (Gibson, 2008: p.50). This is further supported by Sehkaran and Sevcikova (2011, p.74) with their study on the motivation of service employees on cruise ships, acknowledging that employees were ‘primarily bonding with other nationalities’. It could be argued that differences in nationality will continue to come under debate, particular when the pay and working environment are relevant. As noted there could be over 40 different nationalities working on-board a cruise ship, and although this is important to take into account, it would be difficult and beyond the scope of this research to base analysis upon national variables (discussed further in next chapter, Section 3.4.3).

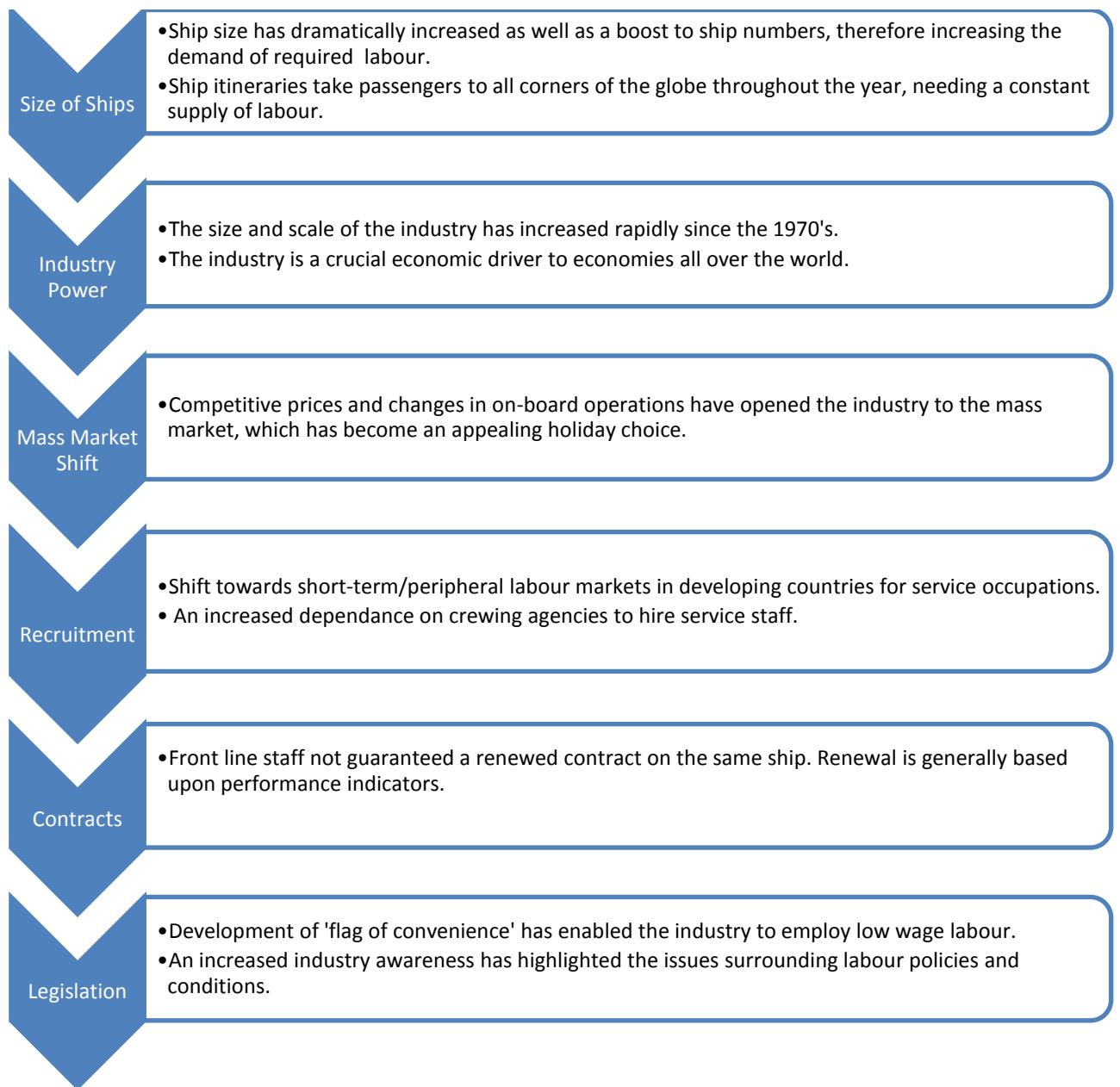
2.3.4 Recruitment and retention

An international recruitment base involves having multiple strategies in order to fulfil the required positions. Industry practices would suggest that the industry benefits from a mixture of internal and external labour recruitment strategies. As a general rule Chin (2008, p.5) points out that ‘lower skilled positions (e.g. dining, bar and cabin stewards) are outsourced while more skilled workers are directly recruited or internally promoted’. This suggests that there is a strong internal labour market if a seafarer is serious regarding a career on a ship. If

this is the case, a better understanding of the ‘crew’ or ‘front line staff’, and potentially the future managers of the industry, is a worthy cause of research.

Labour contracts are generally 4-9 months for service related staff. The International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) has documented that the average stay of hotel/catering crew employment on-board cruise ships has dropped from 3 years in 1970 to 18 months in 1990, to just 9 months in 2000 (ITF, 2002). Therefore, most service employed workers leave before or after one contract, either voluntarily or reluctantly. Recent data regarding retention rates is not publicly available (Lukas, 2010: p.4) and it is recognised that this data is over 10 years old. However, these figures show an indication of key sequences which span 30 years. The data given by the ITF (2002) suggests that current research could provide enhanced and up to date understanding of this decline, with a primary focus on the sustainability of cruise ship labour. This noted, the cruise ship industry has drastically changed over the last 30 years, in structure and operations, so it is important to take some of these changes into consideration when providing a more accurate representation as to why this decline has potentially registered. *Figure 2.3* highlights some of these changes:

Figure 2.3: Changes to the cruise ship industry



Since the 1970's the industry has witnessed significant structural and operational changes in the work environment which may have impacted on cultural variables. Globalisation of the industry has restructured the cruise industry; increasing instability of work, promoting growth to the masses, changing employee contracts, unifying political arenas, and emerging new technological systems. Such operational changes should be appreciated, whereby it could be a case of a cultural incompatibility with the adjustments to the industry. It could be argued that the industry is advancing rapidly in terms of structure and operations while cultural and social practices remain stagnant (e.g. Antonsen, 2009). It is these social and cultural perspectives

that are of interest for this study and, in particular, the perspectives of the front line hospitality cruise ship worker.

There have been ‘massive’ changes in the supply side of the industry’s human resource in recent years, with a shift towards short-term/peripheral labour markets in developing countries (Bocanete & Nistor, 2009: p.8). Flags of convenience (FOC) have been the main instigator in the swing of such recruitment strategies. FOC is a system whereby ship-owners can, for a fee, register their vessels in nations where the laws of the sea are less restrictive. The ISL (2010, p.12) define FOC as the ‘registration of a ship in a country whose tax on the profits of trading ships is low or whose requirements concerning manning or maintenance are not stringent’. This has consequently opened up the global labour market and allows foremost the industry to pay such low wages as a cost cutting strategy. Bergantino and Marlow (1998) estimated that crew cost differences between EU flags and open registry vessels range from +22% to +333% (cited in: Mitroussi, 2008: p.1046). This is a substantial saving for cruise companies, which has contributed to price reductions and subsequently opened up the market to the masses. This trend towards ‘flexible labour processes’ (Chin, 2008) has short-term benefits for both the employee and employer, as the industry offers opportunities to earn a good wage and a prospect of reduced labour costs for the employer. Notwithstanding, Knudsen (2004) in his research on global labour in the shipping sector showed that insecurity of employment very much affected these workers’ attitude to work. If this was the case in the cruise industry, then it could become problematic in the service delivery the industry so heavily relies on.

2.4 Working and living on-board a cruise ship: towards an understanding

As discussed in the previous section, the cruise ship industry in recent years has made several changes, possibly to adapt to globalisation whereby flexibility is demanded and to restructure the labour force, towards a shorter ‘fixed-term contract’. These flexible labour policies provide the opportunity to make short-term labour cost savings, but what are the long-term implications? Lane (2000) in a report on the global seafarer labour market suggests the longer term consequences could be a manpower crisis, affecting not only senior personnel, but also front line workers that are poorly trained. This sentiment was echoed in the 2nd International Cruise Conference 2010 held in Plymouth UK, in which a theme was dedicated to the

exploration of solutions for labour supply. There have been several solutions put forward for the recruitment and retention of staff such as shorter contracts, longer contracts that encapsulate holiday leave, and the ability to cater for a crew member's family, but these offer impractical realities that the industry is unlikely to follow.

More practical arguments presented by Lewarn (2009) and which have been restated by others are: improving the professional recognition of occupations, offering loyalty bonuses, and supporting career progression with the company. Financial incentives are important when considering retention, although may not be attractive on their own and therefore other actions are required. Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp (2011) claim there may be a potential mismatch between a cruise worker's perception and reality of working on-board, with workers generally having realistic work expectations but unrealistic life expectations. One such disparity is the immediate contrast of glamour on display between guest and employee areas - guest areas may represent a picture of luxury, whereas employee areas generally have opposing aesthetic qualities. Working can also front divergence; working as a waiter on-board, for example, would hold occupational similarities to working in a restaurant in a city or town, it is the embracing temporary way of life that poses complexities, or differentiates working on-board from on land.

Lane (2000) believes that a solution will come through with the recognition that it has much to do with socio-economic conditions as with training and education, while Lukas (2010) contends that if any resolutions will be made the needs of employees have to be addressed to take into account the characteristics of the job and also the culture of the organisation. Alderton *et al.* (2004) further state that the key to understanding the everyday life of a seafarer is the exploration of the occupational culture. Testa *et al.* (1998), in their study linking job satisfaction with customer satisfaction in the cruise industry, recognised three key areas of improvement: employee satisfaction with the company, employee satisfaction with their supervisor, and employee satisfaction with the work environment. Their study showed that employee satisfaction with the work environment (including accommodation, time off, and occupational related outcomes) yielded the lowest satisfaction scores. Appreciation could therefore, from understanding of the contributed studies so far, come through the understanding of an employee's occupation and the implications this has on not only their working life, but also their social life on-board. This has been mirrored by more contemporary research by Larsen *et al.* (2012) who recognised the importance of exploring employees' job perceptions while on-board. The "glue" or blurring of work and leisure, and the

interrelatedness of their work and social life on-board, was a key ingredient for the purpose of investigating job perceptions. Their results highlight the importance of the relationships between the individual and their supervisors, colleagues and guests, and also the physical aspects of the work environment. The memberships (work and social) and community an individual becomes part of on-board appears to be of some significance, while the physical aspects may become a crucial element in the creation of these memberships and the value connotations attached.

Furthermore, Thompson (2004) placed significance on mess area segregation as an important influence in the cognitive and emotional factors guiding a seafarer's social identity. Thompson (2004, p.15) further acknowledges how the industry demonstrates operations as a 'convergent role structure' whereby organisational roles, status and ethnicity are linked, so that knowing a person's employment role is diagnostic of their social group membership. Although this study highlighted occupations linked to ethnicity, it also exposed workers' social identity linked to their occupation. In a similar vein, Lee-Ross (2008) aimed to comprehend sociological knowledge of on-board work, although taking a more cultural route. In his work, investigations showed that hospitality occupations form short-term cultural sub-groups, also called 'occupational communities'. A major component of an occupational community is the surrounding identity that encapsulates an occupation and place of work. As Lee-Ross (2008, p.477) explains:

'Chiefly, these communities are driven by the occupational similarities they possess across organisations rather than a broad set of national or societal characteristics'.

He compared cruises of varied duration, and argued that cruises with a longer duration created a more tightly knitted occupational community, with extended isolation playing a key role. The extended isolation consequently intensified 'job specialisation' and 'fusion' stating that an occupational title has more prominence (job specialisation), which not only influences work variables but also social variables (fusion) (Lee-Ross, 2008: p.477). Taking note of such recent research, a call emerges for further investigations through an identity route seeking to explore and understand the behaviour and values of the twenty-first century hospitality worker in order to achieve sustainability and continuously drive this ambitious industry.

2.4.1 Work, family and community

With work becoming a central part of most people's lives, the boundary of work and leisure has long been researched, integrating three significant pieces of this relationship in the (i) job (occupation/organisation), (ii) family, and also the (iii) communities (work and non-work) individuals become entangled within. It could be argued that to understand or discover the underlying meanings these pieces represent may support a clearer picture of the working world and the individuals that work within it. It is well documented within previous cruise literature how a cruise worker's family is an important variable within the work of the industry (e.g., Brownell, 2008; Sampson, 2003). Being isolated away from family members for months at a time can be difficult for individuals, especially where children and partners are concerned. In fact, the separation from one's family has been identified as being one of the biggest causes of 'stress' amongst seafarers and in turn influenced one's psychological decision to stay within the industry (e.g. Thomas *et al.* 2003). Although this is a typical scenario across the industry of shipping (i.e. cargo and passenger) it is thought to affect seafarers more in the cargo sector of shipping, mainly due to less numbers of workers on-board, and therefore a lesser degree of socialisation and a feeling of greater isolation.

The cruise ship, although sharing similar conditions with cargo shipping, is different in terms of people on-board. Cruise ships can provide an individual with a 'surrogate' family. Gibson (2008, p.50) notes that a 'cruise ship is presented as a home' whereby 'the community was referred to as a family, although this was more often the case within departments or on the ships with less than 1000 crew'. Considering that workers are away from their family members, they may take some comfort and support in their occupational or organisational family members. It may therefore prove to be more fruitful in developing an understanding of these types of community in terms of retention and exploring organisational behaviour. The development of such communal ties, in the absence of "normal" networks away from friends and family, can become important to workers and so regular disruption of the social and communication structures by means of employee turnover, can pose a real threat to the harmony of these communities, and one's happiness within the industry. Although the author accepts the transient nature of the industry, being able to retain key personnel would be beneficial to the overall community, and to retention as a whole.

While a worker's family is something which cannot be ignored, this separation is a key element for all individuals within the industry and an element which all members are aware of, despite how they may deal with this. It would be logically impossible for all workers to

have their immediate family along on their working contracts, so other than improving communication technology for seafarers, being away from family members is a part of every workers occupational profile.

2.4.2 Exploring attachment: work vs. non-work

There is much hospitality related research that explores the attitudinal antecedents of individuals within the industry: exploring the motivational factors why employees work in such occupations, what commitment constructs can be utilised to further understand this world of work, at an organisational and occupational level, and also investigating what possible satisfiers and dissatisfiers this type of work imposes upon an individual. In essence, this type of work has sought to understand how individuals are attached to this line of work, further probing the ever evident issues of turnover and retention within the industry. This has been further exposed, although in a very limited way, to the sub-section of the cruise industry (e.g., Gibson, 2008; Lee-Ross, 2008; Raub and Streit, 2006; and Testa, 1998).

Prior research surrounding attachment and turnover suggests that job attitudes along with job alternatives are relevant predictors in an individual's decision to leave, although Hom and Griffeth (1995) and Griffeth *et al.* (2000: noted from Yao *et al.* 2004: p.154-5) report that 'attitudinal antecedents explain about 4-5% of the variance in turnover', suggesting that factors in addition to attitudinal may be useful to the theoretical contributions of turnover and retention. These 'alternative factors' have also carried importance within cruise industry research (e.g. Larsen *et al.* 2012), suggesting indicators other than attitudinal or on-the-job factors can play a crucial role in understanding and explaining individuals' meanings and values in this type of work. Testa *et al.* (1998) specifies that research was required to explore the work and non-work variables to gain further knowledge of the cruise ship worker. On a similar theme, though related to cruise customers, Kwortnik (2008) examines how passengers interact with 'shipscapes' (physical and social environment) to shape their cruise experience. The institution of the ship executes both highly structural and symbolic controls whilst also being isolated by the natural environment of the sea. If such environmental factors affect the experiences of a passenger, which at the most may be a host for around two weeks, an employee, retained for several months, would be exposed to these conditions for an extended period of time and therefore could be suggestive of such environmental impacts upon the working individuals. Lee-Ross (2008) further states that problems may arise due to the work

situation (off-the-job) rather than the job itself. Therefore further investigation into the on-and off-the-job relationship would prove fruitful.

Cohen (1995) in his research on turnover recognises the influence of non-work factors upon the individual, taking note how these influences can impact on employment status and the environment. This is potentially a salient point within the cruise industry, as there are many non-work factors that impact on the work itself, but alternatively how an occupation can impinge on the non-work side of operations. Therefore this particular research has to recognise the importance of studying at the micro (i.e. individual) and macro (organisation) level, but rather consider these dimensions in isolation, promote the study of individuals within their social environment (meso level), taking into account both work and non-work factors at that given time. This research is interested in the space that attempts to capture the complex interaction between the individual and structural/symbolic constraints that generates meaning to that person or group of persons. Cohen's (1995) research was neither the first nor unique in unearthing findings that point to non-work factors being an important decision in turnover or attachment to a type of work or organisation. Commitment theory, for example, has recognised the relationship between non-work and work (i.e., Steers and Mowday, 1981; Mobley, 1982; and Hom and Griffeth, 1995) and although the models of commitment theory incorporated non-work elements, a limitation was that non-work factors were not comprehensively integrated into the models and not thoroughly tested in empirical studies (Yao *et al.* 2004).

2.4.3 Occupational communities

One such framework that attempts to understand multiple aspects of an individual's working and non-working life is that of the developments of an 'occupational community' (OC). Mainly due to the similarities in an employee's work and social setting, this concept considers that individuals bound by a particular occupation share a common identity and values than those in different occupations. Several authors have developed the theory of occupational communities (i.e. Lipset, Trow and Coleman, 1956; Salaman, 1974; and Van Maanen and Barley, 1984). This briefly assumes that work based relationships are formed in particular occupations, bound by a sense of identity, which in sequence form attitudes and certain behaviours (Sandiford and Seymour, 2007). An OC represents an interplay of factors that affect the synergistic relationship between one's work and non-work, which has been of

academic enquiry for some time. This is ever more present in today's society, with increased intensity bearing fair work policies and conditions. Members of an OC are said to be affected by their work in such a way that their non-work lives are infiltrated by their work relationships, interests and values (Salaman, 1974). This seminal work in the exploration of work and leisure relationships pioneers much work with regards to OC, and recognises that for some individuals an occupational group forms the basis of who a person is, i.e. their identification, although there are several defining characteristics.

The first component is what Salaman (1974) describes as an individual's 'self-image'. The identity created by the occupation, which is central to who they believe they are, suggests that members of an occupational community are emotionally involved in their work, and that they value their work not only for the extrinsic benefits, but also the satisfaction they gain from actually 'doing their job'. Individuals that are more intrinsically satisfied with the work they do, are more likely to form work based friendships and activities that are permitted outside of the workplace. From this socialisation process the formation of group attitudes, beliefs and values are distinguished and reciprocated into working life. The second component is closely related to the first component, in which Salaman (1974) suggests that members will get confirmation from members that share similar perceptions of one self, or that share the same beliefs and attitudes, and use these members as a reference group. Members would generally seek confirmation from individuals who value the same beliefs and norms in order to judge what is right and wrong. This socialisation process substantiates group boundaries and also maintains a sense of social identity (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984). This may be apparent in many occupations in the service/hospitality industry due to stigmatised occupations, where members may turn to one another for aid and comfort (Wildes, 2005).

This social interaction between members configures the third component. Due to similar working times and work based groups, certain boundaries will occur and members will form friendships and recreational activities outside of the workplace. This therefore promotes a blurring of work and leisure and in turn may lead to an inclusiveness of work, whereby some roles may 'encapsulate' their employees so that their whole lives are affected by the job that they perform (Salaman, 1974: p.33). These components are closely related, as members associate with other members of the same occupational group, they do so with members with the same values and occupational self image (Salaman, 1974). In addition, Salaman (1974) takes note that marginality, or a degree of stigmatisation may be a determinant of an OC. If a group of individuals are deemed marginal, this may encourage the group to turn inwards to

gain satisfaction and comfort, and therefore contribute to the components mentioned in the previous paragraph.

A definition this research will refer to was acknowledged by Van Maanen and Barley (1984), who consider an OC to be:

'A group of people who consider themselves to be engaged in the same sort of work; whose identity is drawn from the work; who share with one another a set of values, norms and perspectives that apply to but extend beyond work related matters; and whose social relationships meld work and leisure' (p.287)

This working definition can be broken down into multiple components in order to gain a richer understanding of the concept. The term ‘engaged’ could imply a form of membership where individuals would see themselves as members of an occupation, rather than just people who simply work together. A group membership forms boundaries, which in turn offers reference groups to individuals (Van Maanaen and Barley, 1984). Through the process of group membership, differentiation occurs, as groups form individual identities and values. The identity created would affect different levels, whereby social identity and self identity can be influenced. The formation of memberships and the process of identity create unique perspectives of work, which provide identifiable characteristics (Lee-Ross, 2008). Van Maanen and Barley (1984, p.314) suggest that understanding occupational communities is a means of realising why people act the way they do in the workplace, and argue that they form ‘bounded work cultures’ separate from any other culture. Therefore, the notion of OC is largely based on two understandings: (1) that individuals are bound together by a sense of occupational *collectivity* whereby members uphold similar values and interests, displaying shared rituals, while demonstrating solidarity and a common way of life, (2) which not only permeates their working lives, but also their social lives, and therefore clouding the distinction and boundaries of work and leisure. In this representation, it could be considered that an occupation invades one’s personal and social life.

2.4.3.1 Hospitality and occupational communities

There has been much debate as to which professions or occupations, or under which circumstances, the formation of an OC is most likely. Some argue only a select “professional” group of occupations provide evidence of the determinants of OC, while others, such as

Salaman (1974), advocate that symptoms such as physical proximity and a marginal status may grant the conditions to form an OC. Marshall (1986) in exploring the workplace culture of a restaurant (predominantly bar staff), rejected the idea that such hospitality employees formed an OC. Marshall (1986, p.44) maintained that staff ‘fail[ed] to match’ to any of Salaman’s (1974) criteria (self-image, values and social relationships). Marshall (1986) stated that staff held little affiliation towards their occupational role and identified more towards the employing organisation, which is quite typical of lowly status workers. In another study, Riley *et al.* (1998, p.161) argue that catering workers form an OC by means of ‘social isolation through working unsociable hours’, and also with the attainment of ‘the combination of unique skills, however quickly acquired’. In the context of this research, the social isolation is in no doubt a contributing factor of OC dimensions, while the organisational structure suggests that individuals are known in terms of their occupational speciality, which may or may not promote group affiliations to their occupational group. The unusual nature of the work environment confirms that new entrants will become reliant upon fellow workers to “get to know the ropes”, but also become an important reference and support group in the absence of family and friends. This not only provides the basis of belonging, but also a sense of identity (Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp, 2011), which may be utilised as a coping mechanism and hence a stronger affiliation towards the on-board community.

Literature would suggest that hospitality employees, and in particular more specific occupational groups such as dining staff, are likely to form such sub-cultural groupings. Researchers such as Chivers (1971), Mars and Nicod (1984) and Dodrill and Riley (1992) have explored the hospitality field with evidence of such group affiliation within work groups. More recent hospitality research by Adler and Adler (1999) supports that OC’s in resort workers exist due to the characteristics of hospitality work, while Sandiford and Seymour (2007) recognise that OC’s are salient within the UK public house sector especially when employees ‘live in’. Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) also argue that elements of ‘dirty work’ help foster a strong occupational or work group culture, which is arguably evident in much work related to hospitality. More significant to this research is the early cruise-based research by Foster (1986) suggesting that ‘short-lived shipboard societies’ are formed on-board cruise ships. Salaman (1974) also identified a strong occupational community within the fishing sector, and although work profiles are different to cruise ships, this type of work promotes a sense of isolation similar to on-board work. The physical isolation is a key element within community development, restricting a more personal identity due to the barriers and separation of the wider social realms, allowing for a more intense socialisation defined by

organisational and occupational control. More recent research by Lee-Ross (2008) confirms that on-board hospitality employees are likely to form short-term OC's, which are stronger on longer cruises.

To summarise, due to the nature of the cruise industry (i.e. recruitment procedures), individuals may find more comfort and commonality with their workgroup members than the organisation as a whole (explored further in chapter 3). This may be more significant when the occupation is stigmatised in some way (Kreiner *et al.* 2006a) creating a sense of conflict, or “us” and “them” mentality, whereby occupational members tend to turn inwards. The additional isolation factor, including the proximity of other organisational members may play a factor, which reinforces an affiliation at the occupational level. Arguably, the dimensions of occupational communities may not appear on-board cruise ships and in hospitality occupations in its truest of forms, but because of the transient nature of operations and the temporary, although fixed, stature of employment in an intense occupational caldron, individuals can find a commonality with other individuals in the same occupation and share similar views and values.

The cruise industry is arguably one of few industries whereby an occupation demonstrably has an immediate and encapsulating effect on an individual’s working and social life. It may be important to further explore this in terms of how an individual affiliates towards this type of community/grouping and how strong this affiliation is. Not only must an individual be motivated to a specific line of work, they must also enjoy, or at least accept that they will be based on a ship for several months. This further encourages the disparities generated through the employment on a cruise ship and the creation of alternate attitudes and values unique to the industry. This research tends to agree with Lee-Ross (2008) that short-term occupational communities will form on-board cruise ships within hospitality occupations, more as a necessity due to the social isolation and organisational structure in place.

2.4.4 Job Embeddedness (JE)

A relatively new construct which has been identified at the ‘meso’ level is called the ‘Job Embeddedness’ approach (Mitchell *et al.* 2001). ‘Job Embeddedness’ (JE) is a concept relevant in exploring the perceptions of hospitality cruise ship workers which claims to capture the ‘totality’ of work and non-work forces that entangle individuals not only in their job, but also in their personal ‘life-space’ psychological environment, in conjunction with the

external environment. Drawing on the theoretical foundations of Lewin's (1951) Field Theory and Embedded Figures Theories (Witkin *et al.* 1977), Mitchell *et al.* (2001) portray JE as akin to a 'spider's web', whereby an individual can become 'stuck' within social, personal and economic forces. The central point of the web is that of the individual's job, whereby the outreaching strands are symbolised as the attachments to the organisation or community, which also includes the people, groups and institutions connected with one's social web. The strength of these strands is what embeds the individual within the organisation and community. The idea of being 'stuck' may seem to be quite negative for some, and although this comparison is not difficult to understand, it is believed that this is not the case. The idea of being 'stuck' is somewhat based on the social glue that binds an individual to the organisation and the community one makes relative to the type of work one performs. 'Stuck' is also quite comparable to that of an individual on-board a cruise ship, being physically contained on-board a ship surrounded by the natural environment of the sea. The developments made by Mitchell *et al.* (2001) were based on the fact that an employee's decision to remain with an organisation is piloted by a multitude of interacting factors, and not entirely based on job satisfaction and other attitudinal elements, but could be influenced by a diverse range of psychological and emotional processes and activities.

The focal point of embeddedness, according to Witkin *et al.* (1977, p.5) is to 'what extent perception of the item is determined by the surrounding framework', or in other words, how an encapsulating environment that an item or individual is placed within can impact on its meaning at that given time. Witkin *et al.* (1977) used images to explore this in their psychological testing, uncovering that being attached to their backgrounds, the embedded figures become one with their surroundings, making it difficult to untangle them from the background (Mitchell *et al.* 2001). Hence, importance was not only given to the item/individual, but also the environment. This seems an important consideration when exploring individuals working on cruise ships. The term 'Embeddedness' was later related to the sociological and economic research on social networks (see: Granovetter, 1985; and Uzzi, 1996), which included the idea that social relationships act as a constrainer of action, and more broadly on the relationships between individuals and their institutions, and how these impacted on economic action. The surrounding framework of the cruise ship and the controls imposed by the occupational and organisational hierarchy could be similarly categorised in this way, whereby an individual is constrained by not only organisational variables (i.e. cruise ship) but also occupational variables. Lewin's (1951) field theory is a comparable idea, in

which one of the most fundamental constructs is that of the psychological field or ‘life space’. Hall and Lindzey (1978, p.389) represent a life space as ‘the totality of possible facts that are capable of determining the behaviour of the individual’. Similar to embedded figure theory, the main point of action is the individual (or item) in their environment, and the network of interrelatedness this relationship exposes, mediated by physical and psychological processes.

Within field theory an individual is a separate entity from the environment in which they are in, they are yet included within the totality, and therefore define perceptions and tools for behaviour as is deemed appropriate for that environment. As such, the boundary between the individual and the environment is considered a ‘permeable’ one (Hall and Lindzey, 1978: p.391), whereby influence is transactional; in other words the environment can influence the individual, and the individual can influence the environment. Therefore, this has an interesting point in relation to how one perceives oneself. A cruise ship is generally deemed luxurious, although arguably not from an occupational point of view. An individual working in hospitality would be working in a professional setting with standards that are high, coupled with accommodation and social requirements that are set by an occupational hierarchy, proposing potentially contrasting work and non-work elements of one’s work. Yet which elements individuals attach more significance to, if any, and how this affects how one perceives oneself are also relevant.

Overall, using both concepts of field theory and embedded figure theory, Mitchell *et al.* (2001) find importance of the interrelatedness of the individual and the environment they are in at that time, and apply it as a general attachment mechanism between an employee and the type of work he/she performs. From an academic perspective it is clear that the ideas of JE are ‘grounded in the work of others’ (Mitchell and Lee, 2001: p.190) and developed alongside other constructs, such as commitment theory. Typical examples are: attachment and prosocial behaviour (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986), person-organisation fit with variables of normative/instrumental commitment and job satisfaction (O'Reilly *et al.* 1991). Notably therefore, JE could be considered as a hybrid of theories, which ties together related but separate thoughts that attempt to gather an encompassing view of the individual and their environment. Literature has sought to compare the relative distinctness of JE as a unique model (e.g. Yao *et al.* 2004), in which a central outcome is that both areas of work and non-work are given similar importance. The non-work element has previously received attention, for example, Reichers (1985) took note of the ‘multiple commitments to various groups’, recognising that an individual’s attachment to an organisation can be usefully dismantled in

terms of co-workers, management, customers and community. Furthermore, the findings from Cohen (1995, 2007) and Kirchmeyer (1992) discuss how non-work domains have a direct effect upon organisational commitment, and that to understand the individual at work, both non-work and work life ‘must’ be considered. Although these non-work elements have been acknowledged it was not determined as an integral component, unlike JE.

One of the major strengths of JE and what makes it unique as a model, is how both areas of work and non-work are given similar importance. It is crucial to take into account all aspects of an individual’s job when investigating the work performed on cruise ships. Off-the-job characteristics may equal or have higher values than on-the-job characteristics due to the encapsulating working world of the cruise ship. Working on a cruise ship can be considered very different from many occupational industries, whereby the boundaries of work and leisure can become difficult to differentiate. The position an individual holds will detrimentally impact on the type of lifestyle a worker may have, whereby occupational and organisational constraints and controls direct memberships, leisure time, area access, and so on.

Purported by Mitchell *et al.* (2001), JE is comprised of three dimensions: ‘Links, Fit, and Sacrifice’, with each containing a work (organisational/occupational) and non-work (community) component. ‘Links’ are simply the social connections that bind an individual to the organisation and people, but also to the location. ‘Fit’ is how compatible an individual is with an organisation and their environment. Finally, ‘Sacrifice’ is the personal (material or psychological) losses one would forfeit by leaving their job. The organisational component is specific in that only on-the-job elements are important, although Zhang *et al.* (2012) comment how ‘community’ is used interchangeably within JE without specifically justifying what the community is. On cruise ships, boundaries can be clearer than on land, whereby the structure of the ship acts as a community boundary, retaining a concentration of individuals who have commonality.

Overall, the JE approach maintains its focus on the relationships between individuals’ cognitive decision-making processes and also their developing social and affective ties with elements in the work environment. This noted, being highly embedded or wielding low JE, does not necessarily incite individuals to leave a position or stay in a position - it rather identifies a broader range of critical factors that make individuals more likely to consider the possibility of changing jobs. This is the usefulness of JE to this research, through the potential of highlighting critical factors of work and non-work. JE is a concept that binds individuals to the organisation, whilst also capturing the strength of these ties (Shen and Hall, 2009). The

model not only considers the importance of the retention of employees, but also the performance of employees and how these can be affected by the dynamics of work and non-work.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has explored the nature of work, life and community on cruise ships and moreover how a ship can be viewed as a society, or a cultural entity, whereby members under this embrace extract a temporary sense of self and worth. The encapsulated nature of the ship penetrates multiple aspects of one's life, whereby an occupation can have a dominant and immediate effect on an individual's working and social life. Therefore, community formation and social interaction take place in a space that is both an environment for work and living. Within the physical and symbolic confines of a ship, an individual's occupation may be a basis of self-definition, or in the very least, a means of distinguishing self from others, and will not only affect work variables, but also have implications on an individual's social life while on-board. Therefore, the 'totality' of these forces should be explored in order to gain a fuller understanding of the 21st century hospitality cruise ship worker.

A consistent theme running through the veins of this and other cruise based research is the relative uniqueness of working on-board a cruise ship. Like other types of work, it has emerged that it is important to explore both the nature of the work itself and the environment one works in, thus bringing in the concept of how one attaches meanings and values, and therefore one's 'identity' into the frame. There is a long held belief about the conflicting needs between an individual and the organisation, and this may be further provoked within the institution of the cruise ship, where organisational controls imposed through organisational practices and organisational identity attempt to break down the individual self during work and non-work instances. Due to most aspects of an individual's life being constrained by organisational controls, the identity of oneself is also restricted, not only through the physical and more structural aspects of a ship, but also through the more normative or cultural enforcements, which are continuously reinforced. A rigid work schedule and the range of status differences are examples of such controls, where an occupational or organisational identity may take precedence over more personal ones.

This research is investigating the space that attempts to capture the complex interaction between the individual and structural/symbolic constraints that generates meaning to that person or group of persons. A common cultural grounding that individuals share is that of their occupation under the badge of organisational identity, whereby members are socialised to behave and act in a certain manner. Therefore, an exploration of one's identity, how workers come to understand themselves and the world around them, could benefit existing knowledge regarding the life of a hospitality cruise ship worker. Much of the discussion so far has indicated how the structure and practices of a cruise ship may offer the cultural environment capable of inhabiting stronger occupational ties to the self. Consequently, the next chapter will explore how identity may be important in order to gain a greater understanding of cruise ship hospitality workers.

Chapter 3 – Who am I? : Exploring the Identity of Hospitality Cruise Ship Workers

3.1 Introduction

The main focus for this particular study is the identities of hospitality cruise ship workers. The previous chapter, through the identification of literature, highlighted the organisational and occupational determinants which can influence how workers can make sense of themselves and their environment. A key influence was the worker's occupation and the surrounding community embedded within their environment, which through organisational practices and structures can be a major contributor to how one is able to provide a definition of self and others on-board a cruise ship. This chapter begins by discussing the definitional properties of identity through relevant literature sources and the identification of the major identity theories, namely those with a social underpinning. Through the discussion of identity, the ship as a structure is taken into consideration regarding how such an isolating and confining place can offer the boundaries for identity formation. Largely, this chapter is concerned with the meaning and centrality of the worker's job. Particularly how their occupation not only provides purpose and worth, but how their occupational status has implications upon their community formation and self definition while working on-board cruise ships. Finally, there is a discussion of the key issues which have emerged in the literature chapters and thoughts upon how the research will move forward.

3.2 What is identity?

The very first questions that should be considered are what identity is and what is its importance relative to the cruise industry and this particular route of research? Identity at the outset is a 'complex' and 'multidimensional' area (Chase, 1992: p.121), and can be applied and discussed depending upon the context in which it is placed (Lawler, 2008). Researchers have conceptualised identity in numerous ways, although mainstream theories suggest that identity encapsulates cognitive and motivational components, while including individual and social processes, suggesting that identity is an ongoing activity rather than a static entity (e.g. Tajfel, 1978). According to theorists, there are two modes of identification: self/group

identification and the categorisation of others. The former is said to be internally-orientated and held with more emotional value, while the latter is externally-orientated. An individual's personal identity is unique and which the individual strives to protect. According to identity theory, a person's identity is comprised as a 'collection of identities', reflecting the roles that a person engages in social parameters (Terry *et al.* 1999: p.226). This emphasises identity as a dynamic process (Chase, 1992; Korte, 2007) that changes and develops depending on social interactions. As Mead (1934, p.135) states;

'The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process'

Early sociologists such as Mead (1934) and Goffman (1959) conceived identity as socially constructed and variable, whereby the individual self is fully understood and constructed through social interaction. Reading the above quote, Mead (1934) and many others, believe that an individual is not built with an identity at birth but something that gains capacity due to societal relationships and constructs. Therefore, the individual will start as a "blank canvas", an "empty vase", to which the encapsulating culture will offer the social tools to paint or plant the seeds whereby a self-image is constructed. This is one of the reasons behind cultural differences, even if those cultures are deemed similar, i.e. the UK and the USA. As an individual grows, the localised social 'experiences' and 'activities' encountered will further continue to mould an identity and the self, indicating the dynamic element of the process. This suggests that one's personal identity cannot be separated from the context in which it develops (Breakwell, 1992), with the result that the individual is compromised of social and collective dimensions. To take this further, we can consider identity as not something an individual *has*, but something an individual experiences as a tool to justify and clarify themselves, relative to their social world. An identity, therefore, is a social product, formed through the reflexive and symbolic social processes of interaction and confirmation of one's place in that society, while providing an individual or a group of individuals with a framework to interpret the social conditions and the tools for their actions. In the context of this research, the ship provides a cultural and physical boundary in which an identity can be constructed, maintained and understood by its members.

Our social experiences shape who we are, and building on the ideas of Mead (1934) it is only through interaction with others that individuals assign socially constructed labels - these labels can be anything from a nationality, or a particular region (e.g., Cockney, Geordie,

Scouser, etc), to a specific occupation. How an individual talks, where they are born, and the job they do, may construe preconceptions of the self. Take an occupation for example: society will generate certain qualities or attach connotations to individuals who have a particular job, which may be true or untrue, even before they have met this particular individual. Society may stereotypically portray an individual working in a restaurant as a waiter as being young, marginalised, low skilled, temporary, and so forth, whereas a chef may be categorised as being more skilled and professional. To add further complexity, these socially constructed labels will be based around the prevailing environment, for example, the skill-set of a waiter may be appreciated more within different countries or within different establishments (type of restaurant). In this sense, identity is active, in that its premise involves person/environment interaction.

Therefore the self can only be realised as a reflection of others, although the self and social are distinct, they are very much intertwined. The individual identifies with a social self, taking the attitude of the other (Mead, 1934). Following Cooley's (1922) 'looking-glass' perspective (cited in: Cooley 1983), Mead (1934) stated that individuals can strategise what their actions may mean to others and therefore are able to determine what that particular action will be, meaning the individual can adjust the anticipated response by others, as a reflective process. In this respect, what other people think about us may be just as important as how we think of ourselves. Taking the example of a waiter for instance; when an individual "waits" on a table, it may be important to them that the customer enjoys their experience and thinks positively about the waiter. This in turn may reflect on gratuities and/or the customers return to that establishment.

This ongoing social process, whereby the self is realised, is understood by Mead (1934) as having two distinct phases: the "I" and the "Me". "I" is described as an impulsive subjective response of an individual, while the "Me" is a socially structured and organised set of assumptions that an individual may make by seeing the standpoint of others. So from this, the "I" can be considered the act, while the "Me" is the reflective process of meaning in the ongoing process of identity creation. Goffman (1959, p.82) described the way in which the "I" presents the "Me", whereby the social roles an individual performs will have certain behavioural expectations as he stated; 'but what is he [or she] playing?...he [or she] is playing at being a waiter in a café. There is nothing to surprise us'. This example shows how we act and manage our performance based on social norms and controls, whereby society will have certain expectations of how this role should be played. There are many forms of social

control, whether it be through physical or symbolic structures, which in turn construct meaning and alter behaviour.

3.2.1 Which identity: one or many?

It is thought that each of us has multiple identities, which are not only the social identities derived from the affiliations of group memberships, but also our own individual/personal identities. It is through this multi-natured concept, whereby individuals can locate themselves within society, thus providing the direction for interactions with others. Self-categorisation theory (explored in Section 3.3.2) for example, maintains that the self-percept is tied to the social identities of an individual, which includes nationality, sex, occupation, etc. An individual may have as many social identities as he or she has group memberships (Pratt and Foreman, 2000), although it is not thought that all are constantly salient (LeBoeuf *et al.* 2010). The saliency of an identity will be revealed in response to the situation, whereby certain environmental cues will heighten the premise of a specific identity, whether that is being of a particular sex, originating from a particular background or holding down a specific occupation. For example, in an intragroup setting, a female worker employed in a predominantly male workforce may be aware of the fact that her gender specific identity is salient. Another example provided by Ashforth and Johnson (2001) contends that organisations are said to provide members with multiple group memberships, suggesting that organisations present many ‘hats to wear’ including department, workgroup or the organisation as a whole. Ashford *et al.* (2008, p.359) further stipulated in a response to the question; “one or many identities?”, that these identities are likely to ‘converge and combine to some degree such that they become a loose gestalt: not one, perhaps, but a set’. Theory advises that only one identity can be dominant at one time, which in turn affects how information is interpreted and reciprocated. In an organisational setting this can have conflicting consequences, i.e. an individual working on-board a cruise ship is a member of his/her occupation, department, organisation, and also has more personal memberships such as nationality and gender, whereby each of these memberships could potentially host a ‘relevant set of values’.

In a multi-national environment such as the cruise industry, this could be a relevant point. Although Alderton *et al.* (2004, p.97) note that due to ‘circumstances of employment insecurity and a resilient shipboard occupational culture, national identities are essentially

redundant for the purposes of everyday life'. This noted, managing multiple identities is a primary function of modern organisational managers (Pratt and Foreman, 2000) and this momentum is extended when the organisation is multi-national. The saliency of identity is 'transient' by nature (LeBoeuf *et al.* 2010: p.50) in that the situated environment could shift which particular identity may be prominent. If an organisation could target and direct this movement, which could have cultural and sub-cultural domains, it could potentially control values towards the common goal (rather than competing) in an effective manner for the organisation. For example: how does the cruise ship affect the self-percept of an individual, and how does this transcend to group membership by way of group concept? Are there certain environments in which identity-congruent choices might be more likely to arise? The answer to such questions are by no means easy and of course, could have multiple natures in themselves as there are many situations which are likely to shift saliency.

To summarise, it has been established that the individual self and collective self (social groups) are vital components of a person's self-definition, which would inevitably lead to the affiliation of group concept. Therefore, the collective is a self-definition derived from membership in a social group. It is for this reason that individuals value group memberships in their social sphere, and its importance to understand the dynamics and identification in today's organisations (Ashford *et al.* 2008). In this respect identity is often viewed as a categorisation device (Pratt, 2003) creating comparisons throughout society, at an individual level or a group level, that helps place a value within the larger scheme of things. In the context of this research, it is how an individual associates or attaches him/her-self to an occupational group, i.e. how an individual on-board a cruise ship is socialised and how they form membership to the occupation, which in turn derives a value significance and determines behaviour in group norms.

Identity categorises the individual in a given context, defining a set of cognitions and behavioural responses, providing normative guidelines for behaviour. Once in the society of the ship, individuals will derive their identities from the social categories in which they belong. Identity therefore is a fundamental concept, which helps explain what people think about their environment, the way they do things, and why people do what they do in those environments (Ashford *et al.* 2008). It is an ongoing process of self-definition that can be relative to a collective. This can be considered a route for understanding patterns of meaning that are shared among members of a group, and the way this influences the dynamics of the group.

3.2.2 Cruise ships as places of identity

With the understanding of identity so far, it could be argued that an individual's identity has little meaning in isolation from the social world, whereby an identity can be defined and redefined through the ongoing process of social interaction (Jenkins, 2004). It is through this localised social activity and experience that individuals can develop a sense of who they are, and this sense of self may be redefined depending on the situational cues that arise. Individuals generally act upon structural and symbolic prompts according to their external environment. A general opinion of researchers is summed up by Ashford *et al.* (2008, p.327) whereby 'Identity is a self-referential description that provides contextually appropriate answers to the question "Who am I?" or "Who are we?".' Research suggests that the definition of self, rather than being 'stable and monolithic, is malleable and multifaceted' (LeBoeuf *et al.* 2010: p.49), upholding that identity, although complex by composition, is dependant and influenced by the situation, accommodating that individuals will adjust their behaviour specifically to the time and place they are currently in.

Places where social boundaries are created (i.e. the cruise ship) often form conditions of inclusion/exclusion and sometimes a feeling of threat, which can impact upon how an individual comes to understand themselves within that world (Manzo, 2005). On-board a cruise ship there are clear boundaries that separate organisational members from the outside world. The ship itself acts as a boundary, dividing the natural environment from that of a modern 'floating city', but also isolating those individuals that are authorised to be on-board from those that are not. Once on-board, further boundary devices are imposed that separate organisational members from guests, hiding the backstage from the paying participants. These physical or structural boundaries are not difficult to see or understand their purpose – it is the more cultural or symbolic margins that pose a complex underbelly, particularly with reference to the work and life of a seafarer. On-board there is such a fusion of work and leisure that an individual's identity may be attached more significantly to the type of work he/she does and the 'links' of the individuals and activities available to them, therefore directly relating and blurring their occupation with their social activities and status.

Foucault and Miskowiec (1986, p.27) refer to a cruise ship as a 'floating piece of space' containing its own society embedded with specific norms and values, from which an individual derives a sense of identity. Within the grasp of this understanding, cruise ships could be regarded to inhabit an unusual cultural space whereby employees temporarily gain value of themselves under the guidance of the institution of the ship. This situation is only

temporary, because, as Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp (2011) show, employees embrace the work on cruise ships as a ‘different world’, being aware that once they leave the ship they would return to ‘their own world’. The physical and social characteristics of a ship play an important role in shaping the culture (Foster, 1986) which predisposes that cruise ships will have a culture explicitly tied to that entity. A cruise ship has been considered what Goffman (1961) calls a ‘total institution’, controlling the time and space of employees while demanding excessive degrees of personal involvement (e.g. Aubert and Arner, 1958; Zurcher, 1965; Tracy, 2000). Cruise ships certainly contain attributes of a total institution, but unlike the traditional form, employees freely choose to work on-board, rather than being forced, which may facilitate certain qualities of a total institution to a matter of degree.

Cruise ship organisations may have more in common with what Coser (1992) phrases a ‘greedy institution’. By his own admission, Coser (1992, p.146) recognises the ‘evident overlaps’ between a ‘greedy’ and ‘total’ institution, but suggests that whereas a total institution focuses more on the physical boundaries, a greedy institution is more fixed on the symbolic boundaries - As Coser (1992, p.146) notes:

‘Being insulated from competing relationships, and from competing anchors for their social identity, these selected status occupants find their identity anchored in the symbolic universe of the restricted role-set of the greedy institution...’

Although there are the clear physical boundaries of the ship to be considered, when exploring aspects such as occupations and identity, the symbolic elements, such as dress, sub-cultural values, norms and practices, and communication, may place more restrictions not only physically, but also socially and emotionally, which in turn could present more of a total understanding of a worker’s life. This noted, the physical and symbolic boundaries are inevitably intertwined, whereby both have influencing factors on the individual, and therefore need to be taken into consideration when exploring the life of a cruise ship worker.

3.3 Identity theories (The shift from “I” to “We”)

3.3.1 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

The concept of identity has been abstracted in differing ways, in which elements of cultural values, theoretical focus and background, and philosophical views may have played their part. According to SIT there is not one single personal identity but a multidimensional

correspondence of identities to various social group memberships (e.g. Tajfel). These social identities are developed through a progression of interaction and learning derived from the groups we perceive ourselves to be members of and from which derives a central preservation of the self. Therefore the self is recognised through the affiliation of the social groups we become members of, and is essentially social. A social group is defined as ‘a collection of more than two people who have the same social identity – they identify themselves in the same way and have the same definition of who they are’ (Hogg *et al.* 2004: p.251). This denotes a group membership, implying collective psychological processes as individuals adjust and control their behaviour accordingly to the social situation.

SIT is founded upon two socio-cognitive processes: categorisation and self-enhancement (e.g. Kreiner *et al.* 2006b). As humans, we categorise our world naturally into social groups (e.g., sex, nationality, and occupational groups). One assumption of SIT is how people come to understand groups by placing them into a category in comparison with another. Tajfel (1978, 1981) came to call these ‘ingroups’ and ‘outgroups’. In an organisational setting the ingroup could be considered the organisation as a whole; this is something which all employees have in common, whether they are a cleaner or the captain, it is an identity uniting groups under a collective embrace. All employees ideally express behavioural traits that are consistent with organisational norms. This noted, ingroups and outgroups are often subgroups within a larger social organisation (Merton, 1968). In this case, lower order identities (such as occupational groups) are said to satisfy employees’ psychological needs more strongly (e.g., Ashforth *et al.* 2008; Riketta and Van Dick, 2005; Ullrich *et al.* 2007). Because these lower order identities are more salient on a regular basis they are more likely to have an impact on behaviour and attitudes, which in turn could effect a stronger cohesion and commitment to these identities. This could be apparent within the cruise ship, as individuals seek commonality but also separation. Individuals can gain a sense of belongingness and also the ability to define themselves within the localised society. An occupation may be a successful way of attaining this.

SIT is primarily based on the ‘minimal group studies’ (e.g. Tajfel, 1978), whereby initial experiments on group behaviour were investigated. A key finding from these studies was that the sheer act of categorising members to a group, even without prior knowledge or experience of that group, was sufficient for individuals to display ingroup favouritism (Haslam and Ellemers, 2005). Drawing from the minimal group studies, the first process is categorisation which serves to organise social perception, minimising intracategory differences and

maximising intercategory differences, thus reducing uncertainty about one's perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and behaviours in the social domain. In terms of the cruise ship this is important. When being cast away from "normality" in a unique environment with potentially a group of strangers, there is a social need to reduce uncertainty. Based upon organisational practices, one's occupation, although amongst others, can be a way of doing this. From a worker's perspective, the cruise ship is arguably categorised into occupational and hierarchical domains. Social and work aspects of the cruise ship are determined by one's role. Therefore, one's role can be a key categorisation device that minimises intracategory differences and maximises intercategory differences, i.e. the formation of occupational communities.

The second process from the minimal group studies is seeking positive group distinctiveness as a vehicle for individual self-enhancement. Following categorisation, and having defined themselves through comparisons with other groups, individuals seek to achieve or maintain a positive self-esteem (Haslam and Ellemers, 2005). Therefore, if one's occupation is taken as a categorisation device, individuals will seek to find the positives of that work, even if they are low status roles. Taking pursers on cruise ships for example, these individuals may place more emphasis upon their off-the-job activities. The status of their role as an 'officer' gives them more social privileges, which is one aspect of the role where members achieve a positive self-esteem. In another example, waiting staff or cabin stewards, although categorised as 'crew', may make a positive comparison in that they earn gratuities through the service they provide. Therefore, these individuals in low status occupations could potentially earn more money than individuals in a higher status occupation.

3.3.2 Self-Categorisation Theory (SCT)

Self-categorisation is a process that reduces uncertainty (Hogg, 2000). The importance of this uncertainty on-board cruise ships may be emphasised more so upon an individual in the initial phase of entering the cruise ship, or the socialisation process. To reduce uncertainty an individual will, according to theory, transform the definition of self in line with a social group. In line with SIT, the social group will be attractive to the individual. Therefore through the process of reducing uncertainty and increasing self-enhancement, an individual within the social context seeks social categories in which that individual can create a meaningful affiliation with a group that determines their place within that social context. Within an

organisation such as the cruise ship, individuals categorise themselves dependant on situational or context-specific cues, in which a dominant theme could be the occupational structure. The rigid occupational structure linked to status and power on-board a cruise ship, may cause a ‘conflict condition’ (Turner *et al.* 1994: p.456) whereby intracategory similarities and intercategory differences are accentuated based around one’s occupational label within a given social context. A conflict condition assumes that in a typical scenario certain definitional attributes are salient in which individuals are able to gain similarities (intracategory) and differences (intercategory). Both demographic variables (gender, age, race) and functional variables (profession, department) within organisations provide the necessary attributes for individuals to categorise themselves. The hierarchical structure offers a meaningful base of categorisation in most workplaces, which may be more prominently tied to cruise ship operations.

Self-categorisation theory (SCT), evolving from Tajfel’s previous ideas on SIT, describes a psychological process that aligns the person to the social context, a way of structuring society in relation to the self. When people define and evaluate themselves, categorisation and self-enhancement comes into play (Terry *et al.* 1999), the process involves both the application of stereotypes to others, and the depersonalisation of the self (Abrams and Hogg, 2004), segmenting the social world into ‘ingroups’ and ‘outgroups’ (e.g. Tajfel, 1978). According to SCT, the more a person identifies with a particular group, the more they view themselves as group members; the process of depersonalisation occurs (Hornsey and Jetten, 2004). Seminal work by Aubert and Arner (1958, p.206) suggests that when seafarers come on-board a ship, their previous identity is ‘useless’ and that ‘there will be strong reasons to cling to whatever basis for a new identity in the occupation’. It would be inappropriate to think of a previous identity as ‘useless’, although an interpretation could be that due to the sheer differences, and unusual work settings of ship life, an individual’s previous work and life experiences could be so distant from this reality, that occupational socialisation on-board may provide the self with a purpose and definition.

Saliency is important at the organisational level because it is at which level organisational members define themselves that can determine certain behaviours. Depersonalisation occurs because when individuals attach themselves to certain groups, they attach less importance to personal characteristics (Otten and Epstude, 2006), and therefore an individual assimilates group values at the expense of personal values (Hornsey and Jetten, 2004). An example of this for hospitality staff on cruise ships is evidence of ‘emotional labour’. The ability to undertake

emotional labour is a key characteristic of any hospitality employee, especially those in face-to-face interaction with customers for extended periods of time. As Tracy (2000, p.91) notes, on a cruise ship ‘employee emotion is not just a response to work situations but actually is the work’. Emotional labour is ‘displaying the appropriate behaviour in order to elicit the appropriate response from the guests’ (Guerrier and Adib, 2004: p.346). This involves allotting less attachment to personal characteristics in the overall aim of attaining group values.

The self will be placed within a category, transforming self-perception to an ingroup stereotype, affecting attitudes and behaviour. The extent to which the ingroup is valued is therefore an important factor in order to justify how the individual defines themselves. SCT suggests that identification with an ingroup makes the group a central aspect of the individual’s self-percept (Leach *et al.* 2008). This would suggest that an individual working on-board a cruise ship would inherit the behavioural and attitudinal traits required in order to successfully do their job and meet the aims of the organisation. These group norms would be established in the socialisation process or interaction with ingroup members, or relevant outgroup members. Interpreting this can mean that there is no room for the individual in group identification, and this may be the case on-board a cruise ship due to the formal guidelines one must follow. However, there is a notion that there may be degrees of depersonalisation, that identities may be active simultaneously, incorporating personal and social identities (Hornsey and Jetten, 2004). Social identity theory and self-categorisation theory have been introduced, and the fundamentals have been acknowledged. These theories will continue to be a focal point in the remainder of the discussion, so that they can be adapted and developed relative to this research.

3.4 Occupation expressed as identity

From the discussion so far relating to the concept of identity and the on-board life of a hospitality worker, it can be noted that although identity is a powerful theoretical proposition, it is also a concept that accounts for the ‘lived experience’ of the individual (Palmer, 1998: cited in Palmer *et al.* 2010: p.311). This is important to note relative to this research due to many variables, but primarily because of the encapsulated nature of the ship itself, as the individual’s whole world is engulfed. The ship can be visualised as a society, a cultural entity, and an institution, whereby members under this embrace detract a sense of self and worth.

Much of the discussion so far has indicated how the structure and practices of a cruise ship may offer a cultural environment capable of imbuing stronger occupational ties to the self; therefore this section will discuss the ways in which identity is shaped by the work role of the occupant.

3.4.1 The meaning of work and occupation

The wider society we live in today directs members to have an occupation (Saunders, 1981), therefore an occupation could be a significant determinant in how an identity is created and how individuals can answer the question “Who am I?” (e.g. Becker and Carper 1956). As Ashforth and Kreiner (1999, p.417) argue, ‘in meeting a stranger, we often ask what she or he does, and we expect to be asked the same question. Thus job titles serve as prominent identity badges’. An occupation therefore may be recognised as one of the central ways an individual may evaluate and be evaluated. There are two factors to consider here; namely the individual’s perception of the occupation, and how the individual perceives that others view the occupation. This relationship is reciprocal, in how the individual perceives that their occupation is valued will direct how the individual feels about that occupation.

On-board a cruise ship, however simple this may seem, an individual is employed for a specific occupation, to complete a task, and therefore, within the society of the ship, the occupation can be a dominant factor in the definition of an individual’s self image. Members of an occupation learn new skills, but also ways to behave, as well as learning a new set of values and beliefs. These new skills and behaviours ‘construct meaningful interpretations’ (Van Maanen and Barley, 1985: p.300) in the occupational world, which when practised, are likely to conform and confirm to a social identity. Through this identification with the occupation, individuals derive significance from their work in the ship as a continuous reflective process. Nolan (1973, p.90) contends that ‘his [sic] work and social role on the ship are given meaningful and ‘real’ interpretation’. Because the organisation of a cruise ship, like most other workplaces, is internally structured around clusters of occupational specialities and an occupational hierarchy, members within that organisation are generally known and defined in terms of their occupational title. This may be more prominent within the cruise industry due to the strict hierarchical practices in which one’s work, or one’s occupational title, can determine multiple aspects of one’s life while working. Given this centrality of work to members on-board a cruise ship and the encapsulation of work boundaries permeating work

and non-work spheres, it is appropriate to examine the relationship between identity and occupation, although limited research is available within the hospitality industry (Palmer *et al.* 2010).

Organisations offer the conditions that enable individuals to base their identities in multiple loci (e.g. Ashford *et al.* 2008). Most research has focused on organisational identity, although researchers have come to recognise the valuable additions that an occupation or subgroup identity can potentially enrich within existing knowledge. This type of identification (occupation) tends to be more ‘localised’ (Ashford *et al.* 2008: p.359) than with an organisation. Riketta and Van Dick (2005), through the process of meta-analysis, indicate that workgroup attachment is more strongly relatable than organisational attachment, postulating that people are more likely to identify with social groups which are more similar to the self, hold more immediate power over their daily lives, and that workgroup membership should be more salient than their organisational membership since the workgroup generally consists of a reasonably stable and definable group. Due to the top-down hierarchical structure of the ship, this could place more importance on lower order identities to the worker, which is why it is relevant to focus on the occupational attachment. This is not to say that occupational identity is of more importance than organisational identity, it merely recognises that focusing on an occupational group/identity will assist in the exploration of a more organisational attachment, and could highlight potential incompatibilities between the structure and culture of a cruise ship.

Jenkins (1994, p.204) states how ‘occupational identities are among the most important of social identities’. An occupation is generally connected to an individual’s social status, how they fit in with the wider society and where their social standing may be, hence can provide a sense of self and worth. Expectations are dependent upon the position one fills, whereby a social identity is achieved through the awareness of one’s membership to a group by means of the emotional and evaluative significance of this membership. One will be judged or evaluated by one’s expectations of that identity. This is a reflexive process, whereby the individual will act in the way that the audience (customer and organisation) will expect of that individual in that position, and the audience will evaluate the individual in terms of that position/identity.

An occupation can provide a sense of confidence, while influencing how a person may act, and detrimentally sketching a type of lifestyle. On a cruise ship, much like its second cousin the navy ship, the occupation not only alters and controls the behavioural and emotional

elements of an individual, but also the physical aspects. The privacy, much freedom of choice, and control over actions are not only temporarily suspended, but also the physical appearance, from haircut to fingernails, is all under scrutiny to the checklist of the organisation, which has a symbolic underpinning. On the ship, the influence of work is not only restricted during work hours, it transcends to non-working hours which could impact upon an individual's identity at a more intrusive level. In a harsh light it could be conceived that the individual is a slave to the occupation, under the badge of an all-embracing organisational identity. Work is a 'pervasive life domain' (Dutton *et al.* 2010: p.266) and a central source of meaning and definition, especially as individuals spend large parts of their lives at work. An individual's work can adjust and create the basis of their self-image in the context of work-based situations. In this sense, the self is developed within the confines of the cruise ship. Socialisation of the occupation and organisation, through the adoption of social norms and rules that conduct one's performances, as well as the acquiring of new skills and roles, which can often have a symbolic underpinning, will alter the premise of one's actions within the given context.

An occupation allows individuals to feel distinctive within organisational boundaries, but also allows them the ability to share an identity with others (i.e. community), providing members with a social identity that beholds behavioural expectations. Members are socialised into the occupation, and in turn, form similarities of identification with the occupational group, and are required to adhere to occupational norms and practices. When individuals arrive for work on a cruise ship the majority will be strangers, in which socialisation (training/induction) will attempt to shift the "I" to the "We". During this process of socialisation and throughout their experience of ship work, individuals (I) will cling to a social identity (We), within which an occupation may be the most stable identity that can be anchored.

3.4.2 Occupational labels

Societal norms usually carry predispositions depending on a particular occupation held, as Fine (1996a, p.91) states 'when we think about occupations, we employ a dominant label with associated cultural baggage'. Therefore the occupation an individual holds can affect how they see themselves and how they are perceived by others. How *others* receive and respond to the label or title reflects back on the bearer and is taken on-board by them, influencing the surrounding identity (Casey, 2008). The occupations of front line hospitality staff are

arguably surrounded by negative constructed stereotypes. In this respect, the acquired stereotype or label sculpts impressions of those individuals under the badge of the occupation. According to SIT, an identity is created and given meaning through the interaction with others, so if the occupation has a negative image in society, does this mean that it has a negative image to the self? A double threat could exist here. Depending upon the occupation, members may be tainted by both society and the organisation. For example, waiting staff are categorised as ‘crew’, which is at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. Saunders (1981) in exploring the social stigma of work contends that if an occupation is stigmatised by society as low status, then this can result in low self-esteem and self-worth. Wildes (2005) indicates comparable findings from restaurant workers and suggests that due to society’s views surrounding the occupation, individuals within that occupation are more likely to leave the industry. Research on ‘dirty work’ by Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) argues that due to this stigma, members are likely to form strong subcultural values. Notably, not all front line hospitality staff are categorised as ‘crew’. An example is that of the pursers, who are ‘officers’. A purser’s position is somewhat similar to that of working on a front desk in a hotel, mainly dealing with general enquiries, but also involved in communications to on-shore destinations (Wolber, 2012). An interesting proposition would be to explore such hospitality positions, differing in status, occupational pressures and activities, and also privileges, to evaluate how this affects individual community and identity formation.

‘Groups, organisations and societies are rarely homogeneous’, with larger entities housing a diversity of subgroups based on intragroup role assignments or by wider social category memberships (Hornsey and Hogg, 2000: p.143). This noted, the occupational roles or groups contained in an organisation are rarely of equal status and power, based primarily upon the hierarchical system in place. Status as a concept can be regarded as an important and influential factor in understanding both ‘social stratification and the social construction of individual identity’ (Sandiford and Seymour, 2010: p.2). Therefore an occupation, as a constructed identity, allows an individual and the wider society to place value and categorise themselves and others. However, Ellemers *et al.* (1999) through their work on the disentanglement of the definition of social identity, note how relative status and the basis on which membership is formed affects the emotional aspect of social identity, i.e. one’s belongingness with the group as a central definition of the self. Occupational status on cruise ships, being a central component of the work/life experiences for individuals, can be significant when exploring how these types of workers come to understand themselves and

their place within the cruise ship society. Furthermore, this may assist in how workers develop communal ties and a sense of belonging.

3.4.3 Hospitality work: professionals in masking emotions

Hospitality is generally attributed as an industry with low pay and long unsociable hours, requiring workers with a low skill set. A front line hospitality worker is in an intermediary disciplinary position, liaising between the organisation and the customer. As discussed in the previous chapter (Section 2.2.2), hospitality involves the act of taking care of the needs and wants of guests, whilst being guided by organisational practices. Hence, one's occupation may rest on a public image, but it is undoubtedly shaped by organisational variables, whereby occupational identities are constructed and practised in context. Although the hospitality and cruise industry has worked hard to move forward, hospitality and cruise ship work are arguably surrounded by constructed stereotypes and ideologies, e.g. not generally regarded as mainstream careers. It could be argued that hospitality work derives a 'worldwide stigma' (Wildes, 2005: p.6), which could be caused by the perceived subservient relationship between worker and guest. This noted, the perception of work may vary from society to self, and may also be institutional, i.e. the perceived glamour and service expectations of a cruise may have an impact upon how 'professional' one sees oneself. It could therefore be a question proposed by Fine (1996a, p.96) 'the question is not what is a profession, but when is a profession?'

The debate of professional status is one that has been pursued in detail. It is not in this research's scope to indicate the professional boundaries of the discussed occupations. Notwithstanding, the focus of this research is to interpret how individuals themselves, as the occupant, understand their world around them and construct meaning from this. Working on cruise ships, however, does require a certain expertise. Service workers could be regarded as 'actors' (e.g. Goffman, 1959: p.74/75), due to the *scriptive* and *performative* nature of the work, which is closely tangled with 'emotional labour'. Much of their work is a displayed performance, directed by management and the organisation, interpreted and acted by the worker, through which to entertain the audience (passenger). Hospitality work generally requires staff to 'mask' their individual emotions in accordance to passenger and management expectations, acting in harmony with group norms. Goffman (1959) suggested that the presentations we make are the expectations of the audience, and coined the term 'impression management'. This is a somewhat similar thought to that of Hochschild's (1983) 'emotional

labour'. A fundamental aspect of the work on cruise ships is the management of emotions and instances of depersonalisation, particularly as crew/passenger interactions are a prolonged activity. Impression management can be expressed relative to hospitality staff in such a way that: 1) when a worker presents themselves in accordance to the passenger, they are better equipped to get positive feedback (comment cards) and potentially gain more 'tips' (i.e. waiters); and 2) presenting themselves appropriately to management and peers will support that they are capable of doing a good job, which enhances the possibility of promotion, maybe an extended contract, or even acceptance to a particular community, such as deploying behaviour parallel to an occupational community. This may play an important role in the development of a collective identity, whereby collective norms and values are practised and expected. On a cruise ship, employees are 'onstage' for extended periods of time, which entails that this form of impression management or aspects of emotional labour must be upheld for prolonged periods.

On cruise ships, this becomes ever more fundamental as individuals live and work within an organisational stage. Utilising the concept of 'onstage/offstage' (Goffman, 1959), individuals in the backstage area generally have increased personal freedom, where they can "let off steam" away from guests. On a cruise ship, the backstage arena is additionally their temporary home and recreational base, in which organisational norms must still be adhered to (although in a more relaxed manner). Furthermore, one's backstage "access" or privileges are occupationally dependent. It could be argued that this transference of one's occupation to one's social activities can impact on identity, which may be tied more significantly to one's occupation and is worthy for further exploration.

3.4.4 National identity

It is well recognised that cruise ship labour is international. Authors such as Testa *et al.* (2003) have argued that certain nationalities are employed for certain occupational positions. This implies that segregation is in fact based more so on nationality, whereby an occupational identity has little relevance. However, Alderton *et al.* (2004, p.66) counter argue that nationality is irrelevant and employees are selected on the basis of price, quality of training and experience. Research such as by Testa *et al.* (2003) asserts the importance of nationality, which in no doubt implies stronger ties to an identity than an occupation (e.g. Hofstede, 1991). However, the hierarchical occupational structure on ships entails a stronger segregation

than most workplaces on land, which could therefore place an increased importance on occupational identity. Although a cruise ship may be regarded as a ‘microcosm of wider society’ (Hopwood, 1973: p.103) it is notwithstanding a more controlled environment in terms of acceptable social norms and values. Nolan (1973, p.92) supports this further by stating that:

‘the social structure of the ship does not have the potential richness of relations of the larger social milieux...the element of choice is limited mainly by size, work and norms governing social interaction with the ship’.

Albeit modern day cruise ships have changed enormously since the time of Nolan’s (1973) contribution, the same social constrictions exist. There are arguably fewer social constrictions in recent years due to the advancements in technology, altering how seafarers can communicate and how long they are out at sea. Alderton *et al.* (2004, p.97), working on behalf of the International Labour Organization, recognised this issue of the global seafarer and mixed nationality in the shipping industry, which is an issue disputed in many industries, and suggests that:

‘In today’s fleet, contractual engagement and occupational culture remain key to any understanding of everyday life aboard merchant ships. Regardless of crew nationality, a fundamental feature of modern ships is that, although they do not house organic communities marked by population or social network continuities, crews of complete strangers nevertheless find familiar, integrating social mechanisms.’

Therefore, despite nationality differences, the hierarchical form on-board ships could lead to an enhanced importance of the occupational identity/culture to gain a further understanding of the organisational life of workers. Kahveci *et al.* (2002, p.10) on similar ground, suggest that occupational culture is ‘vital’ in understanding the social order on-board. The international workforce on cruise ships is thought to add to the success of the industry, in terms of work output and also the development of harmonious communities (i.e. Gibson, 2008; Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp, 2011). This is not to suggest that the labour practices are without any national prejudices or frictions, however, it is a working system that could educate land based work in the 21st century.

This current research understands that national culture and identity would be an important variable in an individual’s perception of who they believe they are and the values they hold, and there is no intention of ignoring this. According to Hofstede (1991, p.182) an occupation

appears to be stronger by the way of cultural value system rather than any one organisation, suggesting that through the socialisation of an occupation entails the acquisition of values and practices. Notwithstanding, it is at a national level that values are the strongest. This noted, the multi-national flavour is encompassed under an occupational umbrella, in which members share a common ground to provide a service through company standards. In other words, although members of an occupation may be multi-cultural, membership and socialisation will direct the members to behave in a particular way. Because there are such a multitude of nationalities on-board, focusing on one or two particular nationalities would not provide beneficial data which the cruise industry could deem useful, and exploring all nationalities on-board is beyond the scope for this research. Therefore, an occupation, or a group of similar occupations may provide an enhanced indication of how employees attach meanings in the cruise industry. This approach is the one that is pursued.

3.5 Discussion of literature

The ship is a system with a high degree of social control (Antonsen, 2009) and there are many spoken and unspoken rules, formal and informal systems that are highly developed, strongly affecting the conventions of language, behaviour and social interaction. Stemming from the industry's navy background, safety is of primary concern, resulting in the requirement to have control systems in place. On-board there is a fusion of structural and cultural mechanisms in place that attempt to control employee behaviour, which employees are constantly reminded of (i.e. occupational status/hierarchy). This sense of control is extended to employees in the cruise industry whereby living space, food, and regulation of leisure time is taken care of by the organisation; these can be considered characteristics of 'total' and 'greedy' institutions. The physical environment itself is a controlling factor that restricts an employee's movements and which is governed by policies confining and segregating 'crew'/'staff' to certain areas of the ship. Symbolic elements may form deeper boundaries that affect not only the physical restrictions bestowed, but also the emotional and social controls.

Although contained, Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp (2011, p.83) state how employees experience a sense of 'freedom' while on-board, free from their old social lives, where new identities may be created. The cruise ship not only provides individuals with work, but also a home, a social base, and a sense of self and worth that is localised to that context. Captivity creates a sense of belonging and security that enables individuals to gain an on-board identity,

which may be different from their previous identity. One form of control imposed by organisations is the occupational structure, whereby a worker in a particular occupation derives a sense of expected behaviour. This may be more prominent on a cruise ship as demonstrated by the *interconnectness* of one's occupation and one's social life (Larsen *et al.* 2012). One's daily routine on cruise ships is significantly tied to one's occupation, which not only gives purpose but also meaning. Being away from friends, family and "normal" networks can intensify such associations, offering a (perceptual) stable identity at a time which may be unfamiliar and temporary. The workers' time, access to space and contact with others is organised and structured by what work they perform. Therefore an occupation is not only a form of inclusion (occupational members), but can also be a form of exclusion. Work takes place within the spatial environment of the ship, which not only acts as a physical and emotional restrictor, but can also facilitate freedom and a self-definition (Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp, 2011). In this sense, the work someone does on a cruise ship can be a fundamental factor in how they make sense of themselves and how they evaluate others.

Sandiford and Seymour (2010) in their ethnographic research into status perceptions in the UK public house sector, take note of how the type of pub, and particularly its management structure, may be relevant to the perception of status. More critical to this research are Larsen *et al.* (2012) who also state this is apparent on cruise ships, in which job perceptions can be affected by the physical aspects of the ship and also the communal relationships formed on-board. A central aspect to the definition of self for cruise ship workers appears to be facilitated by the confines of the ship and the communal ties made via one's occupation. Although important for workers, this may be a cause of confusion. Antonsen (2009), whilst not particularly focusing on the cruise industry but on offshore supply vessels, notes how there is a friction between aspects of culture and aspects of structure, in particular the incompatibilities between the culture of an occupation, and the safety management approaches of the industry. Through a transfer of foci, it could be argued that the structure relative to occupations on-board (which is linked specifically to lifestyle variables as well as status), is in fact incompatible with the culture of the occupation in the 21st century. The rich history of the maritime industry has culturally filtered through to the modern cruise industry, transcending symbolic aspects of tradition, formality and hierarchy. This 'filtration' has occurred even though the dynamic changes in the cruise industry are operationally and structurally different (Gibson, 2008). More evident for cruise ship workers is the element of hierarchy linked to one's social capabilities. For example, being categorised as crew not only means being bottom of the occupational hierarchy, but also restricts one's access to social

amenities. This could arguably lead to a lack of congruence linked to status on-board, whereby members of the occupation may feel undervalued, or practices may be deemed outdated. Effectiveness may therefore result when there is congruence between the social and more technical elements of working on-board a cruise ship. If the occupation is central to the definition of self, then the occupant needs to feel valued by the organisation in terms of this definition. It may lay here where there is incongruence in value connotation between the individual and organisation (competing values), therefore it could be suggested that the organisational structures in place are incompatible with cultural practices.

3.6 Summary of literature

Although there is little research exploring the sociological considerations of cruise ship workers, this review of the available literature has identified some key elements of how to develop a better understanding of the work and life variables for hospitality workers on-board cruise ships. This suggests that a research process is required to examine one's occupational identity, the cruise ship place, and also the community. The interrelationships of these components will offer an enhanced base upon which to investigate the work and life perceptions of cruise ship workers. To evaluate the work of seafarers on cruise ships it is important that the 'totality' of factors should be considered, which accounts for the work or role one does and also the social/community aspects. The concept of 'Job Embeddedness' was thought a suitable strategy to quantify the critical factors of cruise ship employees' work and life. Ultimately, this theory evaluates the perception of 'Fit' within one's occupation, community and organisation, the significance of the social, professional, physical, and emotional 'Links' to one's workplace and people, and the 'Sacrifices' made if one was to leave one's workplace. The identification of these critical factors is subsequently thought worthy for further exploration at a more intensive and deeper level in terms of identity.

Identity can be a powerful theoretical tool to assist in the exploration of self-definition. This research study seeks to understand how front line hospitality cruise ship workers come to understand themselves, their role and their position within the society of the ship. Evidence suggests that individuals who associate with one another around a common task for a period of time develop group boundaries and a set of norms and behaviours (Schein, 1971), thus, so far that it is possible that several groups coexist within a larger social system and that they develop different norms. One way of viewing such groups with shared goals in organisations

is to characterise them as occupational communities (Elliot and Scacchi, 2008), as subcultures encapsulating a particular occupation or similar occupations. An occupation on a cruise ship can be central in one's self-definition, and how one evaluates others and is evaluated oneself. In the following chapter, the research design will be outlined, which includes the decisions made to seek ways of learning from the working lives of hospitality cruise ship workers.

Chapter 4 - Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological approach used in this study. To successfully achieve the objectives of the research and comply with the logistical practicalities of investigating the cruise ship industry, a mixed-methods approach was deemed most appropriate. The use of both quantitative and qualitative techniques, combining breadth and depth to what is an under researched area, has provided rigour and potential “completeness”. For an exploratory investigation, within a critical realist paradigm, it was thought that an initial phase of quantifiable data could recognise new and unexpected causal mechanisms (McEvoy and Richards, 2006), which can be developed and explored in an open-ended format through a qualitative enquiry. This chapter begins with the philosophical considerations for research. It then provides the methodological appropriateness, through identifying previous research and justifying the research design. Methods and techniques of the research are subsequently discussed, while considering the advantages and disadvantages, procedures, and also the measures to analyse the data that have been collected.

4.1.1 Research aim and objectives

The overall aim of the research as stated in chapter 1 is to explore the community and occupational experiences of hospitality workers on-board cruise ships.

This research aim will be explored through six specific objectives:

1. To measure the importance of occupational and social communities on-board cruise ships
2. To assess the extent and the effects that an occupation has on the lifestyle/social community
3. To explore the importance of organisational structures in the construction of community dimensions on-board cruise ships
4. To discuss the nature and influence of individual perceptions of the occupation and lifestyle on-board a cruise ship, and how these relate to self-perception and social identity

5. To evaluate the role and possible influence of ‘significant others’, such as co-workers, relatives and employers, on issues such as motivation and retention
6. To contribute knowledge on the working lives of front line hospitality workers on cruise ships

4.2 Philosophical considerations

Social research is the pursuit of knowledge that enhances understanding about an element of social life. The manner in which researchers extract or develop this knowledge is thought to be based upon an underlying research philosophy. Typically within the social sciences it is often referred to as a ‘paradigm’, which indicates one’s worldview, or set of beliefs and practices in the context of the research area (e.g. Kuhn, 1970). Therefore, a paradigm influences a researcher’s interpretation of reality and thus the methodological thoughts of research itself.

Traditionally, within the social sciences, there are two opposing philosophies of research, positivism and interpretivism, which are also referred to as ‘nomothetic’ and ‘ideographic’ (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). A positivist (nomothetic) stance is the belief that there is a single reality, which can only be objectively observed, and which can be measured as a “scientific experiment”. Positivism is concerned with ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ (Henn *et al.* 2009), whilst seeking causality and predictability. This approach is deductive in nature, which is concerned with the testing of hypotheses and/or the confirmation of a theory (Gill and Johnson, 2002). Quantitative approaches are generally associated with a positivist paradigm and in its broadest of terms, Bryman and Bell (2011, p.150) describe quantitative research as ‘entailing the collection of numerical data and as exhibiting a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive’. This approach is generally concerned with the collection of large samples to increase reliability and generalisability, producing “hard” statistical data, while based upon the testing of a hypothesis.

While positivistic research remains dominant, this study could not be purely positivist. Positivism’s usefulness lies within the predictability and causality of relationships, although it disables the ability to understand the deeper underlying meaning of these relationships. In other words, quantitative approaches based upon testing and validating, identify the “how” and to a lesser degree, explain the “why”. Furthermore, this study, exploring identity

community dimensions, involves the process of subjective understanding, rather than just an objective explanation. In short, being quantitatively dependent rarely consents to respondents the opportunity to elaborate upon key points that are being investigated, which is particularly central to the objectives of this research.

On the other hand, an interpretivist (ideographic) believes that reality is socially constructed out of the experiences of an individual. In contrast to positivism, interpretivists believe that human behaviour is something that cannot be measured as in the natural sciences, but can only be fully understood through the interpretations and multiple meanings of their experiences in society (Henn *et al.* 2009). The approach is inductive in nature, which begins with research questions and specific observations, and through the detection of patterns or commonalities, explores and understands the research area through the development of general conclusions or theories (Gill and Johnson, 2002). In this sense, an interpretivist will generally use qualitative methods. Qualitative research is a more intensive approach to research, which attempts to gather “rich” and subjective data. Qualitative researchers are less concerned with the quantity of their sample size, preferring a sample which gains in-depth quality accounts of the subject’s experiences/perceptions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Thus, qualitative research attempts to gather the complexities of social phenomena, and although quantitative research may provide insights, it is restricted in its efforts to capture respondent perceptions.

Initially, the idea of interpretivism seemed more purposeful for what this research was striving to achieve. However, a truly interpretive approach would have caused difficulties, in both a pragmatic sense and also in terms of the potential completeness of findings, for the following reasons. First, being an under-researched area, it was thought that a rigorous research strategy was required. An interpretive approach generally lends itself to a limited number of subjects, which solely may have struggled to aid the validity of the findings. Secondly, gaining access into the cruise ship sector is renowned for being difficult (e.g. Larsen *et al.* 2012). Organisations are generally reluctant to grant access, particularly when the industry is continuously tackling and defending its labour employment processes. Although access is still an issue for quantitative approaches, the barriers can often be higher when undertaking qualitative techniques, mainly due to the length of research processes and the ability to “access” subjects.

The overall aim of this research is to further understand the community and occupational dimensions of hospitality workers on-board cruise ships. Literature has shown that the

communities of individuals may be multi-levelled, overlap, and also temporary in composition. Therefore, to gain such knowledge or understanding, the realities of working and living on-board a cruise ship requires a rigorous, flexible and evolving research strategy. There is an ongoing debate regarding philosophical differences and what constitutes the best approach to research, or even questioning the importance of one's philosophical stance. A detailed description is beyond the scope of this thesis, however, as Scott (2010, p.11) argues even if philosophical issues are not salient, a researcher's purpose 'engages with the world and provides a description of it' and so ultimately any methodological decisions are based upon the researcher's interpretation of reality.

Authors such as Creswell (2003) and Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2008) contend that in business and management, research seldom falls neatly within the confines of a specific paradigm. In hospitality research, Morrison (2002, p.164), advocates that 'a single disciplinary perspective is inadequate', mainly due to the social complexities and cultural boundary embracing hospitality. Therefore, to understand the issues within hospitality it may require an interdisciplinary research philosophy that enables the researcher to discover the truisms coherent in this field. This is more recently supported by Lugosi *et al.* (2009), postulating the idea of a 'critical hospitality management research (CHMR)' approach. Critically natured, Lugosi *et al.* (2009, p.1469) characterise CHMR as concerned with 'theory-informed practice', while drawing 'upon a mix of qualitative and quantitative techniques', being 'ethically aware', and 'reflexive in terms of their influence on the process of creating knowledge'. Furthermore, Chen *et al.* (2012), reviewing cultural studies in hotel management, recommend that for more congruence between academia and industry outcomes, a combination of methods may be useful when researching 'middle levels of culture', such as industry, occupational, and corporate cultures. Occupational communities, which are of particular interest to this study, can be recognised as a cultural group. To explore this group, a more flexible approach may be appropriate to explore the structural underpinnings that give situational meaning. Chen *et al.* (2012) furthermore suggest that a mixed-method approach may offer more compatibility or usefulness from the findings of hospitality research to its applicability towards the industry.

Premise could therefore be grounded in the belief that philosophies of research, rather than opposing, lie on a continuum with positivism and interpretivism of either end, implying a more dialectical relationship (e.g., Henn *et al.* 2009; Onwuegbuzie, 2002). Within this thought, a third approach which may be applicable to this study is called critical realism.

Positioning itself between positivism and interpretivism (Harvey, 2002), critical realism neither rejects positivism, nor fully accepts interpretivism, and vice versa. A critical realist observes value in the degree of overlap in the ‘underlying logic’ of quantitative and qualitative approaches (Downward and Mearman, 2004: p.115). Therefore, the methodological choice is not weighed down by paradigmatic stance, but rather considers the nature of the question being asked. As Sayer (2000, p.19) argues ‘critical realism endorses or is compatible with a relatively wide range of research methods’ but choices should be dependent on the ‘object of the study’ and ‘what one wants to learn about it’. This implies that multiple approaches can be useful in extracting different aspects or layers of reality of a social phenomenon.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches is not new, although complexities and discussions arise based upon ontological (the nature of being or existence) and epistemological (the theory of knowledge) issues. Consequently, researchers are required to be mindful when proposing a combination of such methods (Creswell, 2003). Critical realism is considered as epistemological pluralist (Mingers, 2000), orientated towards ontological, epistemological, and methodological logical connections for the undertaking of research. Mainly developing from the work of Bhaskar (e.g. 1978), critical realism speculates on the one hand, a realist ontology, and on the other hand, embraces a fallibilist/subjectivist epistemology (Miller and Tsang, 2010), hence suggesting that reality exists in the world, which can be independent of the researcher’s knowledge or beliefs of it. However, it further recognises that gaining any knowledge of reality can be ‘reliable’, but also ‘not perfect’, because our knowledge is always based upon experience or current theories of experience (Mingers, 2006: p.14). In short, critical realists, through the separation of epistemology and ontology, insist that, similar to interpretivists, knowledge is historically and socially conditioned in which our experiences are interpreted upon, while there is a reality independent of our knowledge. Therefore, central to critical realism is the distinguishing of ontology from epistemology, avoiding confusing the nature of reality with our knowledge of reality.

In the critical realism approach, to gain ‘social-scientific’ (Bhaskar and Danermark, 2006, p.296) understanding and knowledge of a particular phenomenon, the research is required to comprehend the set of structures that underpin the social context. Furthermore, Bhaskar (1998, p.216) states that ‘society must be regarded as an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions which individuals reproduce or transform, but which would not exist unless they

did so'. From a critical realist perspective, social reality is multi-layered and slow changing, created by structures and the actions of individuals, which can only be understood as separate social domains, and through the interconnections between them. Structures are not only deemed as physical and observable, but are also social and contextual. In this study, the cruise ship as an environmental (social and physical) structure and social creator is central to understanding the professional and social community dimensions of working on-board a cruise ship. Therefore, the structure 'mediates an objective influence' (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009: p.44) forming actions and guidance for behaviour, definition, and self-worth, thus creating power relations. Person and environment are separated from each other by a boundary that simultaneously separates and connects the two components of the same whole. By way of application, the society of the ship and its social parameters affects individual and group behaviour, which in its entirety, reproduces the society of the ship, insofar that society offers the conditions for human action, but also, human actions are creators of society.

Although critical realism maintains some similarities with the traditional philosophies of positivism and interpretivism, it is independent, believing that the traditional positions are 'too superficial' and 'non-theoretical' (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009: p.39). As such, critical realism is often considered as an appealing alternative. Similar to positivism, critical realism values the scientific nature of research, which has interests in finding causalities and patterns, but rather than being specific and measurable, the relations are more complex and contextual. Instead, critical realism requires the sought after deeper lying mechanisms that shape events (Bhaskar, 1978), and argues that 'it is not possible to reduce the world to observable objects and facts' (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009: p.40). In short, there are multiple and complex 'objects, entities and structures' that can be observable or unobservable that produce observable events (Mingers, 2006: p.20). From the perspective of a critical realist, the comprehension of reality or the undertaking of research is not to 'identify generalisable laws' (positivism), or 'identify the lived experience or beliefs of social actors' (interpretivism), but is to 'develop deeper levels of explanation and understanding' (McEvoy and Richards 2006: p.69). This deeper level of understanding is based upon the mechanisms and/or structures that produce phenomena. Therefore, a critical realist concedes that reality can only be understood and explained within the social structures, whereby actors attach meaning to the situation. For this research, an on-board hospitality worker's work and life can only be fully realised when viewed in context to the power and control relations of the organisation (cruise ship). Furthermore, although the perceptions of reality may change, the underpinning structural and

mechanical elements of reality can be more durable, and therefore assist in a deeper understanding.

There is no single philosophical route without criticism. Even philosophical extremists may fail to fully commit to one position, or disagree totally with another, whereby a researcher can often take a pragmatic stance upon certain elements of the research process (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 2008). All researchers aim to uncover new knowledge, whereby the task of the researcher is to employ a research strategy for best answering the research objectives and questions, and ultimately the nature of the investigation (e.g., Mason, 2006; Woolley, 2009). In light of this, a critical realist position can provide a less restrictive framework that ‘attempts to formulate general answers about the nature of the world’ (Bhaskar and Danermark, 2006: p.296).

4.3 Methodological appropriateness

This research, although exploratory in nature, provides an in-depth account of the working lives of hospitality cruise ship workers, through attempting to understand the occupational and community dynamics of this under researched world. Consequently, a research methodology justified to unravel the complexities of the social processes was required. A research design is a ‘crucial part of any research project’ (Robson, 2011: p.70) in which the choice of methodological procedures should be compatible with the research area to extract findings. The methodological process, reflecting upon the research questions/problems, aspires to explore answers with the most suitable strategy, which is based upon philosophical understandings. As research questions/problems generally arise from the findings of relevant research, it is therefore appropriate to evaluate the approaches used within such studies before committing a research design

4.3.1 Previous research

The research significant to this project, with methodological thoughts in mind, was those that investigated the working lives of individuals on-board ships. It was important that this previous research had similar practicalities in terms of collecting data, and also reflecting upon the experiences of ship based personnel. *Table 4.1*, although not exhaustive, provides

details of such studies. The margins of research were not restricted to cruise-based studies, but also within the wider grasps of the maritime industry. This was useful to further collaborate with allied industries. Such that working and living environments are alike in terms of isolation and occupational restrictions, and furthermore similar in the aspects of the research issues with gaining access.

Table 4.1 Previous research on the working lives of individuals on ships

Author/s	Date	Method	Respondents	Research
Antonsen, S.	2009	Questionnaire, Interviews	258, 22	Examined the relationship between culture and safety on offshore supply vessels.
Brownell, J.	2008	Questionnaire	111 (Hotel) 77 (Cruise)	Career development and perceptions of required skills/abilities were compared from leaders in hotels and cruise ships.
Gibson, P.	2008	Interviews	38	Explores the work and life dynamics of cruise ship personnel.
Larsen, S. Marnburg, E. and Øgaard, T.	2012	Focus groups, Questionnaire	2 (6-8 people), 216	Explores how the working environment of a cruise ship influences organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
Lee-Ross, D.	2008	Questionnaire	72	Explores the occupational culture of hospitality cruise personnel.
Mack, K.	2007	Interviews (email, phone, face-to-face)	41	Exploring the career experiences of active and non-active Norwegian seafarers in the maritime industry.
Raub, S. and Streit, E.M.	2006	Interviews, Questionnaire	7, 60	Investigates the recruitment practices in the cruise industry.
Testa, M.R.	2007	Questionnaire, Interviews	112, 12	Examines how employees evaluate leaders with varying national cultures.

From this sample of relevant research the dominant method for obtaining data was a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Antonsen (2009) argued that the blending of methods adds to a ‘rich’ understanding of the culture of the working environment on-board ships, arguing that questionnaires add a ‘wide-angled view’, while interviews add depth. A similar approach is observed in the study of Larsen *et al.* (2012). Their research was divided into two steps, an initial phase of focus groups which aimed to explore the experiences of individuals on-board cruise ships. The findings of these focus group sessions then formed the basis to develop aspects of a questionnaire. In this case, an initial exploratory step formed the basis of a sequential confirmatory step. Raub and Streit (2006) applied a similar research design. These types of research design may be typical when there is little research in a chosen field, such as in the cruise industry. Furthermore, a two-stage strategy was employed in the study by Testa (2007), although due to a different research focus, this began with a questionnaire, and a sequential interview stage. The questionnaire sought the provision of themes and/or initial insight, while the interviews gained deeper understanding based upon the findings from the questionnaire

A recurring theme found in research is that of low response rates. This is more evident within the more quantitative studies, as qualitative studies are generally more concerned with in-depth quality rather than quantity of participants. The issue of ‘access’ is common throughout each of the studies. Larsen *et al.* (2012) suggests that the likely reasons for a lack of research in the cruise ship sector are due to the complexities of gathering data. Consequently this has also determined how data were collected. Logistical issues and difficulties in organisational co-operation require the researcher to be more flexible in their approach, whereby data may be collected through multiple techniques and differing levels of formality (e.g., Mack, 2007; Raub and Streit, 2006), i.e. email/telephone/face-to-face. This may also interpret the frequent use of a questionnaire format in this type of research. Although questionnaires still have issues with respect to access, there are arguably less restrictions than with more qualitative approaches.

4.3.2 Mixed-methods approach

Consideration of previous research (*Table 4.1*) and guided by the specific research objectives, it is suggested that the most suitable approach in this instance, combining practicality with robustness, is the integration of quantitative (QUAN) and qualitative (QUAL) approaches.

This gives the opportunity of discovering knowledge in-depth, but also identifying breadth, with the potential of being both analytical and exploratory in nature. Although not suitable for every research project, a mixed-methods approach is a way of tapping into the complexity of a particular social phenomenon (Sale *et al.* 2002). As Mason (2006, p.10) points out our ‘social experiences’ and ‘lived realities’ are in fact complex in composition, being ‘multi-dimensional’, and if our understanding of these is to be fully understood, then it may be ‘inadequate’ to rely upon a single dimension or strategy.

A mixed approach, or using multiple methods to collect data, is an approach which is still debated in terms of compatibility and worthiness, although more recently is gaining momentum and credibility. It is argued that this approach can offer the best of both traditional formats (qualitative and quantitative) while also complementing each other by providing answers to the deficiencies of each format; it also enhances a broader picture of the research initiative through the ability to equally gain breadth and depth of the research; it can also contribute to alternative ways to which a research problem or question can be explained or answered, and is therefore potentially offering a ‘fuller’ route in gaining data (Creswell, 2003; Robson, 2011). From a critical realist perspective, Scott (2007, p.15) argues that ‘if each is focused on different properties of social objects, then it is possible to reconcile them’ at the analysis and interpretation stages.

With little research contributing to the knowledge of the working lives of hospitality workers on-board cruise ships, it is argued that a resolute research strategy that identifies a balance of breadth and depth is required. Breadth to identify critical occupational and community themes and depth to understand these critical points on a more subjective, intensive basis. A QUAN approach seeks cause and explanation, while QUAL approaches seek the understanding and meaning of interrelationships. To fully understand the meaning (QUAL), an exploration of the cause (QUAN) may provide this “fullness”, and alternatively to recognise a cause (QUAN), it may be deemed appropriate to discover the meanings (QUAL) behind phenomena.

4.3.3 Research strategy

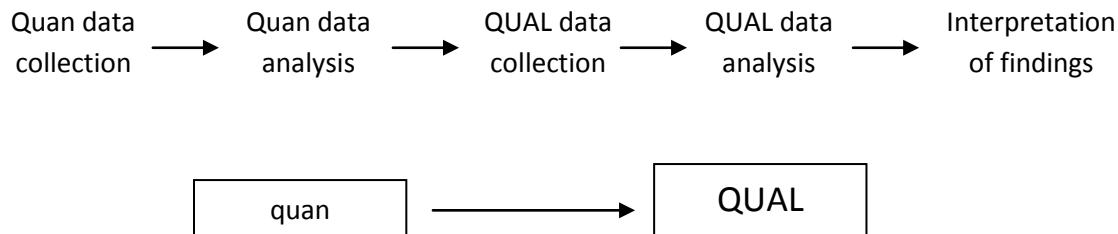
When a mixed-method strategy is proposed, the researcher is required to make justifications for the type of strategy employed. Such justifications include: orientation, priority, and integration (Bryman and Bell 2011; Creswell, 2003; Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2009). Orientation refers to whether QUAN and QUAL data is collected simultaneously or

sequentially. Priority seeks which approach with regards to data collection and analysis will be given dominant (or equal) status, and integration refers to the stage that QUAN and QUAL data and findings will be integrated. Such justifications of mixed-method research are dependent on the nature of the study and the objectives striving to be achieved. This study in particular is largely exploratory, with an emphasis of being ‘complementary’ (Greene *et al.* 1989), and seeks to utilise the results of an initial method to enhance and provide clarification for a final method.

In this research, the application of QUAN and QUAL approaches is sequential. This strategy was deemed most appropriate whereby one approach could gather preliminary data which would feed into a second phase of research for further exploration. As an exploratory study, Creswell (2003) suggests that a QUAL phase to explore a particular phenomenon should precede a sequential QUAN phase for confirmation. Upon reflection, this strategy was thought not to be suited to the research objectives. In an exploratory investigation, a QUAN method can identify patterns or associations, which may not be extractable through QUAL methods. Therefore, an initial phase of quantifiable data can recognise new and unexpected causal mechanisms (McEvoy and Richards, 2006), which can be developed and explored in an open-ended format through a QUAL enquiry. Subsequently, similar to the research of Testa (2007), an initial QUAN phase was followed by a QUAL phase.

The next step was to determine which approach is to be given dominant status, or which is deemed most important to this research. Both phases of the research strategy have significance in data collection and analysis, although in this study, the QUAL phase is given the dominant status. This phase of the research seeks to deepen and strengthen findings built from the preliminary QUAN findings. *Figure 4.1* shows the research strategy:

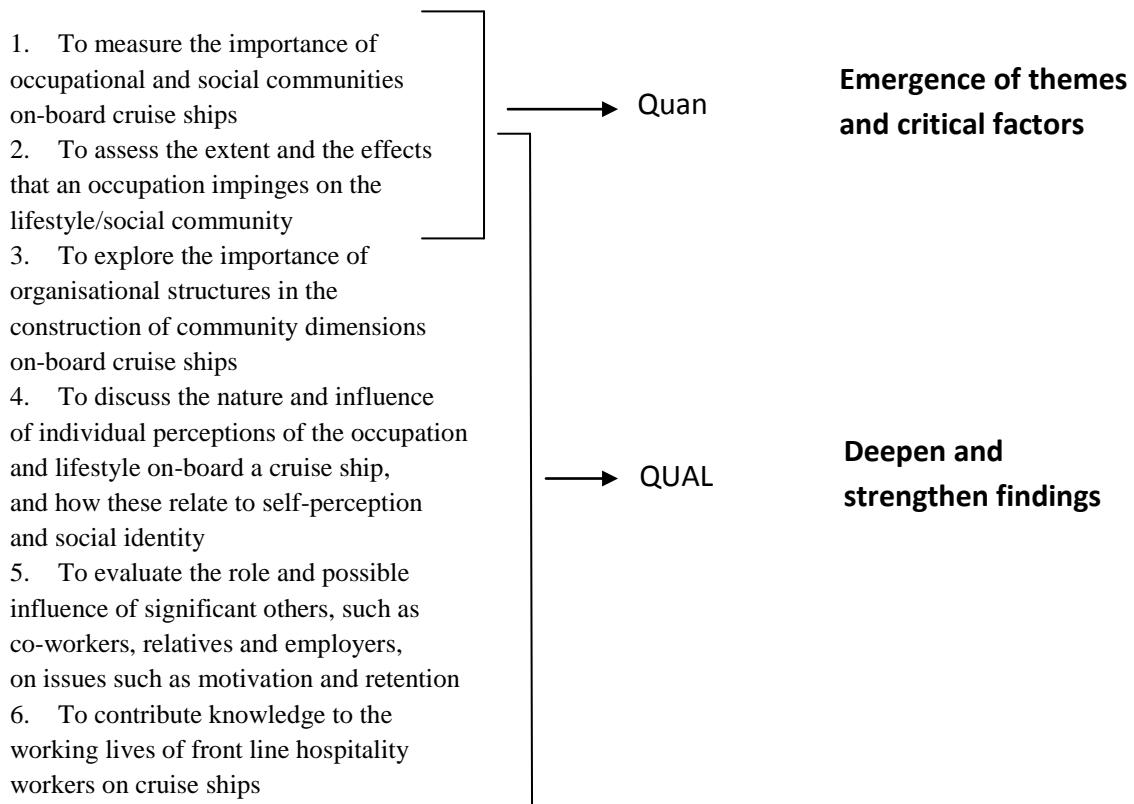
Figure 4.1 Research design



Note: lower case – preliminary study, upper case – main study.

Therefore, the objective of phase 1 (QUAN) was to extract emerging themes and critical community and occupational attributes that employees found relevant to their working environment. Since little was known regarding community dimensions and occupational identity, this stage of the research attempted to not only tackle the breadth of the study, but also gain insight. A QUAN study is also beneficial in gaining a profile of a sample of hospitality cruise ship workers which may assist in enhanced knowledge of this type of worker. Furthermore, as discussed by Larsen *et al.* (2012), gaining access for research purposes in the cruise ship industry can be difficult. A QUAN study, in addition to its deductive qualities, may further assist in the future correspondence of a QUAL study. In short, an initial QUAN phase may base the grounding with industry personnel to proceed with a more in-depth, time consuming study, which may have provided more stumbling blocks if the researcher was to solely rely on a QUAL approach. The findings of phase 1 assisted with the design process, additional to existing theory, for phase 2 (QUAL). Phase 2 is an in-depth study, to explore the importance of the community and occupation to the individual, providing details about how they view their world. *Figure 4.2* shows the relationship between the research objectives and research strategy.

Figure 4.2 Research objectives and strategy



The purpose of the QUAN phase was essentially to provide quantifiable data to measure the relative importance of the social and occupational communities on-board cruise ships, in a manner that was inexpensive and practical, but also reliable. Significance lies within the exploration of the communities that form and exist while individuals are working and not working, and furthermore how these communities may overlap. Cruise ship literature suggests that to fully understand the experiences of working on-board, both aspects of social life and work are required to be explored. Therefore, this preliminary phase of research is investigative in focus, identifying the critical community factors of working on-board cruise ships and how this impacts upon the individual, or group of individuals. The QUAL phase of research was given dominant status within this study. The purpose of this phase was to gain direct insights, at a deeper level, into the perceptions of individual employees.

4.3.4 Case study methodology

A methodological framework that offers the flexibility required for this study is that of the case study. Payne and Payne (2004, p.31) believe a case study method to be a ‘detailed study of a single social unit’, although more intensive definitions elaborate upon the ‘contextual conditions’ (Yin, 2003: p.13) of the method. A more consensual definition is that by Luck *et al.* (2006, p.104) as a ‘detailed, intensive study of a particular contextual, and bounded, phenomena that is undertaken in real life situations’. Therefore, a case is a situational and bounded view of a social phenomenon. A first question may be that of what is the case? Robson (2011, p.138) argues that a ‘case’ can be virtually anything, while Denscombe (2010, p.55) suggests a case can be based upon ‘an individual, an organisation, an industry, a workplace, an educational programme, a policy or a country.’

By way of critical interpretation, Thomas (2011, p.12/13) argues that a ‘case’ can have multiple meanings, which is dependent upon the phenomena being studied, as either a ‘case as a container’ and a ‘case as situation, event’. Based upon a dictionary definition, Thomas (2011) identifies one idea that a case is a ‘container’, bounded by the interrelationships and complexities within a particular case. Everything within the ‘container’ has meaning, which is given meaning dependent upon that localised context, extending there is a reciprocal relationship. Taking the cruise ship as a ‘container’, for example, an identity or meaning given within the cruise ship may have little meaning outside of the world of cruising, in which the meaning, or association of that meaning, can only be fully understood within the bounded ‘container’ of the cruise ship. Alternatively, a case as a situation is less defined by the ‘parameters’ of a particularity but more about the ‘set of conditions’ (Thomas, 2011: p.13).

This study is concerned with the intensive examination of a particular social setting with a desire to ‘understand complex social phenomena’ (Yin, 2003: p.2). The case in this research is hospitality workers; the complex social issue is that of the role of occupational identity and community formation, and the context is the cruise ship setting. The interest lies in the exploration of the experiences of hospitality cruise ship workers and the role played by identity and community formation within this setting.

4.3.5 Summary of research strategy

Having debated some philosophical issues in relation to the methodological approach and identified some relevant approaches to understanding the working lives of individuals on-board cruise ships, an appropriate exploratory strategy is the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods through a case study methodology within the framework of critical realism. Rather than limit understanding through narrow philosophical approaches, a critical realist perspective may provide a comprehensive framework to explore the dynamisms of cruise ship work. Critical realism, affirming to realist principles, and through ‘relaxing the strict ontological commitments of theories and methods’ (Modell, 2009: p.218), involves the synergy of interpretative and positivistic understanding, employing methods for describing or uncovering the structural/mechanical relations, and further methods for understanding and exploring the subjective meanings. In short, there are advantages in exploring multiple ways of researching the same area. This extends potential to gain a “fuller” and “richer” understanding of the working environment, particularly within a field with little research.

Due to the nature of the cruise ship industry, gathering a large sample of respondents would logistically and physically have been a difficult task, while a solely in-depth study of a select number of individuals equally seemed unsuitable, mainly because little research had been tested within the margins of this study and so the direction of the research may have provided irrelevant information. Therefore, it was deemed important that the research strategy should evolve, utilising a preliminary phase (breadth) and flowing into a main phase (depth) of research, using a multiple of methods whereby the initial phase of research would provide more focused and clearly definable margins for the main phase.

4.4 Quantitative study: survey questionnaire

Surveys are regularly regarded as invaluable sources of collecting data about behaviour, values, attitudes and personal experiences, which are generally targeted to a specific population. Moser and Kalton (1971, p.1) suggest that surveys are ‘concerned with the demographic characteristics, the social environment, the activities, or the opinions and attitudes of some group of people’. Surveys can derive descriptive and explanatory information which investigate relationships, behaviours, and understand social conditions. Questionnaires are generally undertaken for the provision of their descriptive qualities,

providing information about characteristics or relationships between characteristics (Robson, 2011), which can only be as effective as the quality of the questions being asked. As Simmons (2008, p.183) states ‘the success of a survey will depend on the questions that are asked, the ways in which they are phrased and the order in which they are placed’. In this research, the scale items used to measure the concepts of interest were obtained, or adapted, from literature, ensuring the greatest potential of high quality data.

For the design of a questionnaire, questions can either be asked in a closed or open style. Closed questions have a number of ‘predetermined options’ from which respondents can choose to answer (Henn *et al.* 2009: p.162), while open questions allocate the respondent space for which to answer their desired output. Closed questions benefit the researcher in terms of control, which is easier to code and analyse. Respondents are also able to answer the questions in a quick and easy fashion. Alternatively, this style prevents the freedom for respondents to further expand on key points or issues which the researcher may not have taken into consideration. Furthermore, respondents may answer questions in a “blasé” manner, ticking boxes without even reading the question (Henn *et al.* 2009). On the other hand, open questions may be able to provide more detailed answers which are more pertinent to the individual. Consequently, some answers may not be relevant, while this style also lends itself to a lengthy and complex process, which can be difficult to interpret.

4.4.1 Questionnaire distribution – gaining industry access

There are several ways in which questionnaires may be administered. The usual avenues include the telephone, face-to-face, mailing paper copies, and also through the Internet (e.g. Bryman and Bell, 2011). *Table 4.2* presents the advantages and disadvantages of each type:

Table 4.2 Exploring questionnaire types for cruise ship industry

Questionnaire	Advantages	Disadvantages
Telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good control of answers/response • Clarify any issues with respondent • Ability to record answers • Ability to build rapport • Capable of further “probing” for more detailed responses • Potentially good response rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many individuals do not have personal phones while working on-board. • Be logically difficult – individuals work differing shifts. • Time-zone issues • Expensive – through the use of satellite phones
Face-to-face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *as above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be logically difficult – individuals work differing shifts. • Expensive to logically organise • Require a “gate keeper” to grant access and organise • Time consuming
Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low - Medium cost (stamps/ envelopes/ paper) • Potential wide geographical distribution • Respondent can fill out in own time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low control of response and answer completion • Difficulties to administrate – require a “gate keeper” • Poor response rate • Diverse nationalities on-board – may have issues with understanding certain questions • Long data collection
Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low cost • Wide geographical distribution • Respondent can fill out in own time • “Gate keeper” not required • Potentially quick data collection • Efficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet connection is required • Low control of response and answer completion • Poor response rate • Diverse nationalities on-board – may have issues with understanding certain questions • Can be expensive to use on-board

Adapted from: Bryman and Bell (2011), and Robson (2011)

Ideally, to improve the potential control of answers, clarity of questions, and response rate, a face-to-face or telephone approach may be more successful. Notwithstanding, the logistical nature of the cruise ship industry creates difficulties for applying these approaches. Both

approaches would be expensive, and further complications would arise with the administration. More realistic alternatives are provided in terms of self-completion questionnaires. These differ in terms of distribution, with one using the postal system, and the other using the Internet. Both approaches would be relatively low cost and there is the potential of wide geographical distribution. The main disparities between the two approaches encroach upon the data collection period and the requirement of a “gate keeper”. Postal questionnaires are assumed to entail a longer data collection period due to the time it takes post to be dispatched to the respondent and then re-dispatched to the researcher, which when applied to the cruise industry may be further prolonged. Alternatively Internet based questionnaires have a shorter data collection period, as the questions can be filled out and read by the researcher as soon as the questionnaire is uploaded. Utilising a postal route for this research would also necessitate a “gate keeper”, who would be able to receive and distribute the questionnaires on behalf of the researcher. An Internet route would, in reality, cut out the “middle man”, in which the desirability of this can be dependent upon the situation. On the one hand if the gate keeper could be trusted, then it offers the possibility of a good sample size for data collection, although on the other hand, respondents may perceive that the questionnaire is organisationally based and be reluctant to answer honestly for fear of losing one’s job.

An attempt was first made with the desired route of using a postal approach. This initially seemed appealing in that, if successful, a select number of cruise ship companies could be targeted, in which findings could be compared by organisation/ship. Also the researcher could have some control on who was answering the questionnaire. To be successful, the researcher would be reliant upon a “gate keeper”, or an individual with some authority that could assist with the distribution of the questionnaire. This involved the process of contacting Human Resource Managers and Hospitality/Food and Beverage Managers within the cruise ship industry. Contact details were predominantly gathered through accessible internet sources. Individuals in the respective positions were contacted by either telephone or via email, explaining the research and enquiring the possibility of conducting such research.

Although several discussions and conversations provided fruitful and progressive discourse, industry personnel either declined to participate once the questionnaire was disclosed, or failed to respond. The researcher was aware of the sensitive nature of the study, in addition to previous research in which the working environment on-board cruise ships was painted in a poor manner (e.g., ITF, 2002; Klein, 2002). Subsequently, anonymity was strongly declared,

while the researcher suggested this research sought working solutions, rather than discrediting the practices of the working environment. Other reasons for refusal of involvement were: the length of the time required by the organisation in processing the questionnaire; the organisation/ship was currently undertaking a similar project and didn't want to confuse the area further, and permission was denied at a higher level of authority.

Some of the more positive conversations, particularly with Hospitality/Food and Beverage Managers, who expressed more of an interest in the study, suggested that the Internet may be a source to gain the data that was required. This was also echoed when the researcher sought advice from academic researchers in the cruise ship industry. Through discussing possible distribution routes of questionnaires and the issues of gaining access, the Internet may be an avenue that holds promise. This will be discussed in the following section.

4.4.2 Online questionnaire

There are generally thought to be two forms of Internet surveys; e-mail and website-based (Robson, 2011). An e-mail survey is simply sending a questionnaire in the form of an e-mail, either as the main message/text, or as an attachment. This is a useful and direct approach to distributing a survey, although the respondents e-mail address is required. Consequently, if the addresses are not known for the selective group of individuals, then this approach is not appropriate. As an employee's contact details on-board cruise ships are not publicly accessible, an e-mail based questionnaire was not suitable for this study. Therefore, a website-based survey was implemented. This involves selecting relevant websites and, if available, placing a 'hyperlink' on the website that transfers the user to the survey.

Internet popularity has seen an increase in the use of this type of approach (Gray, 2009), and is becoming more common within the discipline of tourism and hospitality research (Hung and Law, 2011). Online social media is already playing an important role in the motivational factors for customers choosing particular cruise ships, through the discussions, reviews and tips on forums and blogs (Vogel and Oschmann, 2012). Furthermore, the Internet has more recently, due to modernisations, played increasing importance to the isolated nature of cruise ship work, and notably within the recruitment of employees and also keeping in contact with family, friends, and other cruise ship workers (Chin, 2008; Gibson and Walters, 2012; Millar, 2010; Raub and Streit, 2006). This is particularly beneficial and relevant for this study. Being able to "tap" into this online community of mobile cruise ship workers can provide a

relatively new and accessible approach to gain data about the industry. Therefore, an online route is compatible with the research objectives of this study, gaining data where there are barriers in contacting individuals directly due to worldwide operations and difficulties in gathering contact details.

An online survey was designed and developed with the use of ‘Bristol Online Surveys’ (BOS), which is a service used by the University of Huddersfield. The researcher did not possess the technical capabilities to design a website, and therefore BOS provided a valuable tool to construct a custom made questionnaire. Once the survey was created, it could be accessed via a unique web address. When data has been submitted by the respondent the BOS package stores all statistics and can present them in tables and graphs. This data can then be used in other software programs (i.e. Excel or SPSS) for more sophisticated analysis.

The design of the questionnaire was kept simple, referring to advice offered by Hewson *et al.* (2003, p.83) that the layout should remain ‘clear’ and consistent, free from temptation of adding graphics, and should ‘closely resemble paper survey formats’. Attention spans may be reduced while online with the attraction of other websites. Hewson *et al.* (2003) further stress the importance of a professional appearance with the affiliation of an institution, which may calm fears of any immoral behaviour or a fraudulent website. The BOS software also consisted of several operational options which may improve the experience or reduce non-response. Such options enabled respondents to save the questionnaire and return at a later time, and not permitting respondents to continue to the next page until all questions were answered.

4.4.3 Advantages and disadvantages of an online questionnaire

A major enticement of an online questionnaire, and in particular to this study, is the access to international samples that may prove difficult for other methods to achieve (Gosling *et al.* 2004). The Internet can also provide the opportunity for surveys to look attractive and professional (Bryman and Bell, 2011), and also supply convenient commands that can influence the progressive nature of the survey, i.e. altering questions further in the survey that may be irrelevant based upon how certain questions are answered. Online questionnaires are inexpensive, can be easily administered, and responses can also be seen instantly, which adds to the efficiency of the method.

The internet is a medium which can offer significant advantages over traditional survey approaches. Nevertheless there are still issues and challenges with the methodological design when utilising this technique. Two major problems are the representative number of Internet users (sample) and low response rates (O'Leary, 2004). First, an early study conducted by Cook *et al.* (2000) demonstrated that Internet surveys had lower response rates compared to other types of surveys. This was further confirmed when Lozar-Manfreda *et al.* (2008) asserted that web-based surveys operated with an 11% lower response rate than other forms of survey, based upon 45 comparisons. A strategy which seeks to combine the advantages and disadvantages of non-response on internet surveys is through a 'mixed-mode design', distributing the same questionnaire via online methods and also traditional methods (De Leeuw and Hox, 2011: p.65). Although desirable, this was not an appropriate route for this study.

Secondly, online questionnaires are often criticised regarding the representativeness of the sample (Hewson *et al.* 2003; Sue and Ritter, 2007). They may be biased if individuals are unable to connect to the internet, don't have the technical capacity to participate online, or are not members and/or aware of the online forum/group that is targeted. This is particularly evident amongst ethnic and lower socioeconomic groups (e.g. Smyth and Pearson, 2011), although Gosling *et al.* (2004) and Hewson *et al.* (2003) argue that online questionnaires are either equal or more representative than the traditional formats.

There is also a danger that respondents from the online sample are only the enthusiasts of the industry, which may skew the data in a positive way. Although this particular study received positive comments and responses regarding the industry, there was also an equal amount of constructive/critical arguments about work on-board a cruise ship. Furthermore, because individuals are volunteering to contribute to the study, there is a question of the representative nature of the respondents. Although previous web-based research suggests that respondents use the same 'psychological processes and metric' when answering questionnaires via an online medium or other self-administrated sources (De Leeuw and Hox, 2011: p.57). Online questionnaires may therefore pose similar risks than the more traditional forms. Although representation is a concern for online questionnaires, it is clearly a concern which affects all research methods, and as suggested by other research, the online approach is a technique which can compete, and in some cases surpass, the traditional forms of questionnaire research.

4.4.4 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire in this research study predominantly used closed questions, although there is a section at the end that allowed each respondent to discuss or expand upon any key issues brought up in the questionnaire. This supports more controlled answers, which are easy to code, but also allows the opportunity for the respondent to express themselves further on key points. The purpose of the questionnaire was to solely gain some preliminary indicators which will aid the development of questioning and/or topic areas of the interview. The questionnaire process was an important step in the research process in this sense. Although the questionnaire was based upon existing theory and analytical procedures to add validity and reliability to the preliminary findings, advanced statistical techniques to analyse the data were not thought to be suitable. The questionnaire was primarily a platform to gain initial insights into the world of cruise ship work which could be investigated further and in more depth in the qualitative study.

The questionnaire design is based upon the concept of ‘Job Embeddedness’ (Mitchell *et al.* 2001). The main motivator for utilising the Job Embeddedness approach was that it takes into account the forces of work and non-work that affect an individual’s affiliation to their occupation and/or organisation. This was therefore considered suitable to extract primary indicators about the work and life of on-board hospitality workers. The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) consists of three main sections; (i) Demographics, (ii) Embeddedness Antecedents (Links, Fit, and Sacrifice), and (iii) Organisational and Occupational Embeddedness. The Embeddedness Antecedents section is of main interest in the questionnaire as this directly quantifies work and non-work forces. Section (iii) aims to uncover findings relative to an individual’s affiliation to their occupation and organisation. Initially a fourth section was included which identified turnover intentions, but not being able to contact cruise ship employees directly via their organisations meant that the route of access contributed to less than 25% of individuals being currently employed in the industry. Therefore turnover intentions were eliminated from the analysis. All constructs (except demographics) utilised a Likert-type scale (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = not decided, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree). The following discussion will present the constructs and sources.

(ii) *Embeddedness Antecedents*

Twenty four statements based upon Mitchell *et al.*'s (2001) original study were used measuring three embeddedness subscales of 'Links, Fit, and Sacrifice'. This measure was adapted to suit the cruise ship employee sample, whereby applicable organisational and community dimensions were used. In the original measure, the 'Links' subscale was in the format of an open question. Similar to the approach by Johnson *et al.* (2010), the format was altered in line with the subscales of 'Fit' and 'Sacrifice' to a closed question format. For example, the original item was: '*How many coworkers do you interact with regularly?*', which was changed to: '*I interact with a large number of my co-workers*'. Table 4.3 shows the items that were used in the study.

Table 4.3 Embeddedness antecedents items

Subscale	Adapted items
Fit (10 items)	I feel I am a good match for this organisation
	My job uses my skills and talents well
	I fit with the organisations culture
	I like the responsibility I have on this job
	The prospects for continuing employment with this company are excellent
	I have a lot of freedom on this job to decide how to pursue my goals
	I really enjoy the place where I live on-board
	The on-board community is a good match for me
	I think of the community where I live on-board as home
	The community where I live offers the leisure activities that I like
Links (8 items)	I interact with a large number of my co-workers
	I like the members of my work group
	My co-workers are similar to me
	I don't have regular opportunities to interact with my co-workers (reversed)
	I feel that people at work respect me a great deal
	My co-workers are highly dependent on me
	I am part of many work teams
	I am on many work committees
Sacrifice (6 items)	I would be sacrificing a lot if I left this job
	My promotional opportunities are excellent here
	I am well paid for my level of performance
	This job has excellent benefits
	This job has excellent health-care benefits
	This job has excellent retirement benefits

This is the first instance, known to the researcher, that the Job Embeddedness model has been used on a cruise ship sample. Due to the unique nature of cruise ship work, not all of the original items were applicable. *Table 4.4* shows the items that were dismissed and an explanation.

Table 4.4 Dismissed embeddedness antecedents items

Subscale	Dismissed items	Explanation
Fit	The weather where I live is suitable for me	Being based on-board a cruise ship, the weather was not deemed to have a significant impact upon how embedded individuals were within their jobs. Although the ships destinations may have some relevance, this was not measured in this phase of the research.
Links	If you are married, does your spouse work outside the home?	Due to the unique working conditions of the cruise ship industry whereby individuals live on-board for months at a time, these questions were thought to be irrelevant to this study.
	Do you own the home you live in?	
Sacrifice	Leaving this community would be very hard	It was initially thought that these questions would have caused confusion to respondents and therefore interpretation of results, mainly due to the permeable boundaries between occupational and social communities. Analysis of the results (Chapters 5 and 6) meanwhile suggest that such adaptable questions to the cruise ship worker may have been useful to the sacrifice subscale. Phase 2 of the research will therefore seek to understand this in more depth.
	People respect me a lot in my community	
	My neighbourhood is safe	

(iii) *Organisational and Occupational Embeddedness*

Crossley *et al.*'s (2007) seven-item Global Job Embeddedness scale (*Table 4.5*) was used to assess organisational embeddedness. A global measure of embeddedness aims to address some of the shortcomings of the original measure postulated by Mitchell *et al.* (2001) by assessing 'overall impressions of attachment by asking general questions' (Crossley *et al.* 2007: p.1032). Focused on general attachment, the measure does not separate between on-the-job and off-the-job. Crossley *et al.*'s (2007) seven-item Global Job Embeddedness scale was extended further to include construct measures of occupational embeddedness, as in the research of Johnson *et al.* (2010).

Table 4.5 Organisational embeddedness items

1	I feel attached to this organisation
2	It would be difficult for me to leave this organisation
3	I'm too caught up in this organisation to leave
4	I feel tied to this organisation
5	I simply could not leave the organisation that I work for
6	It would be easy for me to leave this organisation (reversed)
7	I am tightly connected to this organisation

Including the global measure of embeddedness (i.e. organisation and occupation) was thought to be a useful addition to this particular questionnaire to gain an overall feel of how employees are embedded at the occupational and organisational level. Disparities between the two may provide sources of negative discourse or frustration encircling the occupation, organisation, or community.

4.4.5 Pilot questionnaire

Once the questionnaire was designed a pilot questionnaire was conducted. The aim of piloting the questionnaire was to assess the following:

- Item wording - making sure that the language was readable for the respondent. This was important as it is recognised that the cruise ship industry employs a multinational crew, in which English may not be the first language of all employees. This involved not only the questions, but also the clarity of the welcome message and instructions.
- Length of the questionnaire – the questionnaire is relatively lengthy, which is therefore necessary to gauge the individual's perceptions upon the length, so to maximise potential response rates.
- Format and structure – it is important that the structure of the questionnaire is presented in a professional and appealing fashion, but it is also quick and stress free to navigate.
- Suitability and practicality of an online questionnaire – whether individuals are able to access the questionnaire online and a suitable approach in gaining data in the cruise ship industry.

A pilot study was carried out in August 2011. During the process of contacting cruise ship industry personnel, although frustrated in gaining co-operation to conduct a mail orientated questionnaire, a Food and Beverage Manager agreed to assist with the piloting of the online questionnaire with several of his/her colleagues. An e-mail was sent to the individual including the details of where to access the questionnaire (see Appendix 1). These details were passed onto colleagues. A total of 15 respondents completed the questionnaire, which confirmed to some degree the practicality of an online questionnaire route.

Feedback consisted of two areas, item wording and length of questionnaire. The format and structure of the questionnaire was not commented upon, which suggests there were few or no issues with the presentation or navigation through the questionnaire. With regards to the length of the questionnaire, there were 54 questions in total (including the turnover intentions questions which were not taken into consideration for analysis). Although this was taken into consideration, reducing the content may have been inconsistent with the objectives of the questionnaire and so the length was not altered. Couper *et al.* (2001, p.232) suggest the use of ‘progress indicators’ as motivators for individuals to complete web-based surveys. A progress indicator is a simple function that allows each respondent to measure their progress when completing a questionnaire. This was therefore implemented within the survey as a means of motivation. Furthermore, there were also some minor modifications to the language used on select questions. Differences in cultural backgrounds caused some confusion as to the meaning of some of the questions being asked.

4.4.6 Sampling

A sampling frame is a ‘critical issue’ for all surveys, with aspirations that respondents participating in the study are representative of the survey population (Gill and Johnson, 2002). Therefore, the findings made from the sample of respondents facilitate the researcher in making confident accounts about the survey population. There are thought to be two sampling designs, probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 2008). Probability sampling involves random selection, whereas non-probability sampling infers targeting a particular sample of a population based upon certain characteristics (e.g. occupation). In this survey, a probability sampling design would not be appropriate. It is important that individuals have experienced working on-board cruise ships. Furthermore,

online research is mainly based upon ‘voluntary participants’, which a probability sample is impossible (Hewson *et al.* 2003: p.36).

This research study collected data from past and present hospitality employees on-board cruise ships. Although predominantly focused on frontline employees, managers and supervisors were also accepted for comparative reasons. Sampling is therefore based on ‘relevance’ and ‘knowledge’ (Denscombe, 2010: p.35), deliberately selecting a particular route to get the most valuable data, often deemed exploratory, although it enables the researcher to direct the research to the most applicable audience. A sampling method similar to purposive sampling was consequently chosen, whereby relevant web based social groups were targeted, and through this, hospitality cruise ship workers were invited to participate in the questionnaire. Purposive sampling is based on the ‘researcher’s judgement’ that specifically meets the needs of the study (Robson, 2011: p.275). The sample is required to meet certain criteria to qualify for analysis, which in this case is that individuals must work/have worked on a cruise ship in a hospitality position.

4.4.7 Procedure

For the questionnaire to be completed by appropriate individuals, a thorough search of relevant websites was necessary. Online search engines became the principal exploratory tool to seek web-based social network/forums where hospitality cruise ship workers were active agents. Such as the cruise ship industry itself, web-based social networks/forums dedicated to employees are of a niche position. Much of the available forums linked to cruise ships were of a passenger/tourist capacity and so were not useful for this particular study. However, eleven online forums or groups were decided sufficient to gain research. *Table 4.6* provides the details of the websites. Websites were principally chosen because of the number of members, relevance to the research, and level of activity.

Table 4.6 Online forums/groups used for research

Forum/Group	Description
Myship.com	International social and career networking website. Individuals have their own profile, are able to post pictures and messages to other members.
Cruiselinefans.com	This is an online community with all aspects of cruising, including passengers and crew. There is an online forum with a section dedicated to employees.
Cruises.co.uk	A website committed to cruise news, reviews, and chat. There is an online forum with a section dedicated to employees.
Cruisemates.com	This is an online cruise guide and community. There is an online forum with a thread dedicated to employees.
Seasonworkers.com	This is a forum where predominantly hospitality workers can chat about their experiences and career opportunities.
Ehotelier.com	An international hoteliers' community that has a specific thread dedicated towards cruise ship employment and experiences.
Facebook.com (5 groups - Popular international social networking website with several groups dedicated to cruise ship employment – the five groups used are shown adjacent)	'Royal Caribbean – the online crew bar' 'Carnival cruise lines crew' 'Carnival cruise lines – staff and entertainers' 'Cruise ships crew' 'Carnival cruise lines dining room crew'

A message was posted on the relevant forums/groups identified with a small description of the research and hyperlink to the online questionnaire. Below is an example of this message:

"Hello everybody! My name is Adam Dennett and I'm currently doing a PhD at Huddersfield University. My research is looking at cruise ship life, and how this is affected by your line of work and community within. The focus is past and present front line hospitality/hotel employees (Front desk, Bar/Food waiter etc) and I wonder if anyone could help me please?

I would be really grateful if you could fill in this short questionnaire, which

should take 5-10 minutes. All results are confidential and no personal questions are asked, but I'm hoping the results can make a real impact in the future. Thanks for looking :)

<http://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/hud/cruise> ”

Being socially natured, the online forums/groups give the opportunity for members to comment upon the message or contact the author. Similar to the PhD research of Janta (2009), reactions or comments were typified by three responses: positive/confirmatory, negative, or no comment. Most individuals who commented were generally of a confirmatory or positive manner with suggestions for improvement or recommendation to other relevant individuals. Some disgruntled individuals questioned the usefulness of the study and suggested that other areas of the industry should take higher priority. The negative comments were either left, and ignored, or deleted. The reason to delete such comments was to not deter further individuals from attempting the questionnaire. On the other hand, positive comments were thanked.

4.4.7.1 Problems encountered

The questionnaire was open for a period of six months (September 2011 – March 2012), which was the time taken to collect the minimum amount of responses (100). Over this duration there were a number of issues that faced the researcher. First, the opening month of data collection recorded very low responses. Although online questionnaires generally produce low response rates (e.g., Lozar-Manfreda *et al.* 2008), De Leeuw and Hox (2011, 47) suggest that these can be improved through ‘incentives’ and ‘reminders’. A focus was therefore placed upon reminding users, as providing incentives was beyond the means of this research and also is likely to question the issue of validity. It was important that reminders did not become a nuisance and act as a deterrent. Being able to comment on the original message to remind users made a significant difference to the response rates for the succeeding months. The reason for this was that this action subsequently pushed the message to the top of the agenda or forum, and therefore new users would instantly see the message.

Secondly, to communicate/post messages on the social websites, the majority required a registration process. In some instances, the registration process was instant and the user could

begin navigating and corresponding in the forums/groups. On other occasions, the user had to wait to be confirmed by a ‘moderator’, or had to request to join a particular group (i.e. ‘Royal Caribbean – the online crew bar’), or in other cases had to pay to join. This process of confirmation took between one day and one month if successful. No payment was issued to join a particular forum. There were two occurrences when access was denied. Furthermore, once the user was registered, some websites were restricted to what new users were privileged to access and actions to perform. This acts to limit new users with the intention of causing immoral behaviour. This sometimes became a lengthy process, whereby the user had to wait a certain amount of time, perform a number of preliminary actions, or pay a fee to be able to post a message on the online website.

Thirdly, moderators are able to delete messages they feel that may not be appropriate for the forum/group. This can be more prominent if there is a hyperlink attached to the message, particularly on suspicion of foul play. On one occasion the message was deleted from the group (‘Cunard cruise ship crew, past and present’ Facebook), and subsequently the researcher was banned from the group. Additionally, there was one instance when the online group was deleted (‘Carnival cruise lines dining room crew’ Facebook).

4.5 Qualitative study: semi-structured interviews

The interview was chosen as the governing instrument for the collection of data. This provided the researcher with a suitable tool to gain in-depth knowledge of participants’ beliefs and opinions of cruise ship work. Interviews are described as ‘structured’ (Rubin and Rubin, 2005) or ‘purposeful’ (Frey and Oishi, 1995) conversations with a focus on ‘actual experiences’ (King and Horrocks, 2010) and therefore a tool for collecting high-quality, “rich” data. In this understanding, an interview is a conversation, with a sense of rationale and specificity, which seeks to acquire the individual’s perspective of the descriptions, experiences, and events of their world. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.2) argue that an ‘interview is literally an *inter view*’, an inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee, an exchange of views between individuals regarding a common theme of interest. Informed by the research philosophy of critical realism, and the methodological process, interviewing offered a transcending method to provide insights into the structure of the cruise ship industry (mechanisms) and how this impacted on the experiences of the individual. Within critical realism, quantitative methods seldom provide more than ‘surface

depictions of the effects of causal powers in a particular social context' (Modell, 2009: p. 213). Therefore, QUAL methods can be an important sequential step to add substance to QUAN findings.

A typical typology of interviews is centred around the intensity or level of depth and flexibility that is sought. This can be distinguished between structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Robson, 2011). A structured interview, as the name suggests, is a route of interviewing that has strict and focused margins of discourse that the interviewer abides by. This in turn conditions the discourse, presenting restrictions upon the freedom of response, and therefore controlling the opportunities to express opinion. Alternatively, being unstructured can be considered a more natural flow of discourse, although the dismissal of structure limits the range of control for response, which can be difficult to interpret and makes it difficult to offer comparisons between respondents. A middle ground, combining some administration or structure with a sense of freedom is the semi-structured interview. The interviewer will have specific topics in mind, but is flexible or passive in terms of allowing the interviewee to develop their narrative, and they also enable the interviewer to respond to emerging issues. Therefore, questions will remain topical, although open to allow the participant to make a truer expression of their realities and feelings.

The interview facilitated the exploration of work experiences, and furthermore how individuals constructed meaning and work-based identities. Therefore through the conversation of work experience, the purpose was to explore how individuals talked about their identity and community formations within the context of a cruise ship. Semi-structured interviews were used in this study which offers an appropriate technique for achieving the depth required to understand the identity and community dimensions of hospitality cruise ship workers, exploring self-perceptions, occupational identity and professionalism. This coupled flexibility and expressiveness for the interviewee and interviewer, with structure and relevance, ensures that the dialogue of experiences and events were given the fullest chance of openness within the margins of the research area. The process of the interview should allow interviewees to discuss and interpret their experiences without being imposed by the interviewer or the structure of the interview, and therefore should be designed to stimulate a conversation (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The purpose of the interview was not to generate correct answers or elicit a body of facts. Rather it was to enable participants to 'actively construct their social worlds' (Silverman, 2011) and attempt to 'understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects' own perspectives' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009:

p.27). It was important that individuals were free and able to use their own words to gain a picture of their working lives, allowing them to talk about their identities and how their type of work influenced and directed their self-definition.

To facilitate the process of the semi-structured interview, a guide was used, and therefore conforming to some consistency of the area covered, which is important for analysis (Drever, 2003). The interviews were directed by a series of themes which were gathered from literature and also the findings of the QUAN phase of research. Phase one of the present research measured the underlying mechanisms significant to occupational and social communities, and how these are of self-importance to the individual. To fully explore the findings, semi-structured interviews were used to confirm and expand to add value to the research. The interview guide (see Appendix 2) broadly encapsulated the themes of work experiences and consisted of questions that principally sought to:

- Discuss the interviewee's role and status in the organisation, to record how workers respond emotionally to their work.
- Find out the reasons or motivations of becoming involved in cruise ship work, the nature of their work, and their future ambitions.
- Explore the perceptions of their occupation/status, and whether this influenced their attitudes to their roles and work.
- Investigate their work environment, discussing aspects on their physical working environment, and the impact this may have on community dimensions.

Initially, rather than promoting participants to talk about their identity or asking specific questions relating to identity, the first part of the interview gave the opportunity for participants to talk about their identity construction naturally through their dialogue. This was achieved by asking more general questions such as their motivations and length of time working on cruise ships. This was furthermore put in place as a strategy to allow the participant to feel at ease with the interview process (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) and also to get into the right mindset.

The questions were designed as being open ended, hopeful of developing a conversational style scenario through the extraction of experiences, stories and examples. Although semi-structured in nature, the questions were not concrete, in that they were not in a fixed order. The purpose of the interview is to keep the dialogue free flowing, permitting the researcher the ability to ask or change questions slightly depending on what relevant information is

drawn from the participant. This noted, it was important that the interview questions remained consistent and only follow up questions were asked when relating to a particular experience of an individual.

Being a flexible and reactive approach to interviewing, the use of probes and prompts, when tactfully exploited, can provide an effective means of getting more relevant material from the participant, and essentially ‘fill in the structure’ (Drever, 2003: p.13). Prompts encourage, but do not encourage specific answers, and moreover seek to clarify what has already been said, whilst probes seek further exploration and development into answers. Probing can be something simple as being silent, allowing the participant more time to gather their thoughts. Other examples are echoing or repeating words that the participant said, asking the participant to expand on an interesting point, and also confirmatory utterances such as “uh-uh” and “mmm” (Bernard and Ryan, 2010). Rubin and Rubin (2012, p.139) suggest this is a practice of ‘managing’ the conversation, helping to ‘regulate the length of answers and degree of detail’, ‘clarify’, ‘fill in missing steps’, and ‘keeping the conversation on topic’. It is important that individuals are given the fullest opportunity to answer the question without much interference from the interviewer, while any instances whereby probes or prompts are applicable should remain consistent through each of the interviews (Atkinson, 1971).

4.5.1 Recruitment and selection criteria

Similar procedures were initially followed to the QUAN phase when gaining access was concerned. Although unsuccessful, efforts were made to re-contact industry personnel with the ambition to arrange interviews. An overview of the results detailing the QUAN phase was shared with these individuals as a strategy to build confidence about the research purposes and/or a relationship with personnel. Difficulties with organisational co-operation were overcome through three strategies.

The first strategy employed was an advertisement to attract participants in the form of a short letter/poster (see Appendix 3). The port of Southampton is the most popular cruise destination in the UK and so this was thought to be the most likely target to contact cruise ship employees. The findings from phase one of the research and thorough researching of cruise ship based online social networks indicated that internet cafés and purpose built independent seafarer hub buildings were a popular destination for cruise ship workers while ships were in port. On this basis, local internet cafés and seafarer buildings were contacted via telephone,

although if this was not possible contact was made through e-mail. In total, two internet cafés and a seafarer building agreed to advertise the letter. Contact details were included on the advertisement if participants were interested in the study.

The second strategy employed followed a similar route to that of phase one of the research. A post was additionally placed on the online social mediums (see *Table 4.6*). The post declared that this was open to new participants only. This was confirmed with each participant if they agreed to take part in phase two of the research. Through the employment of the advertising strategy, twelve people volunteered to take part in the study. However, to expand the number of participants, a third strategy was employed through the opportunity of snowball sampling. Snowball sampling may be a viable strategy where the sample is particularly selective or difficult to contact and entails asking appropriate individuals if they could nominate others who fit the criteria of the study (Howitt, 2010). Once initial interviews were conducted, participants were asked whether they could recommend other potential interviewees who were appropriate. This process resulted in a further eight participants.

Twenty participants in total were interviewed over a period of six weeks between September and October 2012 (a profile of participants will be presented in Chapter 7, *Table 7.1*). Selection was based upon three specific criteria. The first was that individuals were employed within the occupational position of waiting staff or purser (guest services). These positions were primarily chosen because of the disparity of indicators found in phase one. Furthermore, both positions are strictly hospitality in nature, although on-board a cruise ship, they contrast in terms of responsibility, hierarchy, basic salary, shift patterns, and benefits. It was important that research was able to compare experiences between positions based upon such work and life differentiators. Secondly, participants were required to have at least completed one contract (6-10 months) on a cruise ship. It was thought that anything less than this would not have entitled any individual the full experience. Furthermore, if an individual had left considerably early in their contract, they would not be able to provide a significant contribution to the findings. Thirdly, individuals would have to be currently employed in the cruise ship industry or have worked in the industry in 2012. At the time of conducting the interviews, none of the participants were physically on a cruise ship. This would have been near logically impossible without the co-operation of an organisation. As with the quantitative sample, it was thought individuals not currently working in the industry still have the potential to contribute valuable information. Although unlike the quantitative sample, the

sample for the qualitative approach was restricted to those that have worked on-board since 2012.

4.5.2 *Procedure*

Telephone interviewing provided the necessary means by which to contact the individuals required for this research. Cruise ship work is well known for the employment of an international workforce, and therefore individuals are ‘scattered’ around the world (Rubin and Rubin, 2012: p.177). Face-to-face interviews are arguably a more appropriate method, since visual and emotional cues are available, although in this case this was not possible, either financially or logically.

Prior to interviewing, the schedule was first piloted with two former colleagues. One of the individuals had ceased working for the cruise ship industry within the previous six months of conducting the interview, while the second individual was still working within the industry. Both individuals were British, employed as pursers, and were male and female. Keeping in tradition, the pilot interviews were conducted over the telephone so that similar conditions were present. After each of the interviews the researcher explained the research aims and objectives and the overall purpose of the interview and in response they were both asked to comment on the relevance of the interview material, the researchers conduct throughout the interview, and also general comments about the interview technique of using a telephone. The feedback dedicated to the use of the telephone was positive, with both individuals agreeing they felt more relaxed and comfortable with the process being less intrusive. This may have been in part due to the fact that the researcher and individuals were already somewhat familiar with each other, but alternatively this familiarity may have encouraged the feedback to be more critical and honest. Notwithstanding, the process of the pilot interview also aided preparation for the non use of visual prompts and discourse, which benefited the researcher in the types of strategies to use. For example, taking into consideration the increased use of silences, or the increased use of verbal cues such as “mmm” and “uh-uh”. Because the researcher was unable to see the participant, on a couple of occasions the interviewer thought the interviewee had stopped talking, when in fact the interviewee was taking some time to think. This was a point which one the individuals commented upon. Furthermore, there were no comments relating to the material content.

After the pilot stage, interviews were arranged with the participants that were at a time and date convenient for them. Consent was confirmed by electronic means (email/online social medium) and also at the beginning of the telephone call. Anonymity and confidentiality was further protected through encouraging the interviewee to use a private and comfortable setting, and furthermore for the researcher to use a similar environment (King and Horrocks, 2010). In this case, the researcher made prior arrangements and used the empty office of his supervisor. To organise the date and time of interviews, all participants were initially contacted via electronic mediums (email/online social networks). During this process a broad outline of the research was given. The outline was kept focused, yet broad so to not influence the participant in any way. In addition to this, anonymity and confidentiality was declared. If the participant was happy with the information they were asked to reply with a convenient time and date, and also a contact telephone number. All participants, besides one, who agreed to take part in the study, were happy to be contacted via telephone. One individual preferred to perform the interview over the internet, using Skype. At the beginning of each interview the participant was given four pieces of information;

1. the research details were re-iterated;
2. anonymity and confidentiality was declared again;
3. participants were reminded that answers were voluntary and if they didn't want to answer a particular question they didn't have to, and;
4. participants were asked for permission to record the interview for transcription purposes.

All participants were happy with the information and agreed to be recorded. Time was often an issue and this restricted the chance of a prior introductory phone call which may have eased each participant into the research process and developed an interviewer-interviewee relationship. All individuals were given some visual introductory material about the research, although the detail of this information was dependant on the route of first contact, whether that through email or online social mediums. An email format gave the opportunity for a more detailed description of the research process, while online social mediums lent themselves towards a more focused description. It was important that all participants were aware of the main details of the study, including the nature of the interaction. King and Horrocks (2010, p.83) recognise this as an important point of the telephone interview stage, suggesting that 'clear briefing' is necessary in order to explain the type of interaction in order to obtain quality data and the depth required. Furthermore, as Atkinson (1971, p.48) states the

‘interview does not begin with Q1’, but rather when first contact is made, be that through discourse or the moment you first meet. It is important that the interviewee feels comfortable and at ease with the situation. The preamble may become one of the first opportunities for the interviewer to create such a friendly atmosphere, particularly in the instance of a telephone interview. A preamble allows the interviewer to introduce the research and the aims of the interview, but also presents some important information to the interviewee.

All interviews except for one were conducted on a one-on-one basis. There was one instance which involved a couple conducting the interview at the same time. The couple met while working on a cruise ship. Although there were two people in the interview, this was still counted as one interview. The reason for this was that one of the participants worked as a waiter, while the other worked in a shop. The interview allowed for both participants to “tell their story” and although this research was limited to individuals working as a waiter and purser, it was interesting to listen to their contrasting stories while on-board. Stories have a symbolic underpinning, providing individuals and groups within an organisational context the mechanism to fuse facts and emotion, which may have imaginative qualities, but ultimately share meanings and messages (Gabriel, 1991). This enabled the researcher to gain valuable and contrasting insights into the working experiences of different individuals on-board.

The length of the interviews was between seventeen minutes and just over two hours, with an average of over forty minutes. In all, there was thirteen and a half hours of recordings. There were two short interviews which lasted under twenty minutes. The researcher was aware beforehand that on these occasions the time was limited to a maximum of twenty minutes. Overall, the interview process was successful. The interview being semi-structured meant that conversations could follow issues raised by the participant. This was a factor in the varying length of the interviews. All interviews were recorded on a dictator device which was subsequently connected to the telephone.

4.5.3 Transcription of data

The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Although this was a time consuming process, it was a valuable exercise that allowed the researcher to become immersed in the data and to begin data analysis straight away (Gibbs, 2007). There were 212 pages of transcription material, totalling just over 100,000 words. The transcription procedure used is based on a cut-down version of the Jeffersonian system. This was particularly useful

in this case as the analysis is mainly concerned with the content of the discourse, rather than the speed or breathing annotations. It was important that the transcripts were readable, but also representative. The transcript notations are as follows:

(.)	Indicates a pause that is not natural in talk, the exact time is not measured.
(...)	Indicates audible speech
[Indicates overlapping speech
(word)	Indicates contextual information, for example (Laughs)
<u>Underlined</u>	Indicates emphasis of a word

The use of question marks, commas and full stops has been used where appropriate to improve the readability of the transcript. Furthermore, speech sounds were also recorded phonetically, for example, “um”, “erm”, “mmm”.

4.5.4 An evaluation of the procedure

As stated, the overall procedure was thought to be a success due to being able to meet the sample criteria and through facilitating a technique that allowed participants to tell their story. However, there were some complications which arose because of this particular approach. First, although the use of the telephone was required, there was some signal issues particularly with the long distance calls and calls to mobile phone devices which caused some confusion and also some difficulties with transcription. Issues with the signal were even more pertinent with the one interview conducted over the internet (Skype). There were several instances where there was a gap in the transcription because of a high pitch noise due to the loss of signal. Furthermore, there was one instance where the battery in the mobile phone device “expired” on two separate occasions, meaning that the researcher had to re-contact the participant. Secondly, the use of the telephone may not have aided the ease of understanding the different dialects. This was apparent for both the interviewer and interviewee, and although this may have been the case for face-to-face interviews, there were multiple times in the interview and while transcribing that miscommunication or misinterpretation was noticeable.

Thirdly, it was intended that the interviews should be held in a quiet place with minimal chance of disruption. In reality this was not always the case, and in particular on one occasion there was a lot of background noise which was sometimes distracting and in places made it difficult to hear the conversation. Fourthly, understandably individuals were giving up some of their free time voluntarily and on a couple of occasions the participants were restricted in time. As noted earlier, two interviews were limited to the time of a maximum of 20 minutes. This still gave for a beneficial amount of findings and all questions were asked, but as a consequence may have affected the quality of some of the interview. Some questions were a little rushed, and the researcher, conscious about the time, was unable to follow up on all of the interesting points that were brought up.

Fifthly, although problematic for all research, there were two occasions when an interview was arranged but when the phone call was made there was no answer. This led to two cancellations, which was particularly frustrating as on one occasion the researcher travelled to the university on an evening with the sole purpose of conducting the interview. Lastly, although actions were taken to try and make the whole process as comfortable as possible for the participant, it appeared that some seemed a little nervous, which may have affected the openness and free flowing of the conversation. This may have been attributed to the use of the telephone, or just because of the interview situation. Moreover, being an “outsider” may have had an impact on this. Furthermore, some were happy to respond to each of the questions, while others took the opportunity to talk about their experiences that had significance to them in an open and explanatory fashion. On two occasions the participants were very thankful for the opportunity as this was their first chance to reflect properly upon their experience.

4.6 Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data can be examined from a variety of different perspectives (McKinlay and McVittie, 2008). Similar to quantitative analysis, the basic goals of qualitative analysis are to make sense of the data, reduce the data set, and construct meaning to the findings. Therefore, it involves the process of segmenting the data into coherent parts, identifying relationships and patterns that explain what is observed. However, there is no consensus that exists for the analysis of qualitative data; it is more tailor made to the research, although carried by philosophical undercurrents (Creswell, 1998; Easterby-Smith *et al.* 2008). Coffey and Atkinson (1996, p.14) suggest that the use of complementary and contrasting analytical

strategies are useful to address different versions of social reality. Furthermore, this study took note of the work of Kvæle and Brinkmann (2009, p.233), through the use of a more ad hoc style of analysing data through using multiple approaches, if suitable, which is a ‘common mode of interview analysis’. This study is concerned with understanding the lived experiences of hospitality cruise ship workers, but rather than explore this in isolation, it is viewed as part of a dialectical relationship. Therefore, analysis is required to examine how individuals construct and talk about their workplace experiences in relation to identity and community formation, as a discursive event, and also the situation within which it is embedded.

To undertake this, the analysis is carried out in two strands. The first is a thematic route which looks at how hospitality cruise ship workers have experienced their lives within the context of the ship, and the second is a more creative discursive approach, which examines the deeper ways in which individuals have constructed this experience through the exploration of metaphors. The ambition of this approach is that each process of analysis may highlight different aspects of the social realities of the hospitality cruise ship worker. Therefore, there is no preconception that one analysis will complement the other, or that each analysis can be combined at some stage. Rather the analysis is primarily analysed on two separate fronts, or simply two different ways of looking at the data, which may be complementary, but moreover may discover contrasting and/or diverse findings. This is an interesting choice, in that it allows for an evolving analysis of individual understandings in a transitory working world, taking into consideration the context, and how individuals negotiate their understanding of experience, while bridging the gap between the individual and social.

A thematic analysis offers the opportunity to provide a framework that is capable of demonstrating the broader context specific experiences of working on a cruise ship that can be linked into identity and community. Alternatively, the use of metaphors provides a deeper form of analysis, and a shape of discourse which can disentangle complexity to assist individuals to express ideas or thoughts which they cannot or are reluctant to put into words (Gauntlett, 2007). Furthermore, it also provides a technique that allows hospitality cruise ship employees to share their tacit understandings of experiences, from a world which is semi-closed and in a way that is familiar.

4.6.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible research tool when communicating qualitative findings and is defined as ‘a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006: p.79). It is therefore an inductive and largely descriptive way of making sense of data. It simply seeks to reduce data into manageable and representative rich detail, which is important and related to the research question/objectives. In this sense, a lot of analysis has an element of thematic procedure. The analysis identifies what is said rather than how it is said (Howitt, 2010), which is an attribute to the collection and communication of a broader reflection of data. As Braun and Clarke (2006, p.81) state ‘thematic analysis can be a method that works both to reflect reality and to unpick or unravel the surface of reality’. Therefore its usefulness lies within the broadness of approach, offering a ‘thick description’ of data, which might be effective in particularly under-researched areas, such as the cruise ship industry.

This study follows the structure of Braun and Clarke (2006) for carrying out a thematic analysis. Howitt (2010, p.170) states this is a ‘toughened-up description’ of how to do such an analysis. The step-by-step guide has a total of six phases (Braun and Clarke, 2006: p.87):

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

The analytical process first begins while transcribing the interviews. This formed an initial stage of reflecting upon ideas and commonalities. Once interviews were transcribed, this was followed by the reading and re-reading of the interview transcripts, which involved a ‘constant moving back and forward between the entire data set’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006: p.86). The moving back and forth was constant throughout the whole analytical process. This allowed the researcher to get an overall “feel” of the interviews and become comfortable with the data, but also became a reflective technique which added rigour. During this process general notes and ideas were made and there was an initial search of patterns and/or issues that was of potential interest. Coding began once the researcher became immersed in the data. Miles and Huberman (1994, p.56) identify codes as ‘tags’ or ‘labels’ which assign ‘meaning

to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study', further highlighting that it is the 'meaning' which is the carrier of importance, rather than the actual words. When the codes have been collated the search begins for the overarching emerging themes which are explored, defined and compared with other sources of literature. This analysis is discussed in chapter 6.

4.6.2 Discourse analysis

The second part of analysis was more concerned with the specific discourses which constructed the nature of working on cruise ships. Discourse analysis has many approaches, which is a central contribution to a lack of agreed definition, suggesting that 'discourse sometimes comes close to standing for everything, and thus nothing' (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000: p.1128). Burr's (2003, p.202) conception of discourse is the 'systematic, coherent set of images, metaphors and so on that construct an object in a particular way'. This definition takes note of the multiplicity of discourse and what it comes to stand for. Discourse can be a spoken, written or a visual vehicle of transferring knowledge and identity construction. In this sense, the analysis of discourse is much deeper than thematic analysis. Discourse analysis is more than descriptive and reflective, instead focusing on the constructive and underlying meanings of social practices and experience. This means that discourse is not only a vehicle or medium, but rather has its own properties which can impact upon individuals and social interaction (McKinlay and McVittie, 2008).

Discourse analysis is primarily concerned with 'how language is used within certain contexts' (Rapley, 2007: p.2) regulating knowledge and common understandings, and informing social practices. Therefore language can be articulated as a moderator of social reality, and the understandings and knowledge of the world. The focus on discourse is what gives the approach distinction, but also similarity, as language is used for almost all qualitative research in both subject and meaning (Schmitt, 2005). It is not only important what language is used and how it is carried out, but to what meaning or understanding is emphasised. Language, in whatever form (spoken/written), can be an important tool in the investigation of social and organisational research (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000). As Fairclough (2003, p.2) states 'language is an irreducible part of social life'. Analysis draws upon shared understandings that individuals and groups of individuals make sense and detract meaning within a context. It is contextually tied, as it is assumed that choices or available discourses are dependent or

limited to that situation. Therefore the use of language cannot be understood without reference to the context.

Although the use of language or human communication is about the exchanging of information, it is also a central way in which individuals construct and affiliate to an identity or social group (Gee, 1999; De Fina, 2011; Vaara *et al.* 2003). Identities and the roles of individuals are not thought to be fixed, but situated and active, which, amongst other variables, are negotiated through talk (Koester, 2006). As stated, discourses are context dependent, tied to structures and practices, which can impact on how individuals think, feel and act, and furthermore construct an identity. As Fairclough (2003, p.159) notes, ‘Who you are is partly a matter of how you speak, how you write, as well as a matter of embodiment – how you look, how you hold yourself, how you move, and so forth’. Discourse analysis recognises that identity is not a fixed entity, and draws from a ‘subtle inter-weaving of many different threads’ (Burr, 2003: p.106). Instead, it acknowledges that identity is situational and dynamic. This study focuses on the discovery of the way hospitality cruise ship workers construct meaning from their experience.

4.6.2.1 The exploration of metaphors

The interviews in this research are considered discourse events, embracing the understanding of a particular context, whereby individuals construct a particular identity and detract meaning. A discourse approach to analysis can facilitate the understanding of how identities are constructed and give meaning through discursive processes. A central theme in discourse research is to explore how individuals employ language in their construction of meaning. One route or strand of discourse is through the use of metaphors. Much contemporary research on the subject of metaphor draws upon the work of Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) *‘Metaphors We Live By’*, who asserted that metaphors structure conceptual understanding. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) regard metaphors as ‘pervasive’, not only in the thinking of language use, but also ingrained into thought and action. In this sense, a metaphor can be a representative link between language and thought, and furthermore can be fundamental to the signification of reality to understand and interpret the world (Lehtonen, 2000). As Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p.3) state, ‘the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor’.

In its simplest of forms, a metaphor creates a distinctive understanding of an object/experience through the connection of something that is relatable and familiar. For example, “Michael has the heart of a lion”, does not literally mean that “Michael” has a lion’s heart, but may have a shared understanding of being brave, strong, and courageous. Therefore, through the vehicle of discourse an individual can communicate effectively, maintaining a shared meaning which may or may not be difficult to express otherwise. Metaphorical language means not taking language literally but rather deciphers the underlying meaning. In this sense, a metaphor can reveal an insight into how individuals make sense of events, which can be attributed in a collective and individual way (Cazal and Inns, 1998), reflecting an intersection of context specific social meanings and experience. In short, a metaphor can be considered a form of discourse that transfers an experience or process (e.g., emotion, ideas, relationship) that is tied contextually and often tacitly, and expressed so that it becomes clearer and relatable. Due to the presentational value that metaphors offer individuals, it can be a useful tool to express ideas or thoughts which are sensitive, complex or intangible, or furthermore in areas which are poorly understood, such as cruise ship work. This can be attributed to their ‘generative quality as carriers of meaning across conceptual realms’ (Schultze and Orlowski, 2001: p.48). A common utterance from interviewees was that only experiencing ship life could give a perception of what it is like. In this sense, the cruise ship being a semi-enclosed world may be difficult for “outsiders” to grasp understanding. The formulation of metaphors can be a tool which can tap into this understanding.

4.6.2.2 Metaphors in the literature

It is recognised that metaphors can offer an effective and powerful tool for communicating findings (Lindlof, 1995; Patton, 1990). Miles and Huberman (1994, p.250-252) state that the ‘richness’ and ‘complexity’ of metaphors are particularly useful for analysis, and are competent in reducing the data set, pattern-making, decentering devices, and a way of connecting findings to theory. In essence the use of metaphorical understanding bypasses description and provides a medium between intangible and complex social processes, to a collective understanding. The manipulation of metaphors can be considered as a niche form of discourse analysis (e.g. Cameron, 2003) and so it may be particularly useful to explore how previous research has implemented metaphors within its studies. Metaphors have been applied to a wide range of research areas, specifically, and more relatable to this study, to the area of

work, identity and community. Morgan (1997) argues that metaphors and images are central in the way organisations can be understood and managed, and demonstrates this understanding through seeing organisations as machines, organisms, brains and so on.

The use of metaphors has particularly been successfully applied to educational research, and more pertinent to the identity of teachers (e.g., Cameron, 2003; Hunt, 2006; Leavy *et al.* 2007). Taking note from the work of Cameron (2003, p.24), she suggests that a metaphor can be used to explore sub-groups in society to ‘establish in-group language and identity’, whereby the shared understandings of metaphors may be a vehicle to gain membership or the exclusion of others. Furthermore, this may also be a source of deviation from group norms. Cowan and Bochantic (2011) examine the use of metaphors by those employed in ‘blue-collar professions’. Blue-collar positions can be categorised as skilled and unskilled, although Cowan and Bochantic’s (2011) focus is on those individuals in manual labour/unskilled positions (i.e. custodians). The research more accurately explores the relationship between the work and life spheres, which are of particular interest to the current study of cruise ship workers. Using a grounded metaphoric analysis, metaphors were teased out of the participants through asking direct questions such as “what the relationship between work and life is like?”. Findings suggest that the analysis of communication, and more significantly metaphors, was an important process to the understanding between one’s work and personal life, while also often highlighting tensions that exist. Froggatt (1998) explores nurses’ emotional work through the analysis of metaphor and language. The research indicates that nurses use metaphors to communicate sensitive subjects, such as death. This was done through metaphorical concepts, which ‘were mirrored in practical strategies’ that allowed the nurses to distance themselves from emotional threats. The research of Froggatt (1998) highlight how metaphors, which are ‘grounded in reality’, give an understanding of practical experience. Identified by such studies above, metaphors can provide a link between tacit realities of work and life, and a shared understanding of practical experience. Furthermore, a metaphor may provide the vehicle to explore more sensitive or underlying areas, which in the case of the cruise ship, could be the emotional threats of being away from friends and family, a feeling of being isolated, or even threats concerned with their occupations.

Palmer and Lundberg (1995) in an exploratory study, examine how the applications of metaphors are used in hospitality organisations to characterise their experience. Understood as ‘cognitive lenses we use to make sense of all situations’, the analysis of metaphors was a technique to surface the ‘dominant images’ that hospitality employees have regarding their

organisation (Palmer and Lundberg, 1995: p.80). Taking a quantitative route, findings show that there were twice as many negative metaphors than positive, while structural metaphors accounted for around a third of all metaphors. The structural metaphors, which were ‘machine’ orientated demonstrated organisational and managerial practices as concerned with ‘prediction’ and ‘control’ (Palmer and Lundberg, 1995: p.84). This was not always deemed to be negative. Because metaphors are ‘deeply embedded’ within organisational life and practices, influencing thought and behaviour, Palmer and Lundberg (1995, p.84) note that metaphors deserve serious attention and can be predictors in many organisational strife’s, such as ‘clues to turnover’, ‘management style’, and ‘training effectiveness’.

A study pertinent to this research is Weaver (2005), who explores the use of ‘performative’ metaphors in the interactive service work of cruise ship workers. In Weaver’s (2005) research, although social relations and work/life dynamics are recognised and discussed, the use of metaphors is discussed primarily as the interactions between tourists and employees. Therefore, the focus is more towards the ‘performative’ and ‘onstage’ (e.g. Goffman, 1959) metaphorical use, without applications to the community dimensions of cruise ship work and life. Although the worker/customer interaction is an important element of cruise ship work, this one interaction does not denote the totality of cruise ship work. Furthermore, Weaver (2005) reported the difficulties in getting data and gaining access to the industry. This reflected upon the data collection methods, which were primarily gathered by short informal interviews with crew members only (waiters and room stewards). As an occupation has such a pervasive aspect upon a cruise worker’s life on-board, it would be interesting to explore the perceptions of individuals from contrasting occupations in differing hierarchical levels, rather than focusing specifically upon the lower hierarchical category occupations. Moreover, although performative metaphors may be salient in this study, it will not be restricted just to this category.

Understanding how metaphors are used can assist in the understanding of how people think, make sense of the world, and how individuals communicate (Cameron, 2003). Furthermore, the analysis of metaphors is concerned with how metaphors are structured, used and understood (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). In other words, to what meaning is the metaphor being expressed, what information is being transferred, and what kind of relationship does this have with the experience/process. Thus bridging perceptive thought processes with shared understanding. In this sense, metaphors can provide insights into hidden emotions or

experiences, particularly with regards to belonging to a group, transferring to such concepts as identity, or how individuals construct meaning of themselves.

4.6.2.3 Metaphor analysis

Generally, metaphor analysis, as a research tool, begins with the collection of linguistic metaphors from participants, which are sorted into groups or clusters by lexical connections, and subsequently given labels from which meaning is transferred (Cameron, 2003: p.240). This can be typically applied in two ways: through the use of pre-determined metaphors which have been recognised in previous research, or through the development of metaphors based upon what is discovered in the data. Each approach has its appropriateness and usefulness. Pre-determined metaphors have their strengths in generalisability and transferability of findings, for example the transfer of findings from one context to another which can strengthen or broaden one's findings. Although a counter argument to this approach would be that the search of metaphors in this format could be narrow, which could miss or ignore prominent metaphors which are more pertinent to the current study. On the other hand, developing new metaphors allows for an open and focused analysis, but could limit the usefulness of findings to just that particular study. Morgan (1997, p.351) advises that to 'limit your thinking and you will limit your range of action'. Given that the analysis of metaphors in this research is largely exploratory, the analysis will remain open and evolving with a view to creating a 'mosaic of competing and complementary insights' (Morgan, 1997: p.353). Therefore in remaining open, allowing for a "fuller" exploration, in contrast to being limited in focus.

The extraction of metaphors was unprompted (Weaver, 2005). This meant that the interview schedule did not directly seek to ask participants to think metaphorically, allowing participants to naturally and organically use, and more importantly be given the choice of metaphorical use. In other words, individuals chose to use metaphors as a way of reflecting their understanding as a semi-conscious discourse. This is contrary to being asked directly. This allowed an exploration of the 'subconscious, pervasive metaphoric systems "naturally" occurring in their texts' (Noyes, 2006: p.899) that is 'worthwhile for making sense of messy interactive processes' (Tracy *et al.* 2006: p.174), rather than producing 'some fairly artificial metaphors' (Steger, 2007: p.20). Metaphors used in this way can be used to make sense of the realities of work and life on-board.

The current analytical procedure of metaphors was primarily influenced by the work of Steger (2007), but also takes note of Cameron (2003). Typical in most qualitative analysis, there is not one recognised metaphor analysis route for research. The analysis will be undertaken in three steps (discussed below), which basically involves the identification of metaphor in discourse, evaluating the general meaning of the metaphor, and finally investigating the connotations relevant to the context (i.e. cruise ship). The analysis of metaphor is not to seek an all-encompassing metaphor that are used by cruise ship employees, but to locate multiple metaphors, which may contrast, to fully explore their understandings or realities of working and living on-board a cruise ship.

Step one: Metaphor identification. As stated by Steger (2007), it would not be possible to analyse all metaphors. This apparent, there still requires a systematic way of identifying and justifying metaphors within the discourse. This involves an inductive process of reading the data several times, as a single piece of data (i.e. one transcript) and also as a collective (i.e. all transcripts). The frequency of the metaphor use should be noted. The metaphor does not have to be exact, but the metaphorical meaning should be similar (Steger, 2007). Cameron (2003) suggests this can be done through clustering metaphors together that share commonalities, and therefore connecting local metaphors to a wider discourse event. Furthermore, how the individual elaborated on the metaphor, the use of contrasting metaphors, and also the emotion used when the metaphor was used should be noted.

Step one is a ‘heuristic process’ (Steger, 2007: p.7) in that it is dependent on the researcher’s creative and practical capability of identifying metaphors. Moreover, although the approach to identifying metaphors is inductive, it does not mean that metaphors used in other studies will not be applicable in this setting (e.g., Erickson, 2004; Paules, 1996; Weaver, 2005). The process of identifying metaphors, as suggested, will remain open, permitting the discovery of new metaphors but also being conscious of pre-determined metaphors.

Step two: General metaphor analysis. This step involves evaluating the general meaning of the metaphor to the individuals in that social group, i.e. occupational community. In short, using multiple literature sources, including dictionary definitions, to check for the “meaning transfer” (Cameron, 2003). This entails exploring in what other prior contexts the identified metaphors have been used. So although the process of identifying metaphors is largely inductive, it is also important to see how metaphors are applied in other fields of research or different situations which may be of use in interpretation.

Step three: Text-Immanent metaphor analysis. The final step involves the investigation of the metaphor within the context of the cruise ship. As stated previously, the metaphor can only be fully understood in terms of the context it is used in. It is important that the use of the metaphor is not only linked to the context (i.e. cruise ship) but also to the individual/social group (i.e. occupational group). For example, in this instance, how an individual's occupation has helped make sense of their experience, or how the individual's motivations, background and self-concept may have influenced the use of metaphor.

The aim of a metaphor analysis was to see the interview data from a different perspective or lens giving a different facet to the interview, and an overall deeper and creative level of analysis. A central matter of this analysis was to understand how participants used metaphors to make sense of themselves (individual), and also how participants placed themselves relative to others (social). Therefore, identifying how the use of metaphors constructs meaning, how does it construct an identity and the boundaries of identity, and does the production of metaphors challenge or conform to relations of power.

4.6.2.4 Limitations of metaphor analysis

Although the analysis of metaphors could provide an interesting lens in which to make sense of this data, there are limitations of this approach. First, the analysis will provide the necessary toolkit in which to gather deep and meaningful data, but it will be situation specific to the cruise ship environment. Although similar metaphors may be used in other research areas, the meanings could differ somewhat. Furthermore, the analysis of metaphors is concerned with a higher level of subjectivity. For instance, what one researcher deems as the underlying meaning could be totally different to what another researcher concludes, and moreover both could be different to how the participant makes sense of it. Secondly, a metaphor can represent social phenomena in multiple and sometimes contradictory ways (Schmitt, 2005: p.361). This noted, reality itself is arguably complex and intertwined, and to grasp understanding of such requires multiple techniques that offer different social lenses. Thirdly, an analysis of metaphors, although it doesn't claim to be, cannot give an all encompassing view of a social phenomenon. Morgan (1997, p.5) states that 'metaphor stretches imagination in a way that can create powerful insights, but at the risk of distortion'. However, Morgan (1997) does go on to further discuss that no theory or method can give an all encompassing view, and it is rather the way it is used to find ways of seeing and understanding that is relevant. Finally, although the analysis of metaphors in discourse can

provide a means to reveal an array of underlying values within the ideational nature of group identities, Cameron (2003, p.269) stresses that ‘caution’ should be adhered to. Based in an ideational setting the use of metaphors can appear in conversation for several reasons, such as the ‘nature of interactional talk’ or fashioned by a ‘sub-conscious accommodation’ (Cameron 2003: p.269), which furthermore can have divergence in meaning (i.e. from individual to interpreter) and also unexpected meanings. Clearly, the use of metaphors cannot “tell us the whole story”, but it can highlight how individuals on a cruise ship construct meaning to their world and develop a sense of self, as Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p.193) argue that a metaphor is a useful tool for ‘trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally’.

4.7 Evaluation of research design

There is an emphasis with all research that the results found are valid, reliable and generalizable (Gibbs, 2007). In short, there is reasoning in the methodological processes of the research, and furthermore that the findings or conclusions of the study can be trusted and are confident. Although this research has implemented a mixed-method strategy, the main phase of the research is qualitative in which the majority of the conclusions will be extracted. This doesn’t imply that the quantitative phase was redundant in anyway, more so that this phase of the research played an important sequential step in the development of the qualitative phase and furthermore aided the reliability and validity of the research. This maintains that the qualitative results deserve more focus in terms of being trusted or derived confidence.

The terms validity and reliability have often been ignored by qualitative researchers, generally because of the preconception that these are related to more quantitative research, which may be inappropriate in the rigour of qualitative investigation (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Robson, 2011). Therefore, the way that quantitative and qualitative findings are trusted may differ. A primary distinction is that qualitative research does not claim to be replicable and emphasis is rather placed upon the exploration of circumstantial complexity that naturally occurs (Marshall and Rossman, 1999: p.195). As the aim of this research is to primarily present a rich, in-depth understanding of cruise ship work rather than the discovery of a universal truth, it acknowledges that this research can only offer one possible interpretation among others. Because of this, the truth is not the primary issue, rather it is the ‘trustworthiness’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and ‘relevance’ (Hammersley, 1992: p.68) of the research that should be considered. Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed a model of trust in

qualitative research in which there are a total of four elements to take into consideration: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This is a particularly useful distinction and has been applied to a range of qualitative studies, but to the researcher's understanding the four elements roughly consider the same reflections as reliability and validity (i.e. Credibility – internal validity, transferability – external validity, dependability – reliability, and confirmability – objectivity). For example, Long and Johnson (2000, p.31) argue that 'labels' or distinctions such as those used above 'have the same essential meaning, and nothing is to be gained'. Moreover, an answer for judging the quality of one's work may just be to incorporate a "qualitative view" of reliability and validity.

4.7.1 Validity

The purpose of qualitative research is to construct reality as to what participants recognise it to be in a context-specific environment. Therefore, validity is primarily concerned with how the analysis represents an accurate account which 'correctly captures what is actually happening' (Gibbs, 2007: p.91). Moreover, the validity of the study is dependent on the ability of the researcher. Validity has been usefully segmented, and two typical segments are that of internal and external validity. Internal validity is briefly concerned with the accuracy of the phenomena being researched, and external validity is relative to how generalisable the findings are (Cohen *et al.* 2011). Conventionally, qualitative researchers have suggested that the generalisability or transferability of findings is problematic (e.g. Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This is generally attributed to the small sample sizes of qualitative research and also the specificity in terms of area of investigation. Furthermore, the underlying principle of much qualitative research is to gather "rich", in-depth description of a phenomenon, which can be incompatible with the idea of generalisability. As a study that is based upon a specific sample in a somewhat unusual setting, the generalisability of the findings from this research should be questioned. However, Hammersley (1992, p.68) asserts that 'research must only not produce findings that seem likely to be true, these findings must also be of some human relevance'. In short, the findings should be questioned in terms of their general usefulness, and in particular their usefulness to a 'wide (but specified) range of circumstances beyond those studied in the particular research' (Gibbs, 2007: p.91).

As no research can claim to be 100 per cent valid, it is argued that validity is a matter of degree, attempting to minimise invalidity and maximise validity (Cohen *et al.* 2011). To do

so, there are several strategies that researchers can adopt to increase the validity or credibility of findings (e.g., Creswell and Miller, 2000; Gibbs, 2007). There were two primary strategies implemented in this research to improve the validity of the findings: (1) Triangulation, and (2) Member validation. Triangulation collects data from different sources, not only in the sense of methodological techniques, but also through different samples and analysis. For example, this research conducted quantitative and qualitative studies, using multiple data analysis techniques, whilst particularly being focused upon two occupations that were diverse hierarchically, operationally, and financially compensated. To improve the quality and consistency of the study, mixed-methods were employed, using both semi-structured interviews (main study) and questionnaires. Data triangulation was moreover used through exploring different samples. The questionnaire and interviews gathered opinions from individuals of various hospitality disciplines that were both employed and not currently employed in the cruise ship industry. Furthermore, the interview transcripts were analysed by both thematic and discourse analysis, offering an approach that could analyse the data through different lenses, and potentially identifying a more complete analysis through different levels of interpretation.

Another strategy employed was member validation, which was a route for checking and confirming the accuracy of the findings with participants. Member validation adds credibility to the study in that the participants and the researcher have a chance to add accuracy to the transcripts (Creswell and Miller, 2000), although this has been questioned to what extent participants are critically able to evaluate the scripts (Silverman, 2011). This noted, the aim of this action was not to gain critical evaluation - this is foremost a practice for the researcher, supervisors and colleagues. Rather, the aim was to confirm accuracy and satisfaction of findings with the participant. After each of the interviews, an email was sent to the participants. The first reason was to thank all participants once more for their time, but secondly was to check that all participants were happy with the procedure, and furthermore have the opportunity to add further information if they thought necessary. More importantly, for validation purposes, participants were emailed a copy of their transcripts once completed. Time was an issue for several of the participants and so they declined to read the transcripts on the basis of researcher trust. This was particularly notable, although not exclusively, to those individuals who had since returned to the cruise ships.

4.7.2 Reliability

Reliability is relevant to quantitative and qualitative research, but thought about in different ways. Reliability is often judged upon whether or not findings would be the same if the study was carried out in the same way (Kirk and Miller, 1986). Within quantitative research, reliability assumes consistency and duplication, and simply through using a similar sample, methods and context, then results would be comparable (Cohen *et al.* 2011). In qualitative research this is difficult to do and also not strived for, particularly because the researcher's subjectivity has to be acknowledged. A qualitative researcher cannot claim to be totally objective, and therefore requires the researcher to be reflexive, or at least acknowledge some degree of subjectivity. Briefly, reflexivity is the attempt to understand the researcher's effect upon participants in the research situation while gathering data (Gill and Johnson, 2002). More so, it is the way in which the researcher comes to understand and interprets the information based upon their philosophical considerations and also individual experience. This is particularly evident when the metaphor analysis was undertaken, as this type of analysis conforms to some level of researcher subjectivity.

Reliability, in a qualitative sense, can be demonstrated in that the research has been conducted in a 'thorough, careful and honest' way (Robson, 2011: p.159) in which the recorded data 'fits' what is actually observed (Cohen *et al.* 2011: p.202). The thought behind this is that through the systematic demonstration of research processes and reasoning, it makes it possible for others to explore a similar issue in a similar way. One strategy to consider this is an audit trail (e.g. Lincoln and Guba, 1985) or case study protocol (Yin, 2003). To summarise the audit trail or protocol of this research, this chapter has discussed how the data was gathered and recorded; how quantitative data was analysed and interpreted to feed into the qualitative phase, and how the qualitative data was analysed. The analytical chapters will further demonstrate how the data was reduced into themes and explored through a metaphorical viewpoint. The purpose of expressing the decision trail is to 'allow others to decide on the worth of the study by following the trail taken and comparing it with their own conclusions' (Long and Johnson, 2000: p.35). However, because of some degree of researcher subjectivity, if the study was reproduced in a similar approach there may be a variation in the findings, in which both may be reliable.

Relative to the interview, it is important that the interview questions were understood by the participants in the same way (Silverman, 2011) and also that the interview schedule was standardised to increase consistency. This noted, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.245) extend

that too much emphasis upon reliability in the interview procedure ‘may counteract creative innovations and variability’ and therefore become too restrictive in the ability to find new and appropriate information. Although it is important to standardise the interview schedule, participants vary in the information they decide to disclose and therefore the thoughtful use of probes or prompts are a useful strategy for the researcher to implement in a way to unearth more relevant data.

To reduce uncertainty of the interview process, a thorough pilot was implemented. This was not only beneficial in terms of recognising how participants understood and reacted to the questioning, but also acted as a learning curve for the researcher. This was particularly important in that the process of interviewing by telephone was new to the researcher. Therefore, the pilot was a valuable technique that allowed the researcher to be more aware of non verbal cues which aided a more natural conversation without many interruptions and confusion. Furthermore, all participants gave permission for the interview to be recorded. This allowed the researcher to focus on the interaction in more depth rather than being fixated upon writing notes. This gave the opportunity to be more reflective and reactive, meaning that the researcher could really listen to what was being said and effectively use prompts or probes in which to gather deeper or additional information from the participants. The ability to record the interviews also resulted in the transcripts being more “fuller” and a truer reflection of what was said. Recordings could be listened to on several occasions to get a more accurate representation of the discourse. Furthermore, this gave the opportunity to use some appropriate discourse symbols which can represent a more ‘comprehensive’ and ‘reliable’ way of recording data because of the enhanced detail included (Silverman, 2011: p.366).

4.7.3 Ethical considerations

Initial ethical approval for the research design (qualitative and quantitative) was acquired from the university. Throughout the research process it is important that the researcher remains ethically aware. This was particularly evident, although not restricted to the qualitative phase of the study. The interview is a platform from which participants are encouraged to discuss, explain and evaluate their experiences, and a consequence of this is that personal and/or sensitive information may be disclosed. While the nature of this investigation was not to provoke such boundaries, the researcher sought a true reflection of their experience and inevitably there was some discussion of personal/sensitive material. It

was important that participants were reassured with the research process, but also that they could trust the researcher. As discussed in this chapter, anonymity of names and company names was declared at several intervals in both quantitative and qualitative phases. Each participant in the interviews was given a pseudonym to protect their identity. Furthermore, after each of the interviews, participants were given an explanation of what the findings would be used for and also, as discussed in Section 4.7.1, each member was emailed a copy of their transcripts for approval. This was particularly important in that participants were able to reflect upon their discussions and provide validation. There were no requests to change any material within the transcripts.

4.8 Summary

This chapter has demonstrated the research approach to accomplish the aims and objectives of this study. The decision was made, based upon previous research and the practicalities of the industry entwined with the potential for “fuller” findings, to use a mixed-method strategy. The preliminary study was an online questionnaire, using the concept of ‘Job Embeddedness’ to seek critical factors of the work and life dynamics of the employment on cruise ships. These preliminary findings, being mindful of community, identity and place, were used to assist in the direction of the main qualitative study. Due to the complexity of working on-board, the main study was analysed in two stages: Thematic and Metaphor analysis. The aim of using two analytical tools was to view the data through different “lenses”, which may uncover contradictory or complementary findings. Chapters 5 – 7 will present the findings of this research.

Chapter 5 – Research Findings: Preliminary Study

5.1 Introduction

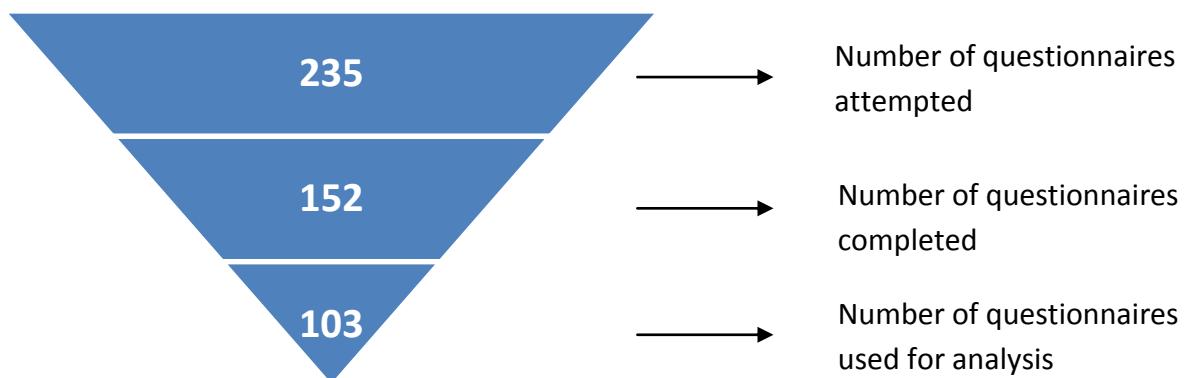
The previous chapter justified the mixed methods approach that was used for this research project. It was reasoned that due to the under researched, disconnected and complex working environment of the cruise ship industry, applying quantitative and qualitative methods was likely to capitalise on a fuller exploration of the subject. The overriding aim of the preliminary study was to enhance the quality of the main study. The review of literature identified promising areas which can assist in the understanding of a hospitality cruise ship employee's work and life. These were notably in the areas of work, community and identity within a given context. A particular concept which aims to explore aspects of these areas, while seeking to investigate the 'totality' of one's working and non-working life, is that of 'Job Embeddedness' (Mitchell *et al.* 2001). Through the use of this concept, this study aims to highlight key indicators of relationships and patterns in a field where there has been little research. This chapter presents a summary of the questionnaire results, from which the findings will provide the basis for further exploration via a more intensive qualitative route. This chapter will therefore discuss the demographics of the sample and summarise key issues. The issues raised will be explored in terms of the demographic groups to see if there are any common themes or key differences as to how individuals or groups of individuals respond to the questionnaire (see Appendix 1). At the end of the questionnaire there was an opportunity for respondents to openly comment upon their experience or to add anything that may be of some use to this study which had not previously been considered. There is a section which identifies these comments and seeks to grasp any understandings. Finally, a discussion of the issues raised in this chapter and how these can be transferred to the main study will be explored.

5.2 Characteristics of respondents

5.2.1 Number of responses

As *Figure 5.1* shows, a total of 152 participants completed the questionnaire over a period of 6 months (September 2011 – March 2012), from which 103 could be used for analysis. The rejection of 49 responses was predominantly because the respondent's main occupation while working on-board a cruise ship lay outside of the sample frame. Although many of the rejected responses seemed of valid quality and contained interesting material, this research is clearly focused on hospitality-related occupations, and so individuals practising nursing, engineering, accountancy, therapy, etc, were not relevant to the research aim. Other reasons for rejection were for the suspicion of foul play. In addition, a total of 83 questionnaires were incomplete and so were not taken into consideration for analysis. This adjusts the total number of questionnaires attempted by participants to 235, of which 152 were fully completed, and a total of 103 used for analysis.

Figure 5.1 Completed questionnaires



Although a sample of 103 is an acceptable figure to draw conclusions, in reality more respondents would have been desirable. This is a common concern in research using self reported measures. Furthermore, this research had other variables to contend with that may have affected the number of respondents. First, the unco-operative nature of cruise ship organisations to assist with the questionnaire distribution made it difficult to contact cruise ship employees direct. An alternative route was therefore implemented through the use of online social networks and mediums, which was deemed the approach with the most

potential. Although this provided an acceptable amount of findings, organisational co-operation would have been helpful. Second, an online based questionnaire requires respondents with the technical competence to navigate around the internet. They also need to be aware or at least knowledgeable of the social networks which were targeted to distribute the questionnaire. Therefore cruise ship employees who do not use the internet or who are not connected to the targeted social networks will not be aware of the questionnaire. In the absence of organisational co-operation, this alternative strategy had to be put into practice. The remainder of this chapter will analyse the responses from the 103 respondents.

5.2.2 Demographics, age and marital status

Table 5.1 gives the demographic profile of the respondents. It shows that the majority of the research sample was female (63%) and also a relatively young workforce (59% were 34 years old or less), although the number of respondents aged 18 – 24 represented just 3% of the overall sample. This figure, regardless of on hospitality being predominantly labelled as a “young peoples” industry, is consistent with other cruise based research (e.g., Gibson, 2008; Lee-Ross, 2008), whereby hospitality employees on-board are generally older than the traditional workers based on land. Furthermore, a second perception of hospitality is that the industry is dominated by a female workforce, which this research sample supports. On land this may be the case, but research within the cruise industry shows that the workforce is male orientated, suggesting that the sample may not be entirely reflective of cruise ship personnel. Notwithstanding, 37% (male) is still a significant representation, while similar cruise-based research (e.g. Lee-Ross, 2008) recorded lower or comparable gender findings particularly when the research tool was self administered. Another key finding from *Table 5.1* is that the cruise industry may be more suited to the single individual (56%); a key component may be determined by the transient nature of work on-board cruise ships, coupled with the invasive nature of the work, thus leaving limited time for those workers with family ties.

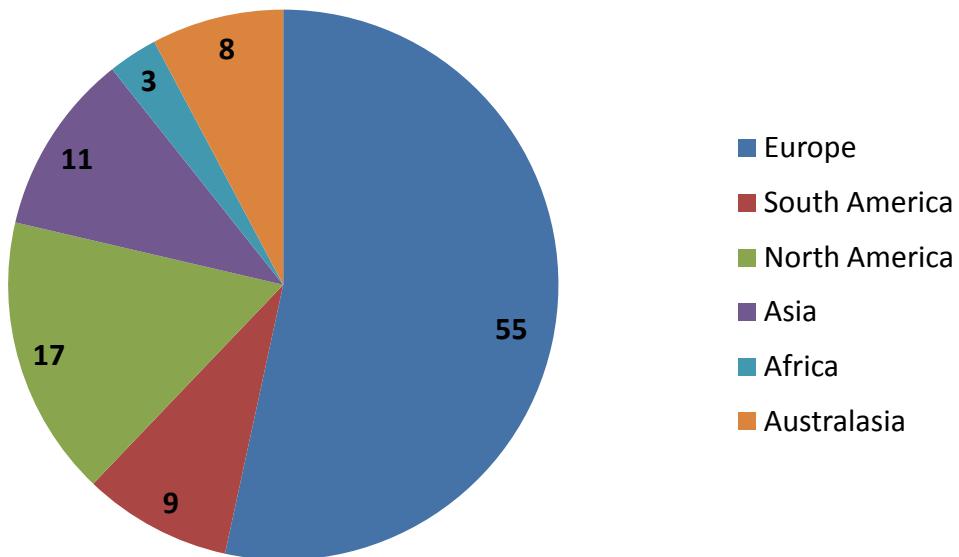
Table 5.1 Demographical profile of respondents

Demographics	Frequency % (number of respondents)					
Age	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55+	Totals
Gender						
Male	5 (2)	50 (19)	29 (11)	11 (4)	5 (2)	37 (38)
Female	2 (1)	60 (39)	31 (20)	8 (5)	0 (0)	63 (65)
						100 (103)
Marital Status						
Single	5 (3)	64 (37)	24 (14)	7 (4)	0 (0)	56 (58)
Married	0 (0)	44 (14)	34 (11)	16 (5)	6 (2)	31 (32)
Divorced	0 (0)	71 (5)	29 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (7)
Other	0 (0)	33 (2)	67 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (6)
Age Total	3 (3)	56 (58)	30 (31)	9 (9)	2 (2)	100 (103)

5.2.3 *Nationality*

The sample was highly diverse, with respondents originating from 35 different countries (*Figure 5.2*). This is seemingly representative of a 21st Century cruise ship.

Figure 5.2 Number of respondents by continent (%)



The majority of the sample was European nationals (55%) from 21 different countries, of which 30 respondents were from countries in Eastern Europe. The UK ($n = 18$) was the highest respondent country base in Europe and of the whole sample. The route of data collection, i.e. the predominant use of “western” focused social media websites, may have granted easier access to the questionnaire for certain countries. This noted, the Internet has a global reach and efforts were made by the researcher to access mediums (online forums, social media etc) that were subscribed to by an international audience. Approximately a quarter of all respondents ($n = 26$) were from the continents of America, a total of 17% from North America and a total of 9% from South America. Those from Asia (India, Indonesia, and Philippines) represented 11% of the sample, with 8% from Australasia, and 3% from Africa.

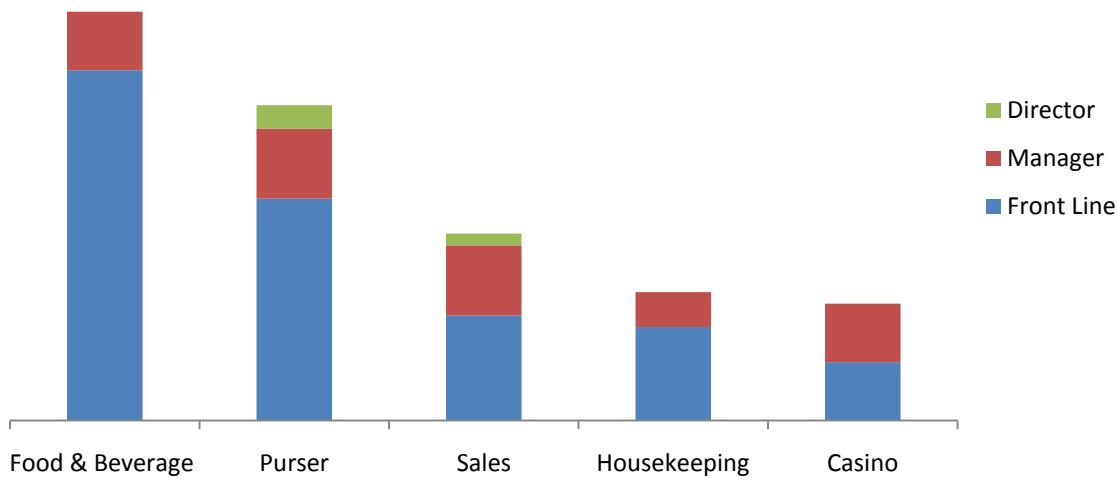
5.2.4 Occupation and organisation characteristics

To gain an overall picture of the working environment on-board a cruise ship, it was important that this research attracted the attention not only of current employees within the industry, but also employees that were previously employed in the industry. This is useful in

extending the insights of the present individuals involved within the industry towards the ability of hindsight and further enquiry as to why an individual may have left the industry. Therefore, the research sample would have the potential to combine the views of current employees and their perspectives of the industry, and also the individuals that have since left the industry. Additionally, the contractual nature of the industry indicates that some individuals may be on “leave” from the industry (in-between contracts), and therefore may not be employed on a ship at the time of completing the questionnaire. These individuals will still have significant views relevant to this research. From the sample, a total of 21% ($n = 22$) were still working within the industry, therefore 79% ($n = 81$) were not on a cruise ship at the time of completing the questionnaire. Of those individuals not presently working on-board, 23% chose not to disclose their time out of the industry, while 18% had left the industry within a year, 40% within 3 years, and 61% within the last 5 years. The mean value for time out of the industry was 4 years 8 months, with a range of 3 months to 15 years.

Respondents were from differing occupational backgrounds, different levels of management and responsibility and were also employed in separate departments on the ship (*Figure 5.3*). 71% of individuals were employed in a direct customer role (front line), 26% had managerial titles, and 3% of a director’s position. The managerial positions held on-board were similarly spread between male ($n = 12$) and females ($n = 15$), although more females were represented in front of house positions. The most represented department was food and beverage (35%), closely followed by pursers (front office) (27%), sales (17%), housekeeping (11%), and the casino (10%). The sample offered a wide range of individuals from hospitality backgrounds, differing in their responsibilities and departments.

Figure 5.3 Department and responsibilities



5.2.5 Key issues arising from the sample survey

The sample identified an encouraging platform that could be used for further analysis, although there were some issues based on the sample itself. The main concern with regards to this particular sample was whether these results were generalisable to the cruise industry population, or just a product of the selection. This can be further discussed in terms of access and sampling. As discussed in Section 5.2.1, gaining organisational co-operation was unsuccessful. Due to the lack of industry support, an alternative strategy to gain results was put in place through the use of online mediums. Therefore a sampling method similar to purposive sampling was chosen, whereby relevant web based social groups were targeted, which invited hospitality cruise ship workers to participate in the questionnaire survey. On the positive side a sample of 103 is a satisfactory figure on which to base analysis, particularly as there is little other research in this area. There has also been a wide response from individuals of different nationalities, which is important to gain aspects from individuals that have differing belief systems. The multi-cultural sample is also typical of a 21st Century cruise ship. Additionally, there are also individuals differing in their occupational positions within the hospitality field which again is important to be able to compare findings based upon occupational characteristics.

On the other hand, there are some underlying issues related to this sample. First, as explained, the sample of 103 is acceptable, although more respondents would have been desirable. While

individuals working in different hospitality occupations were represented, more individuals are needed in each occupation to make true representations of the population. Second, the sample is female dominated when in reality cruise ship employment is geared towards a male workforce. Although other cruise based research has similar results (e.g. Lee-Ross, 2008) any conclusions must be carefully made. Thirdly, and more importantly the majority of the sample were not currently working on-board a cruise ship. Ideally, more respondents still working in the industry would have been desirable, especially when investigating areas such as identity and community, although as explained above, this was a consequence of the struggles in gaining industry co-operation.

With these key issues in mind, it would be naive to suggest that this sample is truly reflective of the representative population of hospitality cruise-based personnel. However, with a lack of research within the cruise industry focusing upon the working life of a hospitality worker, this research provides recent exploratory data whereby key relationships between work and life variables are indicated. In other words, given that the results of this exploratory study may not be truly representative, they can at least serve as an indicator to potentially key relationships and patterns linking hospitality seafarers in terms of embeddedness and identification, which can be further investigated in a more intensive manner. The next section will show the questionnaire responses based on demographic variables to identify any interesting information.

5.3 Demographic variations amongst respondents

The questionnaire is split into three sections that measure distinctive, yet related variables. The first part, which was explored above, obtains the demographics of the sample. The next part explores the overall embeddedness of an individual at the occupational and organisational level. The final section seeks to explore the job embeddedness antecedents set by Mitchell *et al.*'s (2001) original study of how an individual *fits* in a job and community, the *links* made within ones job, and the *sacrifices* made if an individual leaves their job. This final section seeks to explore the on- and off-the-job critical factors of how individuals become embedded in their job and community.

5.3.1 Occupational and organisational embeddedness

This section shows the results of the overall embeddedness of the sample at the occupational and organisational level. *Table 5.2* gives the mean values of embeddedness when demographic variables are controlled. A Likert scale was used for the embeddedness items (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree), therefore the lower the mean value the more positive the relationship.

Table 5.2 Mean values of embeddedness when controlling for demographical variables

Demographic Variable (n)	Organisational Embeddedness	Occupational Embeddedness
Sex		
<i>Male</i> (38)	3.22	2.86
<i>Female</i> (65)	3.16	3.31
Employment Status		
<i>Employed</i> (22)	2.85	2.88
<i>Not Employed</i> (81)	3.28	3.22
Occupation		
<i>Casino</i> (10)	3.36	2.91
<i>F&B</i> (36)	3.59	3.51
<i>Front Office</i> (28)	2.86	2.83
<i>Housekeeping</i> (11)	2.86	3.40
<i>Sales</i> (17)	2.94	2.93
Occupational status*		
<i>Front of house</i> (73)	3.28	3.31
<i>Manager</i> (27)	2.89	2.74

*3 directors were not included within this section

It is generally at the occupational levels that they appear most positive, indicating that occupational variables have a stronger relationship to the individual. The embeddedness items were cross-tabulated against several demographic variables (sex, employment status, occupation, and occupational status) to explore whether there are any significant similarities or differences. A cross-tabulation is a simple way of displaying the relationship between two variables (Robson, 2011).

When an individual's sex was controlled the results were quite similar. The only significant result was at the occupational embeddedness level, where males were more likely to be embedded than females. When employment status was controlled, the level of embeddedness (occupational/organisational) was more positive when individuals were still working in the industry. This came as no surprise. If an individual is working in an occupation and organisation at the time of completing the questionnaire, they were expected to be more embedded than individuals who have since left the industry. There were some interesting results when exploring the different occupations. Individuals that were more embedded with their occupation and organisation were those in the front office and sales positions. An initial explanation of this result is that these positions may be seen as more desirable, with better hours and more benefits. This may become clearer when exploring the job embeddedness antecedents in the next section. Individuals within the food and beverage department seemed to be the least embedded at both levels, which again may be attributed to the long split-shift system normally employed when working in this department. When looking at the level of embeddedness between occupation and organisation there were significant differences with individuals employed in the casino and housekeeping departments. Casino employees appear to be significantly more embedded in their occupation than the organisation, which may suggest problems at the organisational level, such as lack of recognition, or their level of expertise. Alternatively, housekeeping employees significantly identify with their organisation more than their occupation, which suggests there are occupational issues. Finally, when occupational status is controlled, there is a stark contrast. As expected, the more responsibility and recognition an individual has, the more embedded they would feel within their occupation and organisation.

5.3.2 Job embeddedness antecedents

This section will explore Mitchell *et al.*'s (2001) original measures of 'links', 'sacrifice', and 'fit' to examine whether demographic variables show any significant differences between respondents. Each of the answers to the 24 questions was cross-tabulated against each of the demographic variables. The results are shown below in Table 5.3

Sex of employee

Table 5.3 Employee sex and job embeddedness antecedents

Measure	Question	Significant interest
Links	N/A	N/A
Sacrifice	This job has excellent health care benefits	Females were significantly more likely to disagree with this statement.
Fit	I have a lot of freedom on this job to decide how to pursue my goals.	Females were more likely to disagree with this statement.

The sex of an employee provided little significant difference for each of the 24 job embeddedness questions. Only two questions resulted in significantly different answers based upon sex. The questions regarding 'links' had no significant differences suggesting that the links an individual makes within one's role and community on-board has little affiliation to the sex of the individual. One sacrifice item of noteworthy difference related to health care benefits, in which one possibility could be the lack of support for pregnancy or family life. One 'fit' statement also showed a distinction which related to the amount of freedom one has to pursue one's goals.

Employment Status

Table 5.4 Employment status and job embeddedness

Measure	Question	Significant interest
Links	My co-workers are highly dependent on me.	The individuals who were still working in the industry agreed with this statement significantly more than individuals not working in the industry.
Sacrifice	I would be sacrificing a lot if I left this job.	Individuals who were not working in the industry were more likely to disagree with this statement.
Fit	The prospects for continuing employment with this company are excellent. I have a lot of freedom on this job to decide how to pursue my goals.	Individuals still working in the industry are more likely to agree with this statement. Individuals that have since left the industry are more likely to disagree with this statement. These individuals have the benefit of hindsight of the time limitations available to them to pursue goals.

The next demographic variable looked at whether one's current employment status on-board a cruise ship made any difference to how an individual may answer the questions. In this instance there were disparities in all three measures. It was expected that employment status would provide clear differences due to the saliency of one's current job, although on this occasion there were only minimal variations. Based upon the four occurrences shown in *Table 5.4*, it appears that individuals not currently working on-board, having the benefit of hindsight, are able to view statements from an alternative standpoint.

It was surprising that no other sacrifice item was significantly answered differently, although upon further inspection, this was the only question that provoked a future thinking response. In other words, the remaining sacrifice items are based upon current conditions such as benefits, pay and promotional opportunities. Since those individuals not currently working on-board have already left the industry, they are unable to view this particular question as they would as if they were still working on-board, although they could answer the remaining questions as if they were still working.

With respect to the links and fit items, being employed at the time of completing the questionnaire and the experience of currently working in the industry carries the saliency of the links and fit one has within the job and community, rather than diluting it slightly through hindsight.

Occupational position

The specific occupation an individual has seems to have a considerable impact upon how an individual is embedded and reflects upon their experience on-board. Disparities of answers from 15 of the 24 items were found based upon the occupational position of an individual. A major reason why an occupational position displays such differences is the impact an occupation has upon the working and social life a worker will endure. One's occupational choice on-board dictates many conditions of employment such as benefits, pay, time off, length and time of working hours, etc. An occupation impacts upon the links made with colleagues and whether they are able to interact frequently, on a social and work basis. This interaction may facilitate emotional attachments, and also a sense of responsibility or dependency, therefore linking oneself within the job role and community. Since the occupation dictates much of working and community life, sacrifices of leaving this role will be dependent on the occupation. For example, if an individual believes they are underpaid, have few benefits and little healthcare, they will not have many sacrifices when leaving their occupation. When identifying sacrifices, an occupational viewpoint would be beneficial, rather than a wider organisational view. If there are few links and low sacrifices, then individuals are unlikely to perceive that they fit within their job and community. This seems clear within the food and beverage (F&B) department. If there are few benefits associated with their occupation, working long split-shift hours with little time to spend socially, the degree of fit for the majority of F&B personnel, above other occupations, would be relatively small.

Occupational status

An individual's occupational status also seems to share similar variations as occupational choice, although not to the same extent. 11 out of the 24 questions were answered differently depending upon whether someone was a manager or not. As expected, the more responsibilities and benefits an individual has, the more that individual would be linked into

their job, have more sacrifices to contend with when leaving one's position, and also their fit within their job and community.

5.3.3 *Summary*

To summarise, within this sample of hospitality employees it is clear that occupational variables affect how an individual is embedded within their job and community, and moreover have an impact upon their working and social lives. This is more prominent when specifically looking at an occupational position, and the status of that position. This further supports the relative importance of an individual's occupation on-board and how this not only affects work based variables, but also an individual's social and community life. As explained in the literature, the occupation on-board a cruise ship can dictate much of a person's life, whether that be when working or socialising. Therefore, different occupational positions will impact upon individuals in diverse ways, which will further determine how embedded an individual may be and how much they identify with their occupation and organisation. Of note, there were two occupational positions that were of particular interest. Not only were F&B and pursers the most represented groups, but because of their different occupational pressures and activities their answers were somewhat diverse. Thus it would be interesting to further explore these positions in more detail.

To the researcher's knowledge, this is first instance 'Job Embeddedness' measures have been empirically explored with a sample of cruise ship employees. Although the results provide an encouraging platform and offer interesting debate, given the method of data collection it is difficult to claim true representation of the population and generalisations should be treated with caution. Being exploratory in nature, the results do at least serve as a key indicator of the relationships and patterns of a hospitality seafarer's working and social life while on-board. On this basis, the next section will further explore the responses of the job embeddedness antecedents.

5.4 Job embeddedness responses

This section presents the results from the questions to the job embeddedness antecedents of ‘fit’, ‘links’, and ‘sacrifice’. *Table 5.5* shows the statements in regarding ‘fit’ and how each statement was answered by the respondents. The highest responses are highlighted in bold.

Table 5.5 Responses (%) to Fit statements (n = 103)

FIT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel I am a good match for this organisation	28.2%	46.6%	13.6%	10.7%	1.0%
My job uses my skills and talents well	27.2%	42.7%	4.9%	22.3%	2.9%
I fit with the organisations culture	26.2%	46.6%	13.6%	12.6%	1.0%
I like the responsibility I have on this job	31.1%	50.5%	7.8%	8.7%	1.9%
The prospects for continuing employment with this company are excellent	12.6%	34.0%	18.4%	26.2%	8.7%
I have a lot of freedom on this job to decide how to pursue my goals	8.7%	23.3%	13.6%	37.9%	16.5%
I really enjoy the place where I live on-board	11.7%	48.5%	16.5%	12.6%	10.7%
The on-board community is a good match for me	23.3	45.6%	15.5%	14.6%	1.0%
I think of the community where I live on-board as home	22.3%	40.8%	7.8%	25.2%	3.9%
The community where I live offers the leisure activities that I like	14.6%	40.8%	21.4%	17.5%	5.8%

Each statement is related to how one might perceive they fit in with their job, community and organisation. Upon inspection, the statements appear to be split into three parts. The first part (the first four statements) identifies how individuals fit on-the-job, the second part (the middle two statements) recognises to some extent worker aspirations and organisational support of this, and the third part (the last four statements) identifies how individuals fit off-the-job.

Results indicate that respondents mostly felt they fit reasonably well (key figures are highlighted in bold). The only statement that was negative was related to the freedom and pursuing one's goals. Over 54% answered negatively to this statement, which could be indicative of the intensive nature of the work involved, but also could be suggestive of the restricted opportunities available to individuals to further their career within the cruise industry.

Findings in the previous section identified that different occupations affect the respondent's level of embeddedness. The most represented occupational groups were those of F&B and purser. The answers to the statements in *Table 5.5* were then re-calculated albeit with their occupation controlled for, with the promise of exposing any significant differences. A key finding is that pursers are significantly more likely to agree with each of the statements. This could be an indicator of how an occupational position not only has implications for on-the-job factors, but also within the community and social elements of working on-board a cruise ship. *Table 5.6* shows the statements relating to 'Links'.

Table 5.6 Responses (%) to Link statements (n = 103)

LINKS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I interact with a large number of my co-workers	54.3 %	38.7%	1.2%	5.8%	0%
I like the members of my work group	33.0%	54.4%	10.7%	1.9%	0%
My co-workers are similar to me	13.6%	31.1%	19.4%	34.0%	1.9%
I don't have regular opportunities to interact with my co-workers (reversed)	6.9%	9.0%	9.1%	38.6%	36.4%
I feel that people at work respect me a great deal	21.4%	55.3%	18.4%	3.9%	1.0%
My co-workers are highly dependent on me	13.6%	37.9%	21.4%	19.4%	7.7%
I am part of many work teams	26.2%	52.4%	5.8%	15.5%	0%
I am on many work committees	11.7%	26.2%	14.6%	37.9	9.6%

Each of the statements above identifies the links individuals make while working. It appears that the community aspects of the work for hospitality cruise ship workers are important. *Table 5.6* provides evidence of high interaction with co-workers and being dependent upon each other, suggesting a support type network. Furthermore, nearly 90% of respondents said that they liked their work group members, which further suggests that communities are harmonious. The only statements that were negative were how respondents felt they were similar to co-workers and also being on work committees. 34% disagreed on being similar to co-workers, although the majority (44.7%) still responded in a positive fashion. Cruise ships are notorious for their multi-cultured crew, including individuals with different belief systems and attitudes, therefore this statement did not come as a surprise. The way F&B and purasers answered the questions relative to ‘links’ was similar, which suggests that community dimensions for workers are an important element to the work on-board cruise ships. The next table shows the statements relating to ‘sacrifices’.

Table 5.7 Responses (%) to Sacrifices statements (n = 103)

SACRIFICES	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I would be sacrificing a lot if I left this job	8.7%	28.2%	13.6%	39.8%	9.7%
My promotional opportunities are excellent here	10.7%	26.2%	11.7%	30.1%	21.4%
I am well paid for my level of performance	8.7%	30.1%	10.7%	30.1%	20.4%
This job has excellent benefits	12.6%	30.1%	10.7%	30.1%	16.5%
This job has excellent health-care benefits	7.8%	20.4%	11.7%	30.1%	30.1%
This job has excellent retirement benefits	5.8%	3.9%	12.6%	30.1%	47.6%

This table shows the sacrifices that individuals might make through leaving the cruise ship industry. It is clear that respondents felt particularly negative towards the loss of benefits. Nearly 80% of respondents stated that retirement benefits are not excellent, with nearly 50% strongly opinionated. This is something that is important for workers if they were to consider a career on cruise ships. If retirement benefits are not acceptable, or non-existent, then having

a career within the industry may not be a viable option. Job benefits seemed to be even, although this was re-examined but status (Manager/Front line) was controlled. It was apparent when this was controlled that there was a difference of opinion. When managers were asked about job benefits, 60% stated that they were excellent (strongly agree/agree), while only 35.6% of front house employees answered in a positive fashion and nearly 55% answered negatively. This would suggest that although managers are taken care of to an excellent standard, crew members may feel they deserve more. This is also reflected in promotional opportunities and level of pay, whereby managers were more likely to agree with these statements. The sacrifices for pursers and waiters were answered similarly.

5.5 Analysis of open question

There was a section at the end of the questionnaire giving the opportunity for respondents to comment or expand upon their experiences while working on-board and also justifications (if they had left the industry) to why individuals may have left the industry. Although this qualitative element is in contrast to the rest of the chapter, it was thought important that individuals were able to elaborate on any other points they would like to make. This section provides the findings from the open question. This question was optional and since this was the only opportunity for individuals to develop personal experiences, data was simply grouped into themes and subjected to an in-depth description. Two major themes emerged from the analysis: personal and professional. The personal theme reflected on experiences that were intrinsic to an individual, discussing the reasons for working on-board, reasons for leaving, and also the emotional importance of their time. Although this theme was intrinsically orientated, there were multiple common occurrences that summarised how individuals worked and lived on-board a cruise ship. The professional theme was linked to organisational and occupational reflections, considering how the organisation or occupation had an impact on their experiences and turnover intentions.

Additionally, sub-themes emerged from the major themes. Both major themes consisted of information relating to individual cruise ship experiences (working and non-working), and to responses subject to turnover intentions/decisions. *Table 5.8* presents a summary of the ‘personal’ theme, with sub-themes, consisting of sample quotes from respondents illustrating the nature of each sub-theme.

Table 5.8 Personal theme analysis

Sub-themes	Description of theme	Quotes
Family and Friends	<p>Due to the nature of working on-board cruise ships, the time spent with family and friends back home will drastically deteriorate. As illustrated in <i>Table 5.1</i>, the cruise industry is arguably more suited towards the single individual without the dependence of a young family, although this is not always the case. Technological advancements have made communication links more accessible. Some respondents described their ambitions to start a family, which they believe would not coincide with their continuing employment in the cruise industry. Respondents often perceived that family life or relationships was not supported by the organisation / industry.</p>	<p><i>"The only reason I left the cruise line industry was the birth of a child. Otherwise, I could readily see myself still working at sea, as many of my co-workers still do." (Female, Guest Services, Canadian)</i></p> <p><i>"To me, emotional ties are very important. I had a boyfriend on board for almost 5 years and it was hard to get the same ship. In total we spent 2 years on different ships. That was the deciding factor for me to leave. They were very difficult to accommodate our requests even when it was easy to do it." (Female, Guest services, Argentinean)</i></p>
Medical	<p>Cruise ship work and life is fast paced and some individuals found that due to illness or injury they were unable to continue working on-board a cruise ship. Some respondents felt they weren't supported by the organisation / industry.</p>	<p><i>"I had a problem with my wrist and I couldn't come back to dining room anymore. Company offered me different position and 3 times less salary a month. They didn't give me any compensation, even though accident happened during work. I just couldn't afford so less salary and I have left - with nothing." (Female, Waitress, Polish)</i></p> <p><i>"I unfortunately had to leave Cruise Ships because of medical issues. Otherwise I had planned to remain working on board for a number of years." (Female,</i></p>

		Sales, British)
Emotional Ties	To work on a cruise ship requires the ability for an individual to devote their life to the way of the industry. It's an encapsulating working life that doesn't end when a shift finishes. The intensive nature facilitates strong bonds between co-workers which act as a surrogate family. Individuals often expressed positive emotional feelings towards their work and the people that they work with.	<p><i>"I have worked in different jobs but I never felt so close to the people I worked with. It was like family and they were not only co-workers like on shore."</i> (Male, Guest Services, German)</p> <p><i>"I loved working on the ships, I loved talking about my travels, it was a great time of my life. People were often interested in what I was doing, where I was going, and how I lived my life. You become engrossed in the industry. It affects how you interact with people over all your life. I had a great time and made some really great friends..."</i> (Female, Casino Supervisor, British)</p>
Discrimination	The cruise ship has been well documented for its multi-cultured workforce, with organisations often using this as an advertising strategy. <i>Figure 5.2</i> shows the extent of the different nationalities working on-board, even in the sample of this small scale study. Some respondents commented how their nationality was a source of discrimination. This noted, discrimination is not only in the form of nationality, and others suggest that status and occupational title can form prejudices.	<p><i>"Short staffed will very little breaks, resulting in errors (casino dealer) resulting in belittlement from supervisors. Victimisation and bullying were common..."</i> (Male, Casino Dealer, Australian)</p> <p><i>"...mafia system."</i> (Male, Waiter, Filipino)</p>
Travel and Culture	Some respondents detailed how the ability to travel all over the world and meet different cultures and people were positive factors about the life on-board a cruise ship.	<p><i>"The first few years were a lot of fun, I really enjoyed the mix of cultures on board and learned a lot from people that I interacted with, and being able to see a lot of the world was an amazing opportunity."</i></p>

		(Female, Guest Services, American) <p><i>"The cruise ship industry is a great way to travel and become exposed to other cultures. It was awesome to become other friend in other countries and the barrier of your country was gone but just you and your job and how well you performed your job."</i> (Female, Casino Dealer, American)</p>
Aspirations	Some respondents had aspirations that lay outside a career within the cruise industry, with multiple individuals leaving the industry or aspiring to move ‘on-land’ and pursue further studies. Others suggest that if they stayed within the cruise industry for a long period of time it would have a stagnant effect upon their career, which could only be satisfied by moving ashore.	<i>"I left the cruise industry because I felt that I have more opportunities on land. And my only purpose was to get to travel around the world and earn at the same time. When I was done with it, I was already happy to leave and move on to other opportunities."</i> (Male, Waiter, Filipino) <i>"I have left to pursue my Degree in International Relations and hope to do a Masters in Strat Planning...I would go back after in a heartbeat. Even though I've left...I still keep abreast of all that is happening and of what improvements were made to my job."</i> (Female, Guest Services, Trinidadian)

It was clear from some of the respondents that they viewed the cruise industry as a separate world. Being disconnected from friends, family and even media networks for prolonged periods of time were the main reasons behind this, but also adding that the work itself is invasive and intensive from a professional and social aspect. It is therefore understandable how individuals came to this conclusion. This was summed up by the comment:

"It is very easy to become reliant upon the job & way of life. We live in a little bubble & can be quite far removed from real life." (Female, Guest Services Manager, British)

Respondents frequently commented on how personal space was limited, how work dominated their lives, and how difficult the work was. However, the majority of respondents reflected how much they enjoy(ed), their time and how much they have learnt, not only personally, but professionally. Even those who had left the industry due to medical or family reasons expressed a desire to return, with some detailing how they have found it difficult to adjust to a life onshore. Alternatively, it was clear for some that working on a cruise ship was never a long term ambition, either viable personally or professionally. Some wanted to gain valuable life experience, others wanted to travel the world, and some just sought the financial rewards.

"It was time to move on, with my world and life. It's a wonderful well rewarded post, but there comes a point when you need to leave that other world behind, and accept the real one is out there." (Male, Chef, British)

Table 5.9 presents a summary of the ‘professional’ theme.

Table 5.9 Professional theme analysis

Sub-themes	Description of theme	Quotes
Pay and Promotional opportunities	<p>Pay and promotion is an important variable to many individuals. This sub-theme was divided, on one hand respondents displayed pay negatively, while on the other hand respondents would express these in a positive way. Pay was often compared to salaries of jobs that were ashore. Some respondents made note that promotions were difficult to come by.</p>	<p><i>"...promotion wise its very slow...as in really slow...they only implement policies concerning advantage for company's profit only but seldom or never for crew betterment.. Salary wise, its very low but work is tremendous. Being employed with them you'll feel unsatisfied financially. You got to work more but payed less!! They are building new ships but never raise their crew's salary." (Female, Waitress, Filipino)</i></p> <p><i>"...feel that the Cruise companies did not keep up with Salary levels and benefits offered by shoreside companies. The qualification level of staff on board as well has deteriorated due to poor salaries and benefits offered by Cruise Lines. Personally feel it's not worth it any more to work on Cruise Liners." (Male, Chef, German)</i></p> <p><i>"...this line of work pays so much better than working in any land base job. Working on cruise line especially in the f n b department can kill your body very fast, too much working hours, less hours to rest and sleep.. the only advantage is you are earning a lot and you get to tour the world" (Female, Waitress, Filipino)</i></p>
Deteriorating standards	<p>Standards on-board cruise ships are generally set very high. The industry is arguably notorious for being luxurious with</p>	<p><i>"...the company seemed to be losing sight of exceptional customer service and were choosing cheap</i></p>

	attentive and professional customer service. Some respondents have suggested that standards have slumped, in which individuals with a professional demeanour have found difficult to do their job to the standard which is expected by guests.	<i>labour and too many strict rules over English speaking staff and some freedoms to enjoy life on board. The fun was gone... ”</i> (Female, Guest Services, Canadian)
Management style	Due to a higher sense of responsibility and safety by the organisation, it seems that a management style geared towards autocratic is generally practised.	<i>“I left ships the first time because of bad management, if there could be only one negative would be that management tends to be bi-polar.”</i> (Male, Guest Services, Canadian)
Wellbeing	Cruise organisations have extended responsibilities of taking care of employee wellbeing. Employees not only work on-board a cruise ship, but also live on-board, and so the organisation has to cater for work needs, recreational requirements and also living needs. This would be a difficult task for any organisation, as satisfaction not only has to be maintained at the job level, but also a social level. It's important that the organisation makes efforts to maintain both aspects of satisfaction.	<i>They are only aiming more on the profit, never considered the crew' satisfaction and fulfillment. No wonder plenty crew are moving out!”</i> (Female, Waitress, Filipino) <i>“There's no or little job security in the ships because of the globalised nature of the market, and the fact that cruise ships are mini-nations in a way. It's not unionised and the only job security you have is to do your job better than the next bloke and not to stuff things up.”</i> (Male, Bartender, Australian)

Although some respondents viewed the cruise industry as a separate world, they still required the same professional comforts as the ones ashore. Career progression was important, although it seemed that individuals were always keen to reflect how their role on-board a cruise ship could transfer or assist in their career when they went ashore.

“Working on ship teaches you many work ethic that you can take with you for the future.” (Female, Guest Services, American)

Some respondents discussed how they thought promotion was difficult and was therefore a prime motivator in leaving the industry. On the other hand, the amount respondents were paid was generally acceptable, explained by a sense of reality. Respondents considered the money saving opportunities (free board and food) and the travel experiences as variables that made up for the perceived lack of initial pay. It was apparent from the data that individuals did seek to improve themselves professionally, although it wasn't always supported by the organisation or management. A work-life balance was also a top agenda item, and it is important that the organisation aims to satisfy both work and non-work needs. Work was generally accepted as long and hard, although recreational activities and opportunities to relax were also sought after for a healthy balance.

5.6 Discussion and implications for main study

The job embeddedness approach is suggestive that there are organisational, occupational and community factors that embed individuals within their present employment situations. The cruise industry is a unique place of work in which the organisation's responsibility extends beyond the end of their employees shift. To this extent, job embeddedness seems a good fit for the cruise industry, which is a model that takes into account the factors that affect an individual's employment both on the job and when their shift comes to an end. The general aim of this phase of the research was to identify promising research avenues which could be explored further in more depth. It is not the intention of this chapter to state explicitly whether hospitality workers are embedded or not, but rather through the ‘fit’, ‘links’, and ‘sacrifice’ items, provide key indicators of relationships and patterns in a field where there has been little research.

Although hospitality cruise ship workers generally appear to be embedded, further investigation suggests that this is occupationally dependant. For example, individuals in the

positions in F&B appear to be less embedded than those in the purser's position. This raises certain questions, such as the relationship of one's role compared to status, hierarchy, or associated community benefits. It would appear to be a combination of such interacting variables. This noted, although one's occupation may be the cause of frustration, it also seems to have some significance to workers on ships, while the community aspects are important in developing social and familial ties to the place. In this sense, the physical and social parameters of the ship are worthy of exploration.

From the outset it was clear that working on-board a cruise ship is a rather demanding workplace. The ship demands an individual's temporary life: occupationally orientated and socially influenced, while disconnected from the "real world". The social systems, although complex, are important while on-board. Colleagues form strong bonds that act as a support structure and become stand-in family members. Yet while this dependence is clear, it is also typified by the reality that these bonds, or stand-in family are only temporary structures. The strong bonds appear to be a form of coping mechanism, which is further instilled through organisational and occupational practices. These links are expected to be broken, however important they are to the individual. More central to hospitality seafarers is how well they fit within these links, and the sacrifices made when the perceived fit is not reached.

The overall fit one perceives while working on-board is an important element at the occupational and organisational level. A contributory factor as to why fit is central is the nature of the industry. Cast away from "normal" networks with strangers from all over the world with different belief systems and cultures poses potential uncertainties. Respondents acknowledged these cultural and individual differences, but also agreed that they generally fit well within these differences. Being able to fit or adapt into this world is an important variable for an individual being embedded within the organisation and occupation. If individuals discover they do not fit, the sacrifices of leaving the industry or changing jobs will become salient. Another area of interest is in relation to one's promotional opportunities on-board. *Table 5.5* and *Table 5.7* showed that individuals believe there are potential opportunities available within the cruise industry, although individuals feel they are not recognised for promotion or development. This seems to describe a relative struggle and it could be a case whereby individuals are not being given opportunities for betterment, i.e. with promotional or development opportunities. This situation was even more concerning when just front line hospitality seafarers were identified, whereby status is linked with lacking job benefits and perceived poor promotion opportunities. Such inequalities may be more prominent within

cruise employment when social benefits are intertwined with job benefits. In other words, the status of an occupation will determine the type of benefits received regarding one's job, and also one's social life.

Human resource management within the cruise ship environment remains complex, mainly because of its global nature and diversity of personnel. The temporal nature of working on-board and the occasional instances whereby personnel may be required to relocate to different ships, justifies the use of job embeddedness. Finding the critical occupational and community factors that embed employees within the organisation and/or occupation may be useful when considering issues such as retention and behaviour.

5.7 Summary

The results of this preliminary study re-affirm the importance of an individual's occupational choice on cruise ships and how this has extending implications not only for their working life, but also their social life, and moreover their overall perception and experience of their work. In particular, the results showed the disparities between the positions of F&B and purser. The different occupational pressures and activities directly affect the formation of links (work and community) and whether they perceive they fit in that particular role and organisational space. Ultimately, the links made and the perception of one's fit will reflect upon the potential sacrifices of leaving. To assemble a deeper underlying understanding of these relationships a more intensive qualitative route is required. The next chapter therefore seeks to gather this deeper understanding through the investigation of hospitality workers perceptions of their occupation and their place within the organisation.

Chapter 6 – Research Findings: The Identification of Themes

6.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the results of the main qualitative research investigation. The analysis consists of the discovery of consistent themes that have been found in the interview data from hospitality cruise ship workers. The previous chapter showed that an occupation on a cruise ship can be a valuable source of attachment or self definition. The level of attachment is occupationally based, upon which the occupations of purser and F&B were the most different. F&B individuals were mostly comprised of waiting staff and so this occupation, in addition to pursers, will be investigated further in terms of comparison. The chapter begins with an overview of the participants and it then discusses the analytical process. Findings show that there were five major themes in the interview data: the ship as a place, time, the system of the ship, relationships, and occupation. The first three themes are considered the determinants of being and working on a cruise ship, while the last two are relational. Therefore, the determinant themes have a significant impact upon the relational themes, and more so upon the formation of identity and community.

6.2 Overview of participants

In order to introduce the participants it was thought important that the backgrounds and initial motivations for working in the cruise ship industry should be explored (*Table 6.1*). The aim of this section is to briefly discuss each of the participants in terms of their occupation, sex, nationality, length in the industry and also their employment status. This was collected during the interview process. As discussed in chapter 4, the decision was taken to allow individuals to be interviewed that had been out of the industry for no more than one year prior to the interview. If participants were not employed in the cruise ship industry, their reasons for leaving the industry were also shown. Furthermore, each participant's primary motivations for working on-board cruise ships were also included.

Table 6.1 Profile of participants

Pseudonym	Occupation(s) <i>Role of interest in italics</i>	Sex	Nationality	Length in industry	Cruise ship employment status	Reasons for leaving the industry	Main reasons for working on cruise ships
Angela	<i>Waiter and Purser</i>	F	Italy	6 years	Left in March 2012 (6 months prior to interview)	Decided to work on land.	Opportunity to travel, but to get paid to do so. Information gathered through friend.
Barbara	<i>Purser</i>	F	Hungary	2 years	Employed	N/A	Initially followed boyfriend, but also for financial reasons.
Charles	<i>Waiter</i>	M	Philippines	8 years	Left in June 2012 (3 months prior to interview)	Frustrated with the “system” of how things are on a cruise ship.	Opportunity to travel, international work experience, and also financial aspects.
Christine	<i>Purser</i>	F	Argentina	6 years	Left in February 2012 (7 months prior to interview)	Didn’t want to be too old working on the cruise ships. Frustrated with missing family occasions.	Travel and work opportunities and the money saving capabilities.
Craig	<i>Purser</i>	M	USA	1 contract (8 months)	Left in July 2012 (2 months prior to interview)	Preferred “land life” rather than “ship life”	Work and life experience. Information gathered through friend.
David	<i>Waiter</i>	M	UK	1 contract (6 months)	Left in July 2012 (2 months prior to interview)	Left for family reasons	Mainly for financial reasons, but also for the lifestyle and travel opportunities. Recommended by a friend.

Pseudonym	Occupation(s) <i>Role of interest in italics</i>	Sex	Nationality	Length in industry	Cruise ship employment status	Reasons for leaving the industry	Main reasons for working on cruise ships
Hannah	<i>Purser</i>	F	Australia	2.5 years	Left in March 2012 (6 months prior to interview)	Decided to work on land.	Good financial and travel aspects
Joanne	<i>Purser</i>	F	Canada	4 years	Left in February 2012 (7 months prior to interview)	Met partner and wanted to settle down.	Opportunity to travel. Recommended by a friend.
Joseph (*and Jane)	Messenger, Dish washer, <i>Waiter</i> (Merchandise)	M (F)	India (UK)	10 years (3.5 years)	Left in March 2012 (6 months prior to interview)	Wanted to settle down.	Financial and travel opportunities. Influenced by friends in India. (Travel opportunities. Recommended by a friend)
Karen	<i>Waiter</i>	F	Russia	3 years	Left in Summer 2012 (exact date was not given)	Health reasons.	Opportunity to travel, develop English, and gain work experience.
Kim	Merchandise, <i>Purser</i>	F	UK	2 years	Employed	N/A	Money saving capabilities, and travel opportunities.
Mandy	<i>Purser</i> , Selling vacation packages	F	Canada	2 years	Left in February 2012 (7 months prior to interview)	Met partner and wanted to settle down. Disillusioned with job role.	Influenced through family and friends. Main reason was the opportunity to travel, but also the lifestyle.
Neil	<i>Purser</i>	M	Macedonia	2 years	Left in June 2012 (3 months prior to interview)	Disappointed in not being promoted.	Recommended by a friend already on- board a cruise ship.

* Note: This interview was conducted with a couple. Although the findings were useful for reflection and will be taken into consideration for analysis, this was only counted as one interview as Jane was employed in merchandise, and so outside of the sample criteria.

Pseudonym	Occupation(s) <i>Role of interest in italics</i>	Sex	Nationality	Length in industry	Cruise ship employment status	Reasons for leaving the industry	Main reasons for working on cruise ships
Norah	<i>Purser</i>	F	UK	2 years	Employed	N/A	Suggested by parent, but also the money saving capabilities.
Norris	<i>Waiter</i>	M	Cuba	2 years	Left in July 2012 (2 months prior to interview)	Health reasons. Actively looking for employment on cruise ships.	Work and travel opportunities. Used to serve crew members on land.
Peter	<i>Waiter</i>	M	Trinidad and Tobago	2 years	Employed	N/A	International work experience and travel opportunities.
Sam	<i>Purser</i>	M	South Africa	2 years	Left in July 2012 (2 months prior to interview)	Parent became seriously ill. Actively looking for employment on cruise ships.	Wanted to be in the entertainment department but accepted a guest services position. Travel opportunities.
Sarah	Beauty, Youth staff, <i>Purser</i>	F	UK	4 years	Left in June 2012 (3 months prior to interview)	Frustrated with missing family occasions and wants to settle down.	Recommended by a friend and a contact of the family. Opportunity to travel.
Wendy	Lifeguard, Hotel operations, <i>Purser</i>	F	UK	2.5 years	Employed	N/A	Initially a life experience but has developed a career. The weather, and travel opportunities.
Zack	<i>Waiter</i>	M	Slovakia	2 years	Left in May 2012 (4 months prior to interview)	Just an experience.	Main motivation was for financial reasons, but also the opportunity to travel.

Fictional names were given to each of the participants to respect their confidentiality. There was no meaning or reasoning to their given names other than that they are names typically used in the UK. As shown in *Table 6.1*, there were a total of twenty participants, including nine males and eleven females (twelve including Jane) originating from 15 different countries. There was one participant (Angela) who had worked in both positions and so was included in the data of waiting staff and pursers. This included eight waiting staff and thirteen pursers/guest relations staff. The waiting staff participants were typical of cruise ship employees in that it is a male dominated position (six males and two females), and they also primarily originated from Eastern Europe or Asia (five). Participants in the position of purser were also typical in that it is a female dominated position (three males and ten females), and also mainly from Western Europe/North America/Australia (nine). All participants had worked at least one full contract on-board a cruise ship, with the longest being ten years, and with an average of just over three years.

The difficulties of contacting cruise ship employees have been discussed throughout chapters 4 and 5. One such difficulty that was encountered was that of contacting individuals currently working in the industry without the co-operation of cruise ship companies. Consequently, there was a total of just five individuals who were still working in the cruise ship industry in this study. The individuals were still working in that they had been offered a contract to work on a cruise ship and had accepted the contract and were ready to go on-board a ship. These five individuals were currently on their break, which is usually two – three months in length. In two instances, Barbara was due to sign on the cruise ship the day after the interview and Norah two days after the interview, which indicates the importance of time, organisation and a certain amount of luck when contacting the individuals for the purpose of this research. Of the 15 participants not currently working on cruise ships, only two (Sam and Norris) were currently looking for cruise ship employment. This noted, there were several who expressed a desire to return (see Section 6.8.6). The longest time that a participant had not been working on-board a cruise ship was seven months (Mandy, Joanne, and Christine). The shortest was two months (Sam, David, Craig, and Norris), and the average was just over four months.

To gain some initial views about the work on-board cruise ships, the motivations and if applicable, the reasons for leaving the industry were also included in *Table 6.1*. An interesting finding relating to individual motivations for working on cruise ships is the influence of ‘significant others’, such as friends, family members and previous work colleagues. Over half of the participants (eleven) suggested that the recommendation or influence of others had an

impact on their decision to work on cruise ships. Almost all participants were motivated by the opportunity to travel and/or the money saving capabilities affiliated to the work. The popularity of travelling the world was an expected and arguably obvious motivator, although the financial aspects, in particular being so widespread, was a little surprising. Section 6.8 explores the importance of financial aspects in more detail. Other motivators were the work experience prospects, weather, and to improve their English language skills. Typically, findings suggest there are three reasons for working on cruise ships: to develop a career, financial aspects, and the lifestyle.

Reasons for leaving the industry appeared to be somewhat diverse and more personal. This noted, “the way things were” or the way the cruise ship works, in terms of the hierarchy, work, and social structures seemed to be a common factor in reasons for leaving. Being contracted or “stuck” on-board, although constantly surrounded by people, increased the saliency of being isolated and alienated from family, friends and a “normal” way of life. Variables such as these acted as a division and a constant comparative device of ship work and life, and land work and life. There were several individuals who explained that being away from family and friends was not a problem, although at some point they said that they were frustrated about missing family and friend occasions and bereavements. This would suggest that the inflexibility of working on-board is a particular issue, as Wendy (purser) explains “your contract’s your contract, and you work them dates, so if anything happens during them, you just have to miss out”. Other reasons were that individuals wanted a “normal” life, to settle down with a family; to work on ships was not seen as compatible to do this. Two participants (Karen and Norris, both waiters) left cruise ships for health reasons attributed to their work, which can be indicative of the physical and hard natured work of being employed on cruise ships. There were two instances (Neil and Mandy, both pursers) whose decision to leave the industry was occupationally based. Mandy had become disillusioned with the role she was in and found it difficult to do a job in which she did not fully believe in the practices. On the other hand, Neil became frustrated with not being promoted after being promised this by management.

6.3 An introduction to analysis: the discovery of themes

This study withholds a particular interest in the identities of hospitality workers on-board cruise ships and more specifically to waiting staff and pursers. The role of a waiter is

occupationally similar to what would be typical on land, while the role of a purser is described as being similar to that of front desk staff in a hotel. As discussed in the literature chapters, the cruise ship is a unique environment in which work, home and play entwine and overlap, therefore adding to the complexities of making sense of oneself and one's working and social world. Consequently, it was important that the study not only investigated the professional characteristics of their working lives and their social lives, and how these overlapped, but also to take into consideration the physical nature of being on a cruise ship, being semi-enclosed, restricted, and how this has an effect upon workers' understanding of their world and experiences.

Initially, coding was drawn from these topic areas above (i.e., physical characteristics of the ship, one's role and their perception of this, and the social elements of working on-board), and there was a focus upon the questions that were asked. However, it was important that participants, although guided by interview questions, were also allowed to explain, discuss and evaluate other areas of cruise ship work and life that was of most saliency and importance. Although the interview guide had some structure in which to gather relevant data, the participants were discussing their world, or their life on-board a cruise ship, and so there was a range of topics discussed which were outside of the initial guide. Generally the interactions between the interviewer and participants were open and friendly. However, there was evidence of participants being emotionally expressive, such as anger and frustration, which was apparent in the use of strong language. This was not directed at the interviewer, but in the participants' animations of their experiences. The use of this type of language was not thought to be problematic or offensive, but was seen as an indication of participants being relaxed and their willingness to talk about certain situations. Each participant was given as much time as possible to answer questions or queries to the fullest potential. As noted in chapter 4, the use of visual cues was not possible in telephone interviews, so the interviewer had to be more aware and tactical of verbal cues. This encouraged the interviewer to be more patient, but also may have attributed in there being extra periods of short silences.

When analysis began, it was clear that the themes or meanings of themes were not always concrete or exclusive. Themes often overlapped or were related. Becoming familiar with the data was a process that dictated time and concentration. Although it became easier, the first stages were a frustrating process which took the researcher some time to adjust to the requirements of analysis. Familiarisation came through the repeated readings of the transcripts which were conducted on a 'line by line' basis and informed the coding and interpretation of

the data to discover main themes (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Organising the data into themes may often lead to information loss (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). This is generally because the process of analysis is to reduce the data, so inevitably there will be a certain amount of information that is lost, but this is dependent upon the ability of the researcher as to how valuable this data loss may be. To offset the loss of potential valuable information it was important that the researcher really listened to the participant's views and experiences, rather than just identifying the data based on subjectivity. It was important that the researcher remained open to new information and also to allow the themes to evolve. This process involved an attempt at being reflective of the greater picture, keeping the whole picture in mind throughout the analysis.

After the exploratory stage of analysis was completed, the process began of discovering and negotiating consistent themes. At this stage there was considered to be five major themes emerging from the analysis: the ship as a place, time, the system of the ship, relationships, and occupation. Each of themes was separate, yet interrelated, and all had an impact upon identity and community formations while working on-board a cruise ship. The remainder of this chapter will explain and evaluate these major themes and sub-themes.

6.4 Theme one: the ship as a place

The questions in the interview did not purposely seek to explore in-depth views and feelings about the physical nature of the ship or the ship as a place. But it was clear that the ship, the physical layout of the ship and the physical position of being transient in motion in the middle of the ocean were important in how participants evaluated their careers, their work, their identity and community, but also how they came to understand their world. Bitner (1992) explored how physical spaces and environments influence behaviour, and leading from this research, Kwortnik (2008, p.292) developed the notion of 'shipscape' to describe a cruise ship's space, which encapsulates a 'man-made physical and social environment' surrounded by the sea. A ship is foremost a water transportation hub, a physical entity that travels on water. Yet a cruise ship is also a home, a workplace, a hotel, leisure and hospitality centre, and much more, which is encapsulated within one physical entity. The ship therefore provides a space that is social, and furthermore offers a barrier that can be protective, restrictive and selective.

It was salient that the transient foundations of the cruise ship, being physically and socially restrictive and isolated, yet at the same time free to explore the possibilities of the world, acted as both motivators and reasons for leaving the industry. In this sense, ships are arguably ‘liminal spaces’ - a space free from the social and cultural ties of home and family (Lester, 2011; Thomas *et al.* 2013). This is explored in more depth by Pritchard and Morgan (2006) within their study of hotels. Cruise ships, often described as “floating hotels”, are arguably more socially and culturally contained and separated. The physicality of the ship isolates, but also provides freedom for individuals (workers and guests) from the “normal world”. So although a ship in the middle of the ocean smacks of isolation, it can also be a picture of escapism or freedom, away from normality and able to create or reshape a new self or identity (Pritchard and Morgan, 2006). The ship controls and directs working and social lives, and provides the boundaries and ingredients for the facilitation of community and belonging, and so therefore has implications upon one’s identity. It was clear that there was a strong, and often affective relationship from participants towards the cruise ship, which was both negative and positive in construction. Research by Testa *et al.* (1998) and more recently Larsen *et al.* (2012) identified that one’s satisfaction with the work environment and living space is of particular importance to a cruise ship worker’s job satisfaction. This section will explore how participants discussed their relationship with the ship itself and the spaces within the ship.

6.4.1 Adjustment and re-adjustment

Participants often discussed how they had to make adjustments of being on-board a cruise ship. This is not surprising given how different this type of work is compared to many environments they may have worked and lived in before. The adjustment to being on a ship was something that all workers have to go through. Foremost, the biggest difference of working on-board a cruise ship is that individuals live in a floating container which spends large parts of its time travelling the ocean. Therefore the mechanics or logistics of sailing the ocean is one such element that is particularly unique.

“it was very rough, so your cabin continually rocks, which I, I actually now used to sleep better on the ship coz I liked the movement, I didn’t get sea sick, but just the whole erm physiological thing of being at sea” (Joseph, waiter)

The movement of the ship was something that was regularly mentioned, but also the noises of the engine or the sea. Like most new workplaces and living situations, all individuals stated it

took a certain amount of time to get used to being on a ship and that a certain amount of acclimatisation was required. The ship was compared by participants to a town or small city and so individuals had to find out where everything was on-board. Some individuals discussed how being on a ship was a “massive shock” (Joseph, waiter) or a “culture shock” (Sam, purser), while others suggested they “got used to it quick from 1 to 2 weeks” (Norris, waiter). It is not just that the cruise ship environment was new, it was often a case of how far away or isolated they were from their usual lives and networks. As Christine (purser) explained:

“I don’t really want to be so far away all the time or so isolated, it’s not just far away, it’s not, you cannot even take a weekend or a one day and do and go there”

Sacrifice and compromise was often discussed by participants when talking about the cruise ship, the sacrifice of leaving one’s family and ultimately a degree of normality. This was a common factor that was highlighted by participants in that they were aware of the fact that they were tied to the ship’s boundaries for large parts of their contract. Leaving the ship was not in their control, they could leave when the ship docked for several hours, occupationally permitting, but it became apparent that participants felt to some degree stuck and enclosed on the ship. The only instance when any individual is permitted to get off the ship, other than an emergency situation, is when the ship docks:

“I usually got off as much as I could in port just because it gives you that sense of freedom where you can get off and explore a little bit and not feel so closed in” (Joanne, purser)

“but the best sometimes you go out and forget you are working on that ship, not looking from that ship, and then by the time you go back, yeah, you have to put your uniforms back on (.) and put your smiles back on, and back to work” (Charles, waiter)

The way in which some individuals were able to gain a sense of freedom or a sense of control was when the ship docked. This was a time in which they could choose where to be, free from the restraints of the ship, giving a sense of personal freedom. On the ship, it is more controlled and restricted, in both a physical and emotional sense, to the extent of which is often determined by the type of work one does, as Zack (waiter) explained:

“when you are on-board you don’t care about anything because everything is ready for you, you just have to wake up and go to work”.

The organisation takes control or has a major influence on an individual's activities and whereabouts. An employee, while on the ship, can only do things that are included and what is on offer within the boundary of the ship. When working on a cruise ship an employee does not have the typical social concerns on land. For example, rent is free, or at least part of the package of working on-board cruise ships, there are no amenity bills to be paid, suitable accommodation is provided, and ample food is also available. Therefore, one's work or occupation takes up the main focus of one's time and energy on-board. This is often viewed as a positive on the ship.

"I liked that I was 10 minutes from work if need be, so I could have a sleep in every morning, I liked at the end of the day it was, you know, 2 minutes to the crew bar and 2 minutes to my cabin (.) erm, I liked that my meals were all prepared for me, so there's always benefits, that erm (.) you know, encourage you and make it easier for you to stay on-board, erm, probably, the only thing is you don't really sort of have that freedom to just get off when you want and go shopping or go out to dinner, erm, can become a little monotonous" (Hannah, purser)

The convenience of everything being so close on the ship takes some time to get used to and was generally taken as a positive of cruise ship work. So although Hannah considered the drawbacks of being physically closed in, she also acknowledged and liked particular aspects of the closeness. The closeness of the ship was both a source of frustration, but also of convenience. Typically it was a case of getting used to the ship and overcoming the difficulties. The first contract seemed to embrace most of these difficulties related to the adjustment of the ship.

"for the first, err, for the first contract it was quite err difficult, for me to get used to it (.) you know, because, err, you understand that you don't have any place to go, you don't have any place for example if you wanted to stay alone (.) you don't have such place on the ship (.) you know, and err, you are not free to do anything you want, so there are, because there are restrictions, but, err, you know when you get used to it, you stop noticing it, so when I got used to it, so, it was ok, you know, I, its, it is just like my life, ok, no problem" (Karen, waiter)

Because the life on cruise ships is different to what most people are used to, it is understandable that there is a certain amount of adjustment required. It is this adjustable component that may suggest that individuals themselves adjust too. In other words, adjusting to the physical and social aspects of the cruise ship means that to a certain extent the way individuals think and make sense of things may also have to adjust. Being an unusual space,

beginners in the industry become reliant upon the readymade community on the ship (Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp, 2011), and a community that often encircles one's occupation or department. This socialisation process in turn has implications upon the formation of identity and an individual's 'sensemaking' (Weick, 1995). In the current study, individuals coming on a ship construct an identity in the context of others (i.e. occupational community), which will have an impact upon how they make sense of themselves and their environment (i.e. cruise ship).

To some surprise there were several participants who, since being on cruise ships, found it difficult, either for themselves or others known to them, to adjust back to "normal" life, or life back on land.

"These guys they can't live on land anymore (.) They're just too used to certain things only and they are nobody (.) On-board they know exactly what to do" (Angela, waiter and purser)

Angela discussed how people became used to the restriction, the controlled element of life on-board, and arguably became even more reliant upon these aspects of cruise ship work. Away from the cruise ship, Angela proposed "they are nobody" suggesting that some individuals who gained some form of purpose or identity on-board could not transfer this to life back on land. After six years of working on cruise ships Angela further adds:

"I can, I never actually really adapt back on the land, land, land life. I'm struggling".

A struggle connotation was often used and typically related to some sort of psychological struggle in adjustment to the cruise ship life or re-adjustment to normality. This ranges from a modest quality, such as finding it strange to drive to work, having to cook and clean up after yourself, or difficulties in sleeping because there is no movement of the ship, to more severe instances where individuals become so entrenched in the way that the cruise ships work, that they become totally dependent upon the sense of self that the cruise ship allow individuals to create.

6.4.2 *Blurring of work and life boundaries*

Arguably, working on-board a cruise ship is the embodiment of a blurred work and life boundary. To work on a cruise ship is a temporary life, and a life determined by work.

Moreover, workers cannot go home at the end of the day and alternatively cannot escape work when they have finished. This blurriness therefore has implications upon their identity and who individuals interact with.

“your work is so close everything, like you know people knew exactly what was going on in your private life, and you couldn’t kinda escape that part of the ships life” (Hannah, purser)

“you work, you live, you have fun, all in the same place with the same people” (Angela, waiter and purser)

There is no separation from work and life, everything is contained within the boundaries of the ship. The permeable lines between work and one's private life overlapped, whether that be the formation of relationships, the division of time and space, and furthermore an identity.

“it was hard, because you felt like you were always on call, so it’s like working 24 hours a day for like 7 or 8 months, you felt like as soon as you put your head down to sleep you’d have to get back up and go back to work, even when you had off time, it wasn’t like you really had time off (.) erm, you were, you were just constantly, your body was ready to go, like, even in my cabin I would pick up the phone and the first thing that would automatically come out of my mouth would be pursers office, because your just so engrained, into (.) constantly being on call and being ready for anything, that (.) it was hard, it was very hard to separate the two” (Joanne, purser)

Within the relationship of work and life, work was dominant, it commanded time and attention. After all, that is what workers are primarily there for, to work. It was an area of irritation to many participants, not the work itself, but the dominance of overlap in favour of their work. Cruise ship work was accepted as hard and intensive, which was prolonged because individuals could not psychologically or physically get away from their work. Realistically, workers are on call and potentially under the microscope 24/7. Even the freedom of leaving the ship when it docks is debatable:

“you know it’s like when you go ashore or kind of when you walking around the ships you know, you continue the face of the company so people will stop you (.) and you don’t really ever have that time to yourself to be in a bad mood really you know, coz you have a cabin mate, and you live and work with the same people” (Jane, merchandise)

Jane highlights that even when given the opportunity to go ashore, there is still an unbreakable attachment to the work and company, meaning that there is limited opportunity

to completely let go. This furthermore shows how emotionally difficult this can be whereby workers are required to provide prolonged instances of ‘emotional labour’ (Hochschild, 1983) and ‘emotional dissonance’ (e.g. Lashley, 2002).

6.4.3 Ship spaces

Beyond the outer shell of the cruise ship, there are spaces which have associations to the formation of communities and aid in the creation of identity. In short, cruise ships are social spaces in which spatially defined interactions manipulate shipboard communities and identity. A cruise ship has a clear physical boundary, everything is contained and tied to the physical entity of the ship – food, fuel, drinking water, amenities and people. Space on-board is of a constrained capacity, notably in the instance of workers and the spaces of workers. Privacy is a luxury not often granted in this communal arena which overreaches work, recreation and rest.

“realistically you’re in your own space but they can invade it, if you know what I mean...I think one of the main reasons they probably leave is because they don’t have time on their own, and they feel suffocated” (Kim, purser)

Space can be invaded personally, occupationally and organisationally. Shared cabins and amenities restrict personal privacy, while the diffusion of work/life boundaries further provoke the spaces dedicated to workers.

Initially there are two overarching spaces: passenger areas and employee areas, front stage and backstage. Similar to other service environments there is a general contrast in décor, “it’s like two different kinds of environments” (Joseph, waiter). Passenger areas on-board cruise ships are generally tasteful, welcoming and classy, while employee areas are more efficient, but compact and bland. Furthermore, the majority of spaces on-board are undercover or contained within the ship and if employees are working over 12 hours a day this can affect how individuals feel and act.

“a lot of people get sea sick, but just the whole thing with your senses, almost like when you have been on an aeroplane and you feel almost drained, and strange, erm to the point of where you don’t get a lot of daylight, I mean I got more daylight than Joseph, but pretty much you know if you are at sea (.) and you are not at work, you live underneath erm (.) like water level, but you’re actually always in artificial light, so

that's not very healthy, you don't get fresh air unless you go out, there is a promenade deck, but only concessions and officers can use that, then there is a crew deck but it's just literally a door, with a bit of outside area, so you are not getting fresh air, there is not daylight (.) which again has a big impact on how you feel, and to go from being normal and being able to step outside the door whenever, that's a big change" (Jane, merchandise)

This is an extract from the interview with a couple, Joseph and Jane. Jane (merchandise) is comparing her experience with that of Joseph (waiter). Briefly, this passage discusses the impact of being in an artificial space for long periods of time, i.e. no fresh air and no natural sunlight, and the impact this has on employees. The discussion subsequently led to the area of restriction based upon one's occupation or level of hierarchy, in which Joseph, classed as crew, was unable to access the "promenade deck" and instead has "a bit of outside area". This is an example of how one's occupation, or in particular one's level of hierarchy is constantly reminded on-board a cruise ship. Another example is whether or not employees have the privilege of using guest facilities. This again is based upon hierarchical level and ultimately occupational choice. The accessibility of space based upon one's occupation or level of hierarchy will be discussed below in terms of the mess (food canteen), cabins and crew bar.

6.4.3.1 Mess (food canteen)

The mess is a place where workers come together and eat. For crew, this is the only available space in which food is prepared for them on the ship. Staff and officers have the option of food services in guest areas. The mess is a functional space but it is also a social space in which community and group ties develop, based upon occupational, hierarchical and national determinants. One commonality which seemed to bring workers together was the complaining or disliking of the food available in the mess. Some compared the food to "prison food" (Norris, waiter) or simply "disgusting" (Sarah, purser), but more often commented that the food was always the same, and so became repetitive.

"we used to sit in the canteen and like literally (.) fantasise about getting off that ship (.) you know, literally fantasise about being able to watch a football game, erm, having your mother's cooking because what they put on for you food wise is fantastic you know, it's a buffet every night all you can eat (.) but it gets so old after a week (.) because they'd have a rotation and all of it starts to taste the same after 3 months you know (.) Even though the food is fantastic you

know you can have whatever you want, every night, all you can eat, healthy options, greasy options, you name it, dessert, ice-cream, (.) but it all starts to taste the same (Laughs)" (David, waiter)

Thompson (2004) when exploring the mess area on cruise ships, suggested that social identity boundaries are re-affirmed in such places due to the different mess areas of officers, staff and crew. This was not discussed by all participants, but it was clear that there was some segregation and variation regarding the communal eating of food:

"as a crew member as well, you have, they have their own mess, which is where they eat, and it's all buffet style they serve themselves and a staff member, your mess, erm, you actually get served, you can serve yourself, but you can also sit down and get served, and then there's an officers all served" (Mandy, purser)

"in some ships we even had the officers mess where we'd have better food than the crew which is I found very bad...I mean that is way nasty to see the difference but sometimes it's needed" (Angela, waiter and purser)

As suggested by Thompson (2004) it seems clear that this is a practice that re-affirms identity and community boundaries, not only through segregation, but also through the delivery of the service, i.e. buffet style and table service. Angela, having been a waiter and purser, identified this practice in a derogatory fashion, but in the same breath gave reason for such separation. Angela's reason is largely based on the differences in national cultures, in that employees that are classed as crew are often from developing countries (although not exclusively, as observed in this study) and therefore it is a way of keeping similar nationalities with similar tastes and cultures together. So although the segregation is based upon hierarchical structure, there is also a national identity undertone.

6.4.3.2 Cabins

Cabins are a space which allocates workers some personal, but shared, space. Single cabins are only given to high officers or officers with special privileges, although generally staff and crew will share 2-3 people per cabin. There were only two occasions in which participants were given a single cabin in this study, Christine and Sam. Both were pursers. Sam recognised he was very lucky and didn't know why he was given a single room, while

Christine had extra privileges and worked with VIP's often because she was fluent in several languages. Even with the single rooms, the lack of space and privacy was recognised.

"The cabins were very very small you know (.) You know I was in the cabin with a very large Caribbean fellow (.) who used to wake up every single morning (.) and not just pray but he would sing his prayers...because the room was so small there's nowhere else to go but you know it can, you know (.) it's not, it was quite cosy and you know (.) you kind of just don't care really because you just need sleep so (laughs)" (David, waiter)

Relationships with cabin mates were a delicate area, mainly because space is so tight. There was evidence of friction particularly if workers had partners and wanted some privacy, but there were also indications for cabin mates being an important emotional support structure. Not getting along or having a good relationship with fellow cabin mates can have a substantial impact upon working on-board, but it is an intricate relationship which involves personal spaces colliding with work, play and rest. Cabins are co-ordinated depending upon hierarchy, department, occupation and gender. Therefore a cabin mate will typically be someone that individuals are working with and which can further cement community ties around a specific area of work. A central reason for this is that shift patterns would be similar. Furthermore, cabins were below sea level, but deck level corresponded with hierarchy level. Therefore, crew would be stationed in the lowest decks, while the officer's deck would be positioned higher up on the ship. This is a further illustration of segregation and potential community boundaries.

6.4.3.3 Crew bar

The crew bar is a space which is specifically social in purpose. It is an opportunity for individuals to meet and socialise with workers outside of their own department, and basically a way to relax "just because we were not working at that time" (Angela, waiter and purser). With one's occupational position generally determining where workers eat and live, the crew bar was an open space for all working members of the cruise ship. It was a popular area of discussion for the majority of the participants. It was inexpensive, a place where personal relationships developed, and it was also a place that individuals could escape from reality, and in particular escape the stresses and hardship of work, which to some extent became almost ritualistic.

"crew bar was the best for me, crew bar was awesome, I mean we had bottle beers, a dollar 50 (...) I mean you can't beat that, you can't get that anywhere, you can't drink (.) for that price anywhere you know so that was a big plus you know, if it wasn't for that I would have jumped ship a long time ago (laughs)...That was pretty good and after that I mean I would just go to the crew bar get myself a drink and you know forget about work, that was a daily routine, crew bar after work (.) I became an alcoholic (laughs) with a few cups of wine or whatever they, you forget that you had a hard day at work, I mean I would drink a lot" (Norris, waiter)

Although escaping from the pressures of work was a sort after activity, even being in the crew bar did not allow a full break away from work connections. The following two passages demonstrate this:

"sometimes we go to the crew bar, but because how the industry is on the cruise ship (.) erm, we have err, how can I say it, a social life, (...) erm, but sometimes your superior if you are working in the morning he will come and warn you and say you have work in the morning and you have to get up early, (...) it's like you can have a social life but if you're caught late socialising after work you would be documented" (Peter, waiter)

"cos I'm an officer now, I've sort of, I can't go out as much (.) and, I mean I can still have a good time, but usually I would have to go out and have a drink from like 8 o'clock till 10 o'clock, and then, its meant to be seen that all officers should be in their bed by 10 o'clock" (Kim, purser)

There is nothing new that suggests any type of work can and does affect certain elements of one's social life, but because work and social lives are so close on-board a cruise ship it can be more noticeable and infiltrated. These examples show both aspects for officers and crew, but it generally points to the same outcome. Both types of worker are forced into making certain social compromises because of their occupation.

6.4.4 Safety

It was clear that safety was a major concern for both the industry and the participants. It is not only important that workers feel safe in the workplace, but the cruise ships have the added element of being at sea, and the feeling of being safe in their living and social spaces. This is of particular significance to a harmonious and happy on-board society or community.

“it’s like really scary actually you know, it’s very risky to live on the ship, it’s very risky, because err as I was saying possible like fire, erm, collision from the other ships (.) maybe, so, there’s a lot of risk about working on a ship” (Charles, waiter)

There is always a safety component of working on a ship. Safety training was intense and repetitive to ensure the wellbeing of both passengers and workers. On top of the training there were also security systems in place that steered the potential threat of violence or wrong doing. There was evidence of the use of sniffer dogs and getting searched by staff and airport-like security systems when coming onto the ship. The majority of participants felt completely safe.

“I feel very safe, I don’t feel like, I don’t think that anyone could get on (.) you know what I mean, also in terms of like when we’re out at sea, I feel 100% safe only because we have so much training on it, like I feel like I know what I’m doing” (Kim, purser)

Although participants felt safe there were instances discussed which highlight the fragility or threat towards safety. In one case, Charles (waiter) left one particular ship because he didn’t feel safe on-board. One of his colleagues was attacked by another member of the ship and he explained that little was done to the culprit, and so felt insecure on that ship. Sarah (purser) told a traumatic story of how one of her friends had jumped overboard and was lost at sea. She said that this was a tough experience but that the strength of the community on-board helped each other to pull through. Jane (merchandise) brought attention to the fact that she was a woman, and how sometimes she thought that was difficult mainly because of the larger ratio of men on-board. Finally, Neil (purser) deliberated about the threat of “drunk or unhappy customers”. The threat to safety may be heightened in the cruise ship setting, not only being in the middle of the sea, but because of the prolonged, intense and entwined activities of work and life.

6.5 Theme two: the ship as a system

Participants see a clear distinction between the social and working life on-board cruise ships from being on land. The space on-board a cruise ship, because of its physical nature, bound by the fit-for-purpose laws of the sea, and strict hierarchical rules, means a different way of working and living than the socio-cultural confines on land. A cruise ship is like a “small town” or “small city” (Angela, waiter and purser) surrounded by the sea, and in some ways it

represents a mobile floating island with its own cultural boundary. In this sense, a ship will have a system in place to maximise operational effectiveness and social control. This not only incorporates the business side of operations, but also the taking care of the total needs of their workers. Bound to a navy background, the system on-board a cruise ship was often portrayed as being hard and strict, which is important for safety and control. This type of system, although a cause of frustration and sometimes confusion, was generally accepted as “the way it is” (Charles, waiter) because “excuse the pun, everyone was in the same boat” (Jane, merchandise). So, because every worker was in a similar situation, it is something that an individual would have to get used to or deal with. In short, to work on a cruise ship, this is the way the system works.

6.5.1 Hierarchy

Each participant made note of the cruise formality, the hierarchy system, or the chain of command. This was a system that workers could not get away from, and as discussed in this chapter so far, one’s occupational position or hierarchical level had an impact upon work and also social elements of being on a ship. One’s hierarchical position transcends to almost all aspects of life on-board:

“the ranking is, is definitely, ah (.) something that they, erm, (laughs), you know, on depending on if you are a crew member, a staff member, or an officer it makes a big difference on where you eat, where you can go on-board, so that was probably the biggest difference I would say” (Mandy, purser)

There are constant reminders to what occupation an individual does, what hierarchical level they are in and what they can and cannot do. There was generally an acceptance that this is the way it is and moreover that the system in place, worked. However, there was an undertone, or some recognition, that this was not always fair.

“the downfall is definitely, erm, for me I think that the hierarchy system that is very military based (.) and my, so you’d have people in higher up positions that don’t necessarily treat the rest the way that I, I think that should be more equal, so that was very, that was a hard thing to kind of take in, so, and it was very country based” (Craig, purser)

One particular notion was that the hierarchy system typically corresponded with the nationality of the worker:

“it tends to be pretty much (.) you know, like lower down the scale is (laughs) like certain people from certain countries” (Joseph, waiter)

“they are offering some kind of jobs to just some kinds of people, I mean just some kinds of countries” (Zack, waiter)

“the only thing that when I was applying, I don’t know for what reason, but they are not allowed to my country to apply to a better position (.) the only position you can apply is housekeeping or maybe like server” (Neil, purser)

There were multiple discussions on this topic, which suggests that this practice is well known. Attempts are made by some cruise organisations to employ certain nationalities for certain occupations, either as a cost cutting strategy or as a way to try and promote a more harmonious occupational group/community through employing workers that have a similar background. This type of strategy is particularly prominent in the dining room. This noted, cross-cultural relationships were widespread, and were viewed by participants as a positive element of the working environment (discussed in Section 6.7.5).

6.5.2 Strict rules

Similar to hierarchy, the rules on-board a cruise ship were clear and strict. The combination of strict rules and hierarchy, alongside operational standards gave confidence to some participants that they were working for a “serious company” with “high standards”. Rules were seen as important for work and social control mechanisms that kept operations as free from difficulty as possible.

“I think they are important coz err, when you have people from 60 different nations with different backgrounds and cultures, so, sometimes it’s really not so out of place to remind them about common rules that have been set for the, the society on-board, you know it’s like a new society” (Christine, purser)

Given the mix of people, both passengers and staff, from different backgrounds with diverse cultural beliefs, it is important for clear rules to be in place. Although important for safety and efficiency, from a worker point of view this also restricted freedom, personally and

professionally. From a professional aspect, there seemed to be a real threat of getting into trouble or losing one's job.

"I didn't like that (.) for small things you would get in to a lot of trouble or you'd get written up, or they would threaten to, you know, that you would lose your job" (Joanne, purser)

"but it can be very strict on the ship, I mean, a lot of people are terrified for their jobs, some days, sometimes they go out and have little bit too much fun, and the next day, there's sometimes there a threat, you know, like, oh we will be breathalysing people today" (Kim, purser)

Exploring emotional behaviour on cruise ships Johansson and Naslund (2009, p.51) stated that losing one's job on-board 'is not just loss of income, but also an attack on part of your identity'. To lose a job on a ship would be in part losing a sense of self. Being context specific, an on-board identity would make little sense when out of that context. The threat of losing one's job was not only judged on occupational performance, but also on the behaviour while not working. Rules brought up by participants generally centred around an alcohol consumption limit and also the speaking of only English while being on the ship. Talking in a language that was not English, especially in the presence of a passenger was not permitted. Furthermore, cruise ship organisations would often encourage guests to use comment cards to express any concerns, and also positive responses. This was a mechanism of control employed by the organisation:

"guests were writing the comment cards, so if your name appeared once on the comment cards in wrong way (.) you had a problem, and if err if it was there 3 times (.) actually you could be fired" (Zack, waiter)

6.5.3 Hard work, hard life

There was widespread acknowledgement that the work and life on ships is hard. The cruise ship "never stops, nothing really closes" (Angela, waiter and purser) in preparation for the needs and demands of passengers. Work is continuous, fast paced and pressurised, while not being able to physically and mentally escape work and the ship intensifies such hardship.

"there is no release, or you it's just like pressure and people all the time (.) you know from the moment you wake up, and you have to put on the face, that everything's fine" (Jane, merchandise)

Because of the physical and psychological demands of this type of work there are consequences. Physically, participants talked about getting varicose veins (Jane, merchandise), having work related injuries (Norris and Karen, both waiters) which inevitably meant they could not continue in the same role, and also being physically exhausted. Psychologically, participants would talk about how workers could stay too long on the cruise ships and become too used to the system, as Christine (purser) discusses:

"people stay too long I think they get alienated, they get many of them have problems with alcohol or, they are very loners you know (.) or they are attach and they really don't commit to anything"

It can be easy to get used to the system, being encapsulated and having multiple elements of work and life controlled. Vogel and Oschmann (2012, p.16) suggest that life on-board offers a degree of ‘reliability, predictability, structure and routine’ from which workers can arguably gain a clearer sense of self. The ship facilitates identity and belonging, individuals have a sense of who they are on the ship, and in a sense boundaries are clearer in terms of what you can and cannot do. Although work and life is hard, it is shared with colleagues, and it is something that brings a community together with shared experiences and shared hardships. Everyone in that community understood this element of work and life and was something that endorsed community belonging.

"When the last guest or something would leave (.) when the last guest would leave the restaurant you know we had to stay behind an hour and a half to make sure that, that restaurant was spotless for breakfast (.) You know so we'd all be polishing the glasses and all it would take would be for someone to whistle a song or something and then the next thing you know the whole restaurant is (.) singing along the song just because everyone's so exhausted man, everyone's on a, you almost feel quite high as if you're on drugs or something, because as soon as someone gives you a little bit of adrenaline (.) someone starts jumping up and down or dancing or something everybody's all of a sudden going crazy, because they're so tired (.) but they're all your friends as well" (David, waiter)

Participants explained that this type of lifestyle is “very addictive” (e.g. Sam, purser) and although it was “very, very hard at times...I wouldn’t change it” (David, waiter). The hard work and life was often compromised by the social and professional experiences and also the opportunity to travel, as explained by Joseph (waiter), “the pluses outweigh the negatives”.

6.6 Theme three: time

Time on-board is a precious commodity and one that is heavily consumed by work. In particular life on ships is much different than the general activities on land in terms of the time dedicated or demanded by one's family. Family time is almost absent except for the weekly or biweekly telephone or email contact, and so for large parts of time at sea, a worker's family role (i.e., brother, sister, son, daughter) is partially relinquished, albeit for only a temporary time. Furthermore, other activities that are normal on land such as paying bills, driving a car, and regular food shopping are all irrelevant by working on a ship. Therefore, there is arguably more time which is dedicated to one's work and one's way of life on the ship. Even so, participants talked of time as being limited, illusive and intense, and it was often a source of conflict or frustration, and particularly between the division of work and life. This section explores the theme of time and how work and life coexist, and how time also assists in the formation of community and social relationships.

6.6.1 The contract

All workers are employed on a fixed term contract basis. The length of the contract will vary depending on the occupation, organisation and sometimes nationality. A fixed term contract, in its definition is bound by time. A worker will be aware of when the contract ends and up until that point aware they are bound to that ship or organisation, unless there are extenuating circumstances. The contract length of the participants in this study varied from 4 – 9 months, although the majority were on a 6 month contract (both waiters and pursers). Although all acknowledged this was long, only Kim (purser) and Norah (purser) suggested some sort of alternative, which was a longer contract but one that encapsulated frequent breaks in-between, or simply just a shorter contract, for example working 4 months. It was noticeable that there were psychological changes towards work and community the further an individual was into their contract. Hard and intensive work can take its toll both physically and emotionally. Sam (purser) calls this “6 month-itis”, in which workers are more agitated and have little energy, and are generally ready to go home, see their family and have a sense of normality away from the ships. From an occupational perspective, there was evidence of a drop in standards towards the end of contracts.

“at the end of my contract, my second contract I didn’t really care and I would tell the guests all their little secrets (laughs)” (Norris, waiter)

“you start off with a good relationship, but as time goes by and the contract runs out...you start slowly losing your temper (.) like not liking anything that’s happening around...so you slowly, like after 6 months, you start slowly start whining a lot and you don’t like it and say to the manager (laughs) at the contract ends, it starts not being like managing the relationships that you had in the beginning” (Joseph, waiter)

Whether workers are wiser or become more organisationally deviant is a matter of opinion but it was clear that, because of frustration, exhaustion or just because the contract is ending, one’s attitude and behaviour towards work and the relationships in work altered. This was more noticeable in waiters, for which it was accepted that the role had longer working hours and was more physically and emotionally demanding. This type of behaviour is also reflected from a community and social relationship perspective, as Sam (purser) explains:

“it’s funny like when people sign on, they kind of find out how long you have been there (laughs) and if you have been there like 5 months, they won’t really make an effort to commit with you, coz you are not worth it, you know, erm (laughs) but if you have only been there one month then you are worth investing (laughs)” (Sam, purser)

The time spent into a contract may even be a consideration for any potential close relationships that have developed. As workers are constantly signing on and leaving the ships, time left on the ships may be a factor that workers judge whether others are “worth investing” their time in.

6.6.2 Work time

All participants were asked what was most that they disliked or found frustrating about working on a cruise ship. A common response was the time spent working. Furthermore it was seen as a central differentiator to working on land. Working on-board is very intense and an activity that demands the most time and attention from employees. Having a day off was unheard of, there were no holidays and even getting time off due to illness was a difficult task (see below).

"Its a lot more intense, erm, you work a lot more hours, you work, erm, 70 hours a week minimum (.) maybe working overtime, erm, its full on like, you work 7 days a week, erm, you don't get a single day off...I worked 6 months for a whole straight without one day off"
(Sarah, purser)

All participants worked on a shift based system, which is a way whereby cruise ship organisations can make full use of an employee's time. Moreover it was a necessary system, for example waiters would only be required to work two shifts of either breakfast, lunch or dinner to meet demand. As noted, workers would never have a day off and the only time off was in-between shifts or if they were lucky to get a shift off, which was a rare occasion. There were two occasions (Joseph and Zack, both waiters) in this study in which participants discussed paying another cruise ship worker to work their shift, either to get some time off or just to help them with their occupational demands:

"oh we used to pay someone if we were really tired, we used to pay someone to cover us (.) to arrange to sort us out shifts, where you couldn't get off the boat, it would be like once in 15 days we just, not working for lunch, like basically take 2 or 3 hours work will be off for, but then it gives you a long day (.) like a longer set of break in between (.) so we used to normally try and get someone who really wants to work for money (.) and then pay him to do that shift off us and get a day off, for that" (Joseph, waiter)

Joseph explained how the occupational demands can be intense, and sometimes the only way to have some time off would be to pay someone else to work for them. Even when workers were ill there was a struggle to get time off work, as explained by Zack (waiter):

"when you were sick (.) err, and you came to doctor err, he examinated you and he told you ok, you have 3 hours off, or 12 hours off, or you have 24 hours off (.) when I was err really sick, for 24 hours (.) and was really angry at the doctor and shouted at him and told him listen I know how I feel, I cannot be ok in 24 hours, he told me ok, ok, ok, I had 2 or 3 days, I am not sure, but it's like this on ships (laughs)" Zack (waiter)

Taking time off work due to illness is only under the authority of the doctor on-board. When some of the participants were prompted further, the relationship between the medical staff and workers appeared to be somewhat fragile. This type of working practice highlights how important a worker's role is on the ship. There is not an endless supply of labour on-board, so if someone is ill there are more complications to fill the gap left by that individual not being able to work.

Although working hours were long for all occupations, the time spent physically working varied between the two positions in this study. It was accepted that waiters had the longer hours and that their work was more physically and mentally demanding.

“yeah I was working from 5.30 in the morning until erm(.) sometimes 12 o’clock at night. I have to say that not all of the roles were like that but the average job on the ship averaged about 60 hours a week...Sometimes I’d catch myself falling asleep, falling asleep you know and I’d go for a toilet break or something you know I’d go there just to get away for some time” (David, waiter)

To escape the pressure of their occupation was a near impossible task. For some, particularly waiters, it was harder than for others due to work taking up large parts of the day. Of course this was job dependent, and in one case Neil (purser) talked about how he was encouraged by an employee to take the position of a purser because they have more time off.

6.6.3 Social time

Social time mainly revolves around what occupation an individual has. Work has a controlling and restraining factor upon a worker’s social life and time, meaning the time to socialise out of work, is fractured and limited.

“Err I would say time is really a nasty thing cause you don’t really have any time to plan or to understand or to digest or to make the right choice or take the right decision...you have no time to think, no time to digest what happened(.) No time to enjoy(.) I mean you can eat but you gotta be quick, you can talk but you gotta be quick, you can sleep but you gotta be quick. There’s really not much time for nothing, I mean parties you know they were an hour, an hour and a half because after that nobody has no, anymore energy (laughs) for a, a, a crew party you know, everybody works very hard” (Angela, waiter and purser)

It was clear that what participants were able to do, to what extent and at what time was heavily influenced by their work. This was particularly more notable in waiters than pursers because of the longer hours and more physically demanding work. Furthermore, the way that a waiter’s shift would be scheduled usually meant that they are working a shift in the morning, a period of time off in the afternoon, and then another shift in the evening for dinner. Therefore, a waiter’s work is spread out over the course of a day, whereas a purser’s

shift system is usually more compact giving them more time outside of work. This is not to suggest purasers were not frustrated with a lack of social time. Christine (purser) talked about how workers were not really the “owner” of their time. Their time was pre-determined by the demands of work and the needs of the cruise ship. The frustration was “not having time for a social life” (Christine, purser) and when there was time, it was often at “sacrifice” (Joseph, waiter), which was generally the sacrifice of much needed rest. Generally, participants would feel they were working all of the time, or at least found it difficult to get away from their work.

“but we do have a limit on the amount we can drink, coz (.) according to the marine law, like we are all still technically working it doesn’t matter even if we are not clocked in (.) like for instance if there err, we all went to late night Nassau, and then we’ve come back, and we’re all (.) really drunk then, and then all of a sudden there’s an alarm, like we still have to at least help the guest, so realistically we are working all the time” (Kim, purser)

This is not to propose that individuals did not enjoy the social element of the cruise ship; it was just their work was still mindful during social activities. In short, workers have to be aware of their responsibilities as a cruise ship worker all the time.

“even when you had off time, it wasn’t like you really had time off”
(Joanne, purser)

The decision of what to do with social time was also affected by how many previous contracts an individual had worked, and also to how far a worker was into a contract. It was noticeable that the more time spent on a cruise ship the more an individual’s priorities began to change relative to how they spent their time off work.

“we prefer to stay on the ship, just because we don’t have a lot of time so we don’t want to get off, and we’ve obviously seen all the ports a lot time, obviously on the first contract you go and see everything (.) and then on your other contracts, you just sort of don’t do a lot to be honest” (Kim, purser)

The novelty of exploring ports soon waned away with time, meaning that workers were more likely to be strategic with their time off. Thought was more centred with getting rest for being at work, or other “normal” tasks such as buying personal shopping items and contacting family members while the ship was in dock.

6.6.4 Time and relationships

The time spent on the ship also had an impact upon the relationships made and formations of a community. Because of the longer working hours of waiters it was clear that individuals who worked in the restaurant were more likely to form stronger bonds with each other and develop closer community ties around a specific line of work. Time was central, in that a waiter's work would take up the majority of their time, so therefore waiters would spend more time with other waiters or restaurant workers. Furthermore, this restricted waiters in the time spent with other people on-board the ship.

"my closest friends were in the restaurant with me obviously because I had very little time to wander off into other roles" (David, waiter)

Purzers, on the other hand, had more flexibility in their work and so had the opportunity to socialise more with other workers. This was not to say purzers did not form an occupational community. Indeed, most participants said that most of their closest friends were in the same line of work as them, but due to the less time restrictions relative to their work it generated more opportunity to socialise out of their occupational and departmental boundary. This allowed purzers more so to develop community ties with wider margins outside of their occupation. The inclusivity of time spent on the ship, while working with the same people, meant that these bonds between individuals developed rather quickly:

"in some ways you can connect faster with people because you are with them all the time...and obviously like you've got people around you all the time, so (...) you don't seem to miss life at home so much anymore, it just becomes a big whirlwind of work really, and people you live with" (Kim, purser)

Workers are pushed together, with the choice of who to spend time with is limited and to a certain extent controlled. Because of the inclusive, scheduled and intensive time on the ship it is in itself a form of coping or prevention strategy that assists individuals with being away from home, family and friends.

"it's basically like your family, because you spend more time with them than you do your own family" (Norah, purser)

Individuals on-board become like a "family", a temporary replacement family that becomes a support and reference system.

6.6.5 Time on the ship

The intensive and routine nature of work and life on-board cruise ships meant that time and days seemed to roll into one. There was little conception of time and the days were recognised depending upon where the ship was docked that day. The routine of work, other than the occasional change in shift patterns, meant there was little differentiation between days:

“it gets difficult, I mean it’s the time zones and you don’t really know what day it is when you’re on the ship, you don’t know what day it is or time it is, usually you just know which cruise it is and where you are the next day (laughs)” (Kim, purser)

“on the ship there is no Monday, no Saturday or no Sunday, its everyday Monday there, you work minimum 11 hours a day, no, no day off or whatever” (Charles, waiter)

Because of this intensity, some participants suggested that work experience on a cruise ship is comparable to two or three times to that of experience on land.

6.7 Theme four: occupation

Working on a cruise ship was not only a different life, but also shaped a new identity. The routine and structure of working linked with one’s social life was a way to build a personal and social identity. Who they were before being on the cruise ship did not seem to have much relevance, it was who they were on the ship, what occupation they had that held significance to self and social definition. In short, what individuals did professionally on the ship was related to all aspects of one’s life on-board.

“everyone knew you for the type of job that you did” (Sarah, purser)

It was clear that one’s occupation on-board was a major contributor to one’s identity. This was particularly noticeable when participants changed occupational positions. When Angela (waiter and purser) went from being a waiter to a purser she explained that:

“they were actually looking at me differently because I was not a waitress...they caught me with a uniform and they looked at me like, wow congratulations, what happened? (Laughs) Did you get promoted? Well done” (Angela, waiter and purser)

She explained that before she was a purser certain people didn't speak to her, but as soon as she put on the uniform as a purser some people treated her differently. This also highlights how a uniform is a visual mechanism of identity. In another example, when Kim (purser) changed from merchandise to purser, she actually changed behaviour:

"yeah, now coz I'm an officer yeah, definitely, when I was in merchandise I didn't really think too much about it, if I get sacked (.) I get sacked, who cares (.) but now (.) erm, you know, I want to be a role model and stuff and I don't want people to see me drunk and stuff like that" (Kim, purser)

Kim's social identity changed which meant that people looked at her differently because of her status and occupation. This in turn reflected in a change of behaviour according to that status on-board. In a final example, Mandy (purser) changed from being a purser to a sales representative for an external company (she still worked and lived on the ship). Because of this change she explained that:

yeah I think we definitely, erm, viewed as more outsiders when, once, once I switched (Mandy, purser)

Because of a change in role, and a role that was affiliated to an external company, Mandy explains that she felt more of an "outsider" and particularly with regards to the social elements of cruise ship life. The three examples show how an occupation can have an impact on individual and social identity, altering one's behaviour not only at work but also out of work (social). This section explores how one's occupation has an effect on identity on-board.

6.7.1 Occupational identity

The occupations of purser and waiter differed in many ways. Such examples include the level of hierarchy, amount of pay, time spent on the job, and the physical nature of the role. This noted, there was one common factor, besides being on a ship, and that was the significance of the role to their identity formation. There were only three participants (Craig, purser; Mandy, purser; and, Zack, waiter) who viewed their occupation as a way to experience the cruise ship life and opportunity to travel. Although these were important considerations for the majority of participants, their occupational role also took on an affective and central importance. Commonly participants would reflect upon how they "love their job", "love what they do", and how this has changed them.

“it really forged me into a different person” (Angela, waiter and purser)

The nature of the cruise ship in a physical and emotional sense, for example how intense and time consuming the work is and being physically isolated, appeared to be a factor in the identity formation.

“Yeah, it’s a, it’s strange because I mean its technically just (.) erm, it’s just what I would be basically doing at home, its, you know working at front desk, but it just seems, coz its like on a cruise ship, and they’ve got such amazing kind of customer service, such an amazing reputation, it does make me feel kind of proud of my work”
(Norah, purser)

To understand each occupation more, this section will explore the perceptions of waiters and pursers separately.

6.7.1.1 Waiters

The occupation of a waiter is recognised as being one of the hardest jobs on the ship, not only in terms of the physical demands, but also the psychological demands. The hours are very long and time off is limited. Furthermore, waiters are classed as crew which has implications upon where they can eat and sleep and what they can do, and so there was a certain stigma attached to the role. A general perception is described by Angela:

“Crew was the, waiters, stewards, cleaners all the nasty jobs”
(Angela, waiter and purser)

It is a position that not many participants recommended because of the elements of ‘dirty work’ (e.g. Kreiner *et al.* 2006a) and realities described above and throughout this chapter. Even so, the way the waiters in this study described their role was of a very professional and specialised service. This was heightened by the level of service that the cruise ship offers. The dining room on-board is often a formal, 5 star service and so requires professional and well trained personnel, as explained by David (waiter):

“at the end of the day I was serving them food but it’s so much more, you have to entertain them, you have to do tricks, you have to play with the kids, it’s not just giving them food on their table, you know, there’s so many standards that are needed following and the training is actually so intense man (.) the training it was the hardest thing ever

it was done in my life, It sounds easy, you know putting food on the table, taking an order but no you have to use this certain hand to place something this way, you have to learn (.) 300 wines, you have to learn all the cocktails, you have to learn all the allergies, all the ingredients to every single dish, what goes with what erm so (laughs)"
(David, waiter)

The particular focus on training by the organisation attaches a certain amount of specialisation to the role, while David reiterates "it's so much more" than just the serving of food. Relationships between waiters and guests are often prolonged to the duration of the whole time of a guest's vacation. This suggests that waiters are not only food and drink servers, but "entertainers" and reference points, whereby waiters and guests form affective relationships (discussed in Section 6.8.3). The "other side" of a waiter's role was also reflected in the interviews with some of the other waiters. Joseph (waiter) states that waiters also have to be "sellers". This is a particular part of the job that Joseph does not find enjoyable, but waiters are also advised by the organisation to sell extra products to guests such as special wines and cook books. Charles (waiter) also compares the role of a waiter to that of an "actor". It was apparent that the participants in the study were trying to overcome the professional obstacles set by the organisation through the distinction that waiters are much more than just servers.

It was evident that the occupation of waiter was generally motivated by financial gains. Typically, waiters are only paid a very small amount by the cruise ship company. There is a reliance on guests to compensate waiters with tips. This is a particular reason why it is important for waiters to develop strong relationships with their guests. Most of the waiters would not talk about the exact amount of money they earned, although Angela (waiter and purser) stated that she was given "50 dollars a month as a salary and 3000 dollars in tips". David (waiter) also explained that:

"I was assigned 24 guests, erm averaged on maybe, on a cruise of say 5 days we'd have 24 dollars per person and I had 24 guests" (David, waiter)

On this basis, a waiter could earn of good living, although they fully recognised that they could potentially do their job and not get paid for it if, for instance "if 20 people get up and walk away from the table, you lose your wages" (Joseph, waiter). This was generally accepted as the way it is, although Peter (waiter) thought they were being "exploited" and thought the company should do more to compensate its workers. Overall, a waiter's position was recognised as a high earning role:

“everybody knew that except for the captain and maybe the highest officers (.) our wage was considerably, you know definitely the highest, maybe third or fourth highest on the whole ship” (David, waiter)

According to David the earning potential was considerable, although the price of this was the fact that it is a very hard and time consuming role. For example, Angela (waiter and purser) stated that “as a waiter I was making double” to that of her purser wage, but with that she was “exhausted” and “getting a lot of stress related symptoms”. Furthermore, with the potential of earning and losing money in the restaurant, it was a competitive and occupationally deviant arena (e.g. Raelin, 1984). Waiters would compete for the best tables that were closest to the kitchen and there was also evidence of ‘sabotage’ through the practice of stealing cutlery and glassware from rival tables.

6.7.1.2 *Pursers*

Compared to waiters, it is accepted that pursers have an “easier” time when it comes to occupational demands. Pursers, like every front service role, still work every day but this will generally be between four and eight hours, although this may be doubled on embarkation/disembarkation days. Their role is often compared to as similar to the “front desk of a hotel”. A purser is considered to be at the hierarchical level of officer, which when talked about to the pursers in this study, was an important aspect to their occupation and life onboard the cruise ship.

“Yeah, this is, I really like this job, I think this is the greatest job on the ship to do (.) Coz you know everyone it’s not, you don’t have that much of, erm, of pressure, also because, we, we don’t work that many hours, and I really like talking with people...our rank is like officers, so we are also allowed to go everywhere on the ship, not like working on the lowest deck all the time, and not seeing anyone for hours, it’s a really great job” (Barbara, purser)

While talking to pursers in this study about their job, it was apparent that they thought quite highly of the position, considering it to be “one of the best jobs on the ship” (Kim, purser). The job was relatively social in that it would incorporate both guests and other workers in their everyday activities. There would also be a relative amount of responsibility attached to the role, which as Hannah explains gives a sense of pride and meaningfulness:

“the purser role you do get a sense of pride because you are involved so heavily in the day-to-day of what goes on and you really make a difference to fix like cruisers resolving problems and making things happen (.) erm, your responsible for, you know, some quite high level, erm (.) duties on-board the ship, you know managing customs and immigration and managing emergencies and, and to have a certain sense of pride in being able to handle all of those appropriately”

(Hannah, purser)

The purser division is also more compact, whereas there may be around 200 waiters on-board some of the larger cruise ships, there may only be 15 – 20 pursers on a ship. This was seen by many of the pursers as a positive, where individuals felt more special and unique, but also a perceptive feeling of being closer knit. The training for the role varied depending upon the company, but generally it did not seem as intense as the training for waiters, although there was a mixture of responses. Some participants suggested that there was little training and that all their training was on the job, while others stated they went to a specialised purser college, although it seems this has since stopped.

6.7.2 Uniform

The uniform on-board a cruise ship is like a visual icon of identity (e.g. Nickels, 2008). It separates guest and worker, it identifies with an occupation, and it also reinforces hierarchy level. Therefore it not only acts as a separation device but also as a way of forming a collective identity. Hailing from a navy background the uniforms are renowned. This was also acknowledged by some of the participants, and more noticeably with officers, as Angela discusses her purser’s uniform:

“on your shoulder you have a little, like the officers have you know the little thingy that shows your, your grade, shows what range, of officer you are, that kind of thing (.) and I had just one, one tiny little (laughs) little symbol there but I was so proud of my uniform and I could get off of all of the ships sometimes with the uniform and people were looking at me and thinking, oh look that’s an officer” (Angela, waiter and purser)

The uniform, being looked upon by passengers as an officer was something that made Angela proud. Section 6.7 discussed how when Angela first put on the uniform of a purser that other people’s perception of her changed. The uniform in this sense has a feel good value, whereby others judged her based upon the uniform and what that comes to stand for.

6.7.3 Recruitment and promotion

The cruise ship industry generally relies on agencies for the recruitment of front line staff. This was a typical application process for participants in this study. Only Norris (waiter) stated that he applied direct to the cruise ship company, and Christine (purser) after several unsuccessful attempts of applying through agencies met an individual “by chance” that was working on cruise ships and advised her how to apply to a specific cruise line company. Furthermore, Neil (purser), although still using an agency, also relied upon an individual working in the industry to assist him applying to a particular company. The majority of participants were flexible with their decision about which cruise ship company to work for and would apply for several at one time or leave it to an agency to find a suitable cruise ship. Only the three participants above (Norris, Christine and Neil) and David (waiter) and Wendy (purser) were specific in which company they wished to work for. Once individuals were working for a company, any renewal of contracts, change of jobs, or promotions was handled by the cruise ship company. This would imply a particular strong internal labour market, although this would be complemented by a demand based external market (agencies).

Once recruited, the industry was keen to start workers at the bottom of their chosen occupational path. So unless an individual had a specific skill-set or level of qualification (for example, Christine was able to speak several languages and so she was employed for a specific “international ambassador” type role) they would start off in an entry level position. For example, waiters would generally begin in an assistant waiter’s role, a waiter that mainly serves the cruise ship workers, or even as a dishwasher. The participants often told of conflicting examples relating to the changing of jobs or promotion, which can be based upon the company, management, nationality and the current position. For the position of a waiter, moving up the hierarchical ladder may have been more difficult because of the sheer number of waiters compared to that of their superiors. The position of a purser, being more compact, may have provided more opportunity or a clearer line of promotion. There were several examples in this study of participants changing jobs or getting promoted, although alternatively there were also several examples of participants feeling frustrated by the system.

Waiters in particular found the process of promotion or job change difficult. A particular reason may be that to be a waiter on a cruise ship is to possess a great deal of knowledge about food and drink, which requires a lot of investment in training. The cruise ship organisations recognise this and may be more reluctant to sanction a move in jobs. Zack (waiter) stated it was “almost impossible” to change his job to be a purser, even though he had

previous experience as a hotelier and could speak four languages. This noted, Angela (waiter and purser) was able to change her position from waiter to purser, but explains:

"I think actually the chief purser's kind of liked me (...) any kind of sort of, wanted me to know that he liked me... If I seduce you then maybe I can help you" (Angela, waiter and purser)

This behaviour seemed to be accepted as the way that it is. It was often a case of "who you know in the company" rather than "what you know" (Joseph, waiter). Again, this was more so discussed by participants in the position of a waiter. On the other hand a purser, because they were officers and also the professional nature of their role, was argued as a good career and a good role on the ship:

"I think a lot of people stayed in guest services also just because there was more scope for promotion, the people who wanted to stick around and do it as a career" (Sam, purser)

Promotion on-board is something that most participants either considered at some stage or were considering, and it is a variable which seemed to have some impact upon a potential career on-board.

"if I can get my promotion, I can get more money, I, I will definitely stay with the company" (Barbara, purser)

"I was planning to stay longer but the only thing that stopped me is that err I was not promoted" (Neil, purser)

In the two examples, one who is still working on ships (Barbara) and one who has left (Neil), Neil discussed that he was offered a promotion on two separate occasions, although for reasons he didn't explain, it didn't materialise. On the second occasion he explained that he was offered a promotion to work on a different ship with the same company but when he boarded the ship the management there did not know anything about it. This was the reason he left cruise ships. On the other hand, Barbara talks about working hard on a promotion, and if she can get one, along with an increase in salary she will "definitely stay with the company".

Unfortunately, there was also evidence that promotion was also based upon nationality. In the interview with Jane (merchandise) and Joseph (waiter) this was talked about in some detail as each was discussing how different their experiences were based upon their occupations and also their nationality.

6.7.4 The other job

As well as their main occupation, all workers on-board cruise ships are assigned a safety role in case of emergency. This is something entirely new to individuals when first coming to work on cruise ships. The industry takes the matter of safety seriously. Training is intense and repetitive, with crew and passenger drills employed on each cruise. Furthermore, workers will take part in safety training at the start of each contract and generally throughout the contract. Taking on this safety responsibility further added an element of importance to their role, as Angela explains:

“They make you, I mean you have to go to trainings when you are on-board like once a month at least, sometimes even more where they make you feel important because you count, because the ships can, cannot work if you are not there because there’s so much to do, everybody has to do their own part” (Angela, waiter and purser)

As Angela explains, her role in case of emergency is potentially extremely important. Charles (waiter) further explains that the company tells the workers that their safety role is their “first job”. Taking on this extra responsibility intensifies their feeling of importance, and furthermore shows that they are doing something that is meaningful.

6.7.5 Support from family and friends

Passengers generally have little idea how the life of a cruise ship worker is (Klein, 2002), but this is also extended to family members and friends of cruise ship workers.

“I think realistically they just don’t understand it, like, they, they (.) you wouldn’t really ever understand the real ship life unless you lived on it, you know...but the bottom line is, is they just see it as err, a life experience rather than a job experience, like they don’t think I gain any skills from being there (.) they think I just gain some sort of travel experience, you know” (Kim, purser)

The general feeling amongst participants was that “outsiders” have little idea about what it is really like to work on cruise ships. Typically, there is evidence of two different perceptions held by one’s family and friends. First, is that it offers a fantastic opportunity to travel and see the world, and secondly, that it is just an extended vacation and not a “real job”. Participants were able to accept that it was an opportunity to travel, but what seemed frustrating for

participants was when others talked about being on a six month vacation or implied in some fashion that their job was of little importance.

“a lot of people just tell me you are wasting your time. Why don’t you get serious, you know? My god this was the most serious job I’ve ever had, very organised and precise... it’s not a proper job, it’s not a career, it’s just going on vacation for 6 years... It was great for my career...they told me well what can you do anyway? Did you just err dance and sing on-board? I was in the reception actually, the pursers division... but people think we’re just erm having fun and not doing nothing serious” (Angela, waiter and purser)

Participants would often become quite vocal or emotional when discussing this, which would suggest that participants did feel somewhat attached to their occupational role and being on a cruise ship. Participants, consistent with social identity theory, often felt that they had to defend their occupation and that they were working on a cruise ship (e.g., Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Jetten *et al.* 2002). This noted, participants would describe that their family was proud of the work they were doing, even if it was only in the sense of a life experience. It was clear that this was important to workers, in that their family understood and were happy about their work choice.

6.7.6 Work and future

This is a sub-theme that is interesting in that the participants in this study have either recently finished working on cruise ships or are still working in the industry, and therefore can offer two sides to work and future work. Of those who are still working on-board there are three (Barbara, Kim and Wendy) that thought they would be on cruise ships for the foreseeable future, with the main reason being that in their opinion they have been able to develop a career. Timescales were not given as such, while the participants often debated life issues such as starting a family and having a normal life, which would suggest that working on ships long term would not be compatible. Although Kim (purser) discussed that she would not rule coming back on-board ships even after she had a family in place. The other remaining participants still working on ships (Norah and Peter) were more pragmatic in their cruise ship futures, suggesting that they would have one or two more contracts and then think about their future.

Of those participants who have recently left the industry there was a mixture of responses. Although only two were actively seeking cruise ship work (Sam and Norris) there were several who expressed real desires to go back to cruise ships.

“I wake up all the time, you know, from sleep, dreaming I was back on-board and how much I miss it (.) so I think if I wasn’t settled I would go back (Laughs)” (Joanne, purser)

It was evident that their experience on cruise ships was a major aspect of their lives, in which none of the participants either regretted their decision to work on ships or held negative connotations, even after discussing some of the hardships of the work and life. The lifestyle aspect was central when discussing their desires to return, although work is a major part of that lifestyle. Participants would also discuss how the cruise ships have had an impact upon them personally and professionally. Personally, participants were grateful of their time and explained how it gave them a different perspective of life. Professionally, for some, it made a real impact upon what career they wished to pursue, while others discussed their experience had hindered their professional progress. It was explained that being on a ship for some time can “cut many ties with shore side” (Christine, purser) and ultimately this placed individuals near the bottom of the career path. When participants were probed about the potential of a career on cruise ships, again there was a mixture of answers. The majority suggested that it can and is a good career choice, although participants recommended that certain occupations and departments are more suitable. On the other hand, there were some who advised that cruise ships are only for “experience” (Zack, waiter), and if there were career opportunities on land, to take them over cruise ship work.

6.8 Theme five: relationships

Relationships made on-board are central to the happiness and longevity of workers. Participants often discussed their frustrations regarding work and the system, but the formation of relationships and what that brings to individuals was of particular significance. Relationships offer cruise ship workers a support system, a surrogate family, freedom from work, belonging, and a communal feeling of being together in a similar situation. The majority of workers come to work on-board cruise ships as strangers, away from what is “normal” to them including friends and family networks. Relationships are therefore important to fill this void and offer a belonging and support structure. In this sense, the cruise

ship provides an impetus of identity formation. It is important that cruise ship organisations are aware of this and recognise they need to cultivate it. The constant transition of people (passengers and workers) means that relationships may be temporary, yet intense, and also very easy to make. This is somewhat similar to what Sampson (2003) terms ‘transnational communities’ which extend beyond nationality and form due to occupational similarities in an international arena. This section explores the relationships workers make.

6.8.1 Relationship with work colleagues

When describing their relationship with work colleagues, participants were more likely to use more emotive language. It was evident that this relationship was very important for all the participants.

“I will tell this was one part of the job that was perfect, because err (.) you are there for seven months, you do not have your real family, you are just spending your time at work or the people who are working there (.) so the relations for me was really really really nice, it was something erm, special, difficult to explain, to someone who has never working on the ship (.) it was very nice” (Zack, waiter)

Being “stuck” and isolated on the cruise ship is a factor that intensifies such relationships. The majority of participants compared the relationships on-board as being a family. It seemed that this is something that the organisation would also strongly replicate. The use of this type of language is more likely a strategy that offers a form of psychological safety and belonging to a community. The more comfortable or at home workers feel on the cruise ship, the more happier and secure they will be.

“because you’re working with people, erm, you’re with them for 6 months and they basically become your family...it’s really, it’s nice to kind of have that support system, were as if you have that 9 to 5 you have that support system at work, but then (.) you finish work and then that’s it...it does change you, you know, you get to kind of (.) you get to, to kind of lean on people and be able to ask for help (.) it’s nice to have that close knit family I guess” (Norah, purser)

Colleagues became one’s support and reference system, which derives belonging to that community and a specific place. Furthermore, to work on a cruise ship is a unique work and life experience in which they all share that commonality. In terms of identity formation, this is

the in-group, an experience and knowledge which can only be generated through physically working on a cruise ship.

"there's always a bond that you make with these people, and, it holds out no matter what, because everybody knows what it's like to live on-board and you share that (.) whereas people who haven't, they have no idea what you're talking about" (Joanne, purser)

Although relationships were typified as being strong, they were also transitory. There is a constant movement of workers coming on and off the ship, as explained by Sam:

"I remember in my second contract there was a time, maybe 2 months in when a whole lot of my friends that I met just left, and erm (.) I was alone, but as more people came, yeah, I bonded with them and I had some really great friendships, so, there was ups and downs, times when I was quite lonely, and then there were times when I had so many friends and I was devastated to say goodbye" (Sam, purser)

Relationships on the ship are temporary and can also fluctuate during a single contract. Although the emotional attachments towards these relationships are strong, it is apparent that relationships are easily made. In this sense, some participants suggest these types of relationships are more artificial in that "you never get to know people on-board" (Hannah, purser) and "I wasn't really having friends, or what I would say friends" (Christine, purser). Some participants discuss that it is difficult to really get to know people on-board, this is not who they are and that "people have like different lives at home, and this is not their life, on the ship" (Kim, purser). One particular example is illustrated by Wendy:

"I socialise with them out of work on the ship, and then (.) its, I've just went on holiday with one of them and it was weird on holiday, I thought I wouldn't (.) they probably not someone I'd hang out with at home (laughs), you know, but they're still (.) I'd still class them as friends, but just as different, people are so different, it's hard to put them under one bracket (.) and on the ship like, on the ship you find yourself (.) with friends you wouldn't expect to have, if that makes sense" (Wendy, purser)

The relationships generated on-board are formed under context specific variables, and in some instances relationships are pushed together "with friends you wouldn't expect to have" and so out of the context of the ship this may become noticeable. This noted, the majority of participants highlight that they have made "friends for life" (David, waiter) and still keep in contact with workers from previous contracts.

Relationships were strongest with those individuals in the same occupation and department. Research by Lee-Ross (2008) suggested that hospitality workers are likely to form a single occupational community. Although the findings of this study agree with this proposition to some extent, to categorise all hospitality workers in this way is too simple. Community dimensions are particularly intricate and are affected by a multitude of components such as availability of time, work schedule and the accessibility of particular spaces (i.e. guest areas). Variables such as these have certain constraints and forces that underlie the formation of community. Markedly, notions of an occupational community were more evident in the occupation of waiters. As discussed, this is more often because of the longer working hours and shift based structure of work (Section 6.6.2), and also the privileges or access to spaces associated with their role (Section 6.4.3). Pursers had more flexibility within their role. This noted, it was the case that individuals generally formed closest relationships dependent on occupation and department.

“Yeah, you do tend to find that you, erm, gravitate towards people in your own department, for, if you’re socialising outside of your department, so it’s with departments who are at the same sort of level as you” (Hannah, purser)

“I made many friends for life in the restaurant (.) some outside the restaurant as well but erm yeah those were probably the aspects that I enjoyed you know, the friendship, the closeness” (David, waiter)

Developing a community around an occupation would be to some extent easier, but moreover it is the communal situation and pressures of work that push individuals together.

6.8.2 Relationship with management

The findings in this study suggest that the relationship with managers differed in the two occupational positions. On the one hand, workers in the position of purser spoke very highly of the management in place, suggesting they were fair and supportive. Norah (purser) compared her manager to a “father figure” and that they were “head of the family”. This would indicate that the role of the manager was somewhat authoritative, but someone that Norah respected and thought cared about her and her fellow workers. On the other hand, waiters were more likely to describe their relationship with managers as being more difficult. It was very much more autocratic, in that managers appeared to be stricter. When discussing management the general consensus from waiters would be that they didn’t feel “supported” or

“appreciated”. Charles (waiter) had particularly strong views upon this relationship and discussed how he felt management was always against the workers and they didn’t really understand their role as a waiter. This may be because the dining room has more staff than in the purser division and this management style was in place to keep control and maintain efficiency of operations. In both positions it was accepted that “you cannot really treat them like friends” (Angela, waiter and purser). The line of authority was still there in social situations, and although they may be more relaxed, levels of hierarchy would generally socialise together.

6.8.3 Relationship with guests

During the interviews it was not expected that the relationships workers have with guests would be of importance. It was thought that because passengers would generally only take one cruise per year potentially, the opportunity of “regulars” or guests that visit the premise frequently as would be the case on land, would limit the chance of a significant relationship to arise. For pursers, in this study, this usually was the case. Although Christine (purser) talked about when they were able to give guests good advice and they were thankful, this made the role more “meaningful”. Pursers were typically more negative or neutral towards their feelings of guests, particularly because the purser’s position is where guests come to complain if they have any problems during their cruise vacation. Although, as Sam explains this can have a positive effect upon the occupational community:

“especially in guest services (.) you see a lot of really unreasonable requests from, from guests, or demands, or complaints, or, and I think you kind of unite (laughs) against that kind of thing, you know you sympathise which each other, and it’s (laughs) it’s really weird but you bond (laughs) it sounds crazy but it’s true” (Sam, purser)

The negative aspects of the role give rise to a shared experience and a stronger community. Alternatively, waiters described their relationship with guests as meaningful and important.

“I’m just looking at them like, like a family to me...I really enjoy making fun with all people, because I love what I do, it makes me feel good” (Charles, waiter)

Charles incorporates the guests into his cruise ship family which suggests that the relationship he has with them is significant. A major reason for this type of relationship to form is the nature of the work. A waiter will generally serve the same families for the period of their stay.

This means that waiters have time to develop a relationship, become familiar with the guests and ultimately become friends. Notably, a significant variation between purser and waiter is that waiters rely heavily on guests for gratuities. This maintains that for a waiter to make money a central component of their job would be to develop a strong relationship with the guest. This noted, when waiters talked about their relationship with the guests, it was a contributing factor to their satisfaction of the role.

“Erm (.) you know just the fact that when you’re taking care of guests they tell you you’re doing a really good job and you know they’re happy, they were happy so you know (.) once I saw my guests happy you know, I’m being honest here (.) that made me happy, that made me feel proud that I was helping someone (.) I liked that aspect of my job” (Norris, waiter)

There seemed to be a genuine care for making the guests happy and in turn this made the role feel more “professional” (Charles, waiter). The relationship furthermore appeared reciprocal, not only in financial compensation, but also that the guests seemed to care about the waiter and take a general interest in their role and life on a cruise ship.

“they actually feel sad sometimes, when they, yeah like, oh you’re here again, I just saw you a while ago, you’re here again, because we move from one place to another (.) for example we work in the dining room, so and then later on we go up again from the deck, and then you go down again later on to the dining again, so they see us everywhere, so sometimes they think we are not resting at all (laughs) but we also say not we don’t, I’ve had some break as well, just to make them think we are not slaves there (laughs) yeah” (Charles, waiter)

Kwortnik (2008) takes note of such ‘cruiser-crew bonds’ as a direct outcome of the contained physical space and extended service contact. On a side note, it was apparent that such ‘cruiser-crew bonds’ would also become more intimate, and although personal relationships between guest and staff were prohibited, it was apparent that such relationships were occurring regularly

“it was like an adventure (laughs) it was forbidden, you’re not suppose to mess with the passengers, but that made it even more exciting because it was forbidden (laughs) it was taboo” (Norris, waiter)

6.8.4 Personal relationships

“it is very easy to have relationships (.) either with the opposite sex or friendships where it just lasts a couple of months, your best buds or totally in love and spend all time together and then (.) you move onto a different ship and you make new friends (.) or a new boyfriend or girlfriend” (Jane, merchandise)

The cruise ship environment is a place where relationships form relatively fast, be that socially or personally. A sense of personal freedom of exploring the world and a sense of vulnerability of being away from normal networks are probable contributions of personal relationships occurring quite frequently. Personal relationships were renowned for being short, although there were two instances in this study where partners met and stayed together. Joseph (waiter) describes the ship as a “hotbed of passions” with a “lot of swapping and changing partners”. But in the case of longer term relationships, organisations either find it difficult or are reluctant to support them. From a worker point of view, having a stable partner offers support and focus. Joseph (waiter) describes that having a partner was like having “one of your family member being there” and a “home feeling”, while Mandy (purser) explained that it “kept my mind off things”.

6.8.5 Nationality and gender

Although relationships were often co-ordinated by occupation and level of hierarchy, it would be naïve to think that nationality and gender did not play a role in the formation of relationships and communities. There were instances during the interviews where participants would highlight their nationality or talk about other specific nationalities, so national identity was salient on occasions. All participants acknowledged the mixture of nationalities and the opportunity to learn about new cultures as a positive element of cruise ship work.

“I would definitely say the meeting of people from many cultures around the world was the biggest thing you can take from that”
(Craig, purser)

The mixture of nationalities was deemed a good thing and there was a general appreciation of mutual respect for different religions and cultures. It was also noticeable, from the discussions from participants, that cruise ship organisations would promote cultural diversity through training and organisational practices. Of course, it is inevitable that some friction would occur based upon religion or nationality.

“because of people of all different nationalities is amazing coz you get to talk you know and make friends with and you know (.) and just live along side and make lifelong friends all over the world and different backgrounds and things (.) but that doesn’t go without its internal racism and all kinds of disagreements, not as many as you expect, but sometimes there is an undertone...I think there are so many people living together it would be unfair to say that racism is rife, I wouldn’t say that, but (.) people do have their prejudices” (Jane, Merchandise)

There was some evidence of nationalities “sticking together”, mainly because it was easier, they could understand each other better and they could talk in their own language or dialect. Although alternatively, Angela (waiter and purser) discussed that she would much rather work in a multi-cultural work environment. When Angela first started work on ships she was a waiter in an Italian restaurant where everyone employed was Italian. She continued to explain that she “hated” this experience and much preferred to work in the main dining room where there was more of a mixture of nationalities. Moreover, Angela discussed nationality and social life, and specifically talking about dancers saying they wouldn’t socialise with a particular waiter “because they were Filipino and partially because they were waiters”.

Additionally, the cruise ship is a very male dominated work environment, and so one’s gender on-board may be more salient. The two occupations explored in this study differ in that the occupation of a purser is typically female dominated, while the occupation of a waiter is typically male dominated. Hannah (purser) explained that being in a female dominated department assists in the development of relationships, so not only because of being a purser, but also being a female. This also could be true regarding waiters, although the topic of being a male waiter was not discussed.

6.8.6 Maintaining relationships with family

The way participants dealt with being away from family and friends was personal and so varied depending upon the participant. Some participants found partners on-board (Section 6.6.4) which offered some comfort and support. Most participants, although they missed their family, had little or no problems with being away from their family, while others acknowledged some hardship and difficulties with being away. There were facilities available during their contract that gave the opportunity to contact home such as internet on-board and pay phones in docks. This was not without difficulties though:

“the internet is really expensive on the ship, but you was happy when you could call back home when you was outside of the ship (.) so you call home when you could but err, you know when you start to work on the ship it was like err, it was (.) not the same as, so you know for the next seven months you will not have the contact with the family” (Zack, waiter)

“you have like 3 telephone lines connecting with shore side for like 1000 crew members you know and you want to, to call home and its always busy and err, then you cannot find the, erm, telephone card to make calls or there’s no signal, there’s no internet signal all day, if there is its really expensive, erm (.) they don’t allow the Skype to be used on-board so you have to go outside and find a internet cafe to make your internet or to, to talk to your people, instead of maybe knowing the place” (Christine, purser)

The biggest issue was the cost to contact home. The internet on-board for workers was deemed as expensive and the connection could also be poor. Although it was available, the access to such facilities was not always easy, as explained by Christine above. It is furthermore frustrating as workers don’t necessarily have that freedom of contacting their family when they want. Some participants had difficulties to this adjustment:

“I cried, I cried many nights and many times I wanted to come back home, because (.) of that level of (.) erm, distance away from my friends and family, but I think that once you (...) you know, you can contact them via phone or email, you know, but that still doesn’t give you the comfort that you miss (.) you know, it’s challenging (.) its very stressful mentally, you know” (Peter, waiter)

“sometimes I used to just put on the light, coz I am so far away from home, I used to be just homesick, but once you get used to it you know (.) you are there to work and you are used to it” (Joseph, waiter)

Being away from friends and family can be emotionally challenging, and it was often a case of getting used to it and using the support system of the “really close family on-board the ship” (Kim, purser). In one instance, Norah (purser) felt closer to her family at home while she was working on the ships as she made more of a “conscious effort” to contact them. Furthermore, others would invite some family members on-board for a vacation during their contract which was a comforting strategy.

6.9 Summary of themes

This chapter has presented an in-depth description and reflection of the truisms of working and living on-board a cruise ship. Developed from the findings in chapter 5, the data collected here was able to be more focused while identifying significant research areas which are important to hospitality workers and subsequently to the research aim. From the interviews conducted there was found to be five major themes pertinent to waiters and pursers. Of those themes, three were considered determinant themes (place, time and system) and two were relational (occupation and relationships). The determinant themes are thought to be unique to the industry and have a direct impact upon the relational themes. Furthermore, it is the determinant themes that present the social and physical structures of the ship which form the mechanisms of belonging and attachment, while the expression and direction of this is employed through one's occupational choice and relationships formed. The ship as a place, time, and the system of the ship are experienced by waiters and pursers differently which additionally affects the relationships one makes.

Waiters, by their place in the hierarchy of the ship and occupational demands, emerge as being more evidently tied to their occupation. Time outside of their occupation is limited and fractured because of the nature of their split-shift work hours, which ultimately impacts upon what they can do in that time and who one can spend time with. This suggests that waiters form a strong occupational community, arguably because of necessity and situation rather than that of its truest form. Although pursers are submitted to the same physical restraints of the ship, they have more privileges which allow them to be more socially active. Their place in the hierarchy allows pursers to use guest facilities, while their occupation gives them more freedom (compared to waiters) to explore their social and personal ambitions more. Ultimately this has also impacted upon their community and social memberships. Because of what the occupation of a purser grants its members, in terms of social freedom, their community, although strong at an occupational level, appears to be more wide ranging, which incorporates other occupational members from other departments.

This chapter supports the view that a cruise ship worker's choice of occupation will have a significant factor on their experience. The next chapter seeks to explore the identity and community formations on a deeper and more perceptive level, and further probes the questions of "who am I?" and/or "who are we?".

Chapter 7 - Research Findings: The Identification of Metaphors

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this research is to explore the community and occupational experiences of hospitality workers on-board cruise ships. Chapter 6 began this process of understanding through the discovery of themes. The strengths of thematic analysis lies in its ability to provide a broad and in-depth overview of work and life characteristics, presenting an almost detailed account of what it would actually be like to work on a cruise ship and the obstacles and opportunities one may have to contend with. Although chapter 6 presented some valuable and interesting material, to gain more insight, this chapter seeks to take a “fresh” look at the interview transcripts through analysing the same data with a different analytical approach. To comprehend as much of an “insiders” view as possible, one particular route to exploit this is through the identification of metaphors (see Chapter 4, Section 4.6.2). This type of analysis has the potential to explore a deeper account of an individual’s perceptions of their work and work environment. In total there were three clusters of metaphorical illustration found in this study: metaphors of the ship, metaphors of the environment (particularly within the permeable boundaries of work/life), and metaphors of their occupation. This chapter begins with an introduction to metaphor identification, followed by an analysis and discussion of the metaphors found in this study, and finally a summary of the metaphor analysis.

7.2 Metaphor identification

Metaphors are everywhere. All forms of discourse, through knowledge of it or not, will manipulate the use of metaphors to some extent to explain logic, categorise, and transfer knowledge; ‘...the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor’ (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: p.3). In essence, the use of metaphors can assist in how individuals make sense of their world and their place in it, and so through metaphorical identification, it can create their social reality. A metaphorical route therefore can offer a promising avenue to access the semi-closed world of the cruise ship industry and how its workers understand their position within that world. To understand this reality the

analysis does not claim to find one all encompassing metaphor, since it would not be possible to understand the intricate and tangled nature of cruise ship work in this way. Neither does the identification of metaphors declare an all encompassing view, but rather, adjacent to the findings of the thematic analysis, can creatively demonstrate a range of experiences that can build a clearer picture of the work on cruise ships. Moreover, the analysis is specifically interested in the shared metaphors between members, in which common discourses can emphasise community and membership formation.

Interview transcripts were analysed as discussed in the methodology chapter (Section 4.6.2.3). The analysis was not only concerned with the identification of formal metaphors, but rather through any affective and theoretical associations that emphasised how workers made sense of their working world. This was taken as an opportunity to see the data through a different lens, which may have contradictory or complementary insights. A metaphorical approach may be particularly useful in this instance where there is little research, but also as it may be particularly difficult for an “outsider” to grasp the realities of working on cruise ships. Through their use of language, and moreover through ‘metaphorical imagery’ (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996), the interpretation of data can provide an “insider’s” view of the perceptions of hospitality cruise ship workers. This type of analysis does not postulate that the views demonstrated here are definitive, but rather it has generated an interesting and different way of discussing the way waiters and pursers view their lives on-board cruise ships. Ultimately, a metaphor can be used as a porthole into self image, guided by the framework of the cruise ship to help construct meaning. Therefore, the metaphors used by participants were not a method to explain the organisation, but rather how the members come to understand themselves within the organisation. Within this, there were three areas in which metaphorical illustration was used: to describe the ship and its impact upon their understanding, to discuss the work/life permeable boundaries, and how they come to understand their occupational role within the cruise ship.

It is important to be aware of ship based language, such as “mess”, “drills”, “cabins” and so on. In other research areas, these words may have a metaphorical underpinning, whereas on the ship these are industry discourses that is literally describing something on the ship. The metaphors used in this study were naturally occurring; participants were not asked to talk metaphorically and furthermore participants were not aware that the analysis of metaphors was taking place. Therefore, the metaphors used in this study by participants were chosen by them and more importantly, were discourse tools used to assist participants in their

understandings and making sense of their time on cruise ships. In this sense, metaphors have a creative and symbolic association, which can assist with the display of particular emotions and attitudes. Take this passage for example, “its gunna be hell, if you think its gunna be Mickey Mouse from Florida” (David, waiter). In this passage, David explains work on cruise ships as polar opposites, “hell” and “Mickey Mouse from Florida”. To make sense of this, first one must be aware of the symbolic meanings of the two metaphorical pieces of information. “Hell” has negative connotations, while “Mickey Mouse from Florida” is positive, but to understand the overriding message of the passage, these need to be recognised. Only when these are recognised and within the context used, can this statement be fully understood.

7.3 Metaphors of the ship

When analysing the interview transcripts, it became clear that participants used metaphors and language that reflected upon how they understood and took value from the cruise ship itself. As discussed in the previous chapter (Section 6.4), participants often expressed emotional language when discussing the physical nature of the ship. This was constructed positively and negatively.

7.3.1 Home

‘I feel at home there, and I feel more at home there than I have kind of felt anywhere’. (Norah, purser)

Several participants affectively talked of the cruise ship as their home. After all, the cruise ship is their base, where they eat and sleep, and it’s a space in which workers spend a considerable amount of time. The Oxford Dictionary (2012, p.345) definition for home is ‘the place where someone lives’. Albeit temporary, a cruise ship offers the boundaries for where one lives, which may, in a given year, be a place that more time is spent than anywhere else. The Chambers Dictionary (2011, p.729) further adds that a home is ‘a habitual dwelling-place, or the place felt to be such; the residence of one’s family; the scene of domestic life, with its emotional associations’. So furthermore, a home is a place that is ‘felt to be such’ and so is determined by the individual. Therefore, a home is personally bounded, it is something that cannot be forced upon, but rather associated with one’s choice of a “home feeling”

(Joseph, waiter). Spending such an intensive amount of time on-board can be a process whereby one develops ‘emotional associations’ and to the beholder, the cruise ship “becomes your home” (Kim, purser). It is therefore not a process which is instant, but one which develops with time. But ultimately it is a safe place and a space which encourages a familial environment in which participants became settled in their environment. It was evident in the interviews that cruise ship companies would try and make the ship “feel like home” (Karen, waiter), not only through presentation, but also through organisational discourses and practices (Gibson, 2008; Kwortnik, 2008). This is a strategy that is important for the wellbeing of workers, creating a physical and social environment where workers feel at ease and comfortable, but also one that provides ample opportunity to develop meaningful social ties to the ship and its inhabitants. Almost all participants described a sense of security and comfort while on the ship:

“was nice that you could be walking up at any time on-board, like you know, I would go to my room to the gym, or from my working place to my room at any time and err, no matter who you would see on the hallway you wouldn’t be afraid of them, err, making any harm to you, even if you never met the person before” (Christine, purser)

This was particularly important from a female perspective since a cruise ship workforce is renowned for being male dominated. Most participants emphasised their feeling of comfort and safety within their surroundings, which can be a base for community formation.

The meaning of home derives the notion of belonging and also of a space that is lived in. Belonging, in a cruise ship worker context, is particularly important as the ship provides a secure and social space, in a transitory industry and at a time when workers are without their “real” family, in which individuals can develop a sense of self. In this understanding, although the ship is not a house, it provides a space that individuals feel at ease and are able to express and develop an identity (Tucker, 1994). Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen (2004) exploring the meaning of a home make a separation between the linguistic use of ‘home’ and ‘house’. To their understanding, a ‘house’ represents the physical structure, while the ‘home’ is developed through the daily activities and social relations. So in this instance, the physical boundaries of the ship do not create a home feeling for its workers, but instead home is created through the communal activities of its members, which may be work and socially natured. This noted, it would be naïve to suggest that the physical boundaries of the ship do not influence the perception of home for cruise ship workers; after all it is the physical boundaries of the ship that create isolation, yet also belonging and inclusion. Isolation from

the “normal” networks of land life (i.e. family and friends), but also inclusion in the restricted cruise ship based family and community. Therefore a feeling of home, with emotional attachments, is developed through the connections and relations with others, bounded within the ship. In other words, the ship without social relations would be just an empty container, yet it is the physical nature being restrictive and isolative, which forces and intensifies the development of community and social relations. Thus, the physical nature of the ship provides the ingredients of the home, while shared experiences, values and interests with others give substance and meaning to the home (Cuba and Hummon, 1993).

7.3.2 *Prison*

“*going back to prison*” (David, waiter)

Perhaps contradictory to a feeling of home, participants also made reference of the cruise ship being similar to a prison. There are some similarities though, such as the physical and social captivity giving rise to strong familial like bonds. Although negative connotations were often attached to this use of metaphor, the prison like environment, forcing close proximity, does give rise to ‘unusual forms of intimacy’ (Crewe, 2009: p.316). There was frequent talk of one being “stuck”, “segregated”, “suffocated” and (a lack of) “freedom” in an environment that is physically and socially compressed. A general assumption about a prison is that of confinement and restriction. This is not only in a physical sense, but also of a psychological and social capacity. Therefore control is often practised physically and socially.

Prison is very much based upon power based roles and control (Crewe, 2009), which is somewhat similar to the cruise industry. Prison guards, much like that of managers and superiors in the cruise ship industry, have the authority and control and participants were aware that “you are not free to do anything you want” (Karen, waiter). This would often create an “us” and “them” typology, particularly with waiters. One way in which guards (management) may gain compliance with the prison (cruise ship) rules is through threats. Not of a physical nature, but threats of demotion and possible loss of privileges, and also through the prospect of losing one’s job. In one scenario, Charles (waiter) describes that waiters on-board are also “sellers”. Waiters not only have to meet the criteria of being a waiter (i.e. serving food) but they also have set targets by management/organisation to meet specific sales targets, through the selling of alcoholic beverages and restaurant based souvenirs. If the sales targets are not met, a warning might be issued; if three warnings were accumulated there was

a threat of demotion or being “fired”. There were several instances similar to this, of a professional and social nature, indicating that there was a strict policy upon organisational conformity.

The description of personal spaces, such as cabins was also portrayed as being cell like and the provision of food was sometimes referred to as “prison food”. Cabins were often discussed as being small and dark, with no port holes to let in natural light. Furthermore, cabins are self containing in that there is a provision of a bed and washing and toilet facilities, much like a cell. Notably, cruise ship workers are not confined to their cabins and are free to move about the ship (if they have access to do so). The manner in which contracts were discussed could be similar to that of a prison sentence, as explained by David (waiter) “you’re counting down the minutes, the days until your contract ends”. The time on ships was often described in terms of the time “served”.

The prison metaphor has been applied to ships previously, particularly in terms of being physically confined, and through the habitual eating, sleeping and working with the same people for long periods of time (e.g. Antonsen, 2009). Similarly, the most common references in the current study to prison like circumstances were that of a physical nature, of being contained and restricted in movement. Participants were aware that “you don’t have the escape” (Hannah, purser) and “it’s the same thing all the time...the same people all, all the time” (Norah, purser). Although there are similarities between a cruise ship and a prison, the most obvious difference is that workers do not have to be there, and if they so wished they could stop working on the ship. Therefore, cruise ship workers can ultimately “escape”, yet it is a work space that restricts personal and social freedom.

Harvey (2007, p.55/56) in his research on young men in prison, argues there are three variables in which prisoners had to adapt: practically, socially, and psychologically. The notion of having to adapt would suggest a change in the type of environment. This would also be the case for cruise ship workers. Individuals would have to practically adapt to learn what the rules of the ship were, where they could go on the ship, what they were entitled to and so on. Individuals had to adapt socially, knowing how to communicate with one’s officers and superiors and in the correct manner, learning the norms and language for interacting, and also for developing the appropriate relationships with one’s peers. Lastly, individuals had to psychologically adapt, being able to cope at sea away from family and friends with strangers, learn to deal with potentially stressful situations in a confined area, and also being able to cope with being stuck on a cruise ship. To extend this, Morgan (1997) examines the idea of

organisations as psychic prisons. This takes into account more so the confinement of the psychological components of work. Prisoners or workers are not only physically restricted, but are also bound by the ‘knowledge’ and ‘perceptions’ that are tied to that place and the individuals within that place. Even if this system of knowledge is seen as bad practice, it is a system that could not be changed and so often individuals would find themselves being tied and dependent upon that system (Morgan, 1997). An element of this was discussed in the previous chapter (Section 6.4.1) where some individuals found difficulties in re-adjusting to land life after being on a cruise ship. One explanation of this is that of the system in place and the bureaucracy on which cruise ship organisations depends. Within this system, workers are able to arguably gain a clear cruise-based identity, which has little use or transferability to a context out of the cruise ship.

7.4 Metaphors of the working/social environment

The metaphors in the previous section identified how the ship, and in particular its boundaries, impacted upon how hospitality cruise ship workers attached meaning or understood the ship space. This section draws upon the metaphorical concepts that participants used to reflect upon their working and social environment, so therefore looking within that space.

7.4.1 War/ Battlefield

“you’re soldiers with no guns (laughs) they are shooting you in the back” (Charles, waiter)

The war/battlefield metaphor was predominately, although not exclusively, used to describe one’s working arena, and more often it was the participants in the occupation of a waiter that used the metaphor most extensively. This would suggest that waiters felt more threatened and were in a position of conflict. This is not suggested as a physical war/battle, but one that is verbal and symbolic in construction (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), whereby one’s identity (personal and social) is attacked or criticised and strategies are devised to defend it. When identifying the workplace as a battleground or a war, there is potential for behaviour changes that might not take place in different circumstances or contexts, as Angela (waiter and purser) discusses:

“It’s a experience that really makes you see the nasty parts of a human being, how bad that go”

At that time, in that context, such behaviours may seem to be somewhat more acceptable than what would be considered “normal” or appropriate on land. In an atmosphere that can be intense and claustrophobic, conflict may be more likely to arise and behaviours may adjust to the context.

The Oxford Dictionary (2012, p.831) defines war as ‘a prolonged contest between rivals or campaign against something undesirable’, while a battle is defined as ‘a long and difficult struggle’ (Oxford Dictionary, 2012: p.54). The identity of waiters is something which has strong connotations with ‘struggle’ and being ‘undesirable’ (e.g. Wildes, 2005, 2007). The identity of waiters is attacked/threatened by management, other cruise ship workers, and sometimes the passengers. The interview excerpt used above by Charles makes reference to management and how he feels he isn’t “protected”, that they (waiters) are “just numbers”, and management “don’t care”. Charles further talks about how management are “sometimes like your enemies”. This is in contrast to how many of the pursers describe their relationship with their managers, “it’s not like they shoot you down” (Norah, purser). It is clear that worker/management relationships are different in each of the two occupations. Pursers appear to have a clear and congruent working relationship, while the restaurant seems to be more of a battleground whereby the soldiers (waiters) are instructed/ordered by the general/guard (management). This type of bureaucratic style relationship in place for waiters/management can be a source of conflict and furthermore a practice that can stifle creativity (e.g. De Bono, 1985). It is clear that the relationship with management has a direct effect upon the way workers are able to make sense of their world.

Because both positions are guest interacting roles, there was a consensus that most of “the pressure is on the front line” (Norah, purser). The front line assumes that this is the first line of attack or defence, and so this is where most of the conflict and interaction between guests will occur. This is a typical scenario of all guest service type roles. Within the front line, participants (waiters and pursers) would refer to one’s role as a “duty” and tasks as “assignments”. This was particularly emphasised when explaining one’s safety role on-board, that they had a sense of “duty” as a cruise ship worker to take care of the passengers. The care of passengers is of great importance to the cruise ship industry and it is an aspect that the industry prides itself on. Therefore, if one was to get some form of negative feedback from passengers, this was taken extremely seriously, “if you get complain, its err, its err like you

kill someone, and get attacked by supervisor...it's like you killed already the person" (Charles, waiter). "Kill" was used by some participants, which seemed to emphasize the intensity of the situation. "They'll kill you" and "I almost killed somebody" (Angela, waiter and purser) are examples in which both relate to the intensive work relationships.

A war metaphor was also used by Kim (purser) to explain the way work has an impact upon personal and social space, "you're in your own space but they can invade it". The use of the word invade would suggest that this is not something over which workers have any control.

7.4.2 High School

"the ship was a big high school" (Norris, waiter)

For some, the cruise ship was referred to having similar aspects to that of a high school. In particular, this was concerned with social standing (popularity) and community formation (segmentation) depending on one's occupation. Using the interview passage above, Norris uses the notion of high school as a tool to explain the development of social communities based and influenced upon one's occupation. In the dialogue that followed, Norris described a situation where someone had asked him to leave a particular social event because he was a waiter and the social event was for bar staff, "there was a rivalry between the bar and the (.) bar and the restaurant you know". The rivalry was thought to be a more diluted form of conflict than the examples used in the war/battle metaphor. But ultimately, because Norris was a waiter, he was not accepted to go to this particular social event because of his social standing. Other participants suggested that there were certain occupational groups that "clicked" (Norah, purser). It was noticeable that an individual's social standing was generally attached to their occupation. Therefore, pursers, for example, are more socially available and flexible, and generally socialise "with departments who are at the same sort of level as you" (Hannah, purser). This may be a contributory factor as to why pursers and waiters did not mix socially on a regular basis, although shift work would have also had an impact. In this study (comparing waiters and pursers), the pursers may be seen as being the "cheerleaders" of the high school world, whereas the waiters being more like the "geeks". Kinney (1993) recognises that one's 'visibility' may be a key component in popularity in high school. In terms of this research the cheerleaders (pursers) are arguably more socially visible because of their access to certain privileges and also less working hours compared to waiters. Therefore, in terms of social standing, this position can be seen as being more popular and attractive.

Other than segmentation and popularity concerns, there was also in some cases a clear child-like dependence upon the organisation. This is often more clear and wide ranging than what is generally thought when working on land, mainly because workers live and work within organisational boundaries. The organisation supplies its workers with food and activities for play, but it is also a place where individuals come to learn and achieve reward.

7.4.3 Family

“we are all a family together, we are all in the same place, we don’t have our family here, we don’t have our friends here, so it’s now your family sort of thing, so they kind of base it on, the whole ship is kind of your family, like your brother your sister, and you mum and dad and stuff so, rather than being on let’s just be a team, it more seems like a family because you’re are all on one place and you can’t go anywhere (laughs) if it was a team, I think a team is more based if you were, if you living in a normal life, where you can just go home and you do have your family, erm (.) when you’re there it’s definitely an emphasis on a family” (Kim, purser)

On cruise ships there is a strong emphasis on family. When talking of family about other cruise ship members it clearly had meaning to the participants, particularly since they were isolated from their “real” family. This disconnection from their biological family provides a need for belonging and it became “a family away from your own family” (Joanne, purser). It was clear that cruise ship companies would foster and place value upon a family environment. Generating a family atmosphere is not new in organisational research and is often recognised as a strategy to promote bonding and shared collective struggles (e.g. Baum, 1991, Brotheridge and Lee, 2006). Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn (2001) argue that it is a form of cognitive priming, guiding behaviour and affective responses. This may be more pertinent to the cruise industry in that work can be isolated while the workforce is generally made up of individuals who are strangers and from different countries. Developing a family orientated culture is a particularly useful socialisation process for cruise ship companies, but it is also a strategy for control.

In some ways, a family and the organisation are similar. As a social system, both have a recognised leadership/hierarchy, which can be collectively and individually supportive and controlling, and furthermore have the capacity to entrench belonging and a base of conflict (Brotheridge and Lee, 2006).

“I was part of a huge family...I mean I didn’t love everybody but we were having a very good relationship like brothers, helping, you know supporting each other. We had fights of course but you know we were really supportive of each other” (Angela, waiter and purser)

It was clear that organisational members “really became family” (Sam, purser), and although there was some references to the role of a parent/manager role, the most identified role was that of their “brothers and sisters”, or their work group members. As discussed in the previous chapter (Section 6.7), pursers generally had a much wider family base that incorporated different occupations, albeit typically on the same hierarchical level. Alternatively, waiters seemed to have a much stronger family culture at an occupational level. There are several reasons for this, although the long and exclusive shift patterns, and their limited access to spaces on-board the ship, are likely dominators for a strong family/community culture centred around their occupation. A family connotation highlights an element of trust between members, that they “stick” together through hardships, and that they are as one. Developing this bond and trust, may in turn provide the necessary ingredients for a more harmonious community or society, reluctant to criticise others or leave one’s job role, as to do so would correspond to leaving one’s family (Furunes and Mykletun, 2007).

7.4.4 Under the microscope

“It’s something that takes a little while to get used to, erm,(.) and I guess being under the microscope, you know, erm, people were very aware of what’s going on and, erm, having that social aspect where people know your personal life as well and it’s very visible” (Hannah, purser)

The cruise ship is arguably a sociological example whereby one’s working and social life can be closely investigated under the microscope. Like an experiment, it is controlled, (semi-) closed and visible. Nearly every aspect on-board the cruise ship is shared and observable. The ship almost becomes a bubble or microscope slide in which “everybody knows your business” (Norris, waiter) and “you’re all the time in a closed environment, all the time seeing the same people, same crew members, over and over again, same story over and over again every day” (Neil, purser). Participants described feeling on “display” and “visible” with limited privacy. A feeling of under the microscope was viewed as a source of frustration. Work and life is blended and it is almost impossible to get away from one’s occupation or work. The

microscope was not only the organisation, but also other community members since nearly all aspects of one's life on-board ships are shared.

7.5 Work/Life metaphors

The next two sections are the strategies and roles individuals discussed as they negotiated through their working and social lives while on-board cruise ships. From the analysis of the transcripts there emerged several metaphors that waiters and pursers used which described how they viewed their work/life experiences.

7.5.1 *Explorer*

The desire to explore the world, rather than capitalise upon career opportunities, was initially for many of the participants one of their primary motivations for working on cruise ships. The enticement of visiting new and exciting countries and cultures was therefore an appealing element of the work. This would suggest that, for many, working on ships may be more about personal accomplishment rather than a professional career; it was an opportunity to fulfil one's explorer ambitions. To an extent, to work on a cruise ship is a journey, and to therefore be an explorer. The journey begins from one's home or a place which is familiar, to be travelling potentially on a global scale, which may be to places that are new, exciting and sometimes risky. Along the journey an explorer will experience the meeting of new people with potentially unfamiliar cultural backgrounds, languages and behaviours.

Some participants described the work as a "stepping stone" (Wendy, purser), "living out of a suitcase" (Norah, purser), and "my first taste of the world" (Sarah, purser). Notably, the metaphors used are typically temporary in nature and are also all described by pursers. Moreover, most of the explorers or those using exploratory-like language, were those still working in the industry. This would suggest that the adventurer/explorer mindset was not permanent, in that once explorer ambitions were met, individuals were more likely to alter their way of thinking or begin a fresh adventure. An example could be that after taking time to explore one's self and new cultures, workers may become more settled in the environment or alternatively find a new adventure outside of the cruise industry. Wendy (purser) talked about a "stepping stone" and "gap year" when describing her initial motivations for working on ships, although as the interview progressed she detailed that she was developing a career for

herself. In this instance, the explorer of new worlds was Wendy's first attraction to the industry, but this has since developed into a settled like state in which she has been able to fulfil more professional aspirations. Kim (purser) also hinted upon this when probed about her future in the industry and she responded with "I've still got itchy feet". She was tentative in her response in that she didn't know what really the industry could offer her career wise, although she was optimistic. Her reference to "itchy feet" would suggest she is still keen to explore, but more so on a personal and more professional level. On the other hand, Norah talked about "living out of a suitcase" and becoming "tired" and that this is something that "you can't do forever". This highlights the temporary nature of the explorer, and furthermore her perception of working on cruise ships. Significantly, the adventurer/explorer was rarely talked about between waiters, other than their being principally attracted by the opportunities of travel. Generally, within the discourse that followed with waiters there was little connotation with being an adventurer/explorer. Long work hours and subsequently time devoted to work appear to have dampened or redirected their appetite for adventure.

The explorer outlook, although seeks guidance, moreover grasps independence, and other than the exploration of new countries, some participants talked about the exploration of the self. The prospect of being away from home, and in some instances escaping from home, gave the opportunity for participants to reflect upon themselves and their life. The cruise ship instilled organisation, structure and control, while the isolation, freedom from normality, and possibilities of exploration, fostered the environment for some individuals to "find yourself" (Peter, waiter). It was often portrayed by participants that working on a cruise ship was "life changing" and an "experience of a lifetime", and one that changed perceptions of self, work and life.

7.5.2 *Juggler*

"you have to juggle things" (Joseph, waiter)

Ultimately, to work on a cruise ship is foremost being able to juggle work, play and sleep demands. As it suggests, a juggler was a strategy in which participants talked about work and life, although more often it was the juggle between play and sleep, "you had a choice (.) you will go to sleep (.) or you will go outside and enjoy something" (Zack, waiter). The juggler therefore has three pins/balls of work, play and sleep. The work pin stays in the air for the most amount of time, which is typically not in the control of the juggler. The pins that the

juggler has more control over is the play and sleep pins. This was often a dilemma for participants, especially those who were also explorers, as to explore or play was “to lose out on sleep” (Sam, purser), and to lose out on sleep would affect one’s work. Depending upon which occupation one had would affect their decision making. For example, a waiter, having less time out of work, will have more consequences if they decide to play, therefore losing out on sleep and affecting one’s work the following day/shift, as David (waiter) explains:

“We used to have fun you know and work would always be hell the next day because you’re hung over, you know you didn’t get to do that I learned very quickly that I couldn’t do that a lot (laughs)”

In this passage, David talks about drinking alcohol after work. He discussed that he “learned very quickly” that he couldn’t do this very often because of the effect this had on his work the following day. David further explained that he drank alcohol a total of three times during a six month contract. Instances such as this highlight the restrictions or the consequences of decisions that workers have to be aware of. Furthermore, it demonstrates the possible dampening of waiters’ explorer ambitions.

Participants would often view the three pins as an interactive cycle. The act of juggling involves decision making, movement and integration. A decision made regarding one pin will have consequences for another, and so there is a dynamic relationship between the three pins. Each of the pins is constantly moving, they can’t be static, much as life on cruise ships. There is furthermore integration between the three pins and the jugglers require the skill to be able to make the correct decisions. The act of juggling is important for all cruise ship workers. The juggler needs to be aware of all three pins and all three pins need to be maintained otherwise a pin will be lost. The juggler metaphor highlights the need for cruise ship workers to maintain all aspects between the permeable boundaries of work and life. There are some instances when juggling becomes more complex and there are more pins which are added to the act of juggling. One particular example was the juggling act between personal relationships, work and life. To have a committed relationship on-board is to be able to juggle work, play and sleep, but also space and the feelings of others. Joseph (waiter) and Jane (merchandise) described this as a frustrating experience, where they had to juggle the demands of conflicting work schedules and also negotiate with others, such as cabin mates so they had the opportunity to spend time together.

7.5.3 Ninja

“I was a ninja, I would roll back in the gangway you know, I would not say anything” (Norris, waiter)

A ninja, hailing from Japan and is most noted as being a trained assassin, but also skilled in ‘stealth’ and ‘camouflage’ (Chambers Dictionary, 2011: p.1041). It was the attribute of stealth that held most association with that of some participants. It was a strategy that was employed to escape the pressures of work and also the rules of the organisation, which sometimes provoked the boundaries of deviance. In the interview passage above, Norris describes a situation where the ship docked in port for a night and he went to a local bar and had too much to drink. Cruise ship companies often have strict rules upon how much alcohol workers can drink, because according to marine law they are still technically working, even when they are not “on the clock”. Using the metaphor of a ninja he described how he would “sort of vanish” when returning back to the ship, so not to alert security personnel who had the authority to breathalyse workers on suspicion of drinking too much. The ninja mindset in this case was used as a way of avoiding and negotiating through the strict rules of the organisation. Subsequently this was a strategy to improve self-control mechanisms.

Being a ninja is not always easy, and it wasn’t attainable for all, as Kim (purser) explains, “If you are on a regular job on the ship, you can just kind of slip away and no one really notices you”. Kim had two positions, in one of them she was an officer. In the officer position she found it increasingly difficult to get away from work and the role that she had stepped into and so a ninja was not appropriate in her position. A ninja metaphor is foremost a strategy to gain some control, which was often organisationally deviant, whether that be having personal relationships with guests or trying to avoid organisational practice.

7.5.4 Builder/Construction

Working on cruise ships, for most individuals, is the beginning of something new; a new contract, meeting new people, and a new place of employment with different ways of working. So principally, working on a ship necessitates to some degree an element of building or planning, even if workers have worked on ships for several years. With the constant transition of crew and guest, a worker is constantly in the process of “building relationships” (Craig, purser) and “developing ties to some people” (Christine, purser). This was viewed as an important aspect of cruise ship work. The organisation supplied the materials and tools for

which participants used to construct relationships, a sense of self through their occupation, and potentially a career. There was a range of metaphors used by participants that tied with the notion of builder or construction. This was a popular metaphor that was used by participants to describe the tools or plans that were on offer from the employing organisation that workers could manipulate or build to assist in their social and professional strategies. Building metaphors were used by participants to talk about their career, “I managed to develop into a career” (Wendy, purser); the community, “there’s always a bond that you make with these people, and it holds out no matter what” (Joanne, purser); and their work and role with guests, “you are involved so heavily in the day-to-day of what goes on and you really make a difference to fix like cruisers resolving problems and making things happen” (Hannah, purser). To be successful, a builder has to be a skilled practitioner. When participants were asked to give advice for others that were thinking about working on a cruise ship, several suggested that individuals need to be specific with their goals and ambitions, and being able to stick to these.

“the three things for me where I either wanted to travel the world, make money, or start a career (.) and I would probably focus on one, don’t worry about all three” (Wendy, purser)

With a clear goal in mind, individuals would be better suited to manipulate the tools and plans given by the organisation. For example, to build a career it is important for workers to build a work-based network, develop a reputation within the company, be able to successfully put in place what the organisation/management has planned, and so on. However, this could also be a cause of frustration. A worker may have career or professional aspirations, although the ability to reach these may not be facilitated by the organisation. This is arguably a case for waiters on-board. It is recognised that cruise ship organisations want the professional skill-sets and attributes for the role, but additionally forget or are inadequately prepared to meet these career aspirations or professional development. In short, frustration may occur if the tools do not match the requirements of the builder, or the builder does not understand the plans provided. Builders can only work if they have the right tools or plans in place.

7.6 Role playing metaphors

This section identifies the metaphors used by participants that reflect upon their occupational identities. Moreover, participants often reflected upon particular role playing metaphors that described their work on-board cruise ships.

7.6.1 Slave

“you work as a slave for 6 months to live like kings” (David, waiter)

Work on cruise ships is physically and mentally challenging, intensive and the hours are long. This coupled with a feeling of captivity and restriction gives a basis for some participants to feel like slaves. Notably, it was only waiters in this study that used slave like references about their work. Simply, several waiters described the work as “slave labour”, “it’s just slavery”, or that they felt “exploited”. Often this would be explained with a discussion of the amount of hours they worked, but this was just one element. The nature of a waiter’s role being of a ‘servitude’ manner (Wildes, 2005), the management and organisational practices, and also the hierarchical system on ships, are contributory elements of a slave like perception. Being a slave insinuates a power based relationship, in which there must be a master or someone of a higher power that they have to respond to with limited choice. In this case, slave/master roles were mirrored in the waiter/management roles. Norris (waiter) described that “they would talk to you like you were (.) their property you know, they were really disrespectful...they thought they owned you”, while Peter (waiter) extends that “you have to follow every rule that they say”. It was clear that the management style in the restaurant was particularly autocratic and military infused. The fast paced nature of the restaurant in a pressurised and busy environment that is constantly driven by guest and time demands are causative factors upon why this type of management may seem appropriate. Decisions need to be made fast and work needs to be efficiently and effectively carried out to a high repeatable standard, for which there is little time for compromise.

Describing hospitality work as slave- or servant-like is not something new (e.g. Orwell, 1933; Poulston, 2009) mainly because of the service style nature of the work. Paules (1996, p.265/6) noted that domestic servants from the 19th Century did not eat, drink, or take breaks in the presence of their ‘masters’, just as waiters would practise in front of passengers. Waiting staff would also enter and exit through ‘back doors’ and are isolated to the ‘backstage’ whenever not in work. Furthermore, formal names for passengers are required (sir, ma’am, etc) while

waiters have name tags encouraging guests to use first names for staff, which are quite comparative to the *master/servant* identity bestowed not only in the waiter/guest relationship, but also the waiter/manager relationship. On-board a ship this may be more apparent since the industry is renowned for being on the luxurious side of operations and heavily customer focused. Because of this, passengers also have an impact on a perception of a waiter's role being compared to a slave. On the one hand, when Zack (waiter) was asked how he thinks others see his occupation he responded, "for guests we were just poor people from Eastern Europe...they really took you like people from the third world...with no other option". Clearly Zack's perception of slavery was further fuelled by his thoughts on how passengers perceived his role. On the other hand, Charles (waiter) describes how he tried to step away from the perception of being slave like, "just to make them think we are not slaves there (laughs) yeah". This describes a situation in which guests were asking Charles specifically about his role and what it entailed, and to alter his/their perception of "slave" like qualities, he discussed that he would distort the truth slightly regarding the amount of hours worked and breaks he had in order to enhance the perception of his role.

In a related vein of thought, participants also discussed elements of the work, and particularly in relation to crew members (i.e. waiters), being similar to the "British Empire". As Jane explains,

"it almost quite smacks of the old British Empire really...lower down the scale is (laughs) like certain people from certain countries" (Jane, merchandise)

There were similar references made by some other participants that suggested that specific occupations and roles were only offered to people of certain countries. This is the element of the "British Empire" that Jane commented upon, the slavery aspect, in which certain countries or continents would supply this form of labour to the needs of the British Empire, or the cruise ship in this case. This is a notorious practice in the cruise ship industry, in which 'flags of convenience' relax the laws surrounding labour and aids in the assembly of a truly international workforce. Jane further discussed that "it's almost a glass ceiling for the crew (...) in terms of promotion", meaning that the promotion lines are there for the crew but it's unlikely that they will get the opportunity; there is a "glass" barrier which is difficult to break through. This generalisation regarding promotion was not supported by all waiters in this study. David (waiter) stated that "career wise it is lightening fast", although this was an exception for a waiter in this study. Others acknowledged that promotion was difficult,

mainly because there were so many waiter positions compared to superior positions, but their perception was generally that promotion was attainable. In one case, Charles (waiter) suggested that to get promoted wasn't always desirable because there was too much pressure and also because he didn't respect the way the management handled situations and didn't want to step into a similar position.

It seems that using the metaphor of a slave is not painting a rosy picture of being a waiter. Evidently the waiters in this study are not under false pretences. The role is intense, the hours are extremely long, and the work is physically and mentally hard. But, this is all for a cause, there is no reward without some form of sacrifice. The main motivation for this role was mainly for the financial capabilities, and David (waiter) refers to this with his statement at the beginning of this section. The sacrifice in this case is working like a "slave", but the reward is to live like "kings".

7.6.2 Performance and theatre

"you have to put your uniforms back on (.) and put your smiles back on, and back to work" (Charles, waiter)

A performance can illustrate two polar perspectives, one of creativity and freedom, and one of scripted instruction and rehearsed behaviour and emotions. Connotations with hospitality work are generally of the scripted performance, but there are elements of creativity. The study of hospitality has long coexisted with the dramatising and 'performative' fundamentals of work (e.g., Erickson, 2004; Goffman, 1959; Weaver, 2005). Performative metaphors have been commonly applied to service work, and specifically more so towards the employee-customer interaction. Much of the work is generated from the research of Goffman (1959), who compared social interactions to theatrical performances. For Goffman (1959), like in theatre, there is an onstage and a backstage. The onstage, performed in front of an audience (i.e. customers) is where the 'actor' adheres to their role (i.e. occupation). The backstage, away from the audience, is where individuals have more personal freedom away from their roles. Erickson (2004) draws upon the complexity of restaurant work through 'dramaturgical metaphors', and integrates the worker, customer and decorations as a stage for service, viewing the service exchange as a dance. The metaphor of dance highlights restaurant work as rehearsed, physically demanding and emotionally tied, while being repetitive, yet there are

elements of being spontaneous. The use of this metaphor is also a way to try and change preconceptions, which are often negative, about service work through viewing it as a dance.

Similar to Goffman (1959) participants would often refer to a “front” and “back” stage. The front stage is typically where the performances are displayed. The position of a waiter was more so compared to a performance than that of the role of a purser. A purser’s role is generally conducted on a one-on-one basis, whereas a waiter commands a much bigger audience. Furthermore, pursers are confined to their space behind a desk which limits performance behaviour, while a waiter has the opportunity to ‘dance’ around the restaurant. Charles (waiter) states that “you are an actor you know, when you come on the stage with your table”, and David further adds,

“at the end of the day I was serving them food but it’s so much more, you have to entertain them, you have to do tricks, you have to play with the kids, it’s not just giving them food on their table, you know, there’s so many standards that are needed following and the training is actually so intense man” (David, waiter)

The passages from David and Charles highlight the performing elements of the work, but also highlight the instructive or scripted components of their work. As David described, being a waiter is “so much more” than just serving food, there are creative elements of the work, but often this artistic strand is somewhat rehearsed and scripted through organisational “standards” and “training”.

Another ‘performative’ aspect of a waiter’s work, and also pursers, was the uniforms. The uniforms, especially officers, were a popular feature with guests, and this was described by Angela,

“I’m a star now...guests were stopping to me asking me to take a picture with them” (Angela, waiter and purser)

Angela described herself as a “star”. This was in terms of how the audience (i.e. guests) were treating her and asking to take pictures with her. A key factor in this was the uniform she was wearing and how the guests responded to that.

7.6.3 Carer

"It wasn't just a job you know, I wasn't going there for a pay cheque I was going there because I love taking care of people and you know (.) and taking care of myself" (Norris, waiter)

To care for somebody would suggest to some extent to take responsibility for someone else. This could be in terms of one's needs or welfare and whether that is professionally or socially based. In this understanding, a central concept of hospitality is caring. This seemed to be enhanced on cruise ships because of the added responsibility for workers to keep passengers safe (i.e. safety drills). The role of a hospitality worker is to care for their guests, whether this is genuinely heartfelt or not is of little importance as he/she should be an expert in the performance of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). On cruise ships, passengers are dependent upon workers for almost all of their needs for the duration of the vacation. It appeared, although not without some frustration, that the role of the carer was accepted at least on a basic level by most of the participants: "I love interacting with people, I loved helping them with their problems" (Joanne, purser). The close proximity of the guests seemed to be a contributory factor. This noted, it was waiters who stepped into this role on a deeper and more affective level, and as discussed in the previous chapter (Section 6.7.3), it was judged that waiters developed stronger ties with guests due to being involved more intensively and for a prolonged duration.

"coz you get the same guests (.) for the whole cruise you see, you follow everywhere they go for the restaurant plan so you're literally with them, you make such good relationships with them (.) and then that makes the job worth it you know, they give you a gigantic tip, but not only that they give you hundreds of letters, they want pictures with you, they want your email, your phone and then you know when you say goodbye to them, it, you actually think you have the best job in the world" (David, waiter)

The tone of this passage suggests that waiters can form close, almost family orientated relationships with guests. These bonds did not only last the duration of the vacation, but also afterwards. The relationship was valued at a personal and professional level, and there was a genuine feeling of care for guests when talking to the majority of the waiters. It was this intensive development of relationships with guests and other workers, combined with the work, which made it so exhausting and mentally draining.

The carer not only reflected between worker/guest relationships, but also the relationships between each of the workers, which became almost family based (discussed in Section 7.4.3). The workers or surrogate family members became one's support system and counsellor when there were difficult times.

"they basically become your family, whenever anything wrong with one person (.) it tends to be there's something wrong with everyone, it's really, it's nice to kind of have that support system, whereas if you have that 9 to 5 you have that support system at work, but then (.) you finish work and then that's it (.) so whereas on a cruise ship it's, it's basically like your family, because you spend more time with them than you do your own family, so it's, you're pushed together, and you know, it, it's that kind of, I guess it's a, a trust thing as well" (Norah, purser)

This type of support system was an important aspect in one's happiness and wellbeing onboard. The relationships developed were not only caring and affective but there was often a mutual "trust" between workers, which furthermore facilitated a more harmonious and safe community.

7.6.4 Tactician/Game playing

"I love being the first and last piece of the puzzle" (Kim, purser)

There were some participants who talked about their work as if they were playing a strategic game. A game would suggest that there are multiple players in competition, set rules in place, a beginning and an end, and also a winner(s) and loser(s). Therefore a game would result in the formation of some sort of strategy, meaning there is a thought process involved. In short, there needs to be a strategy in place to achieve one's goals. In the statement above, Kim refers to work being of a similar make up to a puzzle. A puzzle does not require multiple players and can be completed individually. To complete the puzzle requires the skill and knowledge of the tactician to fit the pieces together. In this understanding, a puzzle is particularly reflective of a purser's role. Although a purser has multiple tasks, it is generally the destination for passengers if they have an enquiry or problem to be resolved while on the ship. In this case, a passenger becomes the puzzle and the issue/problem is the pieces that need to be skilfully and tactfully put together.

To play the game, it is assumed that one has to understand the complexities and rules of the game. To win, or perform well, players would have to know the rules within the boundary of the game to be of advantage. In this instance, workers have to quickly grasp the rules of the ship and also master their occupation. As Angela explains:

“you suddenly learn to know how it works, you know and beat them at their own game but you’ll never win anyway (.) not that anybody wins anyway in general” (Angela, waiter and purser)

In this passage, Angela is discussing her difficulties in her first contract working as a waiter. She describes the deviances of working in the restaurant and specifically about a story regarding other waiters stealing her cutlery and glassware. She talks about having to “learn” the rules, or “how it works” and evolving a strategy about how to “beat them at their own game”, and learning how to defend oneself or manipulate the rules to make it advantageous. But in her final admission she acknowledges “you’ll never win anyway”. Maybe this is a game where the cruise ship always wins. Participants would often talk about the “risk” of cruise ship work and advise “if you have the chance to work on the land then not to take the risk” (Charles, waiter). A piece of the risk is also attributed to the passengers. Charles (waiter) describes that passengers can be “tricky” and any negative feedback can result in being “fired”, meaning that “you will lose”. Workers need to be tactile and aware of the rules in place, and ultimately “you’ve got to be on the ball more often” (Kim, purser). Participants regularly talked about “goals”, “targets”, “challenges” and “chances”, in which discourse revolved around game playing themes. The most frequent was that of achieving one’s “goals”. This was often a coping strategy displayed due to the hardships of working on-board, “always have a goal in mind, erm, think about the benefits...don’t expect a walk in the park” (David, waiter). Keeping an overall goal in mind was a strategy to cope with the short-term difficulties in order to benefit in the long term.

There was an occasion when the players (workers) felt the need to challenge the rules/authority of the game. For example, Norris (waiter) talked about how he would sometimes when working in “silverware” (while Norris was working in the industry he injured his wrist and so could not carry heavy plates regularly, and so to relieve the stress he would be sent to clean and polish the silverware), he would sneak away to his cabin and “take a little nap...I was milking the clock”. Norris often capitalised upon his situation (taking advantage of the rules), within the game, and used his injury as justification. More frequently,

in this study, players were more likely to play by the rules, particularly because the cost of breaking the rules would be considerably high.

7.6.5 *Robot*

“you’re a robot, you know, you don’t have to think really (laughs), you just do it” (Zack, waiter)

There were occasions when participants would refer to their work as a robot. A robot can be considered ‘a mechanical device that can be programmed to perform tasks of manipulation and locomotion under automatic control’ (Waldman, 1985: p.216). Of note, is the notion of ‘mechanical’ and ‘automatic’. This would infer a robot as having no feeling, no thinking, but is capable of being highly skilled (Hsieh, 2008). Much like that of a slave metaphor, a robot is ‘programmed’ or told what to do, although the amount of information was often questioned. Several participants discussed how training was too fast paced to get any real benefit from the information, “it’s just information overload, like there’s too much to process all in one go” (Sam, purser). There was a mix of individuals who either felt completely prepared for the job or entirely ill-equipped for the job at hand, which would assume that this is reliant upon organisational training practices.

Similar to the slave metaphor only waiters in this study made reference of their job role being like a robot. Waiters would explain their work as something they did automatically, almost mechanical in fashion, and moreover that their supervisors (programmer) always knew best. A robot metaphor highlights a sense of conflict, in terms of work and also out of work.

“I don’t stay there much longer because (.) like I finish at like 11 in the evening and then have dinner, that’s the only time you have dinner at 11 in the evening, imagine, and then (laughs) by the time you go to bed, maybe 12 o’clock, midnight, yeah if you have the power to make party you can go on till at least 1 o’clock, one hour, but just usually I go to bed because I save my energy for the next morning, yeah”
(Charles, waiter)

Charles described his conflicting boundaries of work and life, and specifically about going to the crew bar after work. He talks about having “power” and conserving “energy”. Ultimately, work is the winner, taking up most of his energy, which needs be recharged for work the following day. Furthermore, being a robot emphasizes the issue encircling emotional labour. In many ways, a waiter is programmed or trained in what to do, how to express emotions and

suppress personal emotions while at work. In telling the story earlier (Section 7.3.2) about Charles describing himself as being a “seller”, he further discussed how this was something that he didn’t want to do; he was forced, and he felt he “was robbing the guest”. Purposely, being a robot (waiter) reflects the roles and emotions that are organisationally and socially expected of them.

7.7 Summary

The identification of metaphors is a technique that offers a different way of seeing data and moreover a route that can help explore cruise workers’ understanding of the semi-closed world of the cruise ship industry and their position within it. To do this, it was not a case of identifying every metaphor used by participants, but rather, through metaphorical association, identify the metaphors that were central to their discourse in describing and evaluating their meaningful understandings. Therefore, the process of identifying those metaphors was based upon subjective understanding, although guided by participants as they shared their knowledge. It was important that the metaphors reflected their self-images and also their strategies as they worked and lived on the cruise ship. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the metaphor identification process was not concerned with finding one all encompassing metaphor to explain their understandings. This resulted in participants drawing upon a range of metaphors, which were often conflicting and intertwining, to communicate their experiences of working and living on a cruise ship. The metaphors discussed in this chapter are shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Identification of metaphors

	Home	Prison	War / Battle	High school	Family	Microscope	Explorer	Juggler	Ninja	Builder	Slave	Perform	Carer	Tactician	Robot
Charles	X	X									X	X	X	X	X
David	X			X						X	X	X	X	X	
Joseph	X	X	X								X				
Karen		X							X	X					
Norris	X	X	X		X				X		X		X	X	
Peter			X				X			X	X				
Zack	X			X				X			X				X
Angela			X	X								X		X	
Barbara							X								
Christine	X							X		X					
Craig									X						
Hannah	X		X		X										
Joanne					X					X			X		
Kim	X		X		X		X		X			X		X	
Mandy															
Neil						X									
Norah	X	X	X	X	X			X					X		
Sam						X			X						X
Sarah						X			X						
Wendy						X	X	X		X					
Jane		X		X		X		X	X			X			

As shown in *Table 7.1*, some interviews had more metaphorical content than others. Of note, the interview with Mandy (purser) was found to have no metaphorical content that was of particular interest to this study. Mandy spoke very literally when talking about her experiences, which may have been a strategy on her part so that the information was clearly understood by the interviewer or it may have just been the way that she spoke. The interviews with Barbara, Craig and Neil (all pursers) were also limited in meaningful metaphorical language. Overall, the table shows that most participants reflected metaphorically and moreover that participants would use multiple metaphors to explore their understandings. The identification of the metaphors that participants used to talk about working on cruise ships offers a promising avenue to understand the diverse ways in which hospitality cruise ship workers form identities and position themselves within the organisation.

The first metaphorical content relates to the way in which participants made reference to the cruise ship. This was expressed by arguably two polar opposites: ‘The ship as a home’ and ‘The ship as a prison’. One suggests comfort and belonging, while the other smacks of restriction and control. There are some similarities though, which can highlight the deeper underlying associations of the use of these metaphors. Particularly in the sense of communal rules and a clear line of authority, in which both home and prison are generally associated with a respect for order and compliance, ways of behaviour, and roles that are linked to power. Notably, there was a general difference in how waiters and pursers understood the ship. Waiters were more likely to see it as a prison, while pursers were more likely to see it as a home. Under this premise it could be argued that pursers have more a sense of belonging to the ship than waiters, although upon closer inspection this wouldn’t be the case. A home feeling was discussed more so in terms of being out of work; where participants slept, ate, and socialised. In other words, it was the social, shared and communal activities of cruise ship life. For a waiter, these social activities are limited, in which time, space and control over one’s activities are salient. Other than the issue of time and control, another major difference was the perceptions of management. Although the management on-board was generally respected, it was often associated with a military-esque based relationship. This type of relationship was particularly evident in the restaurant context. Clearly, the occupational pressures and activities of waiters and pursers are different, suggesting that the same management style may not be applicable or successful in both positions. This was noticeable within the discourse from participants; Norah (purser) spoke of her manager as a “father figure”, which has positive connotations of being a caring and protective parent, whilst providing them with the organisational learning tools (Furunes and Mykletun, 2007). Alternatively, none of the waiters

in this study provided evidence that management was part of their cruise ship family, being more like “enemies” (Charles, waiter). Therefore, the major difference was that pursers, by way of occupational pressures and activities, were more likely to encircle their managers within their cruise ship family, further providing the basis of a home environment. Waiters, having a more conflictive and submissive relationship with their manager, were more likely to conform to a prison based metaphor. In short, the home and prison based metaphors were inextricably linked to the amount of freedom and time associated to one’s role and also their relationship to management.

The second metaphorical content reflected upon the participants’ views about their working and social environment. In other words, how the cruise ship environment had implications upon one’s work and also social activities. The metaphorical content here was predominantly associated with conflict, intensity and struggle, and how individuals were able to fit in the ship’s environment. Moreover, the metaphors were of a community focus, in that the focus was not solely upon the individual. The best and worst part of being on-board was often conveyed in the formation of these communities. A community can be a source of identification and belonging, but can also be a base for rejection and selection, as the high school metaphor identified. The war/battlefield metaphor identified workers as being on the “front line”, involved in the intense battles and conflict with passengers and management, while the family metaphor reflected upon the close community bonds between workers and how important this became on-board the cruise ship. Research by Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn (2001) exploring the different understandings of teamwork across national and organisational cultures, suggest that metaphors such as family and military are examples of organisations that emphasize tight control. Both metaphorical illustrations highlight role based expectations, although using the family metaphor may characterise a ‘safer environment’ (Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn, 2001: p.298). Although both metaphors indicate control and power based roles, waiters identifying more so with a military connotation suggests there is more of a threat or conflict surrounding their role.

The third metaphorical content identified the individual strategies used by the participants to work and live on a cruise ship. Moreover, the strategies reflected how participants were able to cope with the conditions and hardships of working and living on the ship. The explorer metaphor was a particular and temporary mindset that some participants described to achieve one’s personal goals that offset the difficulties of ship life. Generally it was compromised that “the positives outweigh the negatives” (Jane, merchandise). The goals were personally tied

and primarily associated with travelling, but also as an experience to explore or develop oneself. Therefore, the organisation, the ship, became the tool or vehicle for exploration and exploring. The juggler metaphor was an attempt to negotiate the major factors of cruise ship life: work, play and sleep. Moreover, it was a strategy for personal and work congruence, being able to meet personal goals but also the goals of the organisation. The ninja metaphor was foremost a way to gain self control through avoiding organisational practices. This was a strategy to attain more personal endeavours, which was often at the cost of organisational protocol. Finally, the builder metaphor was something that was evident for participants throughout the contract. It was a means of using the tools provided by the organisation to develop social and professional bonds. This metaphorical cluster much depended upon the occupational role of the individual, for example the explorer metaphor was heavily associated with the role of the purser. Although exploration and adventure are elements of the cruise ships that most participants based their motivations around when thinking of joining the ships, the explorer metaphor was fine tuned to the purser and the aforementioned freedom of the role. This, coupled with their status, was very much valued for pursers interviewed in this study.

The final metaphorical content recognised the role playing metaphors of participants and in particular their occupational identity. Surprisingly, it was participants in the position of waiter that were more likely to use metaphorical language to talk about their role. Waiters in this study would often talk about their role with emotive qualities, even when there are negative connotations surrounding the role. There are a combination of factors which are indicators of this, such as: a form of defence mechanism against the perceptual attack upon their occupational identity, because a waiter's life on-board cruise ships is heavily dominated by work, or that pursers took more value from the social aspects of the role rather than the professional aspects. It was clear that a purser's role was important for their self-image on cruise ships, yet this self image encircled the social privileges attached to the role. Waiters did not have the luxury of these privileges. The metaphors used by participants involved both negative and positive connotations. In this study, only waiters described themselves as slaves and robots, particularly drawing upon the subservient relationship with their superiors, and the long and often repetitive work. However, waiters also described themselves as carers, performers and tacticians. So there were some creative, emotionally stimulating, and complex areas of their work. It was clear that the role playing metaphors were socially and contextually dependent, as were all the metaphors found in this study. The system and practices of the cruise ship have an overriding impact upon how its workers understand and take value of

themselves. The occupation is generally at the centre at that definition and this definition is moulded by the system and practices of the cruise ship. Hierarchy, management, passengers, and other cruise ship workers all assist in the shaping and re-shaping of this definition.

Chapter 8 – Discussion and Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

This study has taken steps to capture some of the complexities and richness of the professional and social experiences of front line hospitality staff (waiters and pursers) working on-board cruise ships as they negotiate, create and justify their identities and community formations within a transient, encapsulated and fast paced environment. An identity is how the beholder constructs and interprets prior experiences, values, beliefs, and group affiliations and associations within a given context. Identity is therefore a process that is active, social and perceptive in creation and conditioned through the interaction between the context, the individual and groups of individuals. What is clear from this study is that all participants created a ship-based identity, which was different from how they perceived themselves on land. Being an environment that is unique, workers have to adapt, adopt and sacrifice - their previous identity has to be reshaped to meet the criteria of the place and system of the ship.

Within the confines of the cruise ship an occupation is a key means whereby individuals can accomplish meaning and purpose. An occupation is a dominator of time and a controller of space, something which individuals are being constantly reminded of. Through instrumental cues (e.g., hierarchy and access of space) an individual's occupational identity can be more salient (e.g., Turner, 1984; LeBoeuf *et al.* 2010). From a social identity perspective, identity salience confirms that one's behaviour will be consistent with that identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Therefore socialisation and work practices with similar individuals in the same occupation strengthen bonds and confirms the set of values which are congruent with that identity or community. The sociological understanding of cruise ship workers is an area which is under-researched, particularly when the focus is hospitality orientated and focused on front line staff. This study has sought to fill some of this research gap. In particular, there is little research which aims to discover cruise ship worker perceptions about the work they undertake, the communities or social groups they commit to (being isolated from family and friends), and also what this means to them. Notwithstanding, there is some recent work that has identified this gap and sought to explore it (e.g., Gibson, 2008; Larsen *et al.* 2012; Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp, 2011; Sehkaran and Sevcikova, 2011; Weaver, 2005). This

particular study contributes to such literature, yet further explores the avenues of identity and community.

Through analysing data both quantitatively and qualitatively, and by separating the interview analysis into two parts, it is concluded that potential understanding is fuller. Chapters 5 – 7 have presented the analysis for this study. The analytical procedure, building from the literature and the preliminary findings of the online questionnaires (chapter 5), produced a cluster of themes (chapter 6) and metaphors (chapter 7), which participants have used to describe their work and life on-board cruise ships, and more significantly, how they make sense of this work and how this transpires by way of group-concept and self-percept. Ultimately it explores how waiters and pursers in a unique working environment make sense of themselves and others within the society of the ship. This final chapter begins with a discussion of the major findings. These findings are subsequently integrated while reflecting upon theoretical considerations. Objectives of the research are discussed in terms of what outcomes were achieved, and finally the limitations of the research and scope for further research are identified.

8.2 Discussion of the major findings

8.2.1 Quantitative study: *online questionnaires*

The overarching aim of chapter 5 was to provide some direction for the main study. This was therefore considered a preliminary investigation. Coupled with the existing literature (i.e. identity and community), gaining quantifiable data in an under-researched area can offer a wider reach in terms of collecting data, in which more purposeful or focused findings may be extracted in the subsequent qualitative phase of research. This strategy was implemented to gather key relationships or patterns which could be further explored. ‘Job Embeddedness’ (Mitchell *et al.* 2001) was a construct thought appropriate to investigate the occupational, community and organisational factors that tie an individual to a specific environment. To recap, job embeddedness is comprised of three dimensions of ‘fit’, ‘links’, and ‘sacrifices’. These three dimensions have elements of work and non-work. The ability of this model to consider both work and non-work variables was central to its suitability in this study. To understand cruise ship work is to not only study ship workers’ occupations, but also their

social activities and memberships, and how these are related, entwine and impact on each other.

It was clear from the findings that their occupation and the status of that occupation had multiple implications upon a cruise ship worker's life. This is most notable in terms of one's overall level of embeddedness (occupational and organisational). From the five hospitality departments explored in this preliminary investigation, pursers were most embedded, while food and beverage (F&B) were the least embedded (*Table 5.2*). From this initial observation, it would suggest that pursers are more attached to their role. The major difference between the two occupations was how well individuals perceived that they 'fit' at the occupational and organisational level. In this study, pursers were more likely to perceive they 'fit' more so than those in F&B. Mitchell *et al.* (2001) express the point that 'fit' is non-affective. This is an important facet in that an individual may fit in well within the occupation but, for example, not on a cruise ship, which is why it is important to take into account all aspects of an individual's life on-board, be that work or social. Relative to this research, Matuszewski and Blenkinsopp (2011) claim there may be a potential mismatch between a cruise worker's perception and the reality of working on-board, with workers generally having realistic work expectations but unrealistic life expectations. Individuals therefore may have the "right" technical skills for the occupation but be inadequately prepared for the social life on-board. This may alternatively reflect the mismatch of occupational status linked with their social status and compatibilities on-board, hence a disparity between expectation and reality. In this study, this was more obvious for F&B staff. For most staff members in F&B, their job was nothing new, work practices are similar to those on land. The reference to 'fit' (and lack of it) was interpreted to be a consequence of the reality that F&B staff (primarily waiters), cast as crew members in addition to long working hours, have limited opportunities to meet life aspirations while on-board.

'Links' and 'sacrifices' were both answered by a similar manner. The social and professional 'links' made on cruise ships, although temporary, were significant to individuals, irrelevant of what position an individual was employed in. This would assume that community and social memberships are central, heightening a sense of belongingness and attachment to an environment/place. The 'sacrifices' of leaving the cruise ship were not thought to be very high. Of note, nearly 80% of respondents answered negatively with regards to retirement benefits. This is a significant number, which may have noteworthy implications for individuals considering a career in the industry. Alternately, this could be a strategy in which

cruise ship companies feel suits cruise ship operations, accepting the transient and temporary work as “the way it is”. Furthermore, job related benefits were considered to be lacking, particularly from an F&B perspective. This came as little surprise since such workers, classed as crew, don’t have the social privileges as do other individuals on-board. Notably, the biggest disparity between F&B staff and pursers in the ‘sacrifice’ variable was the opportunity for promotion, with pursers more likely to suggest there was scope for promotion. F&B identified that this may be more of a struggle.

Additional to the job embeddedness questions, there was an opportunity for respondents to openly add any comments they thought appropriate to this study. This section provided a range of responses that were of interest for further pursuit. The main findings of the open question were evidence of:

- A strong on-board community with evidence of emotional ties.

Evidence from the job embeddedness questionnaire supported that the on-board community is an important facet to the life of workers. This was demonstrated by the affective language used to describe one’s relationships with other workers.

- Bias/prejudices attached to an occupation – a basis for the definition of others, i.e. other outgroups.

Although the comments made in this section were often small, there was some indication that workers were defined by others and defined oneself in line with their occupational position. The way respondents described their lives and activities were dependent upon their occupational choice.

- Impact of management upon one’s general happiness and professional aspirations.

Management style was deemed as strict and autocratic, which had negative implications on worker satisfaction and subsequent career aspirations.

- Concern for non-work activities and wellbeing.

The cruise ship industry faces a monumental task in that it has to meet the needs of its passengers, but also the social and professional needs of its workers. There were some respondents who highlighted that the industry was failing to satisfy the social/living needs and wellbeing of the workers, and were more focused on profit and occupational compliance.

- Questioning the longevity of a potential career within the industry – dependent on family/personal issues and also on a practical and professional aspect.

A career, or lack of career, was discussed from a personal and professional point of view. Personally, individuals talked about having a family and a “normal” life that was not thought compatible with cruise ship work. Professional aspirations were affected in a push/pull capacity – there was a pull factor in that a career on land was thought to be more sustainable and attainable with more opportunities, while the push factor of having a career on the ship was described as being slow promotionally and coupled with not keeping up to the salary expectations that are usual on land based jobs.

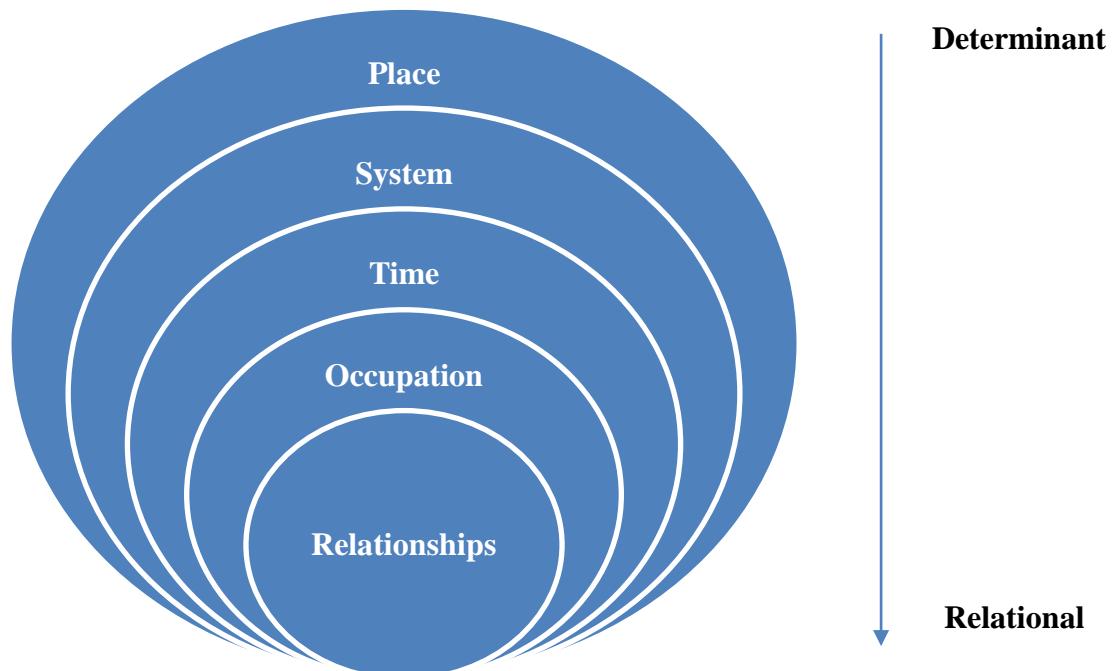
The opportunity for respondents to add supplementary comments was a decision which strengthened the quantitative findings. The purpose of this section gave respondents the chance to include personal reflections that were significant to them, that the questionnaire may have missed. For example, the relationship with management, career aspirations/opportunities, and concern surrounding non-work activities was something not picked up in the previous questions (job embeddedness). Furthermore, the open question allowed respondents to clarify what they had already completed in the questionnaire.

Overall, the questionnaire results affirmed the importance of one’s occupation, status and community membership while on a cruise ship and how this can potentially play an important part in one’s self definition. The questionnaire had the ability to bring attention to commonalities or discrepancies in the data, but did not have the capability to explain them. For example, the questionnaire highlighted a difference in the level of ‘fit’ between the occupations of purser and F&B, but it couldn’t explore this further, whether this was related to community aspects, status level, or social capabilities and so on. Furthermore, evidence suggested that the on-board community was strong, but it was unclear whether this was a community of all workers on-board the cruise ship, individuals in the same occupation/level of hierarchy, or dependant on national culture and gender. In this sense, the research strategy has taken advantage of the nomothetic qualities of this method for exploring the answers of “how”, although based on the limitations of the sample (Section 5.2.5) and the restrictions imposed for exploring subjective responses, the strategy progressed to an ideographic route to explore more the answer to “why” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). It was for this reason that a qualitative study was chosen as the main study, to be able to explore more the question of “why?”.

8.2.2 Qualitative study: thematic analysis of interviews

The first phase of the interview analysis was concerned with the generation of common themes. There were a total of five themes that emerged from the data (*Figure 8.1*). There were three determinant themes: the ship as a place, time, and the system of the ship. These themes were considered unique to the cruise ship industry, primarily acting as a binding mechanism, promoting a shared experience of belonging and attachment. The final two themes were relational: relationships and occupation. The determinant themes have a significant impact upon the relational themes, affecting the formation of identity and community.

Figure 8.1 Determinant and relational themes



The first theme is the ship as a place. This primarily demonstrated the importance of the physical, social, and psychological impacts that the ship has upon the formations of a cruise-based identity and also the social and professional communities. It is a place that is unusual and unique, and one of contrast. Initially, it creates an environment of escapism, away from a “normal” life and networks. Yet this escapism is provided by a psychological and physical space that is confined, restricted and controlled, but in the same breath potentially opens up the freedom of the world. Furthermore, there is an isolative nature to being on a ship, drifting the seas, but in contrast to this isolation is the fact that social contact is almost impossible to avoid whilst on-board. Ultimately, the space on a cruise ship is like no other and requires

workers to adapt and adjust to the physical and social aspects of the ship. The space seems to strip back their previous identity and this is redefined in accordance to the cultural niche of the ship and the work one undertakes, and in a sense, workers are obliged to form a new ship-based identity. With work entwined with life, there was little space which individuals could escape to away from their occupation. Even when participants left the ships to visit ports of call, Jane (merchandise) described how workers are the “face of the company” and guests would still recognise and ask questions (Section 6.4.2). Participants often talked about the difficulties of getting away from work, unable to completely “let go”. The strict and set-for-purpose rules and norms regulate activity and behaviour, and from these, individuals can arguably gain a sense of self more easily. Individuals become dependent on this system and the sense of self that the cruise ship allows individuals to create, as discussed by Angela (waiter and purser):

“These guys they can’t live on land anymore (.) They’re just too used to certain things only and they are nobody (.) On-board they know exactly what to do”

In this excerpt, Angela talks about the difficulties of re-adjusting to land life. This was particularly noticeable after several years of being contracted to ships. Individuals are arguably freer on land, free to base their identities around different variables. For example, on land, individuals may have a set of work friends and tasks, friends based upon geographic variables, and social friends which may be linked to a hobby, and also family members. On-board a cruise ship this is restricted more simply to work and friends at work. Being difficult to “get away” from the ship in a physical, social and psychological sense, this sense of self is evidently more tied to one’s occupation. An individual’s occupation impacts the spaces that he/she has access to. In this study it was clear that pursers and waiters may eat, work and live in separate areas of the ship, although they have the opportunity to come together in the crew bar. This has implications for community formation and ultimately the creation of an identity.

The second theme is the ship as a system. The system epitomises bureaucracy, in which the organisation attempts to manage and control all aspects of work and life. Work and life were considered to be hard, but it was something that was shared with others, creating a common life and in some cases a high sense of occupational camaraderie, i.e. waiters (Riley *et al.* 1998). This shared experience was something which was able to create deep emotional bonds with others and the place. The biggest impact on life on cruise ships is the occupational hierarchy. It was this strict hierarchical system that not only controlled workers, but also gave

a clear account of who they were on the ship and what they could do. Workers are constantly reminded of their place in the hierarchy, and it determines where one can go, where one can eat, and where one lives on the ship. The hierarchy transcends to almost all aspects of one's life, which is a determining factor in why an occupation can be a central basis of one's self-definition. It re-affirms one's place in the organisation, creating social and cultural boundaries, and a form of 'social distance' (e.g. Akerlof, 1997). This understanding can be the basis of the formation of subgroups or 'outgroups' affecting behaviour, values, and norms, for example, an occupational community.

The third determinant theme is time. Being absent from the physical presence of family and friends at home, individuals have more time dedicated to their line of work. Work time and free time on-board were generally determined by one's occupation. Because of this, time was often a cause of frustration which was clearly visible for both waiters and pursers, although it was more evident in waiters. This was primarily because a waiter's work would take up most of the day. Furthermore, the split-shift system which was in place, coupled with a restriction in cruise ship spaces (e.g. guest areas), created constraints upon who waiters could regularly socialise with. Pursers, having more privileges and a more compact working schedule, were granted the opportunity to socialise more regularly and with individuals from occupations outside of their own. Although pursers and waiters generally stated that their occupational members formed their closest friends, this was significantly more evident between waiters because of the restraints in time and space (Section 6.6.4). Therefore, rather than forming a hospitality-wide occupational community as purported by Lee-Ross (2008), the findings of this study would suggest that community formations are more complex, influenced by time, space, and ultimately, the occupational hierarchy.

Theme four is occupation (relational). It was clear that one's occupation was a major contributor to one's identity while on a cruise ship. The example of Angela (waiter and purser) highlights this when she went from being a waiter to being a purser, and also Kim (purser) who began in merchandise and moved to the position of purser (Section 6.7). They both described that not only did their own behaviour and perceptions change, but that others changed in their behaviour towards them. Angela described that "they were actually looking at me differently because I was not a waitress", while Kim explained that she thought of herself as a "role model". One notable difference was their shift in the hierarchy from crew (waiter) / staff (merchandise) to an officer (purser). Therefore, their status, in the eyes of the organisational members, was enhanced. Furthermore, this not only had implications for their

work-based identity, but also transferred to the social elements of their lives on-board the cruise ship. In the case of Angela, she had more freedom and privileges in terms of space and time. Although Kim, transitioning from a member of staff to an officer, explained that her social activities were under more scrutiny because of this change (i.e. being a “role model”). Being a central composition in their identity, participants displayed emotional defending of their role, as was evident when their work was questioned by family or friends outside of the cruise industry (Section 6.7.5).

There was a total contrast in the two occupations explored in this study. This has been discussed in terms of themes and sub-themes, e.g., status, hierarchy, time, space, to name a few, although one immediate difference was the expectations of their level of pay. Pursers, being classed as a high status role, earned a static wage which could be considerably less than that of a waiter. Generally, a waiter will have a lower static wage (as low as \$50(US) a month), but will be heavily reliant upon the generosity of guests (tips). David (waiter) suggests that waiters on cruise ships are potentially some of the highest earners on the whole ship. This divergence in money earned and expected life on ships highlights the fragility of the work/life balance. Although the work/life balance on a ship would be significantly different to that on land, in the context of the ship, the pursers in this study were more able to enjoy the travel opportunities and social activities on the ship, while waiters, restricted in their social capabilities, were able to potentially earn more money. Each occupational member would take these into consideration when looking for a positive identity in their role, using other roles in a comparative manner. This is consistent with social identity theory. Pursers would highlight their status and social freedom as an important aspect of their identity, while waiters would focus more on the financial outcomes of their work.

The final theme is relationships. Relationships were co-ordinated by place, system and time, but the closest relationships formed on-board were occupationally dependent. The cruise ship environment is a space and a system that has the ability to cultivate relationships. Individuals are pushed together into a space, in which workers are absent from family and friends. These relationships were of paramount importance to workers – other members became their friends, a support structure, provided a basis of belonging, and a surrogate family. Ultimately, the communities formed on-board were central to the happiness and longevity (staying in ones role or organisation) of workers. Because of this closeness and support, being away from family did not seem to be a major cause of stress, as was found in the study by Thomas *et al.* (2003). There was some evidence of stress, but generally the strong community atmosphere

on the ships provided a support and reference system for workers in this absence. In this sense, these communities or strong relationships may form on the basis of necessity and situation rather than being more naturally occurring (Fine, 1996b). The conditions on the ship may not lead to enduring friendships, but while they are working on-board, these relationships are deep and meaningful. Other relationships that were significant to participants were those with management and guests. For waiters, guests were incorporated into their cruise-based family, developing a much stronger relationship than pursers would; this was because of the prolonged waiter/guest interaction and also a waiter's reliance upon gratuities. Relationships with management were also different in the two roles studied. Pursers felt closer to and more respected by their superiors, while the waiters felt more disconnected. This builds from the earlier findings from the quantitative stage.

8.2.3 Qualitative study: metaphor analysis of interviews

The second phase of the interview analysis involved searching for metaphors in the data which were used by waiters and pursers to make sense of themselves, others, and their world. The purpose of this analysis was to look at the data with a different "lens", a fresh perspective through which to analyse the data. The metaphors that participants used within this study highlight the differences between the two occupations in terms of freedom and control. Participants chose to use metaphorical illustration as one method to describe and evaluate their work and life experience. An overarching metaphor was neither sought after nor expected, but rather identified the different ways in which individuals experienced their work on cruise ships. In total there were three clusters of metaphorical illustration: metaphors of the ship, metaphors of the environment (particularly within the permeable boundaries of work/life), and metaphors of their occupation (*Table 8.1*)

Table 8.1 Metaphorical clusters

Metaphors of the ship	Metaphors of the environment		Metaphors of their occupation
	Setting	Work vs. life	
Home	War/Battlefield	Explorer	Slave
Prison	High school	Juggler	Performance/Theatre
	Family	Ninja	Carer
	Microscope	Builder	Tactician
			Robot

Metaphors of the ship

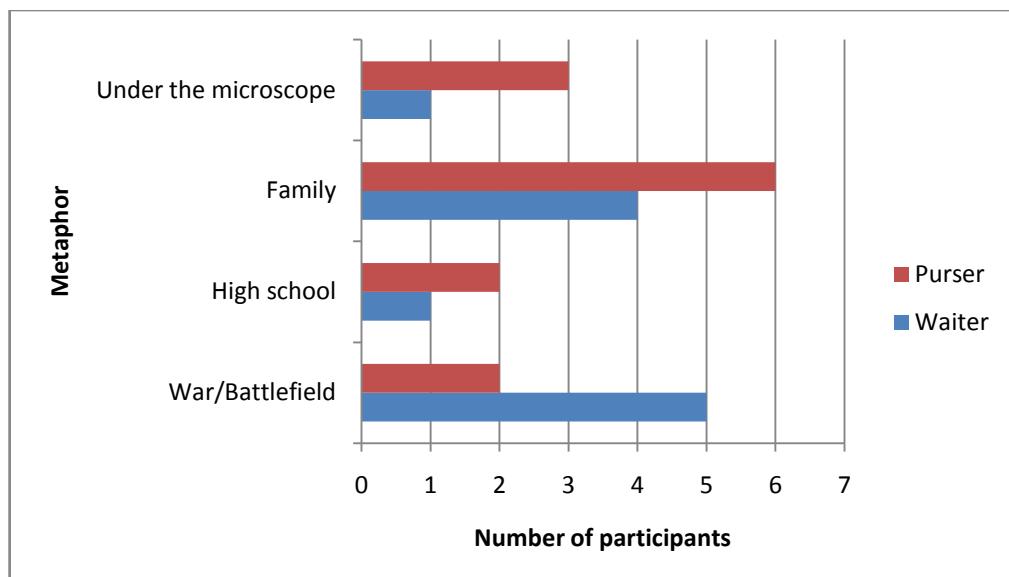
There were two metaphors used by participants that described how they talked about the ship: home and prison. At first glance, home and prison could be considered as environments at opposite ends of a spectrum. This would generally be accepted as the case, but there were some subtle similarities when the metaphors were further explored. Both are based on power-based roles, whether this is of a parent/child or prisoner/guard capacity. This seemingly fits with the strict hierarchy that the cruise ship depends upon for control, yet it is how these power-based roles are implemented that differed. For pursers, being in more of a parent/child relationship with management underlines a sense of care but also authority. A parent is one who sets the rules, but is also a figure that offers comfort, support and looks after their child's wellbeing. For waiters, the relationship of prisoner/guard was noted in the findings as one that is underlined by authority. Guards (management) will set the rules and there is no manoeuvre around them, compliance is demanded. Furthermore, both prison and home denote belonging, although the way this is achieved was clearly different between waiters and pursers, particularly in their relationship with management (Sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2). Belonging in a prison can be formed from an "us" and "them" type attitude (e.g. Crewe, 2009). Because prisoners are marginalised, and part of a submissive relationship with guards, belonging can stem from the relationships and shared experiences with other prisoners. This is somewhat similar to the waiters in this study. Waiters were significantly more likely to see the ship as a prison, having little control, not much of a life outside of work (social activities restricted), a feeling of containment (no access to guest areas), and an autocratic style of management. Alternatively, pursers were more likely to see the ship as home, encapsulating the

management within their cruise-based family. In this sense, this is “an all as one” type belonging, a feeling of comfort. It is concluded that the use of the home and prison metaphors was determined by the freedom of space and time associated with their role and also their relationship with management.

Metaphors of the environment

The cluster of metaphors that were used to describe the cruise ship environment were split into two sub-clusters. One sub-cluster explored how participants understood the ship’s space or work setting, and the second sub-cluster identified the strategies used as participants negotiated their way through their working and social lives. The first sub-cluster highlighted four types of metaphors used by participants in this study: war/battlefield, high school, family, and being under the microscope. The meaning of all four metaphors involved the encapsulation of others. Being able to understand the cruise ship environment could not be fully made without the reference to others. To make sense of oneself (self definition) within a given context can only be realised from the comparison, relationships, and judgement of others (e.g. Tajfel, 1978). Therefore to understand oneself in the cruise ship environment, the perception of others and their perceived perceptions need to be taken into consideration. Drawn from *Table 7.1* (chapter 7) the way purasers and waiters made reference to these metaphors differed, as shown in *Figure 8.2*.

Figure 8.2 Participants and environment metaphors



The family metaphor was used by half of the total number of participants. The family metaphor fits with the previous metaphors used to describe the ship, in that it promotes a shared experience with a feeling of belonging. Being a part of a cruise-based family was important for participants as it assists with being away from “normality”. It was clear that this was something that cruise ship organisations would promote; it not only supports a strong and harmonious community atmosphere, but it also implements control, trust, and an element of obligation. The obligation refers to the feeling of having to do a good job or a reluctance to leave one’s role, because to do so would be letting their family down (Furunes and Mykletun, 2007).

The war/battlefield was the next metaphor that was used the most, although waiters referred to this more often. Waiters related to this metaphor on a more symbolic level which was integrated throughout multiple discourses in the interviews. For pursers, this metaphor was used as a mechanism to primarily describe their relationship with guests, which can be at a confrontational capacity, and also as an explanation as to how their personal space was “invaded” by the organisation (Kim, purser). For waiters, a war/battlefield metaphor was more akin to their identity and multiple aspects of their work and life. It primarily defined their role as one with connotations of conflict and struggle. The war for waiters was ultimately to gain a positive identity, yet they were confronted with being labelled as ‘crew’ by the organisation, having an autocratic relationship with management, and generally having an occupation that carries a ‘stigma’ (Wildes, 2007). This is underlined by the conflict with management, and also the artificial battle with guests to gain tips.

The next metaphor was a feeling of being under the microscope. This metaphor relates to how some participants felt they had no “escape” and that everything was “visible”. This was more often used by pursers. Because pursers had that extra freedom with their role, being more socially available, it was a variable that was more salient. The final metaphor in this sub-cluster was the high school metaphor. This was a metaphorical tool used primarily to describe categorisation and social status linked to one’s occupational role, thus highlighting inter-group rivalries. Based upon school-type language, waiters were thought to be more like “geeks”, while pursers more like “cheerleaders”. In other words, it was a case whereby individuals “knew their place” in the society of the ship based upon their occupation. From this comparison, there was little support for waiters and pursers regularly socialising, either being on a voluntary basis of choosing to socialise together, or not having that opportunity to do so because of the lack of support structure from the organisation. This is not to suggest that

waiters and pursers never socialised, but because of the differing occupational demands and access to space and time; the system and structure in place created practical and social considerations.

A second sub-cluster described the individual strategies used by participants as they negotiated through work and life. In total there were four metaphors: explorer, juggler, ninja, and builder. Though not exclusive, these metaphors were a strategy linked to one's social activities. In this understanding, pursers were significantly more likely to use these metaphors than waiters (see *Table 7.1*), since a purser's role allowed more social freedom outside of their work demands. In essence, these were used by participants to gain some element of control through the management and implementation of their social activities, which was determined by and linked to their occupation. The metaphor that illustrated the biggest sense of control, which bordered on deviance, was that of the ninja metaphor. This was a strategy that was linked to being stealthy, trying to escape from the pressures of work, which could be at the cost of organisational compliance. Norris (waiter) talked about sneaking past security after drinking too much alcohol so as not to get into trouble (Section 7.5.3). Being a ninja was to a certain extent to gain some control, which was more often an ambition for a waiter, as their work and life are more controlled than that of a purser.

The explorer metaphor was popularly used by pursers. The position of a purser gave the opportunity for individuals to explore, whilst the occupational demands and restrictions on being a waiter appeared to have dampened their appetite for being an explorer. An explorer was chiefly a strategy to capitalise upon one's personal ambitions; travel, experience new cultures and new lifestyles, and so on. This noted, an explorer's mindset was thought to be only temporary, either waning over time or fading after one's ambitions had been met. This would result in individuals developing new ambitions, which may lie outside of the industry, or altering their mindset which may be on a professional level. The remaining two metaphors were the juggler and builder. The juggler was used to talk about participants' work/life balance, and how they juggled time and responsibilities between work, sleep, and play. The builder metaphor was used to explain how individuals used the tools of the organisation to build relationships, a sense of self, and potentially a career.

Metaphors of their occupation

The final cluster of metaphors reflect the occupational identities and self images that the cruise ship environment allowed participants to create. Waiters were significantly more likely to use these types of metaphors (see *Table 7.1*). An individual in the position of a waiter is dominated by their role, and this is coupled with the lack of opportunity for social activities. Thus, their occupational activities, compared to pursers, were more central to their definition. Pursers were able to base their identities more so around other variables such as their social and personal activities. In this sense, waiters were more restricted in what and who they could base their cruise ship identity around. There were a total of five metaphors within this cluster: slave, performance/theatre, carer, tactician, and robot. Two of these metaphors were similar in their construction, notably slave and robot. Both suggest a submissive type role, being given orders and instructions which must be carried out. Again, this was attributed to their relationship with management within the restaurant. Furthermore, it suggests that the role is somewhat standardised. A certain level or skill set is required from a waiter, and that level is expected to be repeated and within the behavioural boundaries that the organisation creates. To a certain extent, this can stifle creativity, which is curtailed by the organisation.

Alternatively, waiters also described themselves using a performance/theatre metaphor, such as an “actor”. Initially, this infers an aspiration of creativity and freedom to exude personal talent and entrepreneurial flair, yet this is countered through performances being heavily scripted and rehearsed. This appears to address a relative issue, in that waiters want to demonstrate their theatrical ambitions, such as professional development, but are restrained by organisational and management practices in their capacity to do so, which is based on bureaucratic boundaries. A strategy which could assist in participants overcoming such restraints was described as being a tactician. A tactician revolves around participants playing a game, in which they have to learn the rules to give them advantages. This can involve the manipulation of the rules to suit the player. The final metaphor is that of being a carer, i.e. being a carer of guests needs. This was used by both pursers and waiters, but it was more interconnected with the role of the waiter. This was often viewed as a positive element of their work and something that was attached to their personal identity of being able to care for someone.

8.3 Integration of qualitative findings: theoretical reflections

The strategy to analyse the interview data in two steps and from two separate standpoints (thematic and metaphor) has benefited this research in terms of the depth and range of the findings presented. The thematic analysis gave a ‘thick description’ of what it is like to work and live on a cruise ship, while the metaphor analysis was able to creatively ingrain some of the detail to present a clearer picture. Thematic analysis has shown how structural and situational (time, system, and place) forces have implications on one’s community and occupation, and the affect this has on self-percept within the theory of identity. It also affirmed that one’s identity was a result of one’s occupational choice and also the impact this had on non-work elements. The metaphor analysis further added to the perceptive accounts of workers. In this sense, it conditioned a sense of reality, whereby underlying affective connotations were comprehended. Furthermore, one’s identity relative to one’s work was given a deeper account than that explored in the thematic analysis. The thematic and metaphor analysis was not envisaged to provide findings that were similar or complementary to each other, but rather the aim was to look at the data through different “lenses” to potentially offer a fuller or more complete exploration of the work and life experiences of hospitality cruise ship workers. This noted, being analytical processes investigating the same research area; there are clear overlaps of empirical connections. These will be discussed in this section.

8.3.1 Identity

The strands of theory that this thesis drew upon was that of Social Identity Theory (e.g. Tajfel, 1978) and Self Categorisation Theory (e.g. Turner *et al.* 1987) to explore the affiliations of work and groups on cruise ships. Such theories propose that group categories assist to organise, but also to present the contexts for which individuals can define themselves in accordance with the social world (see Chapter 3). In the context of the cruise ship, being dependent on bureaucratic and hierarchical systems, a significant part of this definition or identification is that of the working group. In the interviews, the manner in which participants described themselves, others, and their situation would often be in the context of their occupation. Their sense of self was entwined with their line of work, and this was something that carried over to the social realms of living on cruise ships, suggesting that work plays a central role in how individuals evaluate themselves and are evaluated by others and the wider cruise ship society of the ‘generalised other’ (Mead, 1934). As Sarah (purser) proclaimed

“everyone knew you for the type of job that you did”. Participants in this study tended to refer to their occupation when they were justifying their actions and making sense of particular situations, insomuch that their occupational members generally became their reference group (this was more evident in the group of waiters), sharing the collective values and beliefs of the group, involving the process of depersonalisation (i.e. self-categorisation), while ultimately affiliating and maintaining a social identity affecting their behaviour. Therefore, one’s occupational label, having socially but contextually constructed definitions, was an avenue for hospitality workers to define themselves and others, guiding behaviour and perspectives, and was relevant to this research for showing how they make sense of themselves within their world.

The identity of cruise ship workers is bound by place and context. This would imply that occupation, place and identity are inextricably linked. Individuals come on-board and unless they have worked on a ship before they have little comprehension of the realities of work and life at sea. Their identity before they come on-board, in part, is ineffective, who they are and what they know holds little relevance, which has similar connotations to Goffman’s (1961) idea of ‘total institution’. The ship acts as a separation from society and “normality”, providing a physical and social barrier from the outside (e.g. Goffman, 1961), meaning that all aspects of one’s life transpire within one place. Being bound to the ship in a physical and social sense has more of an impact upon an individual’s ‘life space’ (Lewin, 1951). The physical boundaries of the ship limit the range of opportunities to be considered at that time, and social actions and behaviour are imposed by what is socially acceptable and valued within the system and place of the ship, which is furthermore strongly affected by one’s occupation.

The cruise ship is a unique working environment - intense, restricted and encapsulated - which requires workers to adjust, adopt and sacrifice “to the way things are”, thus through the transitory and active nature of identity salience (LeBoeuf *et al.* 2010), a ship-based identity is created. The findings in this study suggest that cruise ship spaces, the system on-board, and time, have significant impacts upon the formation of community and identity. Within this intricacy, a cruise ship worker is able to make sense of him/her self and make sense of others, in which an occupation can be a valuable means of expression. The identities of waiters and pursers in this study are influenced and shaped by similar forces, but it is how intensified these forces are that has implications upon one’s identity. Pursers drew upon their social freedom (i.e. explorer metaphor), harmonious relationship with management (i.e. home and family metaphors), and social privileges and status (i.e. high school metaphor) that their

occupation allowed them to create and maintain as a means to define themselves (i.e. explorer and juggler metaphors). Waiters developed their identity through the shared meanings from the connections of time, struggle and conflict (i.e. prison and war/battlefield metaphors), and although this developed a strong communal bond between occupational members (i.e. family metaphor), their occupational choice meant they were restricted in their social capabilities, compared to pursers, and also bound to a confrontational and submissive relationship with management (i.e. slave and robot metaphors). Waiters were more restricted in terms of their identity to their occupational demands, which sometimes forced members into acts of deviance (i.e. ninja and tactician metaphors), but also drew upon the positive elements of their work (i.e. carer and performance metaphors).

It was noted that some pursers in this study made their occupational choice and undertook their role in a way to ‘manage their social identity’ (Laliberte-Rudman, 2002). This was particularly notable in the interview with Neil (purser) who chose his role because of the associated positive connotations attached to being a purser. These connotations were with reference to a purser’s status (professional and social) and social privileges. Moreover, there was evidence in this study that participants would not tend to socialise with certain individuals because of their occupation. There was a combination of reasons such as a difference in timetables and social capabilities linked to their hierarchical level, but also because of the stigma linked to certain occupations, and sometimes nationality.

“if you’re socialising outside of your department, so it’s with departments who are at the same sort of level as you” (Hannah, purser)

This was further discussed by Angela (waiter and purser) who after changing roles from a waiter to a purser, noticed that because of her change in occupation, certain people started to talk and socialise with her.

Identity on-board the ship is often symbolically charged - the uniforms derived from a naval background are a clear example of this. One of the more expressive symbols of identity highlighted by participants was their access to spaces. For pursers, this was a central part of their role, to be able to use guest facilities and so forth. Waiters on the other hand, as crew, had their own ‘mess’ and lower level of living quarters. Symbolically, waiters in this study were inferior (e.g., uniform, hierarchy, hard work, access to space) but it seemed that this was a core part of the formation of a strong community and identity. An example of this is the high school metaphor, in which waiters are looked down upon (“geeks”). Pursers on the other

hand have a stronger voice and more influence over their work role and social life. By contrast, the occupation of waiter is arguably weaker having lesser power or control (i.e. prison) over their actions. This holds resemblances with the studies of kitchen porters (Saunders, 1981) in terms of the weaker occupation, in comparison with other occupations such as chefs in four and five star hotels (e.g. Cameron, 2001). In the current study, the status of officer was important to pursers in their construction of identity as it gave them a feeling of purpose and stature, even if they “really” were not an officer as such (Angela, waiter and purser). Pursers may have looked the part in their officer-style uniform, and were allowed the benefits associated with being an officer, but because occupationally they were similar to a hotel front desk, it was a position with little of the authority or responsibility generally assumed to the status of an officer. Of course, status perceptions can only be context dependent (Sandiford and Seymour, 2010) and within the context of the cruise ship, the purser role was a well respected position.

8.3.2 *Community*

One evident overlap between thematic and metaphor analysis was the feeling that being part of a community was central to the happiness and longevity of workers. The physical boundaries create a sense of belonging, while the internal spaces condition community development. Through this, an identity is constructed by the surrounding community (i.e. occupational) to gain reference and support, and also through the response and interaction of others in the cruise ship spaces (Fine, 1996a). Being part of a community, a social group, is important as a survival strategy (Gaertner *et al.* 1999) and this is intensified while being on-board, increasing the desire for inclusion and belonging through the isolation from friends, family and “normal” networks. There was a strong sense of belonging, not necessarily to the place, but to the communities within that place. This has been recognised in recent research where it has been argued that the development of relationships on-board is important for stability (Gibson and Walters, 2012). The study of the interview transcripts underlined the need for participants to feel connected to other people, facilitating belonging. The work one does was perceived to be a prominent variable in feeling a part of the cruise ship society, insofar that one’s occupation is a mediator between oneself and the wider society (Salaman, 1974).

The ship is very multinational in terms of passengers and workers, and this appeared to suggest that there was little ‘ethnic identity attached to ships, as places’ (Sampson, 2003: p.274). This cultural diversity seemed to benefit the society of the ship, and although nationality plays some part in relationship formations, the findings in this study are similar to Sehkaran and Sevcikova (2011) in that participants appeared to bond primarily with other nationalities, while close friends were often formed based upon occupational dimensions. Undoubtedly, it would be unrealistic to assume that nationality did not create common ties and the basis of relationships, as supported in the example of Barbara (purser) who talked about having similar tastes and values with others of the same or similar nationality, creating a “Hungarian mafia”. Although in contrast to Barbara’s view, Angela (waiter and purser) discussed how she much preferred to socialise and work with people of mixed nationalities, rather than restricted to a singular nationality. Nationality will be salient, mostly because of the ship being similar to a ‘mini UN’ (Chin, 2008: p.1), upon which broad national “prejudices” are formed (Jane, merchandise). This noted, there was little evidence in this research that suggested that one’s nationality was significant in the formation of communities. Such communities were more than likely formed based on occupational dimensions. The physical and social nature of the cruise ship is a generator and harbourer of such occupational communities. Being inclusive and isolated, individuals are pushed together, which is generally on an occupational basis. The shared hardships of work and life further cement commonalities with occupational group members. This was more visible in waiters because of the marginality of the role (i.e. social aspects linked with their hierarchy) which resulted in waiters forming a stronger occupational community, which were based on negative shared connotations (e.g., Gerstl, 1961; Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999). The majority of participants in both sets of occupational groups had a work-based self image (Salaman, 1974). Moreover, members also portrayed a positive identity relating to their own group with which they defended themselves against negative associations, brought about by, for example, perceptions of long working hours (waiters) and low pay (pursers). Their occupation determined much of their cruise ship life as it was physically and psychologically difficult to get away from the work that they did. The boundaries of such communities can be argued to be more complex than those suggested by Lee-Ross (2008). There was not much evidence that pursers and waiters socially or professionally mixed, this being based on several variables such as time and space constraints, hierarchy, and social status.

8.3.3 Management

It was clear from the interviews that management played a fundamental hand in the formation of occupational identity and communities. These were more symbolically expressed in the metaphor analysis. When discussing management, waiters referred to the metaphors of prison, war/battlefield, slave, and robot. These four metaphors highlight authority, control, and ‘behavioural learning’ (e.g. Leroy and Ramanantsoa, 1997). This implies a standardised learning process, which may restrict waiters in showing their fullest ability. It is difficult for waiters to go beyond the cognitive boundaries of what is organisationally expected of them. Waiters try and compensate for this by being a performer, ninja or tactician. A performer allows the waiter some occupational freedom, although the degree is curtailed by the organisation. A waiter may therefore turn to more deviant ways, either socially (ninja) or professionally (tactician). There is little doubt that the organisation recognises and requires the professional skills attached to the role of a waiter, yet in doing so, it appears to have stagnated in terms of development. Whether this is of a cultural or structural component is unclear. Alternatively, when pursers discussed management, they would incorporate the metaphors of home and family. Their relationship was more harmonious, supportive and respectful allowing for more control over their work.

Management on-board is somewhat different to the expectations on land, primarily because workers live on the ship and so management responsibilities don’t stop after their shift ends. It is understandable, or at least graspable to understand why the industry relies upon a particular bureaucratic style system. Their focus on structure and management processes is brought about by the complex nature of the business; operating in international waters with an international workforce under ‘flags of convenience’ allows cruise operators to break or bend the laws that are acceptable on land, yet are supported within the law to suit their needs and requirements. This is foremost a strategy which controls costs for the organisation, which can be passed on to the consumer. This arguable fixation on costs transcends to a general ‘behavioural learning’ style, restricting ‘cognitive learning’ and controlling talent. Particularly in waiters, being highly ruled based can stifle talent, in which management push for a traditional service, rather than an entrepreneurial service. It is this which is an area of conflict. The waiters in this study wanted to aspire and more importantly wanted recognition, and not be seen as “numbers” (Charles, waiter). It could be argued to be a deficit of self-esteem from others, whereby they are felt to be seen as a function rather than a profession.

8.4 Extent to which objectives have been met

Table 8.2 shows the extent to which each of the objectives has been met. Each of the research objectives are stated which will be discussed in terms of how the objective was explored and subsequent outcome of the objective.

Table 8.2 Outcomes of objectives

Objective	Where evidence can be found (Chapter)	Brief discussion and Outcome
To measure the importance of occupational and social communities on-board cruise ships	5	<p>Job Embeddedness was used to measure the importance of work and non-work variables. Although the perceived ‘sacrifices’ for leaving one’s role were low, the ‘links’ made with others was an important part of a hospitality worker’s employment. A key finding was their perception of ‘fit’, which was dependent upon their occupational choice. Because social benefits are entwined with one’s occupation, their perception of ‘fit’ became salient.</p> <p>Outcome: The findings of this study indicate that the social communities that hospitality cruise ship workers become a part of are central to their happiness and longevity. One’s community, absent of normal networks, forms strong bonds which are a basis for reference and support. Furthermore, one’s social community is generally comprised of the individuals that one works with – this was more evident amongst F&B staff in this study.</p>
To assess the extent and the effects that an occupation has on the lifestyle/social community	6 & 7	<p>On cruise ships, one’s occupation determines almost all aspects of one’s life. One’s occupational position and ultimately one’s place in the hierarchical system dictates what an individual can do, where an individual can go, where one sleeps and eats, and also has an influence on the people one spends time with.</p> <p>Outcome: The choice of occupation on-board controls and steers the type of life that cruise ship workers ultimately have. This was acknowledged by several of the participants, particularly when asked what advice they would give to others aspiring to work on cruise ships. Waiters, being classed as crew, were significantly more tied to and controlled by their occupation (i.e. slave) than pursers, working longer hours and subsequently having little time away from the demands of their occupation. Pursers, as officers, have that extra freedom and privilege to explore their personal and social ambitions (i.e. explorer) which allows them to socialise more, which may be with several departments, but more notably, they are able to base their identity around other variables than their occupation (see <i>Table 7.1</i>).</p>

To explore the importance of organisational structures in the construction of community and identity dimensions on-board cruise ships

6

The thematic analysis identified multiple variables that impacted upon the construction of identity and community. These were chiefly: the physical boundaries of the ship and the internal spaces within it, the system of the ship (hierarchy and strict rules), and finally the implications of time (length and time into a contract, how many previous contracts have been completed, and the time dedicated to one's occupational position and subsequently one's social life).

To discuss the nature and influence of individual perceptions of the occupation and lifestyle on-board a cruise ship, and how these relate to self-perception and social identity

7

Outcome: the organisational structures, which are unique to the cruise ship industry, were both spatial and socio-cultural in construction. This was further determined by one's occupational choice (i.e. hierarchy). These organisational structures, not only had an impact physically but also socially, which was often underlined by worker frustration (generally waiters), yet accepted as "the way that it is".

This was creatively explored in the metaphor analysis. Being dominated by their occupational activities, waiters were significantly more inclined to affiliate to an identity closely linked to their occupation. Alternatively, pursers, being in the position of an officer, were able to base their self-definition more on their social activities.

To evaluate the role and possible influence of significant others, such as co-workers, relatives and employers, on issues such as motivation and retention

6 & 7

Outcome: this was reflected within the metaphors individuals chose to talk about while discussing their work and life. The findings highlight the contrasting depictions of waiters and pursers, and more importantly what individuals chose to base those definitions on.

Waiters were significantly more likely to view themselves as a slave or robot, encapsulated in a prison or war/battlefield environment. Pursers, reflecting more on their social privileges, based themselves more on being an explorer or juggler, within a home environment.

Evidence suggests that relationships on cruise ships are central to an individual's longevity and happiness. Initially, as shown in chapter 6, half of the participants in this study were motivated by others (friends and family) to work on cruise ships. Once on-board, co-workers become a surrogate family, which may for some encapsulate management (pursers), although for others (waiters) the management may be a source of conflict, impacting on retention.

Outcome: The relationships one makes on-board, and also those whom workers keep in contact with ashore (i.e. family) are prominent bases of influence, support, and also

To contribute knowledge on
the working lives of front
line hospitality workers on
cruise ships

5 - 7

frustration and conflict. In this research, being away from family was frustrating, but was not found to be a central source of stress (although this may have been different if participants with children were to be interviewed). This noted, it was important that participants were able to contact their family and friends. It was clear that the perceptions of family and friends about cruise ship work was often skewed, either focusing upon the negative aspects of the work, or identifying it as an opportunity to travel and see the world. Furthermore, they would generally view the participant's occupation as short term and not a career, which most participants would disagree with.

This is an exploratory study in an area with little previous research. The work and life has been explored from a hospitality worker perspective, which has taken into consideration variables such as identity and community, linked to their occupation.

8.5 Limitations of the research

The limitations of this research have mainly concerned the difficulties in collecting data, which stemmed from two areas: the choice of research area (cruise ship industry) coupled with the sensitivity of the research subject (bordering issues of retention and motivation for front line hospitality cruise ship workers) in which prior research has revealed the darker side of the industry (e.g. Klein, 2002).

Gaining data in the cruise ship industry is notoriously difficult (e.g. Larsen *et al.* 2012) and the experience of this research was no exception. At the beginning of the research process, there were some fruitful conversations and e-mail exchanges with managers and directors in hospitality operations working for several cruise companies. There was evidence of interest and also the requirement/justification of such research to take place. Unfortunately, after discussing the research topic in more detail and forwarding the proposed questionnaire, barriers began to emerge. These were generally that either Human Resources or senior personnel would not sanction the proposed research, or as in one case, that similar research was already being carried out within the company. Trying to obtain co-operation was a frustrating, tedious and lengthy process.

Chapter 4 discussed these challenges and the subsequent route chosen because of the difficulties in gaining industry co-operation. Ideally, the research carried out would have been on hospitality workers in a single organisation or ship, or two organisations/ships for comparative purposes. This would have contextually controlled more variables, such as organisational practices, management practices, the segmentation of the ship and its passengers, and so on. Subsequently, this may have increased the level of detail. This noted, from chapters 5-7 (particularly from analysing the interview transcripts), despite participants being from differing organisational contexts (i.e. more than one organisation), this study suggests there was a multifaceted and entwining set of similar and distinctive features that could be identified giving a wider industry perspective of waiters and pursers, suggesting that although the level of detail may have been curtailed, the quality was not compromised.

Another limitation was the initial low response rate and size of sample for the questionnaire survey. The chosen approach was an online questionnaire through targeted social media for cruise ship workers. It was successful in that it provided an avenue for workers to complete the questionnaire, but alternatively nearly 80% of the sample were not currently employed in the industry, while some respondents had not been employed for several years. However, on a

preliminary basis, the sample provided an exploratory opportunity to identify key relationships regarding their work and life on cruise ships. The target of completed questionnaires was set at a minimum of 100, which took longer than six months to accumulate. Sampling was also an issue relevant to the interviews. Cruise ship companies were contacted again, but once more without success. This resulted in a sample in which the majority of the participants were not currently employed in the industry (15 out of 20). Nevertheless, the longest time an individual had been out of the industry was seven months. This was seen as sufficient to be able to get meaningful data. Another limitation regarding the interview sample was that although the sample was culturally diverse, there were few participants in this study who “needed” to be working on-board a cruise ship, rather than “wanting” to work on a cruise ship. Those who “needed” to be there, for largely financial reasons may have had different perceptions of their work and life on cruise ships.

As noted above, the sample, from a nationality perspective, was seemingly representative of a twenty-first century cruise ship. Within the interview sample there were fifteen nationalities represented (see *Table 6.1*). Although it was important for the sample to be nationally diverse, this may have had implications at the analysis stage, and in particular the metaphor analysis. Notably, the focus of this analysis is language and the use of language in a given context. A major consideration therefore (being that the interviews were conducted in English) was that for 50% of participants (ten), English was not their first language. While participants are required to have a good grasp of the English language to be employed on cruise ships it is important to recognise this limitation. It could be suggested that if participants were interviewed in their first language, different metaphors may have been used to describe their experiences and subsequently affected the findings related to the analysis of metaphors. This further highlights the issue of national differences, whereby metaphors used by participants may be understood differently than their intended purpose.

Despite such limitations, the mixed method approach and split analysis of the interviews have yielded meaningful and culturally defined findings relative to the occupations of waiters and pursers, unravelling some of the complexity in the work and life of hospitality cruise ship workers.

8.6 Scope for further research

The opportunities for further research would be to firstly address the limitations explained in the previous section. Centrally, this would be to base research upon one or two organisations/ships and on a sample of workers who are currently working on a cruise ship (at the time of research). Future research could also consider alternative methods, such as participant observation. This may provide a tool to gather a closer cultural account of what it is like to work and live on a cruise ship. Furthermore, this thesis has provided a comparative basis for future studies, for example, identifying the perceptions on identity and community from the perspective of hospitality occupations and marine operations (i.e. engineering).

This research does not claim to have uncovered all the details of working on-board a cruise ship, but rather, through exploration, to partially offer an understanding of being a waiter or purser on a cruise ship and explain how this affects their perceptions, identity and ultimately their temporary life. Future research could capitalise upon these exploratory findings. This study particularly focused on the meaning of work for these participants. It would be interesting to undertake a longitudinal research study of a group of workers which identifies their motivations, perceptions and identity at different stages of their cruise ship work journey. For example, investigating their perceptions and motivations before an individual started working on-board, and at subsequent intersections throughout their contract(s), to explore how perceptions, relationships and self-definition changes. This may be particularly interesting if an individual were to change job roles/titles during their contract and how this change in occupation has a perceptive and social impact upon the individual. Additionally, this research only sought the perceptions of front line workers. A part of their perception was influenced by their relationship with their management. Future research could profit from gathering the perceptions of management and comparing how the findings might relate to findings in this study.

Additional to those research avenues discussed above there is potential to develop some of the conceptual frameworks employed in this study, namely that of Job Embeddedness and metaphor analysis. Being a relatively new concept there has been little application of Job Embeddedness to a hospitality setting. Although this study used an adapted form of Job Embeddedness to identify critical factors for understanding cruise ship employee experiences, the sample did not allow to test whether employees were actually embedded within their occupation and/or organisation. To use Job Embeddedness to its fullest potential, firstly the

sample must be working in the industry at the time of completing the questionnaire, and secondly, on the basis of the findings in this research (i.e. lifestyle, community, physical and social restraints, etc), some of the questions would need adapting to a cruise ship sample. The construct could also be tested upon a wider hospitality sample in land-based jobs. It would also be interesting to develop upon the findings from the metaphor analysis. This could be explored in a couple of directions. Firstly, to re-contact the participants in this study and discuss whether the metaphors found demonstrate some reality of working and living on-board. Alternatively, it may be worthwhile to initially ask the participants to sum up their experiences using metaphors, so asking them to think metaphorically, and based upon the answers given, have a discussion about any similarities or differences found from the original metaphorical findings. Secondly, metaphor analysis could be carried out on a new sample from which to identify any commonalities or differences.

8.7 A final reflection

The cruise ship industry has witnessed a considerable amount of growth within a moderately short period of time. This growth has brought about multiple changes, mostly evident in the structural and technological advancements in vessel design, which has transformed the industry in recent years. Although there have been such dynamic changes to the industry there could be an argument that working conditions and practices (e.g. hierarchy) have remained relatively stagnant and unusual in twenty-first century organisations. This is reflected in the little prior research carried out in this area, coupled with the unco-operative nature of the industry to assist with such research. This area of research will become more important in the years to come as organisations follow the trend of building bigger ships with potentially more concerns about workplace conditions and employee welfare, but also as the industry attracts more media coverage, both positively and negatively.

This study represents an exploratory and innovative contribution to the field of hospitality cruise ship work. The research also has value by being a medium that allows cruise ship workers to tell their story. This is something of a rarity in cruise ship research, to get a perceptive account of their world and what this line of work means for them. Furthermore, the research has been able to re-address and also re-affirm some of the negative depictions of cruise ship work. The stories collected from the workers in this study, particularly from the metaphor analysis, have been able to produce a very different but realistic perspective of the

working lives of waiters and pursers. It would be naïve to suggest that the industry would make any dramatic changes from the findings of this study, yet it is hopeful, from the provision of an in-depth account of the lives of workers, that industry personnel, particularly those in Human Resource and hospitality manager roles, will gain a different perspective of work on-board. This research would likely to be more useful to fellow academics and researchers interested in the cruise ship industry. This exploratory study can act as a “springboard” for more focused research on the human and social side of operations.

It was not the intention of this research to generate theory that was generalisable to other research areas. It would be unrealistic to expect to make claims for generalisability from the findings of this study. Rather the impetus was to explore, evaluate, and interpret the work and life experiences provided by front line hospitality workers (waiters and pursers) on-board cruise ships. From this viewpoint, new knowledge has been produced from the aspect of those individuals as members of their occupation and communities within the cultural entity (physical and social) of the ship, and the ways in which this has assisted in self definition and group affiliation. Therefore, the findings from this study sought transferability, which will benefit other contexts with familiar foci.

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Appendix 1 – Questionnaire (paper copy)



Department of Hospitality and Events Management

University of Huddersfield

Huddersfield, HD1 3DH

a.dennett@hud.ac.uk

+44 (0) 1484 471854

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Adam Dennett, a PhD Hospitality student at The University of Huddersfield. I understand you have a busy schedule but I would be very grateful if you could complete this short questionnaire. All questions other than the ones below (questions 3, 5, 6) are multiple choice and should take no longer than 5 - 10 minutes to answer.

The valuable data collected here forms part of an initial process on a study of hospitality employees on-board cruise ships. The purpose of the questionnaire is to investigate the extent to which social, personal, and economic forces bind a particular individual to a job, and attempts to further understand the importance of communities whilst on-board cruise ships.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could complete the questionnaire. Please **do not** include your name anywhere on the questionnaire. All information is **strictly confidential** and for research purposes only.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this important research initiative.

Yours faithfully

Adam Dennett

1. Sex: Male Female

2. Age: 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55+

3. Nationality: _____

4. Marital status: Single Married Divorced Other

5. Occupational title: _____

6. How long have you worked for the:
(Years/Months) Current ship _____ Current organisation _____
 Current occupation _____ Cruise industry _____

Please Note : Organisation = cruise company
Occupation = current job role

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. I feel attached to this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8. It would be difficult for me to leave this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. I'm too caught up in this organisation to leave	<input type="checkbox"/>				
10. I feel tied to this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
11. I simply could not leave the organisation that I work for	<input type="checkbox"/>				
12. It would be easy for me to leave this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
13. I am tightly connected to this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
14. I feel attached to this occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
15. It would be difficult for me to leave this occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
16. I'm too caught up in this occupation to leave	<input type="checkbox"/>				
17. I feel tied to this occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
18. I simply could not leave the occupation that I do	<input type="checkbox"/>				
19. It would be easy for me to leave this occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
20. I am tightly connected to this occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
21. I interact with a large number of my co-workers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
22. I like the members of my work group	<input type="checkbox"/>				
23. My co-workers are similar to me	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24. I don't have regular opportunities to interact with my co-workers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
25. I feel that people at work respect me a great deal	<input type="checkbox"/>				
26. My co-workers are highly dependent on me	<input type="checkbox"/>				
27. I am part of many work teams	<input type="checkbox"/>				
28. I am on many work committees	<input type="checkbox"/>				
29. I would be sacrificing a lot if I left this job	<input type="checkbox"/>				
30. My promotional opportunities are excellent here	<input type="checkbox"/>				
31. I am well paid for my level of performance	<input type="checkbox"/>				
32. This job has excellent benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>				
33. This job has excellent health-care benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>				
34. This job has excellent retirement benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35. I feel I am a good match for this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
36. My job uses my skills and talents well	<input type="checkbox"/>				
37. I fit with the organisations culture	<input type="checkbox"/>				
38. I like the responsibility I have on this job	<input type="checkbox"/>				
39. The prospects for continuing employment with this company are excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>				
40. I have a lot of freedom on this job to decide how to pursue my goals	<input type="checkbox"/>				
41. I really enjoy the place where I live on-board	<input type="checkbox"/>				
42. The on-board community is a good match for me	<input type="checkbox"/>				
43. I think of the community where I live on-board as home	<input type="checkbox"/>				
44. The community where I live offers the leisure activities that I like	<input type="checkbox"/>				
45. I frequently think about leaving this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
46. I have actively looked for another position outside Of this organisation since starting this job	<input type="checkbox"/>				
47. I intend to leave this organisation before the end of my contract	<input type="checkbox"/>				
48. I plan to stay in this organisation until I retire	<input type="checkbox"/>				
49. I plan to extend my contract with the organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
50. I frequently think about leaving this occupational role	<input type="checkbox"/>				
51. I have actively looked for another occupation since starting this job	<input type="checkbox"/>				
52. I intend to leave this occupation before the end of my contract	<input type="checkbox"/>				
53. I plan to stay in this occupation until I retire	<input type="checkbox"/>				
54. I plan to extend my contract in this occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Additional Comments:

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Should you require any further information about this project, please don't hesitate to contact
me at: a.dennett@hud.ac.uk or +44 (0) 1484 471854

Appendix 2 – Interview guide

- 1) Preamble (Thank informant for their time, Describe who I am and what I am doing – purpose/overview of the interview, Declare confidentiality and anonymity, Ask approval to record interview)
- 2) How long have you worked on cruise ships? What attracted you to work on a cruise ship? Has it been what you expected?
- 3) How does working on-board compare to other places you have worked? What aspects do you enjoy/dislike the most? Would you change anything given the opportunity? What do friends and family back home think about you working/living on a cruise ship?
- 4) Were there any reasons that affected your decision to choose a particular ship/organisation? i.e. destinations of the ship, type of organisation, available facilities? How did you first apply?
- 5) What is your job title? What does your title mean to you? Do you feel proud? Why did you choose this type of occupation?
- 6) What does your job entail? What is a typical day? How do you think others view your occupation? What do you like/dislike about your job? Does your occupation have any impact on your social life on-board? Do you feel there are many opportunities to continue working in the cruise ship industry?
- 7) What relationship do you have with your co-workers? Is there a team/community feeling? Do you socialise out of work with your co-workers? Are most of your friends on-board doing the same occupation? What relationship do you have with your managers?
- 8) What do you think about living and working on-board a cruise ship? How much does training prepare you for working and living on-board? How do you deal with being away from friends and family? What do you do when you're not working? Do you feel safe while on-board?
- 9) What advice would you give someone starting work on-board? What are your future career plans? Will you continue to work in the cruise industry? In the same occupation?
- 10) Finally, is there anything else you would like to comment upon?

Appendix 3 – Interview advertisement/letter

**WAITERS AND PURSERS WORKING ON CRUISE SHIPS
REQUIRED!**

COULD YOU SPARE SOME TIME PLEASE?

Hello everybody!

My name is Adam Dennett and I'm currently undertaking a PhD at Huddersfield University. I'm undertaking some fresh and exciting research about your world of work and I'm looking for some waiters and pursers to tell their story.

I would be really grateful if you could spare some time for a telephone interview please? I'm looking for waiters and pursers who have completed at least one contract and are either still working or have finished working within the last year.

All results are confidential and no personal questions are asked, but I'm hoping the results can make a real impact in the future. Thanks for looking :)

To get in touch or to get more details please don't hesitate to contact me on the details below:

Email: a.dennett@hud.ac.uk

Telephone: 07817857983