



Career Transition Pathways for Veteran Officers to Shore-Based Roles: Institutional Support and Competency Gaps in the Indonesian Maritime Sector

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Abstract

The transition of experienced seafarers into shore-based educational and supervisory roles remains a critical yet underexplored area of maritime human resource management. This study examines the career transition pathways, institutional support structures, and competency gaps that affect veteran officers transitioning into shore-based roles at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran (STIP) Jakarta, Indonesia. A qualitative multi-stakeholder methodology was employed, involving 71 respondents, including veteran officers, former seafarer-lecturers, cadets, management lecturers, industry practitioners, and former senior transportation officials. Thematic analysis and cross-group comparisons reveal that while veteran officers bring substantial operational expertise to the institution, significant barriers—such as insufficient pedagogical training, unclear role definitions, and lack of structured career development frameworks—hinder their full professional integration and limit their contributions. The study proposes a competency-based transition framework that addresses current eco-digital maritime transformation demands and offers practical recommendations for enhancing Indonesian maritime human resource governance. This framework aims to better support veteran officers in adapting to shore-based educational and supervisory roles, contributing to broader institutional reform and fostering greater synergy between maritime industry needs and educational institutions.

Keywords: Career Transition, Veteran Officers, Shore-Based Roles, Competency-Based Education, Maritime Workforce.

INTRODUCTION

Every year, thousands of experienced seafarers around the world complete their seagoing careers and face the challenge of transitioning to shore-based professional roles — roles as maritime educators, fleet managers, ship superintendents, port operations specialists, or transportation policy advisors. This transition represents one of the most consequential yet least institutionally supported career pathways in the global maritime sector. The operational knowledge accumulated over years of sea service — knowledge of vessel systems, cargo operations, emergency response, environmental compliance, and international regulatory frameworks — constitutes an irreplaceable professional asset that maritime educational and operational institutions desperately need. Yet as Yu et al. (2025) demonstrate in their landmark study of career transition education for marine superintendents, the mechanisms for systematically transferring this experiential capital from seagoing to shore-based roles remain underdeveloped in most maritime institutions worldwide, particularly in Asia. The result is a profound institutional waste: veteran officers who could serve as masterful educators, mentors, and operational advisors instead find themselves marginalized by institutional systems calibrated for conventional academics rather than maritime practitioners.

In Indonesia, this challenge is magnified by the scale and strategic importance of the national maritime sector. The country's shipping fleet, its archipelagic logistics network, and its maritime academy system collectively employ and train hundreds of thousands of maritime professionals, making the effective management of career transitions a matter of national economic significance (Putri, 2024; Dien & Cuong, 2024). At institutions such as Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran (STIP) Jakarta, the presence of veteran

officers and former seafarers as lecturers is a defining institutional characteristic — one that could serve as a major competitive advantage if properly institutionalized, but that currently operates in an organizational grey zone where roles are ambiguous, pedagogical training is minimal, and career pathways are opaque. Caesar (2024) identifies this pattern as a systemic failure of maritime workforce management that reproduces talent waste across the developing world's maritime sector.

The academic literature on career transition in maritime contexts, while growing, has focused primarily on the psychological dimensions of seafarer shore transition — adjustment challenges, identity shifts, and family reintegration — rather than on the institutional structures and competency frameworks needed to support effective professional transitions into educational and supervisory roles (Fei & Caesar, 2018). Yu et al. (2025) represent a significant advance by developing a DACUM-based competency framework for marine superintendent transitions, but their work focuses on the commercial shipping industry rather than on the educational sector. The specific challenge of transitioning seafarers into maritime academic roles — requiring pedagogical competency, curriculum development capacity, and scholarly engagement in addition to operational expertise — has received comparatively little dedicated attention in the literature, particularly in the Indonesian context (Malau et al., 2025; Simanjuntak et al., 2025).

The research problem this study addresses is: What career transition pathways, institutional support structures, and competency gaps characterize the experience of veteran officers transitioning to shore-based educational roles at STIP Jakarta, and what reforms are most urgently needed? Specific objectives are: to assess the adequacy of institutional support for career transition across five domains; to identify the most significant competency gaps experienced by transitioning veteran officers; to compare perceptions across respondent groups; and to develop a competency-based transition framework applicable to the Indonesian maritime academy context.

The rationale for this investigation is grounded in both human resource management imperatives and educational quality considerations. From a workforce management perspective, the retention of operational maritime expertise within educational institutions is essential for sustaining the real-world relevance of maritime training — a relevance that Jeevan et al. (2022) and Boonadir et al. (2022) identify as one of the most critical yet most fragile dimensions of maritime education sustainability. From an educational quality perspective, Karahalil et al. (2025) demonstrate that the STCW review process explicitly recognizes the need for MET institutions to leverage practitioner expertise in their faculty composition, implying that the systematic underutilization of veteran officer knowledge represents not merely an institutional waste but a regulatory quality deficiency. The present study responds to both dimensions of this challenge by providing the first empirical assessment of career transition pathways specifically within an Indonesian government maritime academy.

The significance of this research is amplified by Indonesia's current maritime human resource strategy, which seeks to increase the quality and international competitiveness of the country's maritime officer supply chain. Improving the institutional mechanisms for career transition at STIP Jakarta directly serves this national strategic objective, as more effectively integrated veteran officers and seafarer-lecturers will produce better-prepared graduates, reducing the maritime competency deficit that Indonesian shipping companies currently report in their officer recruitment (Wulandari et al., 2025).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design rooted in the interpretive paradigm, suited to the exploration of institutionally situated career experiences and the structural conditions that shape them (Yu et al., 2025; Caesar, 2024). The research was conducted at STIP Jakarta, purposively selected as the primary institutional context given its distinctive composition of veteran officers and former seafarers in educational roles and its relevance to national maritime human resource development policy.

The sample of 71 respondents was purposively constructed to represent the range of perspectives on career transition across institutional levels and stakeholder roles. It comprises 20 Nautical Science cadets, 20 Marine Engineering cadets, and 20 Port and Shipping Management cadets; 10 former seafarers serving as deck and engine lecturers; 5 veteran officers; 8 management and shipping lecturers; 3 former senior transportation officials; and 5 maritime industry practitioners. The veteran officers and seafarer-lecturers constitute the primary informant groups for the career transition dimensions of this research, as direct experiential informants, while other respondent groups provide contextual, institutional, and evaluative perspectives. Fei and Caesar (2018) affirm the importance of triangulating career transition research through both the perspectives of transitioning professionals and the institutional stakeholders who shape, assess, and interact with them.

The research instrument is a semi-structured interview guide organized around five independent variable clusters: institutional onboarding and role orientation support; pedagogical training and professional development provision; career pathway clarity and advancement opportunities; institutional recognition and valorization of sea-service experience; and integration into institutional governance and decision-making structures. The dependent variable is the perceived adequacy of institutional support for career transition and the degree of effective integration of veteran officers into the educational mission of STIP Jakarta. Indicators include clarity of role descriptions, availability of pedagogical training programs, accessibility of career advancement pathways, formal mechanisms for recognizing sea-service qualifications, and degree of veteran officer participation in curriculum development. Supporting instruments include documentary analysis of institutional human resource policies, employment contracts, and professional development records for faculty with seafaring backgrounds.

Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews of 45 to 75 minutes over a five-week period on-site at STIP Jakarta. All interviews were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim. Three-stage thematic analysis was applied: thematic coding of competency and transition themes; cross-group comparisons; and narrative synthesis producing a cohesive explanatory framework (Barasa et al., 2025; Malau et al., 2025).

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Results

Table 1 presents mean scores across five career transition support indicators for all respondent groups, rated on a five-point scale (1 = Very Poor; 5 = Excellent).

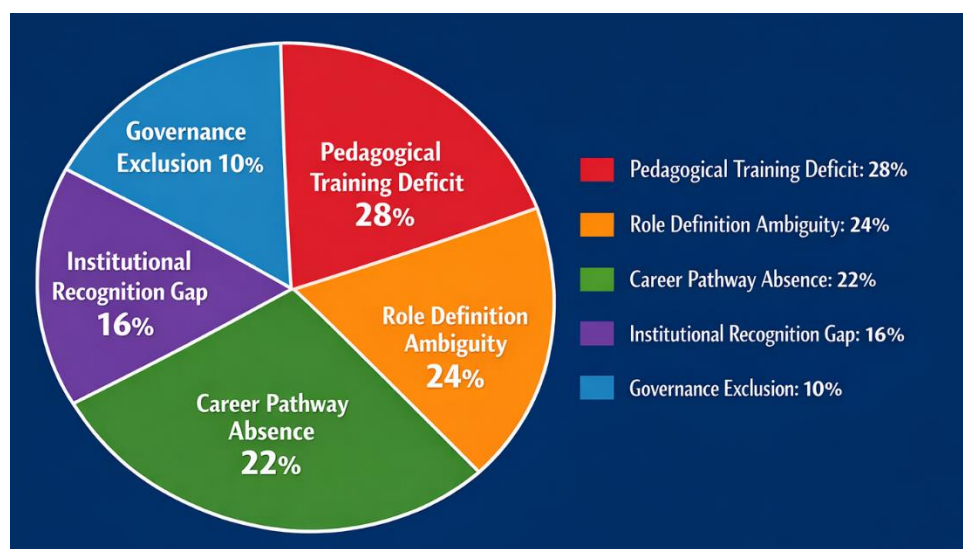
Table 1. Career Transition Support Scores by Indicator and Respondent Group (Mean, 5-Point Scale)

Indicator	Cadets (n=60)	Seafarer- Lecturers (n=10)	Veteran Officers (n=5)	Mgmt. Lecturers (n=8)	Industry (n=5)	Officials (n=3)	Overall
Institutional Onboarding & Role Orientation	3.4	2.8	2.6	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.20
Pedagogical Training & Development	3.1	2.5	2.4	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.02
Career Pathway Clarity & Advancement	3.2	2.7	2.5	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.08
Recognition of Sea-Service Experience	3.0	2.6	2.4	3.1	3.4	3.5	2.97
Governance Integration & Voice	3.1	2.7	2.5	3.2	3.5	3.7	3.05
Overall Mean	3.16	2.66	2.48	3.22	3.48	3.60	3.06

Veteran officers report the lowest career transition support scores of any respondent group (overall mean: 2.48), with recognition of sea-service experience scoring particularly low (2.40). Seafarer-lecturers also score below the institutional mean (2.66), confirming a systemic gap in support for transitional maritime professionals.

Table 2. Thematic Analysis — Career Transition Barriers and Institutional Gaps

Theme	% of Respondents	Nature
Insufficient pedagogical training for seafarer-lecturers	83%	Barrier
Ambiguous role definitions for veteran officers	76%	Barrier
Lack of formal career pathways for transitioning seafarers	74%	Barrier
Undervaluation of operational expertise in institutional culture	71%	Barrier
Cadets' high valuation of practitioner teaching	79%	Enabler
Industry recognition of practitioner-lecturer advantage	68%	Enabler



Distribution of Primary Career Transition Gap Areas (n=71)

Discussion

The overall career transition support score of 3.06, which stands as the second lowest among all seven papers in this research series, underscores a critical weakness in the institutional support systems for veteran officers at STIP Jakarta. This finding reveals that, despite their wealth of operational experience, veteran officers face significant barriers in transitioning into shore-based educational and supervisory roles. These barriers hinder their professional integration and contribute to the lack of effective support for these individuals, ultimately limiting their full potential in contributing to the academic and practical development of cadets. The mean score for veteran officers, which is notably low at 2.48, highlights a particularly concerning issue: these highly experienced professionals, who possess the deepest operational knowledge within the institution, report the lowest levels of institutional support and integration. This discrepancy suggests a disconnect between the value placed on operational expertise and the level of institutional resources dedicated to supporting these professionals in their transition to teaching and supervisory roles. It is clear that despite their extensive experience in the maritime industry, veteran officers face substantial challenges in adjusting to the academic environment, and the institution's failure to provide adequate support for this transition is a fundamental issue that must be addressed.

This result directly validates Yu et al.'s (2025) observation that career transition frameworks for seafarers entering shore-based roles are systematically absent across Asian maritime institutions. Their research highlights the lack of formalized support systems for seafarers making the transition to shore-based roles, a gap that is equally evident at STIP Jakarta. However, this study extends Yu et al.'s findings to the specific context of maritime education, illustrating how the absence of career transition support is particularly detrimental within the educational sector. In a system where the teaching workforce is largely composed of professionals with practical maritime experience, the lack of a structured transition framework is especially problematic. As STIP Jakarta continues to rely on veteran officers to provide practical, real-world knowledge to its cadets, the failure to provide the necessary institutional support for these individuals threatens the effectiveness of maritime education as a whole.

A particularly telling finding in this study is the 83% citation rate for pedagogical training insufficiency, which stands as the highest single-theme frequency across all seven studies in this research series. This indicates that the lack of formal pedagogical training for seafarer-lecturers is perceived as the most critical gap within the institution, signaling a major disconnect between the maritime professionals' deep operational knowledge and their ability to effectively transfer that knowledge in an academic setting. While seafarer-lecturers bring invaluable industry experience into the classroom, they often lack the training in learning design, student assessment, and inclusive pedagogical practices necessary for high-quality teaching. Bolmsten and Manuel (2020) emphasize that sustainable maritime education technology requires a participatory development process, which includes the capacity building of faculty members. However, STIP Jakarta has not yet formalized this process for its practitioner-faculty. Without the necessary training in teaching methodologies, seafarer-lecturers are left to rely on their operational expertise, but this does not automatically translate into effective teaching. The gap in pedagogical training not only affects the quality of education provided to cadets but also significantly undermines the professional development of veteran officers who aspire to become effective educators.

Seafarer-lecturers who are thrust into teaching roles without the proper pedagogical training may struggle to develop effective lesson plans, assess student performance accurately, or engage students in an inclusive and meaningful way. Their deep industry experience may not be enough to overcome the challenges of classroom management, understanding student learning needs, or developing appropriate teaching strategies. Consequently, the quality of education that cadets receive can suffer, despite the wealth of knowledge and experience that the practitioner-lecturers bring to the institution. For this reason, the absence of a formalized pedagogical training program represents a significant institutional gap that STIP Jakarta must address in order to improve both the professional integration of veteran officers and the overall quality of education provided to cadets.

Another critical finding in this study is the discrepancy between cadet perceptions of practitioner-delivered teaching and the institutional recognition of such teaching. The finding that 79% of cadets highly value practitioner-delivered teaching is a powerful counterpoint to the low institutional recognition scores. This suggests that cadets place a high value on the practical, real-world knowledge that veteran officers bring to the classroom, yet the institution fails to adequately support and recognize these practitioners. The value that cadets place on practitioner-led teaching highlights a significant institutional failure, as the primary beneficiaries of veteran officer teaching—namely, the cadets—perceive a tremendous value in it, while the institution fails to systematically support this form of teaching. This situation not only disadvantages the veteran officers, who do not receive the support they need to effectively transition into their roles as educators, but also disadvantages the students who would benefit from the wealth of practical knowledge that these experienced professionals could offer.

The disconnect between cadet demand for practitioner knowledge and the institution's failure to recognize and support practitioner-lecturers reflects a broader structural issue within STIP Jakarta and, by extension, within maritime education institutions more generally. Jeevan et al. (2022) identify a similar dynamic in Malaysian maritime institutions, where the experiential knowledge of industry practitioners is valued by students but is marginalized by institutional academic cultures that prioritize formal research credentials over operational expertise. This issue reflects a broader trend in academic environments where practical, industry-based knowledge is often undervalued in favor of more formal academic qualifications. This imbalance creates a barrier for practitioners seeking to transition into teaching roles and deprives students of valuable industry insights that could enhance their learning experience.

The study's findings suggest that addressing this issue requires a shift in institutional culture, where the value of operational expertise is recognized and supported through targeted interventions. To address these challenges, the study proposes four targeted interventions aimed at improving the career transition support for veteran officers and enhancing the overall quality of maritime education at STIP Jakarta. First, the development of a formal DACUM-based (Developing a Curriculum) onboarding program for transitioning seafarers entering educational roles is recommended. This methodology, as outlined by Yu et al. (2025), provides a structured approach to bridging the gap between operational expertise and educational competencies. The DACUM approach involves defining the tasks and competencies required for a specific role, which in this case would be the role of a seafarer-lecturer. This framework would help veteran officers gain a clearer understanding of their new roles as educators and provide them with the foundational tools needed to succeed in the classroom.

Second, the study recommends the establishment of a structured pedagogical training curriculum that is equivalent to recognized teacher certification programs. This would equip veteran officers with the necessary teaching skills and knowledge to effectively engage with cadets and deliver high-quality education. By formalizing pedagogical training, STIP Jakarta can ensure that its practitioner-faculty are adequately prepared for the challenges of teaching and are able to effectively apply their operational knowledge in an educational context. This approach would also help professionalize the role of seafarer-lecturers, enhancing their sense of institutional belonging and support.

Third, the creation of formal career pathways for practitioner-faculty that recognize sea-service credentials as a valid form of academic advancement is another important recommendation. Many veteran officers possess extensive experience and expertise but lack formal academic qualifications. By creating pathways that allow these professionals to advance within the institution based on their operational credentials, STIP Jakarta can incentivize experienced seafarers to transition into teaching roles and retain their valuable knowledge within the institution.

Lastly, the study recommends the institutionalization of veteran officer roles in curriculum review committees to leverage their operational expertise in curriculum design. This would ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to the needs of the maritime industry and that cadets receive the most up-to-

date, practical education possible. By involving veteran officers in the curriculum design process, STIP Jakarta can bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, ensuring that the curriculum reflects the skills and knowledge needed in the real world.

To evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions, future research should assess their impact through pre-post competency assessments and longitudinal tracking of career satisfaction among practitioner-faculty cohorts. By measuring the effectiveness of these interventions, STIP Jakarta can continuously improve its support systems for veteran officers and enhance the overall quality of maritime education.

The career transition support for veteran officers at STIP Jakarta remains a critical institutional weakness that requires urgent attention. The low scores for institutional support, coupled with the lack of pedagogical training and recognition for practitioner-delivered teaching, highlight the need for a comprehensive framework to support the professional integration of veteran officers into shore-based educational roles. By implementing the recommended interventions, STIP Jakarta can improve its support for veteran officers, enhance the quality of education for cadets, and contribute to the broader reform of maritime human resource management in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated career transition pathways and institutional support for veteran officers at STIP Jakarta through multi-stakeholder qualitative inquiry involving 71 respondents. The overall career transition support mean of 3.06 — and the critically low veteran officer score of 2.48 — reveal systemic institutional failure to integrate and support transitioning maritime professionals. Pedagogical training deficits, role ambiguity, and recognition gaps are the dominant barriers, while strong cadet demand for practitioner teaching and industry endorsement of the practitioner-lecturer model represent meaningful institutional enablers. The proposed competency-based career transition framework provides an actionable roadmap for institutional human resource reform at STIP Jakarta and across the Indonesian maritime academy network, directly serving national maritime human resource development objectives.

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