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Basic Personality Patterns of Seamen and Their Life Companions in the Light of Social and Professional Conditions

Summary

The author deals with basic personality patterns of merchant seamen and their life companions. This article constitutes an attempt to formulate a definition of a personality pattern together with a distinction between personality patterns and paragons (cultural personality superlatives). The conclusions of the above-mentioned theoretical considerations enable a description of a research problem. By using methodological approach characteristic for the grounded theory it was possible to analyze interviews with merchant seamen and their life companions. Basing on the results of empirical analysis it was possible to distinct four basic personality patterns of seamen: home-bird, globetrotter, handyman, sea-dog and two patterns of seamen's life companions: lady and house- wife.

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present a classification of personality patterns which have emerged from the research on seamen of the deep sea merchant fleet and their life companions. Interviews gathered in the course of the research constitute a database for two research projects conducted under the auspices of the Institute of Sociology of the University of Szczecin. Both research projects were supervised by Robert Woźniak and Maciej Kowalewski. The outcomes of the research which are presented in this paper fall into the category of sociological research on seamen. This relatively young sub-discipline of general sociology is also referred to as maritime sociology.¹

The profile of each personality pattern could not be complete without drawing the attention to various ways of spending spare time by seamen on board a ship and on shore as well as by their life companions while the seamen are at sea and during their stay at home. The issues covered in this paper seem to fall into the category of sociological studies called the sociology of family as well as sociology of labour.

Because the issue of personality patterns among seamen has not been discussed within the last few years in the context of maritime sociology, a study in this field seems

¹ Comp. Janiszewski L., (1985) *Socjologia morska jako nauka*, [in] *Socjologia morska*, vol.1.

to be a very useful undertaking. It ought to be pointed out that academics from scientific centres in Szczecin and Gdańsk² have significantly contributed to comprehending the peculiarity of seamen's marriages and their families. The need for maritime sociological research on social patterns within the domain of labour and family roles has for the first time been indicated by the following scholars: Ludwik Janiszewski, Bolesław Klepajczuk³ and Robert Woźniak⁴. Ludwik Janiszewski claims that in contemporary, urbanized society there are certain cultural, socio-cultural and personality principles which determine the way in which work and family life interact creating personality patterns within specific social categories⁵.

2. Theoretical aspects of the research problem

The conceptual scope of the term *pattern* requires a coherent system of definitions. Its meaning depends on the context. The most important issue as far as the research problem is concerned is separating the methods for defining patterns of behaviour. The method for classifying patterns applied for the purpose of this research is consistent with the method adopted by J. Szczepański. The method in question requires dividing behavioural patterns into a cultural ideal of personality, personality pattern of an individual and a cultural pattern⁶. *"Each permanent community imposes on its members certain patterns of muscular, emotional and mental reactions to various stimuli." In other words, behavioural patterns for various circumstances, moral principles and the sense of what is perceived as decent and what is not, as well as certain points of view and methods of thinking; all this is imposed [...] The total of these patterns determines the culture of a given community and a certain set of patterns constitutes a personality pattern characteristic for the said community. Of course this personality pattern may differ from the ideal personality pattern promoted by the group in official situations⁷.*

² A thorough study of the research problem was possible mainly due to the following research on the peculiarity of seamen families: research concerning models of partner selection by H. Mrzygłód, research on the causes of conflicts in marriages by M. Kaczmarczyk-Sowa, research on pathological phenomena by A. Nowak, research on educational problems and deviation by R.B. Woźniak and finally research on conditions for marital success by L. Janiszewski.

³ Comp. Klepajczuk B., (1990), *Relacje między rolami rodzinnymi i pracowniczymi rybaków dalekomorskich*. Uwagi metodologiczne, Roczniki Socjologii Morskiej, vol.5.

⁴ Comp. Woźniak R.B., (1987), *Problemy socjologii wychowania morskiego. Socjologiczne studium wychowania na statku morskim*, Szczecin.

⁵ Comp. Janiszewski L., (1990), *Wzajemne powiązania ról zawodowych i rodzinnych- w ujęciu dynamicznym*, [in:] Janiszewski L. (ed.), "Zeszyty Naukowe Studia Sociologica", Nr.11, Szczecin p.10.

⁶ Szczepański J., (1972) *Elementarne pojęcia socjologii*, Warszawa p. 100-101.

⁷ Ossowski S., (1967), *Córka kilku matek*, [in:] „Dzieła”, vol.3: *Z zagadnień psychologii społecznej*, Warszawa p. 50-51 [quot. in]: Jasińska- Kania A., (1991), *Socjologiczna koncepcja osobowości*, [in:] Krawczyk Z. (eds.), „Socjologia. Problemy podstawowe”, Warszawa.

Therefore personality patterns may differ from the cultural ideal of personality by being more specific and manifesting a less ceremonious character. Personality patterns may also differ from the cultural ideal in that they may be positive: displaying desirable qualities and constituting an object of aspiration, or negative: anti-patterns which display condemned and rejected patterns⁸.

In other words, the cultural personality ideal is an image devoid of negative features. It contains only those features which constitute the object of aspiration. For the community the cultural personality ideal is the embodiment of desirable and highly esteemed features. Personality pattern is a certain model of reality which comprises of both positive and negative features. The personality pattern reflects the individual as it is and not as it would like to be perceived. This means that a personality pattern remains unconscious. Similarly, the behaviour of an individual, caused by existing cultural patterns as well as systems of values and customs, is also unconscious. The personality pattern of an individual has never the same structural hierarchy as the cultural pattern on a group level⁹. The cultural pattern determines the behaviour recognized as *typical* in a given situation, i.e. behaviour approved in a given group, or to put it in other words, it is the pattern which determines the scope of permissible behaviours and behaviours efficient in a given situation. Personality patterns act thus as an element standardizing human behaviour. They facilitate reaching a consensus, understanding the behaviour of other people as well as the efficiency of mutual interaction¹⁰."

Such process of defining the concepts is called by Z. Zimny a system definition. The conceptual map for a system definition of personality pattern, which is presented below, serves for a clear definition of a research problem. *It is impossible to understand a concept without conceptually placing it in a system of superior or equal concepts. Moreover, it is also impossible to understand a concept without simultaneously placing it in a set of objects of concepts from which these concepts have been generated by means of generalization, i.e. a negative abstraction [...] it is necessary to know their location in a system of concepts on at least two levels of complexity of a concrete system, that is on at least two levels of generalization and accuracy of concrete concepts and moreover on a level of concrete elements which belong to a set of defined concepts¹¹.*

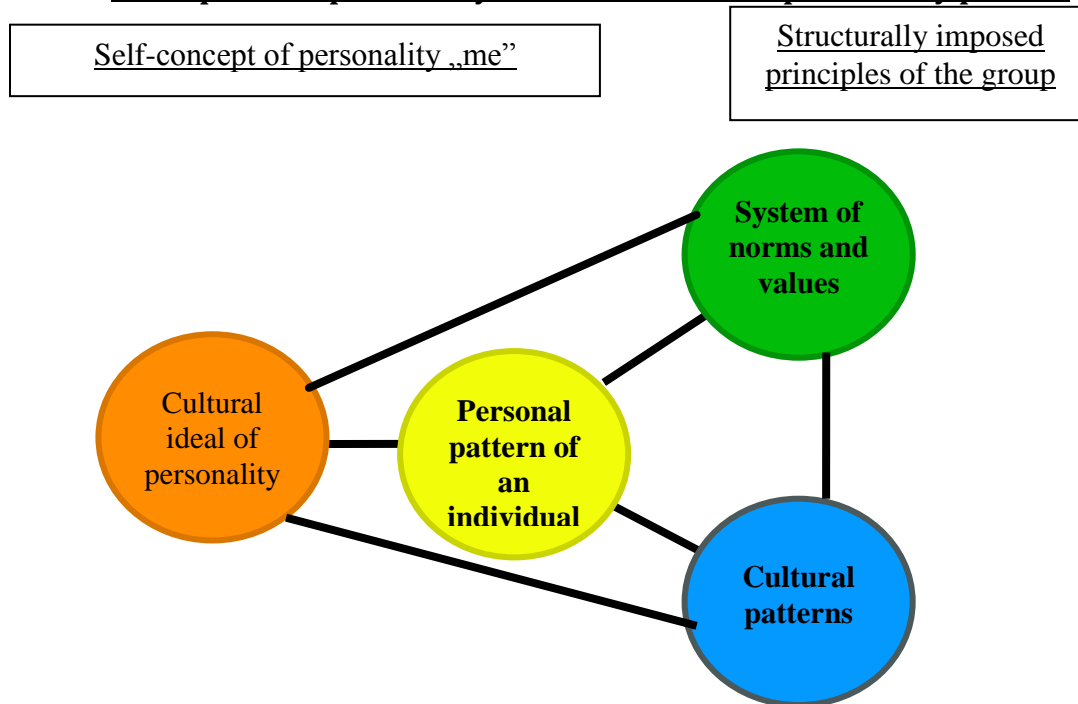
⁸ Ibidem. p. 93.

⁹ Comp. Szmatka J., (1998), *Próba strukturalnej koncepcji malej grupy społecznej*, in: Machaj I. (ed.), "Małe struktury społeczne", Lublin p. 45.

¹⁰ Op. cit. Szczepański J., p.100-101.

¹¹ Zimny Z. (2000), *Metodologia badań społecznych*, Częstochowa, p.205 and 208.

Conceptual map for the system definition of a personality pattern



Source: Own study on the basis of the definition by J. Szczepański(1972).

3. The methodology and organization of the research

Scientific approach in empirical research requires the application of specific rules in the process of gaining data. Moreover, the analysis of the gathered data can not bear any traits of randomness. The analysis has to be conducted according to principles governing scientific research and not according to a subjective predilection of the

researcher. Due to the fact that the research has been carried out according to methodology of the grounded theory, formulating preliminary hypothesis and conceptualization of variables has been omitted.

According to J.Creswell the researcher ought to begin the research with the so called clear mind, that is without any theories or hypotheses. All conceptual categories and future theories ought to stem out of continuous analysis of data. Only when the researcher gathers enough data to observe the phenomena and the mechanisms behind them, may he compare the results with the theories existing in the literature. Such an approach prevents the researcher from modifying the grounded theory by making use of points of views found in other grounded theories¹².

The grounded theory seems to be the most adequate research method for the task. In principle, grounded theory constitutes an attempt to derive a theory from analyzed patterns and topics of common categories revealed in empirical data¹³. The method chosen for the research seems appropriate for the task. This choice of method is supported by the fact that for the first time it has been fully applied in research concerning the patterns of organizational behaviours at work in relation to dying patients¹⁴.

This research uses the following techniques of gathering data: informal interview, categorized interview. With a general concept of the aim of the research in mind, it was possible to begin the first stage of gathering data. During this stage a total number of 15 standardized interviews has been conducted. These interviews have given rise to the process of generating categories and hypotheses. During the second stage of collecting data additional 20 informal interviews with the seamen and their life companions have been made in order to confirm or reject preliminary assumptions concerning personality patterns. After each informal interview a so called memo (a note) has been made so as to retain any spontaneous conclusions to which the researcher arrived. Informal interviews have proved to be an effective tool as they have provided a few very interesting pieces of information, for example that seamen and their life companions are quite willing to discuss issues concerning sexuality.

¹² Comp. Glaser B.G., Holton J., (2004), Remodeling Grounded Theory, [in]:The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal, vol.4, no.1.

¹³ Babbie E., (2007), *Badanie społeczne w praktyce*, Warszawa, p. 318-319.

¹⁴ Comp. Konecki K., (2000), *Studia z metodologii badań jakościowych. Teoria ugruntowana*, Warszawa.

The data for the research were gathered between December 2007 and January 2008. It is also worth mentioning that the peculiar character of the profession made it difficult to access the respondents. Moreover, the stage of collecting data was even more difficult due to the fact during the research the respondents had to leave for work for the time span between 3 and 10 months. Bearing in mind all the above mentioned difficulties and marine family traditions of the researcher, the *snowball method* proved to be the most adequate means of gathering data. In the course of the research it turned out that the method chosen for the project is most effective when it involves third parties (seamen's friends and members of seamen's families) in the search for the respondents. The engagement of third parties was necessary due to the fact that seamen usually do not socialize with one another when being on shore.

4. Characteristic of sample

A total number of 40 respondents took part in the research. The sample consisted of 25 seamen and 15 seamen's life companions (13 wives and 2 fiancées). Personality patterns presented below have not been classified according to the gender as the patterns did not differ significantly. The group of respondents consisted of 9 ordinary seamen, 12 officers (mainly 1st and 2nd officers) and 4 captains. All ordinary seamen had secondary vocational education, while officers and captains graduated from Maritime University of Szczecin.

The age of respondents ranged from 23 to 74 years. Job seniority among respondents ranged from 1 to 35 years. The majority of seamen was married (22 married seamen, 2 bachelors and 1 divorced). Job seniority among ordinary sailors ranged from 1 to 25 years, the same indicator for officers ranged from 4 to 25 years and for captains from 30 to 35 years.

Job seniority by rank

<i>Job seniority</i>	<i>Ordinary seamen</i>	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Captains</i>	<i>Total:</i>
1-5 years	3	2	-	5
6-10 years	3	1	-	4
11-15 years	1	2	-	3
16-20 years	1	4	-	5
21-25 years	1	3	-	4
26-30 years	-	-	2	2
31-35 years	-	-	2	2
Total:	9	12	4	25

Source: Own study.

The majority of seamen, 6 out of 19, signed on as crew members on board of foreign charters. All crew members hired by Polish charters had secondary vocational education. The most popular duration of cruises among the research group was between 4 and 6 months. Most of the seamen have chosen this profession due to high earnings. Such factors as passion for the sea and the originality of the profession did not play a significant role in the decision-making process. Only 7 out of 25 respondents declared marine traditions among male members of their families, while no such indications were made as far as the female members of the families were concerned. Younger seamen share the view that their profession gives them an opportunity to become financially independent and take a home loan within a relatively short period of time. Young seamen mentioned also during the interviews that the prestige of maritime academy or university influenced their choice of studies for future professional career.

The difference in the duration of relationships among seamen and their life companions did not exceed 5 years. Seamen's life companions, who constituted the research group, were in general 2 years younger than their husbands or partners. Only two of the seamen's life companions had a higher education. It seems also very important that the majority of seamen's life companions were unemployed at the time of the research.

5. Classification of the seamen's personality patterns

The analysis of empirical data resulted in isolating 4 basic personality patterns of seamen. It should be pointed out that this is a model typology and that personality patterns may overlap and mix in random configurations.

The following are personality patterns which emerged in the course of the analysis: home-bird, globetrotter, handyman and sea-dog. The terminology chosen for each personality pattern is not strictly scientific. The terminology used in this typology is metaphorical and refers to respondents' comments about themselves.

"Home-bird" personality pattern¹⁵

Seamen who fall into this category usually manifest a negative attitude towards their own profession. "Home-birds" seamen state that if they had the chance they would

¹⁵ Author used this phrase trying to clarify the correct translation of a Polish word „domator”

definitely choose a different well-paid job on shore. What is especially bothering home-bird seamen is the sense of lost moments with their families. Seamen who fall into this category are most willing to take part in their children's education by helping them mainly in the sciences such as Maths, Physics, Mechanics or IT. They pay attention to family meals and ceremonies. During their stay at home the whole family has to follow their rules. "Home-birds" claim that they would definitely advise their sons against the profession of seamen. Seamen also present a negative attitude towards their partners' professions as they would rather see their companions spend more time with them while they are at home.

*„My husband does not like sightseeing. He says that there are seamen who, in fact, like sightseeing. They devote their spare time to sightseeing; if their watch ends they go sightseeing. My husband does not like sightseeing, he prefers to read books. Once in a while I try to encourage him to go sightseeing if there is an opportunity and if he visits such places which are a definite must-see. But my husband still doesn't like sightseeing.”
(seamen's wife, 52 years)*

"To tell the truth I don't want to work at sea for all my life though I will probably have to. It is a difficult job to do which uses you up both mentally and physically, but above all I just can't lead a normal family life [...] so how can I be a good father when half a year I spend at sea?" (chief engineer,, 27 years old)

*"Every person and especially a seaman ought to have a home with a family to come back to. It's like a seaman who is single and returns home, spends his stay at home as if he still was on board. Such a person can't tear away from his job. Stay at home actually doesn't change anything. Being at sea and alone at home, it's all the same."
(chief engineer, 57 years old)*

"The Globetrotter" personality pattern¹⁶

This personality pattern was also often referred to as a traveller or fidget. Persons who display features typical for the Globetrotter personality pattern have chosen the profession of seaman mainly because of their own passion for the sea and such an environment. This personality pattern seems to be gradually disappearing due to shorter and shorter time span intended for loading and reloading the cargo as well as reductions in the number of crew. All this results in more duties for seaman. Nevertheless, this personality pattern still seems to be popular among beginners as well as experienced seamen. The Globetrotter can not stay in one place for long. Leading life at one's fireside is like a prison for a Globetrotter. He would happily get away from home

¹⁶ Author used this phrase trying to clarify the correct translation of a Polish word *obieżyświat*

just to take part in social meetings and trips. He likes to tell everybody stories concerning his adventures.

"I wanted to work at sea; the profession itself seemed to me very original [...] with its unique character: for me, each new contract is like a new job. I don't like to work in one place. I like to make changes, even very often. Working at sea is a real challenge for me". (seaman, 27 years old)

"My husband has a soul of a traveller: I've been to that place, but I would like to go there again while I haven't been to that place yet, but I would definitely like to visit that place, so in short the desire for travelling is insatiable." (seaman's wife, 52 years old)

"Well, I am sure that a typical citizen of Szczecin, let's call him Mr Kowalski for example, can afford to go for a trip to Spain, Greece or Egypt, but surely [...] he couldn't have got to know, he can't even get to know as many cultures as I managed." (seaman, 28 years old)

"I wouldn't trade this profession for any other. Of course, there are many pros and cons of this job [...] tough it's getting worse because the ships dock for shorter and shorter period of time and there are fewer opportunities [...] to visit the ports, I would say. There were times when ships would dock even as for two weeks. There used to be a lot of spare time for sightseeing and thanks to that I have already visited quite a lot of places and I've seen a lot, so I guess it's a good profession." (chief engineer, 57 years old)

„I guess that I'm not fully satisfied with my job. I would rather have a job on shore, but you know you can't have everything. I won't even deny that at the beginning it was some sort of fascination, let's say a cool profession, an adventure [...] but with time, visiting other countries just stops being interesting and than again, with time it even gets boring. Besides, I don't have so much time." (deck-officer, 36 years old)

"HANDYMAN" personality pattern¹⁷

This personality pattern was especially popular before 1989. Men who fell into this category usually had a technical education which, in times when there were no necessary materials on the market, allowed them to undertake various repair and redecoration tasks at home. Being a handyman did not necessary mean introduced alterations were perfect. These changes were often unfinished or unskilfully finished projects. The skill of making repairs with one's own resources in times when it was extremely difficult to buy anything constituted a very attractive model of masculinity for women. Of course, such factors as high incomes and access to the so called commodities in short supply worked to the advantage of this personality pattern. These rare

¹⁷ Author used this phrase trying to clarify the correct translation of a Polish word *złota rączka*.

commodities were available only in chain stores called Baltona and Pewex where one could pay in foreign currency, a currency in which seamen were paid. Nowadays, this personality pattern is no longer so attractive.

"I can always count on him, as a wife [...] anything I ask him, he is able to do it. Even if it's impossible, he is able to do it. I wish that my Aśka had a husband like that." (seaman's wife, 52 years old)

"When I am on shore then it's mainly the DIY [...] I like to tamper in the house, redecoration works, I like carpentry. What else? Well, sport in general. Like every man I like watching matches." (seaman, 28 years old)

„ [...] when I come home, there are so many manly things to do: you have to repair a doorknob, sometimes a socket, while at other times something comes off, you have to screw something in. There are so many things to do at home [...] so I guess my wife doesn't see me sitting in my slippers and watching TV." (seaman, 45 years old)

"He is stubborn, a real workaholic. He is a pedant, but it is connected with his profession. At home everything has to be just like on the ship. He believes that if he doesn't do the job himself, it won't be done properly." (seaman's wife, 58 years old)

"SEA DOG" personality pattern¹⁸

Seamen with this personality pattern often point out that in order to be a real seaman one has to be marked with suitable personality traits. A Sea-Dog claims that he is not afraid of water or he believes that the risk of an accident is relatively low. He treats his job as some kind of a challenge for himself; he likes to see how he deals in difficult conditions. He likes working in a male environment; he is a typical tough guy both at work and at home. A Sea Dog is a real authority for his family. He supports his family and gives his family a sense of security. This type of personality pattern often feels indignant at the thought of spreading the romantic model of a seaman as a globetrotter who visits exotic countries. This image does not tone in with his own vision of the profession. He believes that only a *real man* can be a seaman.

"My husband is a very determined man and he knew that this is what he wants to do in his life and he didn't give up." (seaman's wife, 33 years old)

"I wasn't bothered with storm or other stress situations." (seaman, 60 years old)

¹⁸ Author used this phrase trying to clarify the correct translation of a Polish word *wilk morski*.

"The profession of seaman is [...] well unfortunately with all the work to be done and the fatigue and the mental make-up [...] there are some people with not strong enough mentality and on top of that they just aren't suitable for the job. OK, so the man graduated from school and wants to be a seaman [...] and I know many people like that, who graduated from Marine Academies, who were officers and then they had to give up the job because they felt seasick [...] there was a storm and suddenly the man was as if excluded, but it was his duty as an officer to be on the bridge and to steer the vessel [...] they just can't do that [...]. For those men the lone separation, I don't even mention their girlfriends, maybe it's more difficult for them to go through all this. I remember when a friend of mine had to go to work just month after he got married. It was a complete disaster for him." (seaman, 50 years old)

"It all depends on the mental make-up, that's why we have to undergo some sort of special examinations, it's basically the same examination as some pilots have to undergo [...] you have to be predisposed to do this kind of job." (seaman, 50 years old).

*"If you didn't like it, well unfortunately, such periods of separation would be difficult to deal with, but you can get used to it. " If you like such a male environment, such a tough life."
(seaman, 28 years old)*

6. Classification of the seamen's life companions personality patterns

The analysis of gathered data has supplied evidence which suggest that there are certain basic features shared by every seaman's life companion. Seamen themselves pay special attention to three most important features: faithfulness, thrift/ resourcefulness, ability to reach a compromise/being non-quarrelsome. What is also very important for seamen is their partner's acceptance of peculiarity of the profession. It does not necessarily mean that women do not try to convince their husbands to resign from this profession.

The analysis of empirical data has shown that a feature of personality shared by all personality patterns among seamen is jealousy for their women. This jealousy manifests itself in that very often women who stay in relationships with seamen are unemployed and as if isolated from the society by staying at home. Referring to P.Bourdieu it possible to reach a conclusion that jealousy among seamen is a typical manifestation of fear of losing one's honour. P. Bourdieu claims that honour is the element which controls one's thoughts and actions. Honour is also responsible for controlling operations of logical necessity which has been imposed as a principle or as an outcome of logical calculation. A man is a prisoner and a victim of dominating cultural patterns which assume that a man has to fulfil certain obligations such as providing for financial resources for the family. Masculinity is also the ability to reproduce and pass

the genes what is of course impossible while at sea. Seamen while being at sea believe that they do not fulfil their duties imposed on them by their masculinity. Seamen's life companions, who of course stay on shore, are under constant pressure as their husbands, jealous and afraid of losing their manly honour, socially isolate their wives. Seamen often disapprove of intense social contacts with friends and even relatives. Seamen require from their wives ability to run the symbolic capital, i.e. a woman has to take care of both the internal and external image of the family. When seamen's women lead an active social life they may be suspected by their husbands, family or even their neighbours of being unfaithful¹⁹.

The research revealed two main strategies of spending spare time by seamen's life companions. The first strategy depicts a situation when a seaman returns home and the woman stays at home and breaks this routine only when invited to family meetings or to a friends' house. However, when the husband is away, the woman starts renewing her old friendships from school times and starts going to the cinema, theatre and restaurants. The second strategy is a complete contradiction of the first one. When the husband returns home social life livens up and stays very intensive until the seaman leaves for work at sea. During the period of separation the wife looks after the house or garden, she reads books and watches TV. Below there is a short description of two prevailing personality patterns of seamen's life companions:

"HOUSE WIFE" personality pattern²⁰

This personality pattern may also be referred to as a home-bird type. She has accepted her role as a wife of a seaman and believes that her life is all about looking after the house. Usually women who fall into this personality pattern do not work as they devote all their time to bringing up children. When the children are old enough, the woman begins to feel lonely and she tries to find employment in order to break the monotony of her personal life. However, sometimes husbands forbid their wives to work for, as they believe, too low wages. She is the embodiment of resourcefulness and thrift, i.e. the features which are highly esteemed by seamen.

"My husband is the breadwinner so he ought to earn enough for his woman to look after the house [...] to be honest I am such a type of woman who is totally dependant on her husband. I like looking after the house [...] my job is to wisely spend money which my husband earned [...] it's true that he is the breadwinner, but it's also true that in general it

¹⁹ Comp. Bourdieu P., (1998), *La domination masculine*, Editions du Seuil, Paris.

²⁰ Author used this phrase trying to clarify the correct translation of a Polish word *gospodyni domowa*.

is me who looks after everything else:–from building the house, bringing up children, doing the laundry, tidying, cooking, mending a broken tap to looking after the lawn and the flowers in front of the house [...] I could go on enumerating my duties.”
(seaman's wife, 52 years old)

“I look after the garden [...] but once or twice a year I go for a trip [...] such 4 or 5-day trips [...] but when my husband is away [...] I stay at home unless there is a need to visit the family or simply go shopping (seaman's wife, 33 years old)

„No, currently I am not working professionally. I haven't worked professionally since I gave birth to our first son [...] I didn't think it's necessary, my husband had a well-paid job and the children were small, besides I had a lot of responsibilities so I just had to be mum and dad in one person.” (seaman's wife, 52 years old)

“LADY” personality pattern²¹

This personality pattern has undergone significant changes during the last twenty-five years. This personality pattern used to be associated mainly with women who stood above dull society by wearing fashionable and colourful clothes made of a popular in the 70's and the 80's fabric called crimplene. Seamen's partners could do their shopping by paying in the so called baltona vouchers. The status of a seaman's wife has significantly diminished together with a fall in prestige of the profession of seaman which began after the transformations in Poland. Even now earnings of seamen, especially the well-qualified seamen who are employed by foreign charters, allow them and their families to lead a prosperous life. A contemporary seaman's wife is eager to work professionally. She tries to lead a life of a woman whose husband does not work at the sea. Definitely she wants to distinct herself from the stereotype of a seaman's wife as a typical "house wife".

“In our house we believe in equal rights for both men and women [...] we take turns when it comes to cooking meals. Whoever is at home and has got some spare time does the cooking. My husband takes care of small repairs in the house (when he comes back there is always a list of things to be repaired). I do the laundry and the ironing. We do the shopping together. The washing machine does the washing up so everybody cleans after himself.”
(seaman's wife, 45 years old)

“At the weekends when I have got some more spare time I like to go to the cinema or to the theatre. Recently, together with my sister, I more often go out to the philharmonic [...] sometimes I go out with my friends to a café or a wine bar. When my husband returns, we go out together.” (seaman's wife, 45 years old)

²¹ Author used this phrase trying to clarify the correct translation of a Polish word *marynarzowa*.

“When my husband is absent I travel. I have been to Paris and I have visited Bornholm. I also visit Polish mountains. At the moment we are also planning a trip. Sightseeing, visiting places that are worth seeing, just spending spare time. [...] Sometimes we go to the city centre, to Szczecin, we go to a café and we just spend together some time. If he arrives in Szczecin or Gdańsk I come to see him and than we go out.” (seaman’s wife, 52 years old)

7. Conclusions

The last part of this paper contains some general remarks concerning personality patterns of seaman and their life companions. The classification of personality patterns presented in this paper constitutes a model division. Individual patterns may overlap and create any kind of configuration. Quoting after A. Jasińska-Kania it should be pointed out that *“not all repeating patterns of behaviour are an expression of permanent features of character. (...) They are only one of many factors determining our actions. Other factors influencing our behaviour are: current economic-political and cultural situation, requirements and opportunities created by direct social situation, constantly changing interests, qualifications and moods of an individual, etc.”²²*

The outcomes of this analysis constitute a basis for a better comprehension of personality patterns of both seamen and their life companions. Moreover, the data presented in this paper constitute an attempt to arrange features which motivate seaman and allow them to work in this peculiar profession as well as features which allow seamen’s partners to accept the absence of their men for a better part of the year. The author of this paper is aware of the fact that the classification presented in this paper does not exhaust the subject. The research problem of this paper is a broad issue which requires more research on the motives for working on a ship, social consequences caused by working in marine environment and the seamen's attitude towards the physical and mental risks in their work.

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²² Op. cit. Jasińska-Kania A., (1991).

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