



Seafarers Welfare in Chinese Ports

(SWiC) Project Report

for the ITF Seafarers' Trust

Minghua Zhao, Gaochao He, Pengfei Zhang

Solent University UK

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INTRODUCTION

Compared with workers in land-based industries, seafaring has unique characteristics. The vessel in commercial shipping is not only seafarers' workplace, but also the place where they live, sleep and socialise. After the working day is over, seafarers cannot go home but continue to stay on board. Even when the ship is in port, seafarers have very limited opportunities to communicate with the outside world. Sometimes, for long periods, they cannot contact their families (Zhang, 2016).

In addition, the seafarer's work on board is very complex, lengthy and highly stressful. A merchant ship is an isolated place and the seafarers on board must be self-sufficient and able to improvise. Despite there being a regular work-and-rest regime on board, when the ship departs or arrives at a port, or if the ship is involved in an emergency situation, all the crew will be called upon and rest periods will be interrupted. In addition, the seafarer has to deal with hazardous cargoes and severe weather. These special factors impose a particularly difficult workload on seafarers, and the quality of seafarers' labour may be compromised by the need to be available at all times (*ibid.*). These factors lead seafarers to become nervous and mentally stressed and make their access to port-based welfare services (PBWS) important for their welfare and well-being, and their basic needs and entitlements. Even a short period of rest on the land is of great importance for seafarers' health and well-being and, hence, has significant implications for the safety of life and property at sea.

The importance of shore leave and PBWS and facilities for seafarers have been widely acknowledged by the maritime industry and appropriate requirements have been included in Part Four of Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC 2006). According to the Convention, as a port State, each Member shall promote the development of welfare facilities in designated ports and provide seafarers visiting its ports with access to adequate welfare facilities and services. China is the largest port State and seafarer-supplying State. China is also a Member State of MLC 2006. Providing visiting seafarers with decent welfare services is of great significance for visiting seafarers from all over the world, including those from China.

This research report presents the key findings of our research project "Seafarers Welfare in Chinese Ports (SWiC Project)". The research was carried out by the China Centre (Maritime) (CCM) at the Warsash School of Maritime Science and Engineering, Southampton's Solent University (UK), between April 2017 and March 2018. The project was supported with a generous grant from the ITF Seafarers Trust and endorsed by the Nautilus International (NI) and by the International Seafarers Welfare Assistance Network (ISWAN) which also includes the Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB).

This report consists of four parts. Part I focuses on the background of the study, the objectives of the research and the research methods employed for the primary data collection. Part II reports key findings from the institutional stakeholders which include the Chinese government, the trade unions and PBWS under the trade unions' auspice. Part III provides a space for seafarers' voices to be heard – seafarers' voices concerning their needs

for PBWS and their experiences in Chinese ports. Part IV presents the conclusion for the report and its recommendations.

PART I: BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

1. Background

As noted above, PBWS for seafarers are vital to their health and wellbeing and have important implications for the safety of life and property at sea. Essentially, the PBWS discussed in this report include ship visits, provision of transport, access to internet, Wi-Fi and other means of communication, shopping, medical treatment, facilities for relaxation, leisure, and money exchange when seafarers and their ships call at ports (Oldenburg *et al*, 2010; Davies and Parfett, 1998).

The MLC2006 states that “(E)very seafarer has the right to health protection, medical care, welfare measures and other forms of social protection.” Regulation 4.4 of this Convention ‘Access to Shore-Based Welfare Services’ sets out mandatory requirements and guidance “to ensure that seafarers working on board a ship have access to shore-based facilities and services to secure their health and well-being” (ILO, 2006).

China has gained a dominant role on the international maritime scene in the 21st century. The country has become the second largest economy in the world and is one of the main drivers of global trade and international commerce. According to UNCTAD *Review of Maritime Transport 2015*, seven of the top ten container ports in the world are located in China. In 2014, these seven ports alone had a throughput of 151.3 million TEUs, amounting to nearly 70% of the total TEUs processed at the world top ten ports (UNCTAD, 2015). In 2013, the country’s Customs Report noted that nearly half million (487,190) ocean ships called at Chinese ports in 2012, suggesting that as many as 10 million person-time visits by seafarers on board of these vessels had taken place in this year.

China’s growing prominence, together with its ratification of the International Labour Organisation’s MLC2006 in 2016, has created a timely opportunity to promote the importance of providing accessible, quality welfare services and facilities for the large number of seafarers that visit the Chinese ports each year.

Traditionally, seafarers’ centres have been main providers of the PBWS for ocean-going seafarers throughout the world. In the West, these centres are run primarily by faith institutions, such as Christian seafarers’ missions, as well as by trade unions, governments and NGOs. There are now over 400 such “western style” seafarers’ centres around the world. Two of them are in Hong Kong. There are, however, none on the Chinese mainland (ISWAN, 2018). Although many of these centres are facing challenges due to structural changes in the world shipping industry and to the advancement of technology aboard and ashore, they and their infrastructure are still there, representing an opportunity for change and adjustment. These centres have not abandoned or terminated their role as the industry’s major PBWS provider for seafarers.

In China, it is known that the International Seafarers Clubs (ISC, *haiyuan julebu* 海员俱乐部), set up in major port cities under the planned economy in the 1950s, were intended to showcase the “Socialist New China” for visiting “foreign seafarers”, many from the “Capitalist western economies”. It is also known that these ISCs provided reasonable PBWS for “hundreds upon thousands” of international seafarers when their vessels called at China’s sea ports, especially in the 1980s (Yu, 1986). In the last 20 years or so, it appears, however, that the number of ISCs has dwindled in Chinese ports, with many apparently in the process of vanishing or have, indeed, vanished.

We wondered why China, whilst rising as an economic power with an ambitious maritime dream for a strong “Silk Road at Sea”, has not presented itself as a positive and effective provider of PBWS for seafarers on the ships that carry most of its international trade in and out of its ports, to and from the seas and oceans. In our study, we investigated situation of seafarers’ PBWS in China in the 21st Century. We wanted to discover what visiting seafarers wanted and needed when they called with their ships at Chinese ports. We also wanted to discover how this compared with their experience. Anecdotal accounts of seafarers’ difficulties in seeking welfare provisions at some Chinese ports have been reported in the media. There has been, however, little scientifically- generated evidence on how PBWS has fared in Chinese ports.

2. Objectives

The SWiC Project aimed to address the following four dimensions of seafarers’ welfare in Chinese ports today:

- What has happened to the International Seafarers Clubs that were traditionally the key institutional PBWS providers in Chinese ports? What is the main context for this change?
- What are the positions of the key institutional stakeholders concerning PBWS in China?
- What are visiting seafarers’ welfare demands and experiences in Chinese ports?
- What are the ways forward for the improvement of the PBWS under the MLC2006 in China?

The MLC 2006 states that a seafarer is any person who is employed or engaged or works in any capacity on board a ship and whose normal place of work is on a ship (MLC2006). The focus of this study are seafarers who are engaged in international shipping in the cargo sector and who have visited Chinese ports with their ships in the last three years, 2015-2017.

3. Methods

The SWiC project took a mixed-method approach with primary and secondary data gathered from three key sources:

- A comprehensive literature review of existing scholarship and other relevant knowledge available in the public domain
- A questionnaire survey of 300 seafarers in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Hamburg and Southampton

- 100 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in China and also in Germany, Norway, Romania and the UK. These stakeholders included government officials, ship owners and shipping and crewing managers, trade union leaders, managers of seafarers' centres and, most importantly, the seafarers themselves

In total, this study gathered information from 18 ports and/or cities, including 11 on the Chinese mainland, two in Hong Kong and four in other countries, as shown in the following table.

Table 1. Ports and cities included for the SWiC study, 2017-2018

| No | Country | City/Port | Main Activities & Institutions Visited |
|----|---------|-------------|---|
| 1 | China | Dalian | Shipping companies, maritime lawyers, market-oriented facilities for visiting seafarers such as bars and restaurants |
| 2 | | Qingdao | ISC Qingdao |
| 3 | | Yantai | ISC Yantai |
| 4 | | Beijing | All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) |
| 5 | | Taicang | ISC Taicang |
| 6 | | Shanghai | Bars for seafarers at Waigaoqiao Port; COSCO (Shanghai) and 3 other shipping companies; 1 shipping yard; Pudong government etc. |
| 7 | | Ningbo | China Ports Museum; MSA; maritime court; ISC site; ship agents |
| 8 | | Xiamen | ISC (Xiamen); Seafarers Services Centre, ship agents, Marine College of Jimei University, MSA; |
| 9 | | Shenzhen | ISC (Shenzhen) shipping companies, government agencies |
| 10 | | Zhanjiang | ISC (Zhanjiang), shipping companies, government agencies |
| 11 | | Huangpu | ISC, shipping companies, government agencies |
| 12 | | Guangzhou | ISC, shipping companies, government agencies, Guangzhou Maritime University |
| 13 | | Shantou | ISC, shipping companies, government agencies |
| 14 | | Hong Kong | Mariners' Club/Mission to Seafarers; ITF Office (HK); |
| 15 | Germany | Hamburg | Altona Seamen's Mission Hotel: questionnaire survey and interviews |
| 16 | UK | Southampton | Container Port: Oil Terminal in Fowley |
| 17 | Romania | Constanza | Constanza Seafarers' Centre |
| 18 | Norway | Bergen | Bergen International Seamen's Centre |

SPSS was utilised for analysis of the survey data. Information derived from the interviews was used to gain greater insights and a deeper understanding of seafarers' welfare needs and their experiences at Chinese ports. We purposely enlarged the Chinese sample in order to make a comparative study of the needs and experiences of those visiting Chinese ports:

Chinese seafarers, who presumably have homeland advantages, compared to seafarers from other parts of world. We also included seafarer with a spread of different ranks.

PART II: FINDINGS FROM INSTITUTIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

This part of the report presents findings from the institutional stakeholders we contacted for the study. These stakeholders include the Chinese State, trade unions and the shipping industry. We first review the development of PBWS and facilities in Chinese ports, highlighting the role of ISCs, which has been the official PBWS provider in China since the 1950s and operates under the auspice of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU). We then critically review the development of policy for meeting seafarers' welfare before turning to consideration of the stakeholders' positions towards the PBWS for visiting seafarers in Chinese ports.

1. PBWS for seafarers in China

1.1. The earliest efforts of western Christian missions

In China, the earliest institutions that provided PBWS for seafarers engaged in international trade began in the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), before the Opium War (1839–1842). The British Seamen's Hospital Society was set up by a group of British merchants and operated, briefly (1836-1838), on a ship in Guangzhou, which was the largest and most important port city open to international trade in China at the time. This was followed by the creation, also in Guangzhou, of the Seamen's Friends Association (China) in 1839 by a group of American merchants. Both of these were set up as charity organisations with a shared mission: to provide shore-based welfare services to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, when trading ships called at Guangzhou Port. The British Seamen's Hospital Society never won trust from the Chinese authorities and was abolished after just 18 months' operation. The Seamen's Friends Association also had a very short life, disappearing from view after the outbreak of the First Opium War in 1839 (Zhang, 2011).

Similar initiatives were also undertaken in Shanghai, also by Christian missions, during the Second Opium War (1856-1860). In 1860, Shanghai Seamen's Church (海员布道会) was set up and began delivering welfare services "to visiting seafarers of all nationalities". The missions purchased a second-hand barque to provide ship visits at the port area. At the same time, they also purchased a piece of land of 15 Chinese *mu* in the city, where they built a church, a hospital and a cemetery, all free of charge for visiting seafarers (PPY, 2015).

It is interesting to note that during the same period, in the early/mid 19thC, the Christian missions began to set up seafarers' centres in the west. These centers flourished in later years in Europe, North America and many other parts of the world (Kverndal, 1986; MoS, 2018). In China, the mission-led PBWS movement was, unfortunately, unsuccessful. It never managed to find a foothold in Chinese mainland ports. Some positive moves, however, have been recently reported, indicating that the Christian missions and other related societies are still interested in establishing a presence in Chinese ports (Sailors' Society, 2018).

At present, little information is available on PBWS for visiting seafarers in China in the Republic Period, 1912-1949.

1.2. International Seafarers Clubs since the 1950s

Start up

In 1949, the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established. From the 1950s until the late 1970s and early 1980s, under the planned economy, China adopted a proactive approach in providing PBWS for visiting seafarers, especially for international ones, as part of its foreign policy. The State began a strategic development of ISCs in China's major port cities. These ISCs usually occupied grand buildings at prominent locations at the city's water front, attracting the attention of seafarers and providing easy access for trading ships and seafarers.

Institutionally, these ISCs were, and still are, owned and administered by the local trade unions under the auspices of the ACFTU. Under the planned economy and until the late 1980s, the ISCs were well funded by the government (via the ACFTU).

In practice, the Chinese ISCs operated similarly to those in the West. They provided free transport, accommodation, medicine, social and recreational opportunities, such as parties at the clubs and sightseeing tours around the city.

Heyday

With the strong support from the State, the ISCs had adequate resources for providing PBWS for visiting seafarers for over three decades, from the 1950s to the 1980s/1990s. The ten years between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s are considered to be the Club's heyday. No systematic data is available to show exactly how many seafarers received the PBWS from China's ISCs during this period, but the number must be substantial. For instance, in 1985, the Shanghai ISC was reported to have provided PBWS for "over 100,000 person/times in just one year" and the cinema operated by the Shanghai ISC "had shown films to more than 30,000 international seafarers' during the same period" (Yu, 1986).

Impact of China's economic reforms

Economic reforms since the early 1980s have fundamentally changed China's social-economic landscape, including that of shipping. With the reduction, or in many cases entire withdrawal, of the funding support by the State and with increasing marketization, Chinese ISCs have been struggling to survive since the late 1990s. Most of the ISCs, with the loss of Government funding, have had to survive in the emerging market economy by diversifying their sources of income. Unprofitable ISCs have closed down. China used to have over 30 ISCs. One recent ACFTU report states that "(Of all the ISCs) 15 deliver regular reports concerning their activities to the ACFTU" (Tommasi, 2018). This suggests that about half of the ISCs no longer exist.

In reality, most ISCs in China have ceased to be PBWS providers for seafarers. To our best knowledge, at the end of 2017, only seven ISCs were listed on the website run by the Chinese Seamen and Construction Workers Union (CSCW) under the auspices of the ACFTU; there has been no update of these pages since 2005. In “The ISC Activities” field, the latest report is dated 2013 and this activity reported had little to do with seafarers. In Shanghai, the ISC no longer exists; the building still stands prominently at the waterfront of the Huangpu River but is now a five-star hotel, as shown in Fig.s 1a and 1b.

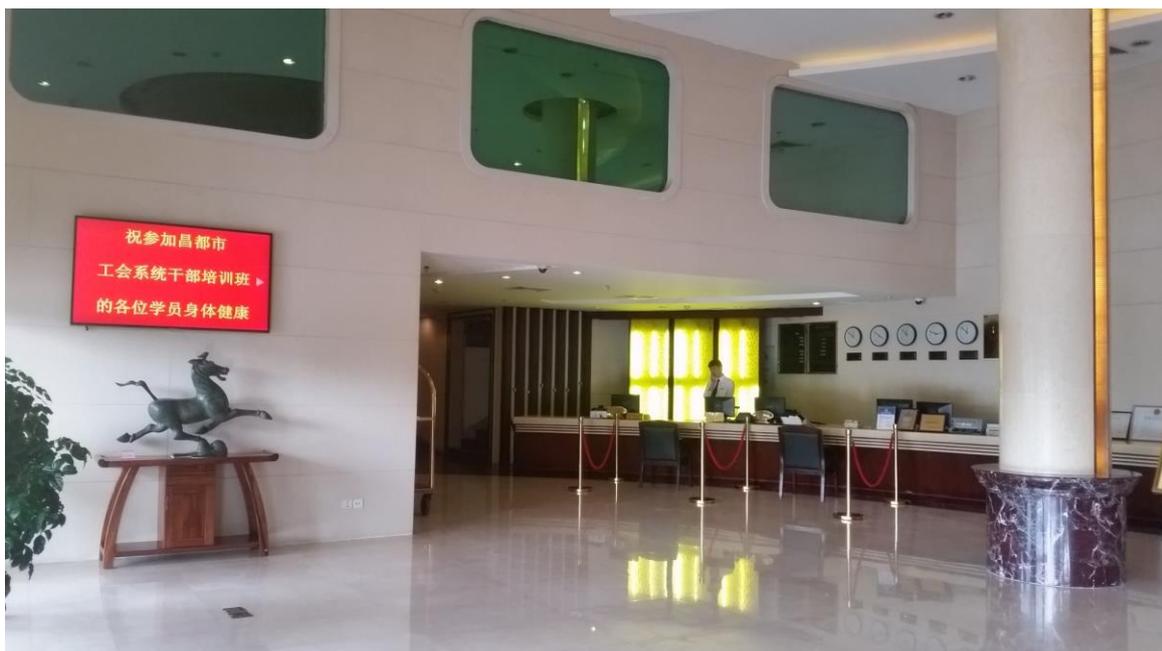
Fig.s. 1a, 1b. Old site of the ISC in Shanghai, now a 5-start hotel, 2018



Source: SWiC Photo Bank 2018.

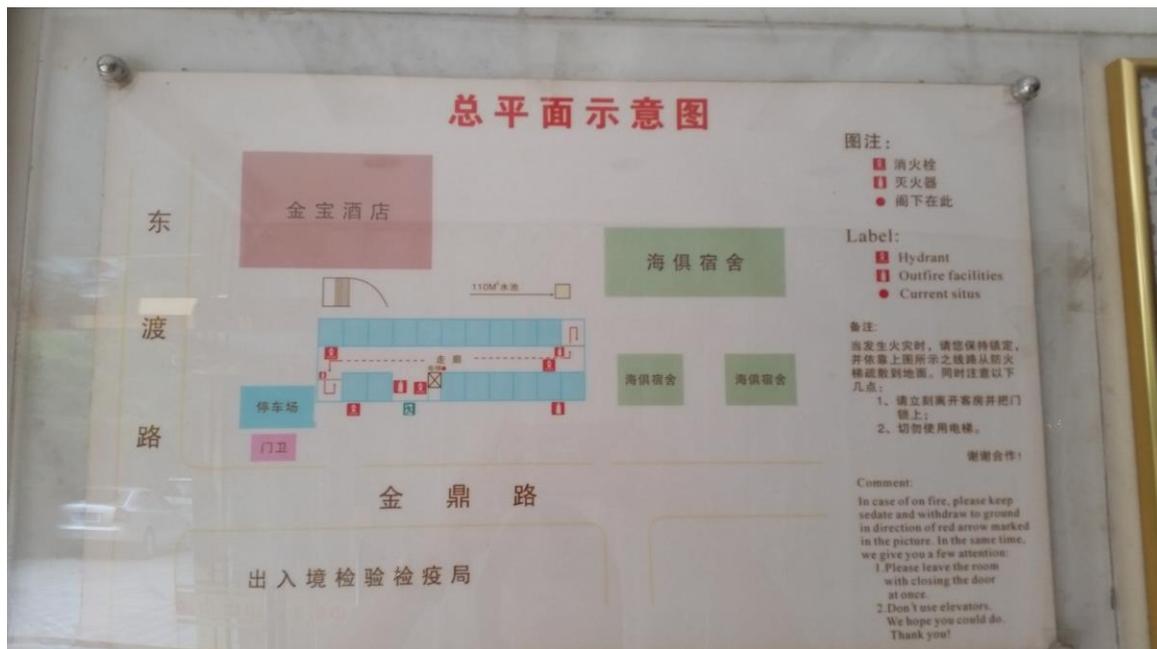
In Xiamen, the ISC’s site has largely been turned over for commercial use, with the main building being a five star hotel, open to the public. The ISC still has, however, offices at the site and continues its PBWS operation with a few sporadic ship visits, mainly around Christmas, Chinese New Year and other festival occasions.

Fig.2 The main building of the ISC in Xiamen has been turned into a star hotel, 2016



Source: SWiC Photo Bank 2016.

Fig. 3 Xiamen's ISC site – distribution of facilities, 2016.



Source: SWiC Photo Bank 2016.

Fig.2 and Fig.3 show that most of the facilities of Xiamen ISC's facilities are now used for commercial purpose. In Fig.3, the pink-coloured part is now is a hotel open to the public and the green-coloured parts are ISC today, squeezed into three small, old buildings.

Fig.4 ISC in Xiamen, 2016



Source: SWiC Photo Bank 2016.

In Ningbo, the ISC's name remains at the top of the building that originally housed the Club for visiting seafarers (Fig.5). The building has **now** been converted entirely into commercial use under private management.

Fig.s. 5 The old ISC in Ningbo, now a hotel in private hand, 2017



Source: SWiC Photo Bank 2016.

The Chinese name of this hotel stands prominently on the front wall - ISC Grand Hotel. Due to its historical association with providing excellent facilities and services for foreign seafarers, the ISC has become a marketing brand in attracting customers.

Impact of industry restructuring

The world shipping industry has experienced a significant restructuring in the last 30 to 40 years. While ships have become larger, crews smaller and more multi-national, and the turnaround time shorter, ports have become larger and increasingly located in more remote waters. In China, as in many other parts of the world, the expansion of the existing ports and the development of new and larger ports, always located far from the city centres, makes city-centre based ISCs facilities out of reach of seafarers from today's merchant vessels which, due to their increase in size, require deeper water berths. At the new ports, typically vast and remote, such as Yangshan Deep-Water Port in Shanghai and Beilun Port in Ningbo, there is little PBWS available for visiting seafarers (see Fig.s 6a and 6b).

All these structural changes have inevitably had a profound impact on PBWS for seafarers. Seafarers are sensitive to such changes and those in the study reported their experiences of PBWS provision (or lack of it) in the port areas when their ships were trading in China. This will be discussed later in this paper when we report the seafarers' experiences.

Fig.s 6a, 6b Donghai Bridge built in 2005 linking Shanghai with Yangshan Deep-Water Port in Zhejiang, 32.5 km from Shanghai city.



Source: Bing.com, 2018.

Operating ISCs today

ISCs in China has clearly suffered a severe double impact: they have been affected by China’s own market-oriented economic reforms since the 1980s *and* by the maritime industry’s restructuring process during the same period. In spite of this double impact, it is worthwhile noting that about 50% (16) of the ISCs are still functioning reasonably well, and, according to the latest ACFTU communication with the SWiC research team, provide a basic level of PBWS for visiting seafarers. The number of the operating ISCs is revised to 16 by ACFTU and they are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: List of the ISCs still operating in China

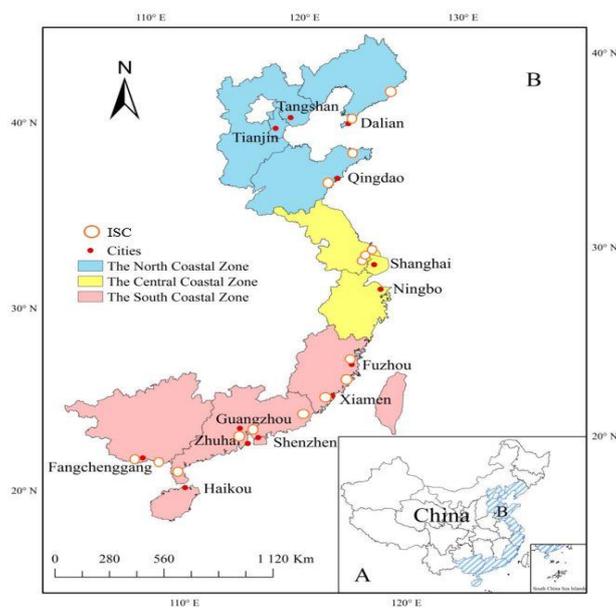
| No | Name (名称) | Address (地址) | Contacting Person | Tel (电话) | Email (电邮) |
|----|---|---|--------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | ISC Guangzhou 广州国际海员俱乐部 | 20 Bingjiang Road West, Haizhou District, Guangzhou, Guangdong 广东省广州市海珠区滨江 江西路 20 号 | LUO Yanqing 罗燕卿 | 020- 61259958 1350303188 7 | 1136470897 @qq.com |
| 2 | ISC Shantou 汕头国际海员俱乐部 | 4 Lian Road, Jinping District, Shantou, Guangdong 广东省汕头市金平区利 安路 4 号 | GUO Yi 郭奕 | 1802953625 2 | shanhaiju@ 163.com |
| 3 | ISC Guangzhou Huangpu 广州黄埔国际海员 俱乐部 | 39 Haiyuan Road, Huangpu District, Guangzhou, Guangdong 广东省汕头市金平区利 | ZENG Yuchan 曾玉婵 | 1501319489 7 | 735269924 @qq.com |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------|-----------------|---|
| | | 安路 4 号 | | | |
| 4 | ISC Zhanjiang 湛江国际海员俱乐部 | 6 Renmin Dadao South, Xiashan District, Zhanjiang, Guangdong 广东省湛江市霞山区人民大道南 6 号 | ZHANG Tiankui 张田奎 | 1370273596 8 | 465041355 @qq.com |
| 5 | ISC Fuzhou 福州国际海员俱乐部 | 8 Luoxingta Road, Mawei District, Fuzhou, Fujian 福建省福州市马尾区罗星塔路 8 号 | ZHAO Jinquan 赵劲荃 | 1586082937 6 | 2465553607 @qq.com |
| 6 | ISC Xiamen 厦门国际海员俱乐部 | 124 Dongdu Road, Huli District, Xiamen, Fujian 福建省厦门市湖里区东渡路 124 号 | LI Wenyi 李文艺 | 1359992867 3 | Bunkei@126 .com |
| 7 | ISC Quanzhou 泉州国际海员俱乐部 | ISC Building, 30 Yuantong Street, Fengze District, Quanzhou, Fujian 福建省泉州市丰泽区远桐街 30 号海俱大厦 | ZHENG Cuimei 郑翠梅 | 1395977809 6 | 307655653 @qq.com |
| 8 | ISC Beihai 北海国际海员俱乐部 | Room 2701, Building One, Lingxiuyifang, 6 Changqing Road, Haicheng District, Beihai, Guangxi 广西省北海市海城区长青路 6 号领秀一方 1 栋 2701 室 | ZHOU Bo 周波 | 1378800816 8 | 1048517262 @qq.com |
| 9 | ISC Fangcheng 防城国际海员俱乐部 | 15 Youyi Road, Gangkou District, Fangchenggang, Guangxi 广西省防城港市港口区友谊路 15 号 | HUANG Shiping 黄世平 | 1378800818 8 | 334049392 @qq.com |
| 10 | ISC Zhangjiagang 张家港国际海员俱乐部 | 19 Jiangxi Road, Jingangzhen Port District, Zhangjiagang City, Jiangsu 江苏省苏州市张家港市金港镇港区长江西路 19 号 | LI Yongxiang 李永相 | 1390156781 1 | williamli200 5@163.com |
| 11 | ISC Nantong 南通国际海员俱乐部 | 5 Qingnian Road West, Chongchuan 江苏省南通市崇川区青年西路 5 号 District, Nantong, Jiangsu | HUANG Fei 黄飞 | 1321827211 6 | 2296753220 @qq.com |
| 12 | ISC Taicang 太仓国际海员俱乐部 | 114 Renmin Road South, 江苏省太仓市人民南路 114 号 | WANG Jing 王静 | | |

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|----|--------------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| | 太仓国际海员俱乐部 | Taicang, Jiangsu 江苏省太仓市人民南路114号 | 王静 | 13962410205 | 6451293@qq.com |
| 13 | ISC Qingdao 青岛国际海员俱乐部 | 2 Taipingjiao Wulu Road, Qingdao, Shandong 山东省青岛市太平角五路2号 | Li Mei 李梅 | 18661936299 | qdzggjl@163.com |
| 14 | ISC Yantai 烟台国际海员俱乐部 | 75-1 Guanghai Road, Laishan District, Yantai, Shandong 山东省烟台市莱山区观海路75-1号 | WANG Yongjun 王永军 | 0535-6245347 18561092612 | 18561092612@163.com |
| 15 | ISC Dalian 大连国际海员俱乐部 | 92 Renmin Road, Zhongshan District, Dalian, Liaoning 辽宁省大连市中山区人民路92号 | SUN Weiyong 孙维涌 | 15942658682 | 393306419@qq.com |
| 16 | ISC Dandong 丹东国际海员俱乐部 | 75 Zone M, Area for Commerce and Tourism, Yanjiang Development Zone, Dandong, Liaoning 辽宁省丹东市沿江开发区商贸旅游区M区75号 | CHANG Dehai 常德海 | 13050370743 | ddhj2164926@126.com |

The International Seafarers Clubs listed above are distributed along China's coast, see Fig. 7.

Fig. 7 Distribution of existing ISCs operating in China, 2018.



Source: Sustainability, 2018.

Best practices and new initiatives

ISC Classification

Despite the difficult structural conditions for seafarers set out above, some remarkable people have tried hard, in innovative ways, to provide PBWS to seafarers in Chinese ports. China's ratification of MLC 2006 in 2016 and the country's Belt & Road Initiative (OBOR) – which includes the Silk Road at Sea – have created new inspiration for revitalising Chinese ISCs' PBWS functions. Our research has identified several good practices in Chinese ISCs and several interesting initiatives undertaken by different organizations, as shown in the three case studies below.

All the ISCs in China are now classified as charity organisations. They are differentiated into three Grades according to standards set out by the Central Government in 2011 (CP&SC 2011). An ISC's classification is linked directly to the level of government funding. A Grade-I ISC receives full funding from the government for its PBWS operations; a Grade-II ISC receives public funding for 50% of its operations; a Grade-III ISC is expected to rely entirely on the market for survival.

Of the officially listed 16 ISCs in China, one is classified as Grade I, a small number are classified as Grade-II, and the rest are classified as Grade III.

The Shantou ISC: the only Club with a Grade I Status

The Shantou ISC is the only ISC classified with a Grade-I status in China. It was set up in 1951 and is located in the northeast of Guangdong Province. As is the case with other ISCs in China, this Club has suffered severely from the impact of both China's economic reforms and the structural changes that have taken place in the shipping industry. Fortunately, the Club has received strong support from both the government and the local trade union, primarily because of favourable personnel links.

In fact, only 75% of Shantou ISC's annual budget is covered by the Government. It has had to raise the remaining 25% from a variety of sources, including financial support from the local trade union and the support-in-kind from various other government institutions. Its success in raising the remaining 25% has enabled the Club to continue to provide its services for visiting seafarers.

The Club is known for its innovation in setting up a Seamen's Home at the new port area close to the trading ships and seafarers. The Home is at the Hong Kong-Macau Port, about one hour's drive from the Club's old office building in the city centre. The Club has rented three floors out of a five-floor building and turned it into a dedicated space for visiting seafarers to use. This home opens from 14:00 to 22:00 and provides a bar serving drinks, free coffee and tea, free Wi-Fi access, computers with internet access, a reading room, a

meeting room, a pool table, and exercise facilities (including 10 mountain bikes donated by the local Maritime Safety Administration).¹

The Club also has a van to pick up seafarers from their berths. The Club staff can access the port easily as they are provided with the appropriate documentation and are trusted by the custom officials. Sometimes, the Club transports seafarers downtown for shopping, free of charge. The Club also organises free sightseeing trips for them, when they have the time, sometimes bringing them to the ISC downtown office so that they can relax. The ISC have three professionally trained English translators to help seafarers; it also has a number of student volunteer from a local college who have adequate English language skills.

The Club has made efforts to win the support of the local community. Initially, vendors from the local villages were not happy to see the ISC developing a Seamen's Home that would provide free welfare services for seafarers. They considered that the ISC was taking away their business. They feared the seafarers would prefer to use the Club's free or less expensive services. During the Club's first visit, villagers even tried to block the ISC's van from picking up seafarers. To smooth over local resistance, the ISC invited villagers and local government officials to attend the Seamen's Home' opening ceremony in order to ensure that they understood that the Seamen's Home was a non-profit organization and that it was the duty of the Chinese authorities to provide such services according to the international convention (MLC2006). At the same time, the ISC also agreed to invite the local vendors to sell their services to the seafarers when the ISC is overwhelmed by too many ships calling simultaneously at the port. As a consequence, the ISC has been able to carry out its work to provide free services to the seafarers while at the same time making peace with the local community.

Setting up the Seamen's Home at the new port area can be seen as the ISC's strategic adaptation to the changing shipping environment. Indeed, Shantou ISC is one of the two seafarers' clubs in China which have adopted this strategy and it continues to provide good PBWS for visiting seafarers on a daily basis (the other ISC with this strategy is in Qingdao, see below).

The Qingdao ISC: an exemplar club with Grade II status

The Qingdao ISC is the best functioning ISC in China. It was set up in 1952 and has experienced the same difficulties as have other ISCs in China. In recent years, as the port has expanded further away from the city where the ISC office building is located, the Club developed a Mobile Seafarers Home in one of the new ports in Qingdao.

This Mobile (or semi-mobile) Seaman's Club consists of 10 containers formed into a semi-circle. It takes less than 15 minutes to transport the seafarers from their berths to this "home". This club supplies all the necessary components for a fully functional seaman's centre, including a bar with beer and wine at reasonable prices, free coffee, free Wi-Fi access, computer rooms with internet connections, a reading room, shops for groceries and

¹ The Director of this Maritime Safety Administration holds a Master Degree from a London University and is a member of the Chinese negotiating team in Geneva for the development of MLC2006.

souvenirs, and a gym. One of the containers has been refurbished and turned into a flat to host seafarers' family members. According to the manager, the Club staff has a routine of daily ship visits, six ships a day. For the seafarers' larger shopping needs, the ISC has a van to transport them to a big shopping centre nearby.

The Club has developed a good working relationship with several key stakeholders in the port area, including custom officials, boarder control police, security guards and the port authority. The ISC Director claims proudly that "We know everyone in the port!".

This Mobile Seamen's Club is very popular with the visiting seafarers from many countries. The Club has a plan to replicate this PBWS model, building a similar facility in each of the other three remote ports in Big Qingdao Bay. They hope to gain funding support from the Qingdao Government. According to the Club and the local trade union, the local government has given economic priority to the development of the ports and shipping industry in Qingdao.

The ACFTU in Beijing showcased Qingdao's experience as an example of Best Practice in China. In the trade union's view, the success of the Qingdao ISC demonstrates that an ISC can still survive even with only half of the budget provided by the local government, as long as it undertakes the following: emphasising innovative, fostering good relationships with key stake-holders and, most of all, being serious about delivering good services to the seafarers. Additionally, it is also important to note Qingdao ISC's success also derives from the fact that the Club has been successful in generating income from other sources, typically from renting out part of its properties in the city centre and from other profit-making businesses.

The Zhanjiang ISC: a dedicated club with Grade III status

The Zhanjiang ISC has been classified as a Grade III charity organisation in the public sector. As is the case with many other ISCs in China, the Zhangjiang ISC prospered in the 1990s. In addition to providing quality PBWS for visiting seafarers, the Club turned over a substantial profit by attracting many local people to purchase its high-quality services. The local people were attracted, not only by the high-quality consumer goods available, but also by the western style of services in bars and the dance floor - attractions that that local Chinese people saw as symbols of western life style at that time.

The Club's profitable business in the 1990s misled the managers, giving them the illusion that their business model would be sustainable and that the ISC would continue to prosper. Thus, the managers did not make a great deal of effort in 2012 when applying for grading. The Club was graded as a charity organisation - Grade III. In retrospect, the Club realised that it has actually been defeated by its own business success: it had lost the chance to be classified as Grade I or II, which would have brought in public funding.

What makes Zhanjiang ISC different from other ISCs in Grade III is that never gave up its duty to provide non-profit services to seafarers. According to its annual work report in 2016, the Club devoted some of its income to fund PBWS, including ship visits, with free gifts for seafarers, organising tea parties with senior foreign officers during the public holidays, subscribing to newspapers and magazines for seafarers to read, organizing a number of

sightseeing tours for seafarers, and bringing seafarers to local events such as sporting activities and opera performances. The ISC also tried to find resources for improving its welfare facilities, such as accesses to free Wi-Fi, free internet, upgrading its gyms and sports facilities.

The Zhanjiang ISC also managed to raise money to purchase a van, thereby providing free transportation for seafarers. Unfortunately, the Club lost its van when, two years ago, the local government implemented a new policy that banned any public institution from owning automobiles and all public institutions, regardless of function, were obliged to auction their vehicles.

What makes the Zhanjiang ISC stands out above the other clubs in Grade III is its strong belief in the importance of the PBWS for seafarers and the innovative operation model they developed for serving seafarers in today's new business environment. By working collaboratively with the border control police at the port, the Club has managed to continue to provide a reasonable level of PBWS as set out above.

Comparing the Zhanjiang ISC with the two best practice examples set out earlier, it is worthwhile highlighting Zhanjiang ISC's "never give up" spirit and its dedication to providing welfare services for seafarers. When discussing the challenges and prospect regarding PBWS in Zhanjiang Port, the Director of Zhanjiang ISC stated that, in order for ISCs to have a realistic future in China as the main providers of PBWS for seafarers, Grade III clubs should be upgraded into Grade II ones, so that they would secure 50% of the funding from the State.

2. State policies

As already noted, China ratified MLC 2006 in 2016. Since then, the Chinese government has introduced a large number of new policies and regulations aimed at securing compliance with MLC2006. China has not, however, yet issued any regulations or maritime policies related to PBWS for visiting seafarers (see below).

2.1. Ministry of Transport (MoT) policies

ROS 2007

Since 2007, the Chinese Government, especially the MoT, has adopted a series of maritime policies to deal with seafarers' rights and welfare issues.

One most important achievement is the adoption in 2007 of the "Regulations on Seafarers of the People's Republic of China" (ROS 2007, 中华人民共和国船员条例) shortly after the introduction of MLC2006 in Geneva. So far, this law can be said to be the most important legislation concerning seafarers' rights in China. ROS was passed at the 172nd Executive Meeting of the State Council on 28th March 2007, and entered into force on 1 September in the same year. ROS' objective is to strengthen the administrative apparatus governing seafarers, to improve its quality and capacity, to safeguard seafarers' legal rights and interests, to ensure maritime traffic safety, and to protect the marine environment (ROS,

2007: Art. 1). For the first time in Chinese history, seafarers' rights have been substantially laid down in law.

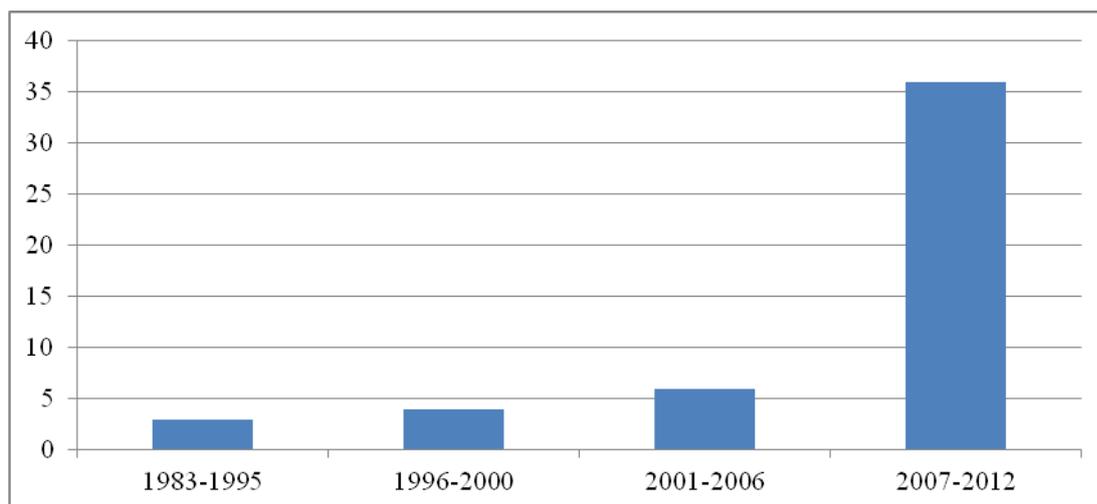
The provisions of the law include, for instance, the minimum requirements to be registered as a seafarer (Art. 5), the seafarers' special identification and competence certificate (Art. 7-19), seafarers' occupational health and protection (Art. 25-34), and seafarers' training and recruitment (Art. 35-44). Although ROS can be criticised as focusing mainly on the administration of seafarers, rather than on seafarers' rights and protection, it is heartening to see the development of legislation tailor-made for workers in this particular sector, an occupation that has many features rendering it substantially different from land-based industries.

There are no provision for seafarers' rights to PBWS in ROS 2007.

Other MoT policies

Between 2007 and 2012, around 36 maritime policies were adopted by the MoT in a variety of forms. In addition to ROS2007. These include, for instance, the Administration Rules of Seafarers' Registration of PRC adopted on 4 May 2008 (ARSR, 2008), the Provisions of Seafarers' Service Management on 20 July 2008 (PSSM, 2008), and the Provisions of Seafarers' Despatch Management on 7 March 2011 (PSDM, 2011). In addition, the Provisions of Seafarers' Occupational Security have been drafted by the MoT and will enter into force in the near future (PSOS, 2013). Fig. 1 clearly demonstrates the marked increase in maritime law-making in China since 2007, following the ILO's adoption of the MLC 2006 in Geneva.²

Fig. 8: Number of maritime legal instruments adopted in China, 1983-2012



Source: Zhang, 2016.

² For a detailed review and analysis of the policies and regulations introduced in China in the last ten years since the adoption of the MLC2006 at the ILO, see Pengfei Zhang, (2016), 'Seafarers' Rights in China: A Restructuring Process', Springer.

More recently, on 4 June 2017, the MoT issued a White Paper “Seafarers’ Development in China 2016”. On 29 September 2016, the MoT, together with the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Security (MHRSS), produced “Directive on Compliance of the MLC2006 in PRC”.

2.2. Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) policies

In order to implement the ROS2007 and to cope with the requirements of the MLC 2006, the MoC has also adopted a large number of maritime policies in the form of Decisions, Notices or other Red-letter-headed documents. These Decisions or Notices are not laws and cannot be viewed as part of Chinese legislation. However, they carry significant weight in the administration and treatment of seafarers. These Decisions or Notices are issued by the Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) that is a section within the MoT and in charge of maritime issues.

The MSA has issued five Notices since 1994. The first Notice was adopted in 1994 (Number 208), and entitled “The Notice Regarding Implementation of the ‘Requirements of Seafarers’ Medical Examination’ in the Maritime Profession”. According to the Requirements, those with positive Hepatitis B virus Surface Antigen (HBSAG) could not join the industry as seafarers and were prevented from entering a college for nautical studies.

The situation did not change until 2010, when the MSA issued another Notice, “The Notice Regarding Amendments of ‘the Requirements of Seafarers’ Medical Examination’ (2010, Number 306)”. In this amended Notice, the prejudiced article above was deleted. The MSA have also issued another three Notices – all referring to seafarers’ medical examinations.

All these documents grant more rights to individual seafarers than did previous Notices. The influence of the MLC 2006, which emphasizes the rights and interests – indeed the spirit – of the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda – is clearly apparent in these new documents.

It is important to note that, while many aspects of seafarers’ rights are covered in these post-2007 documents, such as the employment age, wages and occupational health, little is mention is made of seafarers’ entitlement to welfare provisions when they call at ports during voyages.

3. Key stakeholders’ positions and practices

3.1. Government agencies

During the SWiC team’s research fieldwork in China, our request for meetings with senior maritime officials in the Central Government in Beijing was declined. Nonetheless, our in-depth interviews with maritime officials at the provincial and local government levels clearly indicate that there is a strong view, at least at these levels, that PBWS is important for seafarers and for shipping. These officials believe that more resources should be made available to strengthen facilities and services in this area. They also believe that the Central Government should take the lead in the implementation of the MLC2006 including

Regulation 4.4. In 2017, two senior officials from maritime agencies in Ningbo and Xiamen informed us in interviews that “We will immediately follow once the Central Government turns on the green light”.

3.2 Trade unions

Recently, Chinese trade unions have made positive responses to seafarers’ need for PBWS. In July 2017, the ACFTU sent a CSCW official to observe the “Forum on Port Welfare Service for Seafarers”, which was hosted jointly by ISWAN, MNWB and CCM, in association with Shanghai Pudong Government.

Shortly afterwards, the ACFTU invited the ITF Seafarers Trust and the CCM’s SWiC Project Team to pay study visits to several Chinese ports. The trade union officials at all levels, together with the staff members at the ISCs contacted for the study, expressed strong support for the implementation of MLC2006 Regulation 4.4 and expressed genuine concerns about the PBWS for seafarers in Chinese ports. They believed that the ISCs should be the main provider of the PBWS for seafarers in China. They also believed, however, that there needed to be a better policy for PBWS and more support including, in particular, investment and Government funding for the ISCs.

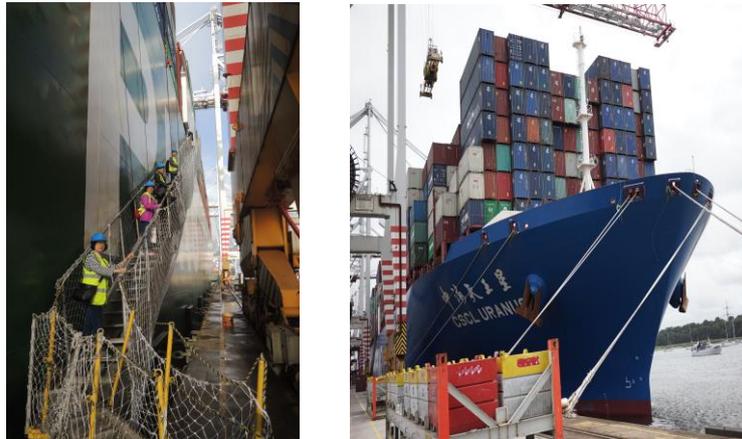
Very recently, at the time when this report was being finalised, the ACFTU provided the SWiC Team with a list of the 16 operating ISCs in China (see Table 1 above). This list contains all the contact details for these official PBWS facilities and services. For the first time, this list will be included in the ISWAN database and will, thereby, benefit the millions of seafarers whose ships call at Chinese ports in large numbers. This is certainly a positive move.

3.3 Shipping companies

Shipping companies, in both state and private sectors, are very supportive of PBWS for seafarers. In Shanghai, for example, the TCC Group and the Taihua Shipping (Shanghai), both private companies, voluntarily arranged for their seafarers to participate in the study’s interview and questionnaire surveys.

In the state sector, COSCO (Container) in Shanghai participated in the study whole-heartedly and offered their extensive experiences, views and support for the development and improvement of PBWS in China. The China Shipping Container Line (CSCL) International, generously offered their ships and crews for inclusion in the study when calling at Southampton Port (see Fig. 8a and Fig. 8b).

Fig.s.8a, 8b CSCL Shipping kindly offered all their ships and crew for the SWiC study when their ships called at Southampton, 2017.



Source: SWiC Photo Bank, 2017.

Since many of the senior shipping managers have seafaring experiences, the industry as a whole is keen to see all visiting seafarers, regardless of nationality, benefit from access to high-quality PBWS in all world ports, including those in China.

3.4 Shared view for the key Institutional Stakeholders

It is important to note that all the institutional stakeholders involved - the Government maritime agencies, the trade unions and its associated ISCs, and the shipping companies, in both public and private sectors, share the same view.

All the stakeholders believed that China should implement MLC2006, including Reg.4.4, because of its significant implications of PBWS for seafarers' health and well-being and for the safety of life and property at sea. They also believe, however, that, given the complex structure of the stakeholders involved, a coordinated body should be set up in each port city with all main stakeholders sitting at the same table to discuss how implementation can be carried out and how PBWS can be provided sustainably on a daily basis. "We need a united front to solve the problem of PBWS for seafarers" was the unanimous sentiment. All these institutional stakeholders share the view that "China is rich and so money is not an issue" and that "it is the Central Government that should take the lead in this initiative".

3.5 Faith organisations and other NGOs

Finally, to conclude this section, it is worth pointing out again that, unlike in the west, there is very little involvement in China of faith or volunteer organisations or any other NGOs in providing PBWS for seafarers. The lack of involvement of faith organisations or other NGOs in China's PBWS is possibly due primarily to the strict government control of the activities and operations of faith and other charity organisations. At the same time, the lack of participation in PBWS by faith and other voluntary organisations also indicates a low level of

shipping awareness in the general public in China, as was pointed out repeatedly during our interviews with stakeholders in the shipping industry.

Faith movements, such as Christianity, have, however, expanded rapidly in China in the last 30 to 40 years, in both urban and rural areas, and this expansion may lead to these movements becoming interested in the future in providing PBWS for seafarers.

PART III: SEAFARERS' VOICES

1. Survey questions and geography coverage

According to the guideline B4.4.2.3 of MLC 2006, necessary welfare and recreational facilities for seafarers should be established or developed in ports. These should include: (a) meeting and recreation rooms as required; (b) facilities for sports and outdoor facilities, including competitions; (c) educational facilities; and (d) facilities for religious observances and for personal counselling, where appropriate.

We investigated what seafarers felt they needed in terms of the port-base welfare facilities and services. We also collected information on their experiences when they called at Chinese ports in the last few years. These matters are not only directly related to the health and wellbeing of seafarers, but are also essential for improving the implementation of the Regulation 4.4 of the MLC 2006 in China, which ratified the convention in 2016.

We conducted a survey of 300 seafarers who had called at a Chinese port in the last three years. These 300 seafarers had a median age of 33 and came from 42 countries: they included both Chinese and international seafarers (about half and half). They called at 51 ports in China. The distribution of those ports was concentrated in Shenzhen, Shanghai, Tianjin, Ningbo, and Qingdao (see Fig. 1.1), and the times of their visits was concentrated in the last three years (see Fig. 1.2).

Fig. 1.1 Chinese ports last visited by seafarers

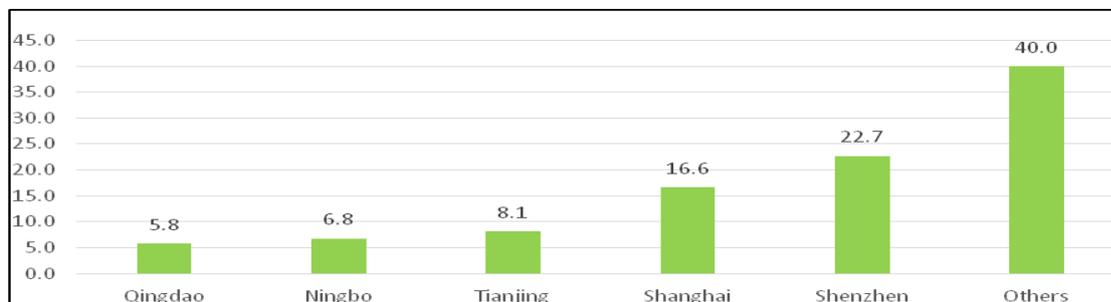
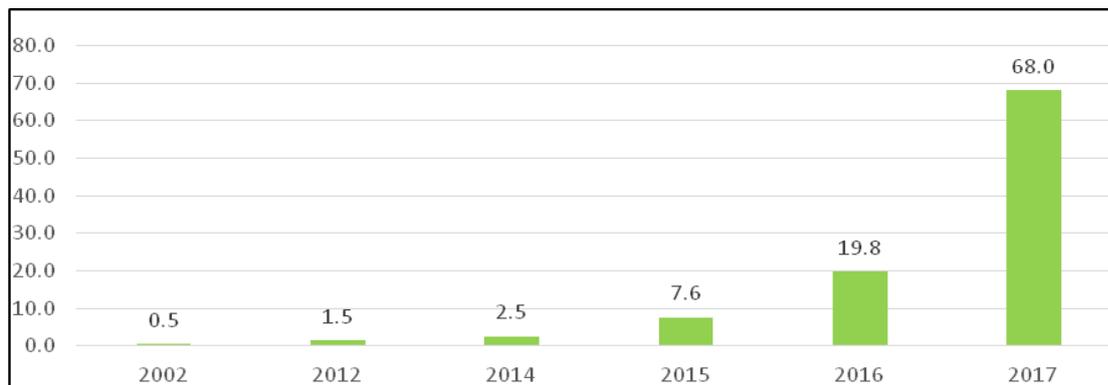


Fig. 1.2 Time when Chinese port last visited for seafarers



To enrich our empirical data, we also conducted interviews with 100 people, both inside and outside of China, including seafarers, stakeholders from service providers, trade unions, shipping communities and the relevant government bureaux.

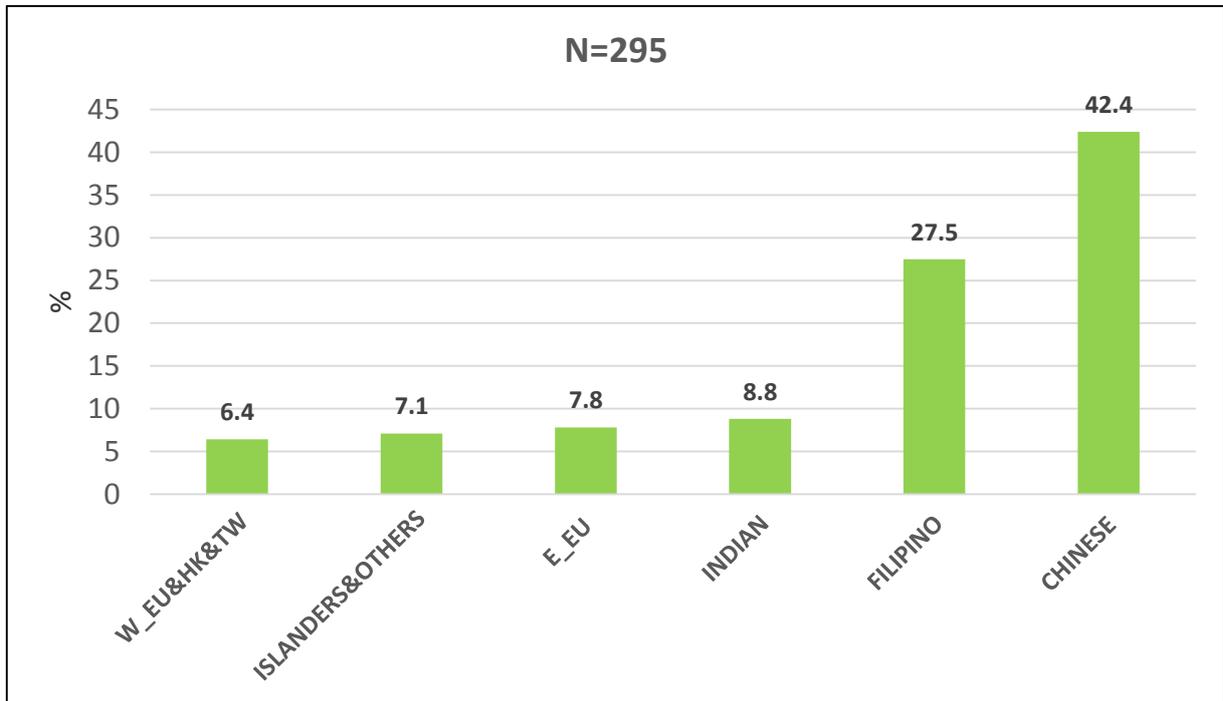
2. Survey respondents' demographics

The seafarers who participated in our survey came from 42 countries and regimes. They were all male except for one female cadet. They had a median age of 33. We set out below details of the seafarers' nationality, rank, education level and career experiences.

2.1 Nationality

As shown in Fig. 2.1, most of the seafarers were Chinese (42.4%). For the rest, Filipinos comprised 27.5% and Indian comprised 8.8%. The nationalities of the rest of the seafarers were varied. We aggregated the seafarers into groups by regions, such those from former socialist countries (E-EU, 7.8%), those from west European countries, those from Taiwan and Hong Kong (6.4%), and those from island countries and other countries (7.1%). The distribution of the non-Chinese seafarers in our study largely matches the nationality distribution of seafarers in the global market (BIMCO 2015).

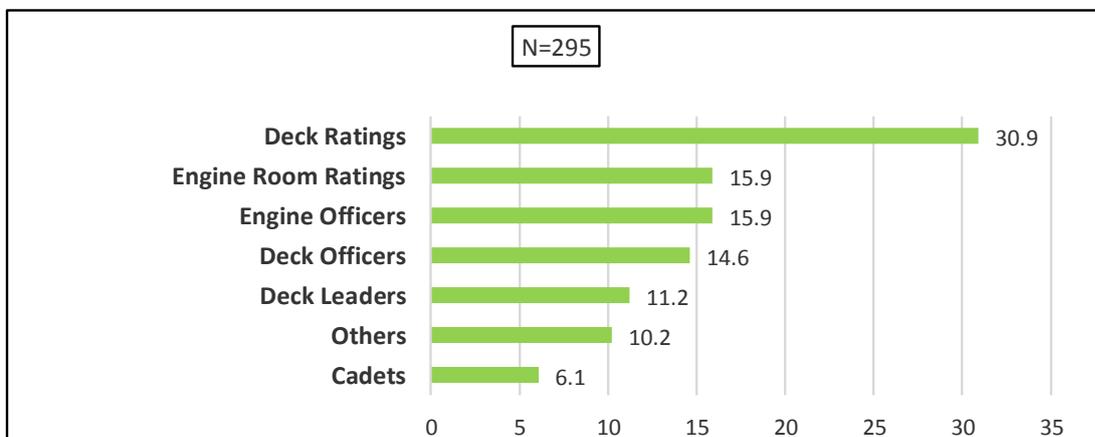
Fig. 2.1 Distribution of seafarers by nationality



2.2 Rank

As Fig. 2.2 shows, the largest group in the survey was Deck Ratings (30.9%), followed by Engine Room Ratings and Engine Officers (15.9% for both), Deck officers (14.6%) and Deck leaders (11.2%, Captain and First Officers). The cadets comprised 6.1% of the total. The distributions of the Ratings and Officers were roughly 52% and 40% respectively. We investigated whether seafarers of different ranks had different demands for, and different evaluations of, PBWS in China.

Fig.2.2 Distribution of seafarers by rank



Note: Deck Leaders refers to Captain and Chief Officer who have the duties to stay on board when at ports.

2.3 Education level

The education levels of seafarers are typically higher than that in the general population in developing countries. In our survey, 99% of the seafarers received education at high school and beyond, and 52% of them were educated at college level and beyond: 56% graduated from a maritime school or a maritime university that provided specific skills and knowledge of shipping industry (see Fig.2.3). We investigated whether different levels of education led to different demands and different evaluations of PBWS in China.

Fig. 2.3 Distribution of seafarers by education level

2.4 Work experiences

As shown in Figs 2.4a and b, the seafarers in our survey had, on average, 10 years of working experiences at sea, and had worked on their current ship for seven months. While 65% of the seafarers had signed contracts with a crewing/manning agency, only 35% had signed contracts with shipping companies. The average length of their contact was ten months. The labour conditions of the majority seafarers in our survey were, therefore, flexible and contingent.

Fig. 2.4a Seafarers' work experiences

| | Valid | | Missing | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----|---------|--------|------|----------|
| | N | N | Mean | Median | Mode | SD |
| Age | 274 | 21 | 34.8 | 33 | 30 | 9.007 |
| Years working at sea | 276 | 19 | 10.3 | 9 | 10 | 7.3691 |
| Months working on this ship | 266 | 29 | 6.7 | 6 | 4 | 7.2298 |
| Contract length (month) | 261 | 34 | 10.3 | 8 | 9 | 16.36041 |
| Job search difficult (1 – 10) | 258 | 37 | 3.8 | 3 | 5 | 2.07 |

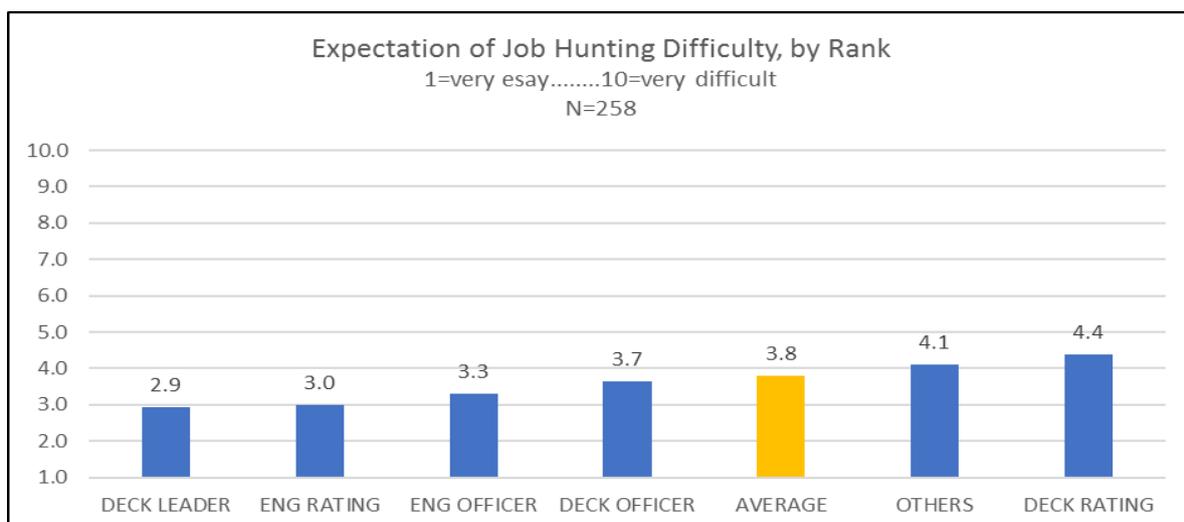
Fig.2.4b Contract signed by seafarers



In terms of the seafarers’ assessment of their job market, the mean value was 3.8 on a scale from 1 to 10, with “1” standing for “Very easy” and “10” for “Very difficult” for finding a job after finishing their current contract. This indicates that the seafarers in our survey were confident about their job market.

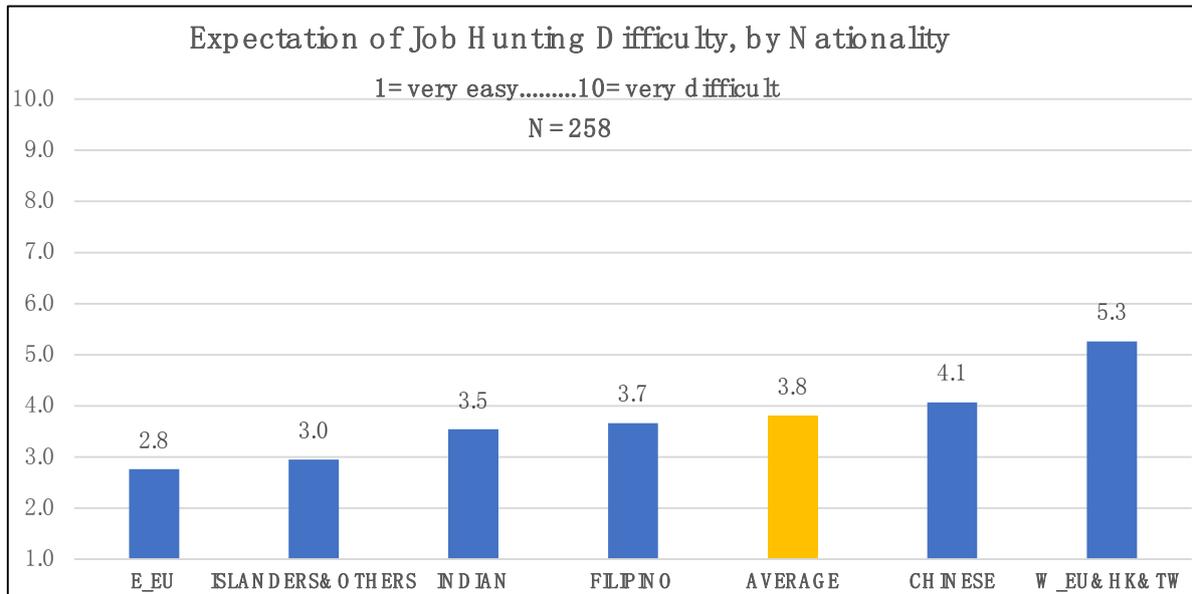
The seafarers’ confidence in their job market were very similar across ranks and nationalities. In general, the higher their job rank, the higher their confidence. Deck ratings had an average of score of 4.4 indicating that they had less confidence in their job market than other groups (see Fig. 2.4c). This finding is consistent with the report of BIMCO2015, which indicates that there is an oversupply of ordinary seafarers in the industry and an undersupply of senior seafarers.

Fig.2.4c Average expectation of job hunting difficulty by rank for seafarers



In terms of nationalities, the seafarers from east European countries and island countries had the highest confidence on job market, a score of 2.9 (see Fig. 2.4d). Those from western European countries, and from Hong Kong and Taiwan, had the lowest confidence: their score was 5.3. The confidence scores for seafarers from the mainland China, India and Philippine fell in between.

Fig.2.4d Expectation of job hunting difficulty by nationality



In sum, for work experiences, most of the seafarers in our survey had signed contracts with a crewing agency and were confident about their job prospects.

3. Seafarers’ needs: What is important?

We investigated what the seafarers in our sample wanted in terms of PBWS when they called at Chinese ports. We considered this to be important data to collect.

Based on the guideline of MLC 2006, the insights from our pilot study, and the findings of previous researches, we listed six types of needs with 24 measurement items – see below:

- Transportation service (5 items);
- Shopping service (5 items);
- Spiritual and social service (5 items);
- Communication service (3 times);
- Monetary service (2 items);
- Health and leisure service (4 items).

We invited the seafarers in our survey to evaluate the importance of each items for them by choosing from the responses below:

- Important
- Indifferent

- Not Important

Overall, 55% of the seafarers rated the 24 items of the six types of welfare services as Important, 30% stated that they were Indifferent and 15% rated them as Not important. We discuss the distribution of the seafarers' response in more detail below.

3.1. Transportation services

Seafarers around the world typically consider that transportation services that take them from their port for a short break of several hours to be very important. In our interviews with the seafarers, we were informed repeatedly that they needed reliable means of transportation to take them away from berths and ports, which were typically far away from any amenities. To fine tune our analysis of the seafarers' transportation needs, we asked the seafarers to list the importance to them of five items:

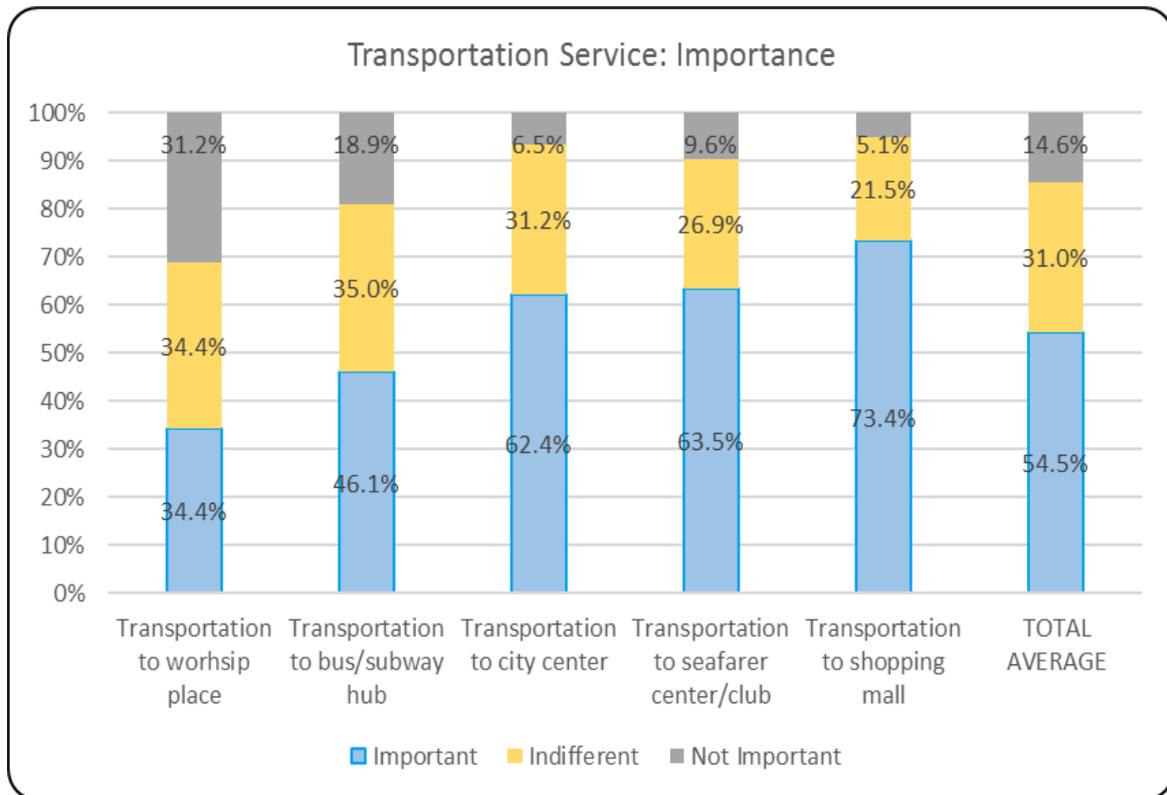
- Transportation to worship place
- Transportation to bus/subway hub
- Transportation to city centre
- Transportation to seafarers' centre/club
- Transportation to shopping mall

Our findings are set out in Fig. 3.1 below.

In our survey, more than half of the seafarer choose Important for transportation services to shopping mall, to seafarer centre or club, and to city centre (73.4%, 63.5%, and 62.4% respectively). These percentages are higher than the overall average of importance for the 24 items (54.5%). These findings are consistent with our interviews and with existing previous studies.

The importance of transportation to worship place appears lower to be than the average. Two factors may have reduced its importance for the seafarers. First, about half of the seafarers in our survey had no religious beliefs. Second, some believers stated that they did not need to have a dedicated place for their religious observance. As one Egyptian sailor put it: "I can pray in anywhere, as long as it is a clean and quiet place" (Case 2). Once we control for these two factors, the percentage for its importance increased to 53%.

Fig.3.1 Transportation Service: Importance to seafarers



3.2. Shopping services

Shopping is an activity with multiple implications. Once getting on shore, the seafarers shop for goods to supplement their daily consumption aboard, for fashionable and durable goods for family members at homes, and for souvenirs. Shopping is an opportunity for seafarers to relax and socialize once ashore.

To assess seafarers' specific shopping needs, we selected five common shopping items:

- Shopping for beer
- Shopping for chocolate
- Shopping for eclectic appliances
- Shopping for clothes
- Shopping for souvenirs

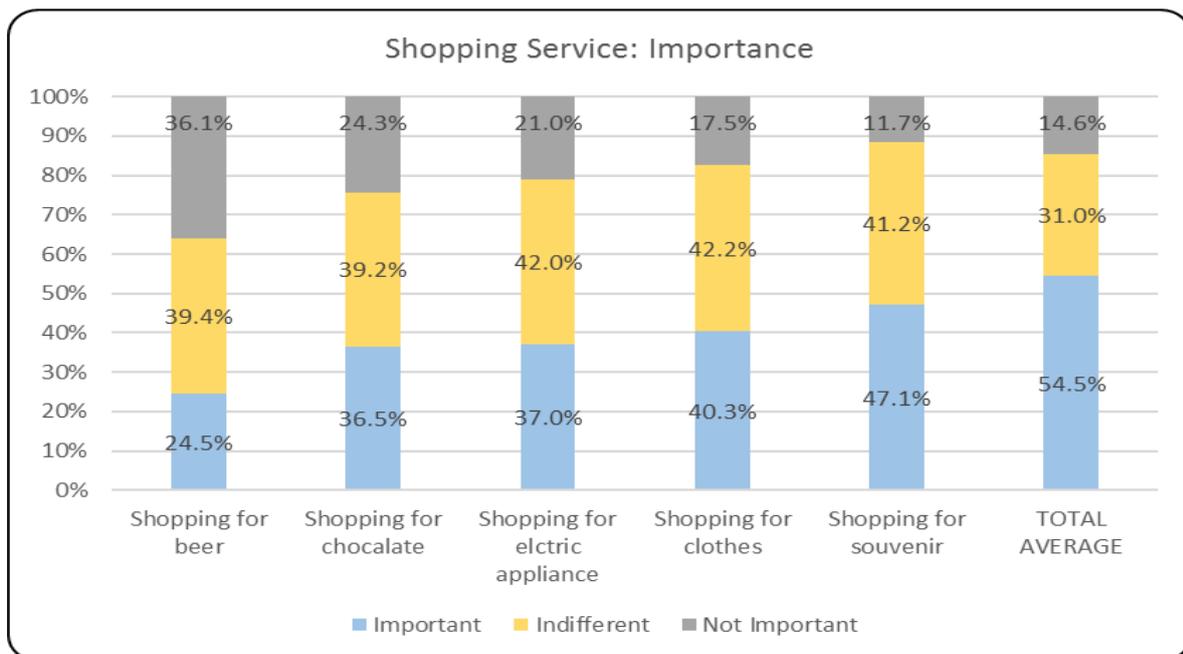
The results are shown in Fig. 3.2. It is interesting to note that the seafarers rated the importance of all five items below the average of 54.5% for the 24 items.

For these five items, the seafarers ranked shopping for souvenirs (47%) and clothes (40%) as important. They ranked shopping for electric appliances (37%), chocolate (37%), and beer (25%) as substantially less important. The choice of beer as important is only half of the

survey average (24.5% compared to the average of 54.5%). Approximately 75% of the seafarers in our survey consider that the shopping service for beer was either not important (36.1%) or were indifferent to it (39.4%).

We also investigated whether the seafarers wanted a special shopping service rather than relying on market mechanisms once ashore. In our interviews, several seafarers reported that Chinese markets provided “good food, cheap beer, affordable clothes and electrical appliances”. (Cases 2, 19 and 26). It appears that the seafarers considered that the market mechanism in China could largely cater for their shopping needs. This is probably because these consumer goods are easily available in Chinese markets, and the seafarers may not need any special services to acquire them. For the seafarers who travelled to Chinese ports on regular basis, it is possible that they did not wish to undertake further shopping. We also found, however, that more than a third of the seafarers felt it was important to have a special shopping service for seafarers to acquire the consumer goods listed above and that it was justifiable to provide the services.

Fig.3.2 Shopping Service: Importance to seafarers



3.3. Spiritual and social services

For the spiritual and social dimensions of the services, we asked the seafarers to rate the importance of five services and facilities:

- Religious service
- Place to read
- Onshore accommodation
- Place to meet others
- Non-profit driven seafarer centre/club

As shown in Fig. 3.3, 64% of the seafarers in our survey considered Non-profit driven seafarers' centre or club to be important. This is 10% higher than the survey average and ranks seventh out of the 24 items of services.

The next most highly rated services were Place to meet others (47%), Onshore accommodation (36%), Place to read (33%), and Religious service (25%). Again, once we control the religious belief: for those who had a religious belief, the importance of Religious service increased to 44%.

It is interesting to notice that more seafarers ranked Place to meet others (47%) as more important than Place to read. This is probably because that the seafarers, having been socially isolated on long voyages, are keen to meet new people once ashore.

In our interview, several seafarers stated that the international seafarer club in Hamburg Germany was the best place for providing seafarers with a quiet and comfortable place to relax, to read, to play games, and to socialise with other people.

One Chinese 1st officer had the following comment:

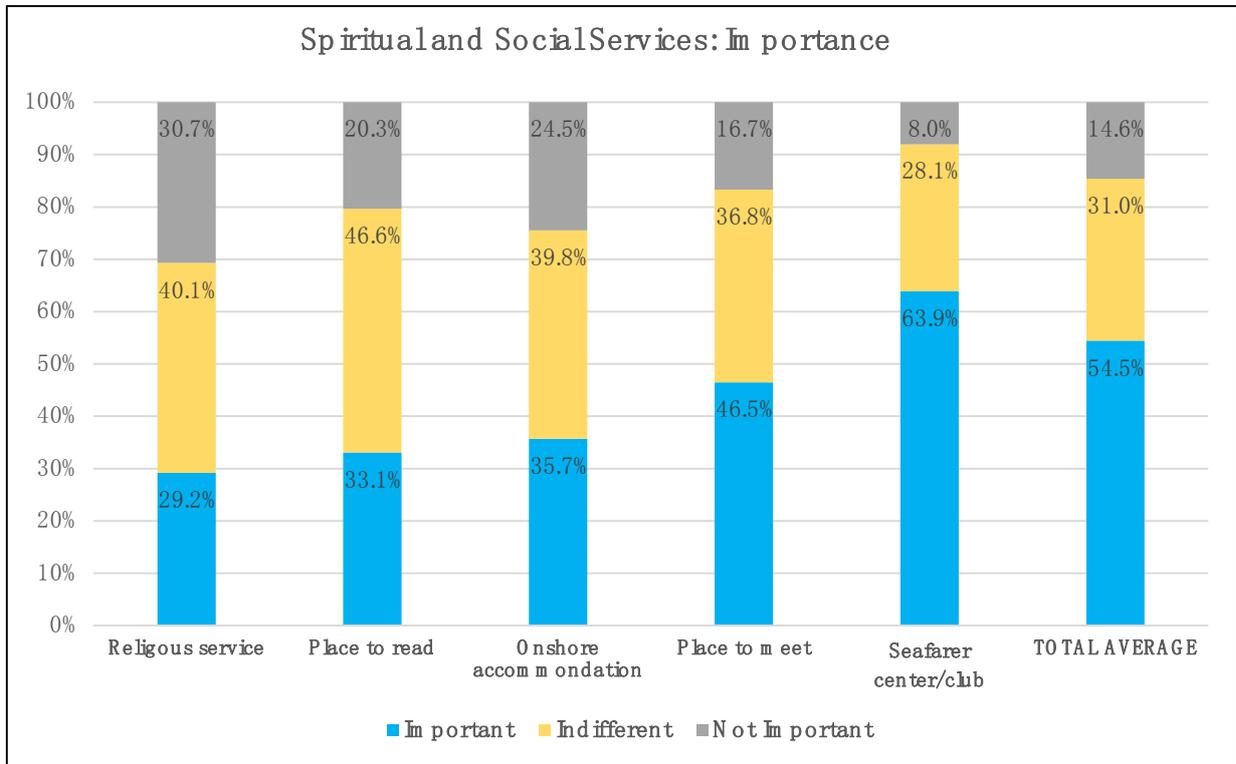
The seafarer club in Hamburg is like a "post house" to us. When I walk into it, I feel that it is prepared ready for me. I can walk in with my chin up and out.
(Case 29)

Another Chinese Second Officer gave us his impression of the international seafarer club in Hamburg:

It is so easy to get a ride in Hamburg port. There is a button right underneath a portal crane. All you have to do it to push the button. Then the club will send a car. It was operated by the church people who are volunteers. Though I don't really consider the club my home, but it is a nice place to take a rest and to step on the solid ground. It is a quiet place with no noise. It is very comfortable place. I can drink a glass of beer there, meet with other seafarers, say "Hi" to them, drink with them, and share a joke very them. You can get online there too (Case 31).

The seafarers' observations on the best practice of this Hamburg seafarers' club highlight why a well-managed non-profit-driven seafarer club was important to the seafarers. It a crucial hub for the seafarers' physical, social and spiritual wellbeing after a long and hard-working journey on the ocean. It is an oasis in the world of shipping industry.

Fig.3.3 Spiritual and social service: Importance to seafarers



3.4. Communication services

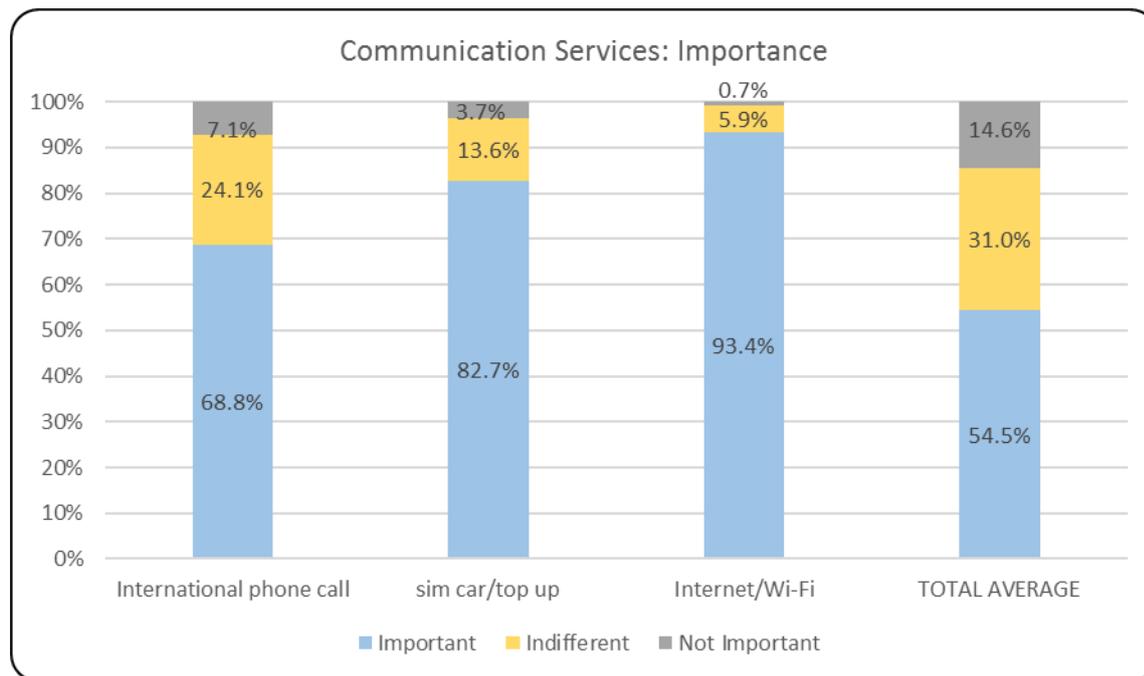
Communication services were consistently rated as highly important by the seafarers in all previous studies. We chose 3 items for consideration:

- International phone call
- Sim card/top up
- Internet/Wi-Fi

Not surprisingly, as Fig. 3.4 shows, the seafarers’ ratings for importance of the three communication items were the highest in our survey. To be more specific, 93% of the seafarers ranked Internet/Wi-Fi as important, following by Sim card/top up and International phone call (83% and 69%). These numbers are considerably higher than the survey average.

Our direct observations in the international seafarer club in Hamburg also resonated with the survey findings. Once a seafarer walked in and sat down in the club, the first thing he would do is to get online, more than likely with his mobile phone, to communicate with his loved ones, family members and friends. We were told repeatedly that the communication during voyage in ocean is either not available to most of the seafarers or is very expensive. The service of wireless communication ashore is clearly the seafarers’ primary concern.

Fig. 3.4 Communication services: Importance to seafarers



3.5. Monetary services

Monetary services are important to seafarers in general. They need to exchange money to spend once they get ashore in a foreign land and they need to send money home to support their families. We asked the seafarers to rate the importance of two items:

- Money sending
- Money exchange

As shown in Fig. 3.5a, a high percentage of seafarers - 79% - rated Money exchange as important service as did 51% for Money sending.

Seafarer’s job ranks made a difference for the importance of Money sending: 64% of ratings compared to 34% of officers considered this to be important (see Fig. 3.5b). In terms of the nationality, Filipino and Island seafarers were particularly likely to rate money sending as important: 65% and 77% compared to the average of 51%. In general, the seafarers with lower income had greater need to send money home to support their family.

Fig.3.5a Monetary service: Importance to seafarers

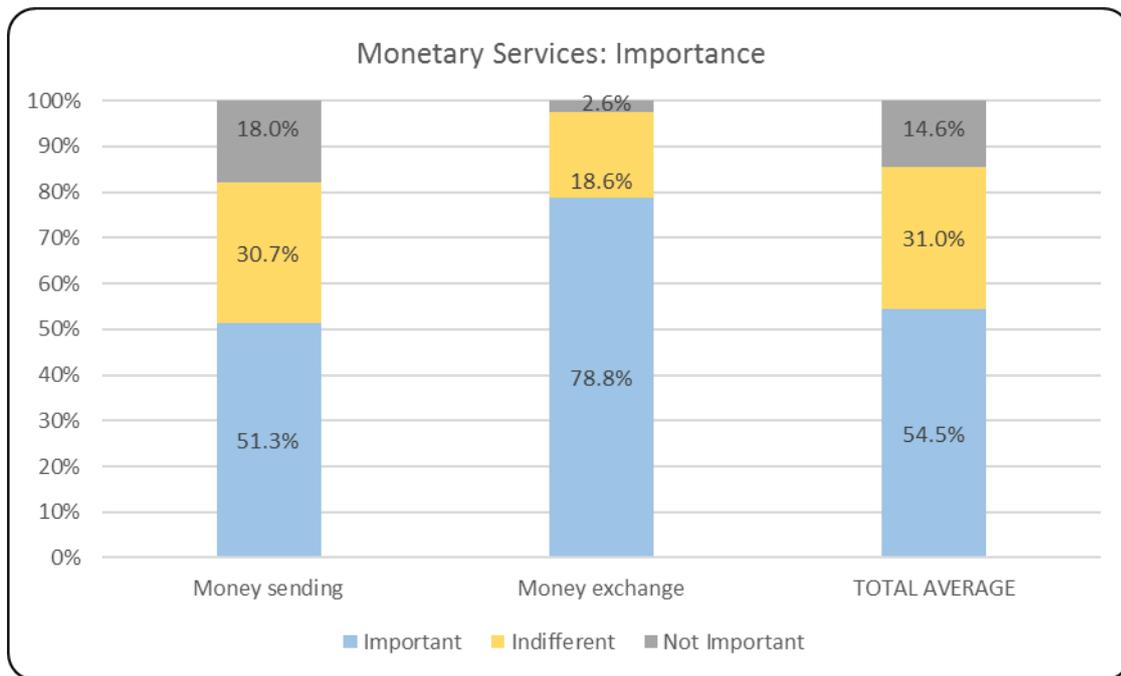
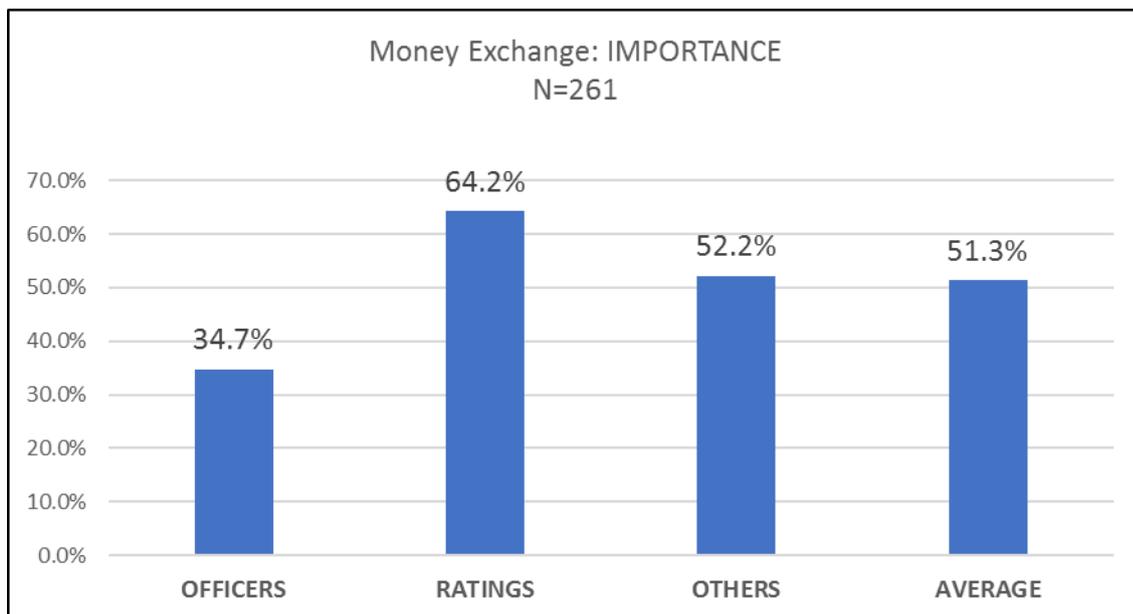


Fig.3.5b Money exchange: Importance to seafarers



Leisure, sport and health services

Facilities and services for leisure and sport are very important for strengthening seafarers' physical and mental health, and providing relief from the social isolation of a long voyage.

Medical clinics at ports are also crucial for seafarers' well-being. We asked the seafarers' to rate the importance of four items for these services:

- Book/film exchange
- Sport facility
- Organized sightseeing
- Medical clinics ashore

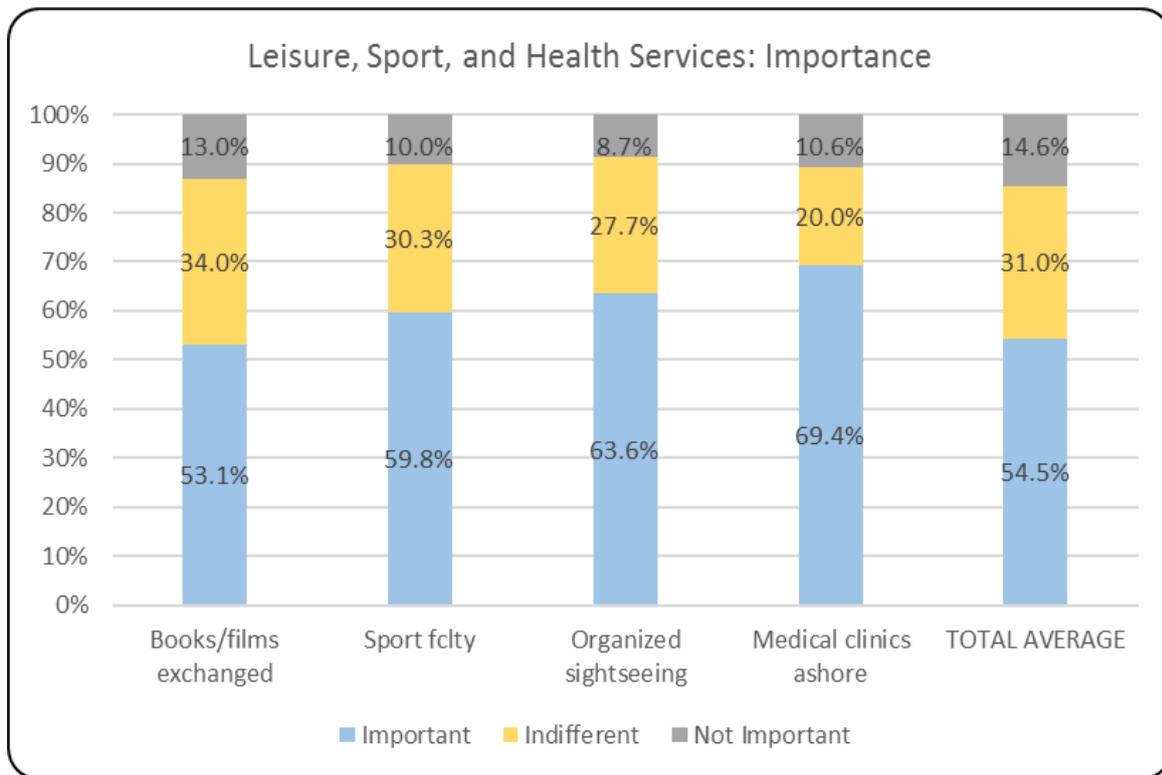
As Fig. 3.6 shows, more than half of the seafarers ranked these four items as important. Their highest rating was for Medical clinics ashore (69%). Seafarers working on ship for long voyage may encounter various health hazards at work. Up until today, there has been no reliable way to handle serious illness and injuries on ships during cross ocean voyage. Thus, the medical clinics at port area are often the critical first stop for seafarers to obtain medical treatment. The seafarers also ranked this service as important.

A port-master in England, who used to be a captain, gave us an example of how difficult it is to get medical help aboard and why it is important to have medical services available in the port area:

Once during my voyage in the middle of ocean, a seafarer developed the acute appendicitis. No one in the crew were trained to handle an operation on him. The sailor could die if not got treated immediately. Out of desperation, I did the operation to remove the appendix by looking at a book and followed the textbook instruction. The sailor survived consequently. When a real doctor got on board after we arrived the port, I showed the cut off appendix to the doctor and to make sure I didn't remove a wrong organ. Thanks God, the doctor told me that I did a good job (Case 54).

The seafarers' ranked Organized sightseeing (64%) as important. Organized sightseeing is considered by seafarers as the most reliable way to enjoy this activity and relax, as most of the seafarers have limited local information and limited time to locate a reliable travel agency. The seafarers' also ranked Sports facilities (60%), and Books/film exchange (53%) as important. The ratings for these four items indicate that many seafarers considered this type of services to be important for them.

Fig.3.6 Leisure, sport, and health service: Importance to seafarers



3.7 Comparison of our study of PBWS with previous studies

Most previous studies of PBWS for seafarers have paid little attention to the provision of these in China. Our study stands out as the first to provide data on port-based facilities in China. Our study also stands out because we collected data for 24 service items, more than double of the number of service items included in previous survey studies (these contained about 10 or 11 items). We now undertake a comparison of our findings with three previous studies for items common to both. These three studies are the port-based welfare services survey conducted by the ITF Seafarers Trust (ST) published in 2016, a similar survey carried out by Erol Kahvech Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC) published in 2006 and the ITF/MORI study published in 1996.

Fig. 3.7 compares our findings for seafarers’ need for PBWS with those of three previous surveys. This figure shows similar patterns for 11 items common to the four surveys. Communication and transportation services are rated as important for seafarers in all the surveys, 70% and 90%. For leisure, sports and health services, spiritual and social services, and monetary services, the importance ratings are similar for the four surveys: 50% to 60%. The 2006 study, however, has ratings strikingly different for the importance of onshore accommodation, book/film, sport facilities, organized sightseeing, and money exchange: they were under 20%. It is not clear why the 2006 study reported such low ratings.

Ratings for the seafarers’ need for transportation to a seafarer centre are substantially higher in two previous studies than in ours: 82% and 72% compared to 64%. This may be

due to the fact that there are very few functioning non-profit making seafarer centres or clubs in China. This lack may reduce seafarer’s evaluation of their importance. Nevertheless, 64% of the seafarers in our survey still considered non-profit driven seafarer centres/clubs to be important for them. This is a strong indication that most seafarers want a place where they can rest, meet others, exercise, and be away from the noises and traffic of a busy port. It is also interesting to note the difference in transportation to city centre: 63% in our survey compared to 85% and 85 % in two of the other surveys.

Fig. 3.7 Comparison of different surveys for importance of seafarers’ needs

| | SWIC 2017 | ST 2016 | ST/SIRC 2006 | ITF/MORI 1996 |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Shopping for beer | 24.5 | | | |
| Spiritual services | 29.2 | | | |
| Place to read | 33.1 | | | |
| Transportation to worship place | 34.4 | 54 | 53 | 48 |
| Onshore accommodation | 35.7 | 53 | 9 | 44 |
| Shopping for chocolate | 36.5 | | | |
| Shopping for electronic appliances | 37.0 | | | |
| Shopping for clothes | 40.3 | | | |
| Transportation to bus/subway hub | 46.1 | | | |
| Place to meet others | 46.5 | | | |
| Shopping for souvenir | 47.1 | | | |
| Money sending | 51.3 | 54 | | |
| Book/film exchange | 53.1 | 48 | 15 | 50 |
| Sport facilities | 59.8 | 52 | 10 | 51 |
| Transportation to city centre | 62.4 | 85 | 85 | |
| Transportation to seafarer centre | 63.5 | 82 | 72 | |
| Organized sightseeing | 63.6 | 56 | 13 | 48 |
| Non-profit driven seafarer centre/club | 63.9 | | | |
| International phone call | 68.8 | 73 | 81 | 79 |
| Transportation to shopping mall | 73.4 | | | |
| Money exchange | 78.8 | 61 | 9 | 66 |
| Sim cards/top ups | 82.7 | | | |
| Access to internet/Wi-Fi | 93.4 | 90 | 68 | |

4. Seafarers’ experiences in Chinese ports

The main purpose of our study, as set out above, was to assess the availability of various kinds of PBWS for the seafarers who had called at Chinese ports in the last three years. The information we received from our interviews was conflicting. Many seafarers claimed that “There are no PBWS in the Chinese ports” (Cases 8, 16 and 29), “No shuttle bus, no seamen club, no free transportation” (Case 23). One Indian captain stated that going to China was a

nightmare, because there is no services at all, other than in Yantian Port (Case 21). Some seafarers claimed that they had received some market-mechanism PBWS – either at what they considered to be fair price or at an overcharged price. Some seafarers claimed they had received free PBWS.

We investigated this discrepancy. In our survey, rather than asking whether the seafarers were satisfied with the provision of welfare services in China. We asked them for information on their experiences for 24 items (six types of services) – the same items we used earlier when assessing the importance of different PBWS. We asked the seafarers in our survey to indicate their experience for each item. We asked them to choose one of five responses for each item based on their past experiences on Chinese ports. These possible responses were:

- Received the service free
- Received the service via the market at a fair with a fair price
- Received the service via the market but was overcharged
- Received no such service at all
- Did not know such a service existed

Overall, we found the seafarers' experience of free services to be limited for most of the 24 items: the average for all the 24 items was 12%. A little more than a third of the seafarers stated that they received services at a fair market price. Slightly more than a quarter of the seafarers stated either they had found no such service available (23%), or they did not know such a service existed (22%). A small proportion of the seafarers, 8.4 %, stated that they received an overcharged service of some kind.

If we put consider the first two responses to be positive experiences (free service and fair market price service), and the other three choices to be negative experiences (overcharged service, service not available at all and did not know such a service existed), then we find that 47.3% of the seafarers had positive experiences in Chinese ports over the last two years while a larger proportion (52.7%) had negative ones.

We use our interview data in order to investigate who had provided services for those seafarers in our survey – the 12% – who stated that they had received free services. We learnt from the interviews that there were a very limited number of functioning non-profit driven seafarers' centres or clubs in China, compared to the late 1990s. The interviewees rated the seafarer's centres in Shantou, Qingdao, and Yantai as best practice. Interviewees (Cases 39, 40, 42 and 44) reported that these centres provided regular free services to seafarers. There are also a few other seafarers' centres or clubs in China that manage to provide some free services when they have received funding. "Unfortunately, those fundings are very limited and highly uncertain" (Case 54).

In general, there is a lack of non-profit-driven international seafarers' centres in most Chinese ports. As provision of seafarers' services by NGOs is almost non-existent and as there no charity-based organization provision either, it very unlikely that Chinese seafarers in our study received free services from these sources.

It was clear from our interviews that it was shipping company agents, especially those in the south China who tended to provide various kinds of free services to the seafarers in our study. The agents were eager to deliver services to the seafarers as a favour to the shipping companies in order to gain these companies' trust and enhance their reputation. The agents' goal was to secure a long-term business relation with the shipping companies. This was especially the case in southern Chinese ports where competition between agents is very high. In 2013, the Chinese authorities lifted some impotent restrictions on entrance to the shipping agency market. This institutional change has led to this high-level competition among shipping agents, again particularly in south China.

Seafarers reported that shipping company agents provided rides to markets. We note that, although this was not a free service, the seafarers also reported that agents arranged for taxis to pick them up in the ports and drive them to city centres and places of entertainment places, and (Cases 3, 4, 5, 6 and 18). Several seafarers complained to us during the interview that the taxis arranged by the agents charged high taxi fees, brought the seafarers to the places where the prices are higher, and repeatedly offered them girls who would provide sex services (Cases 8, 21, 23). We give an example of one typical complaint:

The transportation arranged by the agents could be very tricky. In our case, the driver didn't bring us to the place we asked for. Instead, the driver drove us to a place of his choice where everything was more expensive, and where there were girls (sex workers). Only after we went through that place, then the driver drove us to other places (Case 7).

We suspected that the agents received kickbacks on the high prices paid by the seafarers. In short, the services provided by the agents are limited and unpredictable at best and scams at worst.

We now turn to analyse more specifically the experiences of the six types of service for the seafarers in the survey.

4.1 Experience of transportation services

As our analysis shows above, the seafarers in our survey consistently ranked transportation service from the port to various places as important. We went on to ask asked the seafarers to report their experiences for the five items of transportation services:

- Transportation to place of worship
- Transportation to bus/subway hub
- Transportation to city centre
- Transportation to seafarers' centre/club
- Transportation to shopping mall

Fig 4.1 sets out the seafarers' reports on their experiences. The seafarers mainly obtained their transportation services in Chinese ports via a market mechanism (mainly hiring taxis according to our interviewees) at fair prices. The seafarers most frequently reported that using transportation for going to a public transportation hub, to the city centre, and to shopping malls – 40%, 46%, and 49% respectively, compared to an average of 35% for all transportation items.

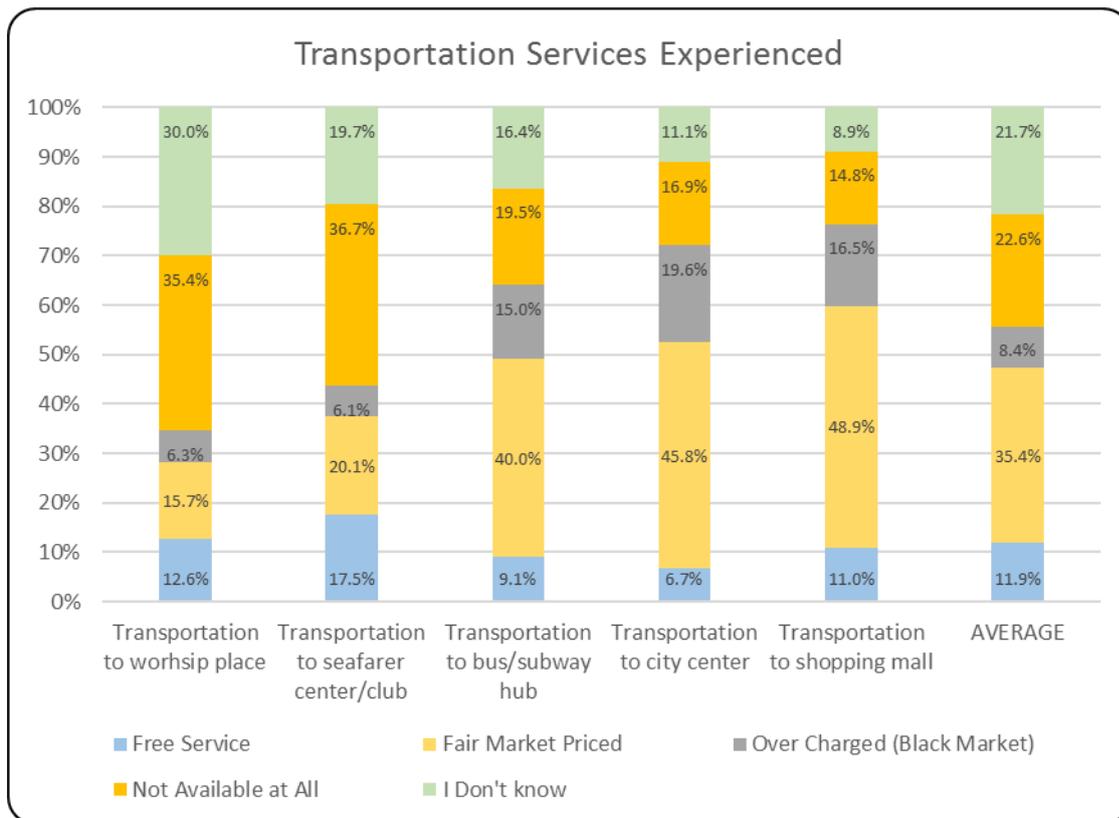
The seafarers reported low usage of the fair-priced market mechanism for transportation to places of worship and to seafarer's centres/clubs. The proportions of seafarers reporting being overcharged for these two services were also two or three times lower than those reporting being overcharged the other three types of transportation services (6% compared to 15-20%). For these two types of transportation, we note that if we add the responses of the service not being available and not knowing that such a service existed together, then 65% and 56% of the seafarers had no experience of transportation services for attending a place of worship or for visiting seafarers' centres or clubs.

In our interviews, several seafarers in our study reported that Yangshan Port in Shanghai was too isolated and far away from any services. Few seafarers choose to take shore leave when their ship was berthed in Yangshan Port (Cases 8 and 9).

We also found that seafarers were most likely to be overcharged for transportation services via the market mechanism for transport to a public transportation hub (15%), to a shopping mall (17%), and to a city centre (20%). These proportions are more than double of the survey average 8% for being overcharged. Thus, roughly one seventh to one fifth of the seafarers in our survey were overcharged for these transportation services. Many seafarers reported in their interviews that the normal-priced transportation was not allowed to enter port areas. They complained that the taxis permitted to enter port areas typically charged a much higher price than normal, because the driver had to give a share of the fare to port control personnel (Case 7).

The extent of overcharging reported by the seafarers in our study suggests that there is a strong need to regulate taxi fares for seamen being picked up inside the port area. Another area where transportation for seafarers could be improved is for transportation to places of worship and to seafarers' centres/clubs. There is a strong need for public interest-driven welfare service mechanisms for seafarers whose ships berth in Chinese ports.

Fig.4.1 Experience of transportation service



4.2 Experience of shopping services

In our study we investigated the availability of shopping services for the seafarers when they called at Chinese ports. We asked the seafarers to report their experiences of shopping for the five items below:

- Shopping for beer
- Shopping for chocolate
- Shopping for eclectic appliance
- Shopping for clothes
- Shopping for souvenirs

As shown in Fig. 4.2, the seafarers reported their shopping for the five types of consumer goods were typically market-driven. Around 50% of the seafarers reported that they gained their services via fair-market prices. This percentage is much higher than the survey average for all shopping items of 35%. Our interviews with the seafarers confirmed that most were impressed by the Chinese consumer markets which they considered to be well-supplied and having affordable prices (Cases 7, 12 and 23) The main frustration for many seafarers appeared to be the lack of reliable transportation from the port areas to the shopping areas (as above).

We note, however, that about 40% of the seafarers reported negative shopping experiences: a combination of being overcharged, of items not being available and of not knowing such a service existed. This was lower than the average of 53% for all shopping items. We consider there is significant room for improvement.

Some seafarers complained about the quality of mobile phones and other products they bought in China, and also that products could be counterfeit. (Cases 3, 4, 5 and 8).

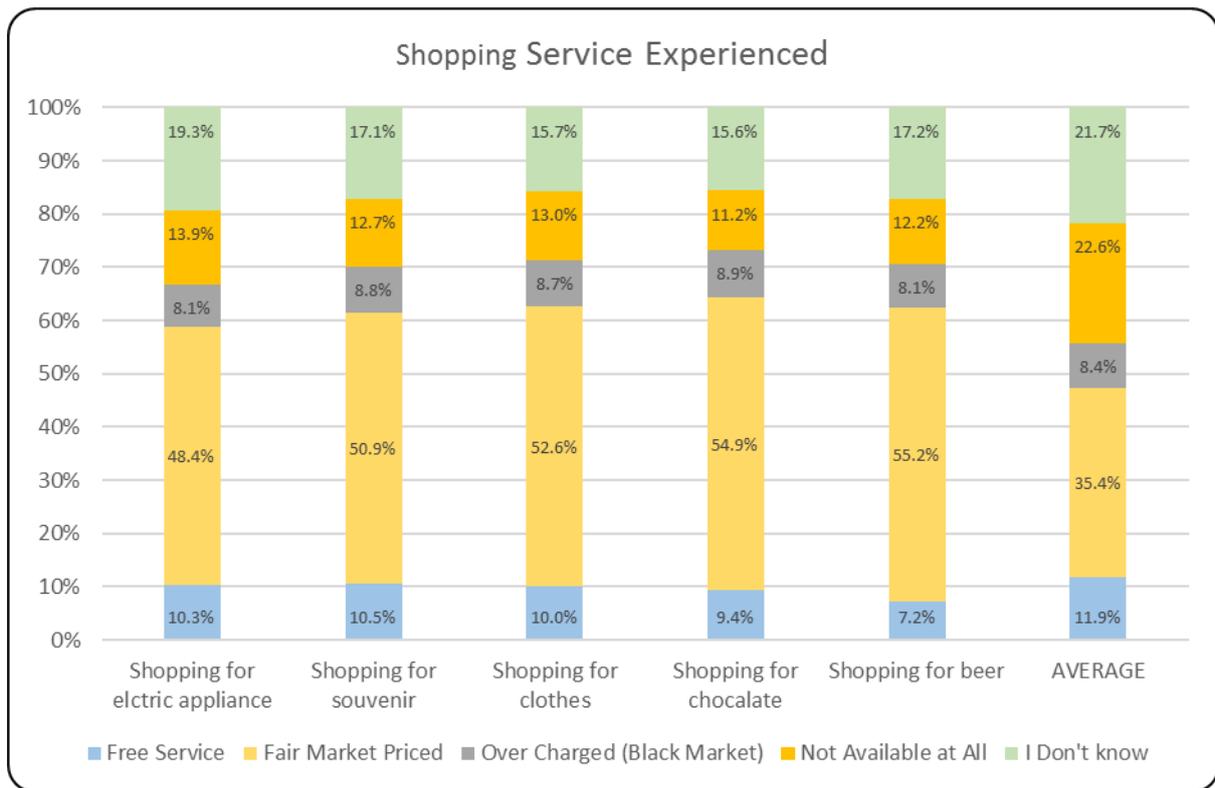
We were given evidence of occasions when non-local seafarers were tricked into entering fake seafarer' clubs and were scammed. One Filipino AB told us about two such cases in his interview:

Once in a port, the agent promised to bring us to a good place for a drink. He arranged a bus to take eight of us to the shopping mall. We went to a club for a drink. We ordered 16 bottles of Qingdao Beer. Then Mama Sang asked us to take girls out. We didn't. So the girls sat down with us. When the high officer (2nd engineer) asked for the bill, the bill was \$100 USD for the beer and \$800 USD for the girls. We didn't do anything with the girls. So we all shouted. The Mama Sang threatened us that she would call police and would not let us to leave if we would not pay for it. Why \$800 USD? The Mama sang said that it was for the girls. But we didn't do anything with the girls, and they were only drinking with us. Why didn't we call the police? When the owner called the police, we were afraid they were together. Finally, we bargained down the price from \$800 USD down to \$300 USD and left the club. The agent could speak English, and we trusted him. But he didn't do anything to help. He stayed away.

In another case, in 2007, an oiler and an AB went on shore leave in Dalian port. They went into a club and ended up with a bill of \$1000 USD. They were not allowed to leave without paying the bill. The owner also threatened to call the police. But they did not have that much money on them. Finally, one of the two were allowed to go back to fetch some money, while the other was held as a hostage.

To conclude, while many seafarers were able to buy much of what they wanted in Chinese markets, after they had berthed at Chinese ports, a number of seafarers preferred to visit a well-managed non-profit-driven seafarer club in the port area, a safe oasis where they could have a drink and socialize with others, and to purchase goods of decent quality, without worrying about being scammed.

Fig.4.2.Experience of shopping services



4.3 Experience of spiritual and social services

In our study, we investigated the availability of spiritual and social services in Chinese ports. We asked the seafarers to report their experiences of finding the five items below.

- Religious service
- Place to read
- Onshore accommodation
- Place to meet others
- Non-profit driven seafarer centre/club

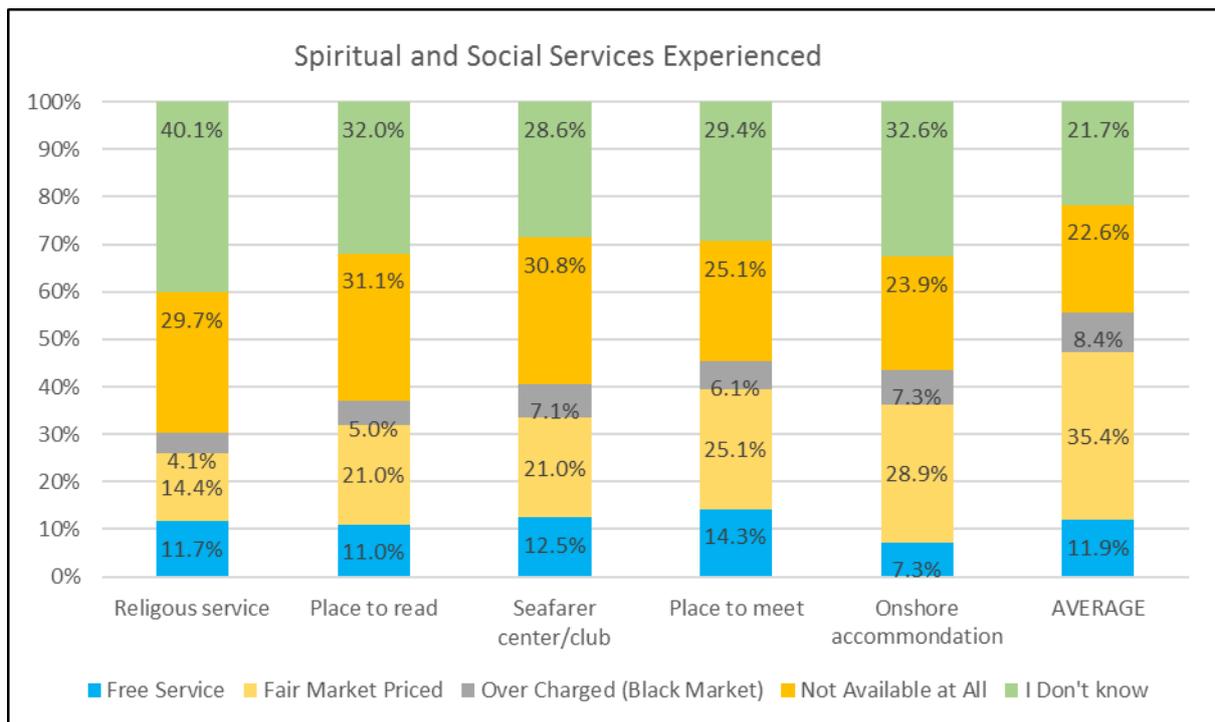
As Fig. 4.3 shows, the seafarer’s experiences for spiritual services was very negative. Nearly 74% reported that this service was not available or that they did not know if such a service existed (a few reported that they were over-charged for this service. The seafarers’ experiences for the other items in this group were also negative though less negative that they were for spiritual services, ranging from about 68% to 52.7% for this service not being available, not knowing if such a service existed and (for a few) being over-charged for this service). It is clear that spiritual and social services are seriously deficient for seafarers in Chinese port areas.

The above contrasts strongly with what the seafarers consider to be important to them (see Fig. 3.3 above). As the seafarers tended to feel isolated and lonely during their long sea

voyage, it was important for them to be able socialize and to engage spiritual activities when ashore.

It is clear that market mechanism is inadequate to provide seafarers with the spiritual and social services they need. The combination of a high level of a service not being available and not knowing that such a service existed for these services, together with the weak market supply of them, indicates strongly the necessity of providing public interest-driven service suppliers, such as international seafarer centres or seamen clubs, and of coordinating efforts among stakeholders in the shipping industry.

Fig.4.3 Experience of spiritual and social services



4.4 Experience of communication services

In our study, we investigated the availability of communication services in Chinese ports. We asked the seafarers to report their experiences making/finding the three items below:

- International phone call
- Sim card/top up
- Internet/Wi-Fi

Communication services have always been a priority for seafarers. Our survey findings for the seafarers' experience of communication services are set out in Fig. 4.4. This figure shows that the seafarers had mixed experiences. Some seafarers reported that they obtained communication services mainly via the market at fair-market prices and that they also enjoyed some limited free services. More seafarers reported, however, that they had experienced being overcharged.

We found it surprising that 22% of the seafarers received free access to internet/Wi-Fi. This proportion is twice as much as the average for communication services of 12%. We do not have further information from our survey data as to who provided this free service.

The anecdotes from our interviews indicate that free Wi-Fi is available in many restaurants and shopping malls in China. The shopping malls and restaurants provide free Wi-Fi for customers in general, however, not specifically for seafarers.

We found it, interestingly, that it was easy for the seafarers to acquire sim cards and/or top-up cards in Chinese ports. As one Egyptian sailor related:

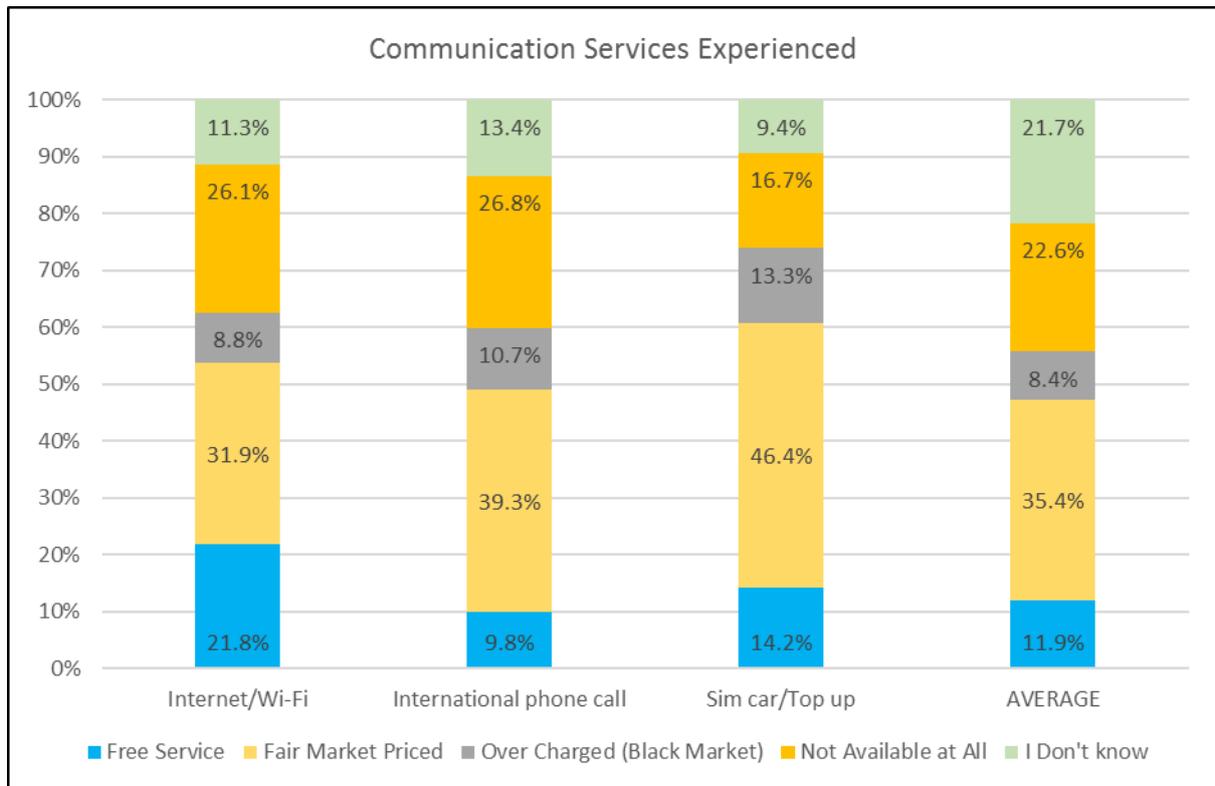
The best thing in China is sim card. It is easy to acquire, and cheap. For \$10 USD, you can get 3-5 G volumes. It is quite good (Case 2).

Some seafarers complained about the quality of the sim cards and/or top-up cards they bought from street vendors. As one Filipino sailor reported in the interview:

Last time I bought a sim card from a vendor who came aboard. The sim card only worked for 10 minutes. Then it stopped working. Some Chinese words showed up on my phone screen, and I don't understand Chinese. I asked my Chinese colleague to help me. He read it and told me that it said that the sim card is no longer valid. My other colleague bought an iPhone from that vendor for \$200 USD. It only worked for one month, then it stopped functioning (Case 24).

Again, seafarers' experience of market forces is mixed. It will be a challenge to ensure that the seafarers receive decent communication services. Although there are rumours that free Wi-Fi will be made available shortly in Chinese port areas, nothing concrete has yet be put in place.

Fig.4.4 Experience of communication services



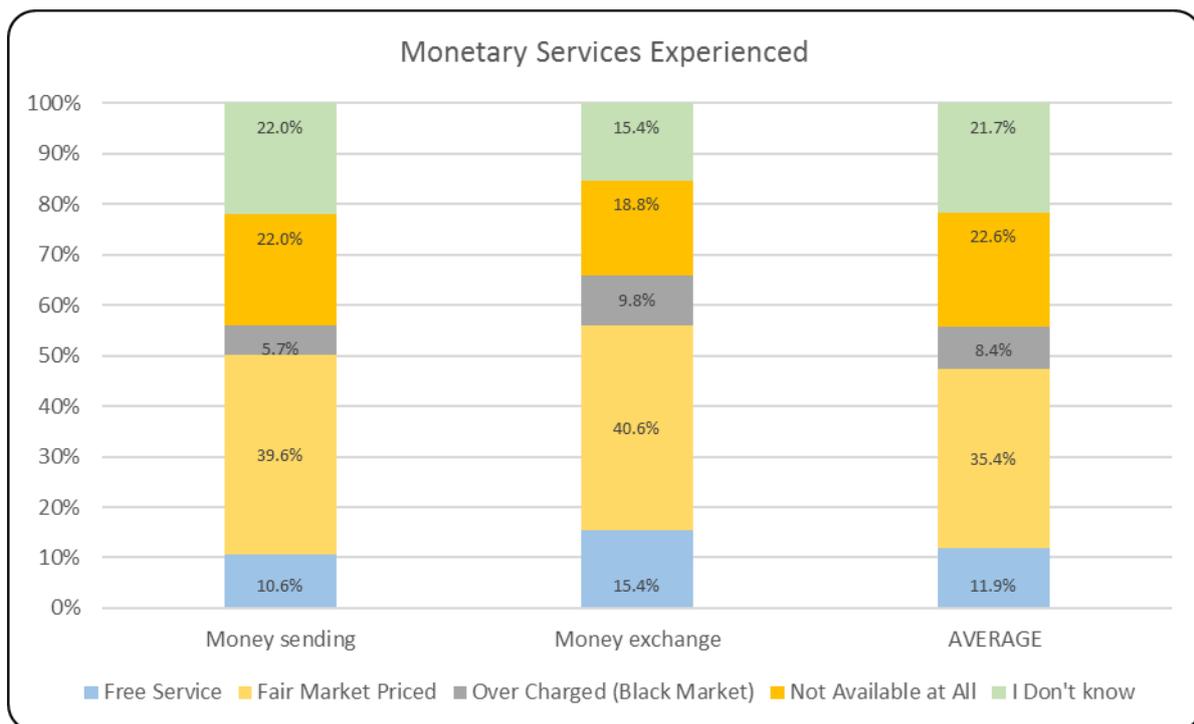
4.5 Experiences of monetary services

In our study, we investigated the availability of monetary services in Chinese ports. We asked the seafarers to report their experiences for the two items below:

- Money sending
- Money exchange

As shown in Fig. 4.5, the seafarers reported that their experiences of money exchange and money sending were mixed: positive and negative feelings were fairly evenly balanced, although we note that their experiences for money sending were more positive than those for money exchange. The seafarers' positive experience were mainly concentrated on fair market priced services. There appears to be considerable room for room for improvement in these services.

Fig.4.5 Experiences of monetary services



4.6 Experiences of leisure, sport and health services

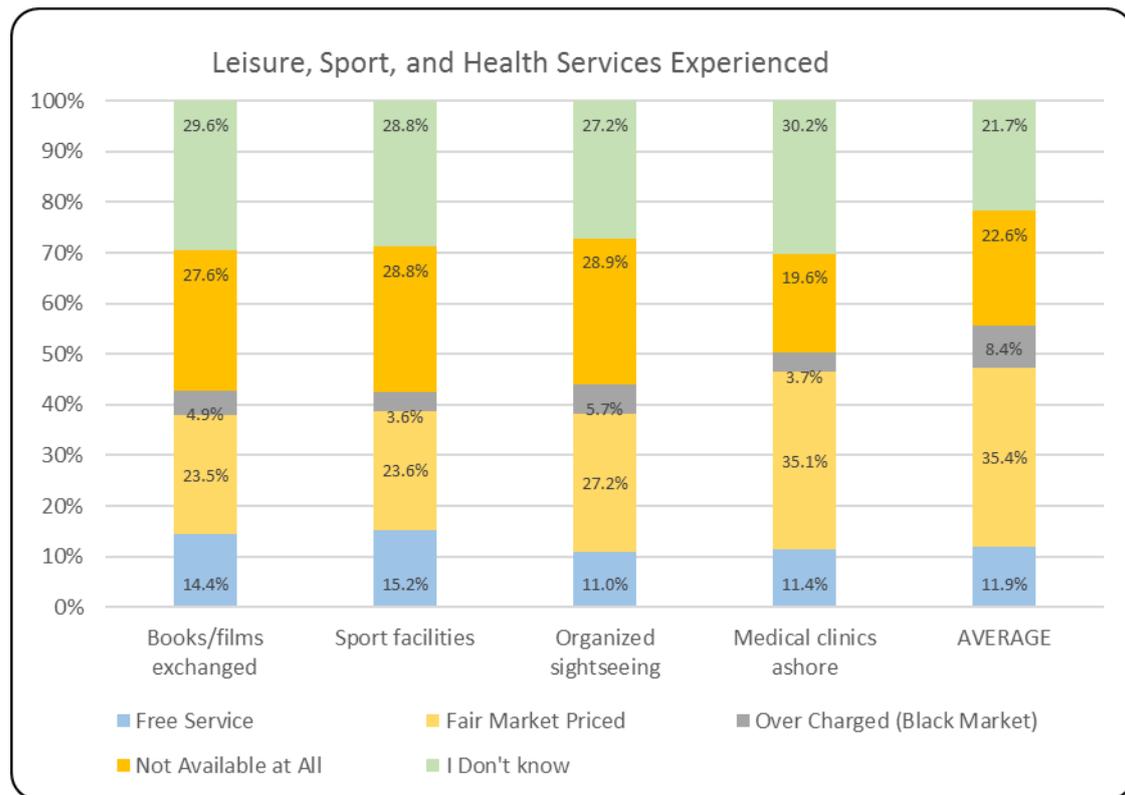
Finally, we investigated the availability of leisure, sport, and health service for seafarers who call at Chinese ports. We asked the seafarers to report their experiences for the four items below:

- Book/film exchange
- Sport facility
- Organized sightseeing
- Medical clinics ashore

As shown in Fig. 4.6, more seafarers reported negative experience than did positive ones for books/video exchanges, sports facilities, organizing sightseeing and onshore medical clinics ashore: their positive responses were less than 40% and negatives ones were around 60%.

Again, very similar to the spiritual and social service, there was a combination of services not being available and a weak market for supplying these kind of services. This indicates the need to create public interest-driven service suppliers, such as international seafarer centres or seamen’s clubs, and coordinate the efforts of the stakeholders in the shipping industry.

Fig. 4.6 Experiences of leisure, sport, and health services



Summarising this subsection on seafarers’ experiences of PBWS, it is clear that market mechanisms are the main channels making services available for seafarers in Chinese ports. The proportions of the seafarers in our survey who reported getting fair-market-priced services were far larger than those who reported being overcharged. Nevertheless, over half of the seafarers (53%) were either not getting services at all, did not know of the existence of services or were being overcharged. Market supplies were weak for the spiritual, social, leisure, sport and health related services – both the fair-priced ones and the overcharged ones. This suggests a strong need to create some public interest-driven service suppliers, such as international seafarer centres or seamen clubs, and to develop coordination between stakeholders in shipping industry. The overall pictures of PBWS in Chinese ports presents a challenge.

5. Comparisons of importance and positive experiences

We went on in our study to compare the importance the seafarers gave to different PBWS and their assessment of their experience of these.

To simplify our analysis, we aggregated the five options of seafarers’ reports of the availability of the PBWS into two categories, “positive” and “negative”. The positive was a combination of free services and market fair-price services, while the negative was a combination of being overcharged, the service not being available and not knowing that such a service existed. We then compared the seafarers’ assessment of the importance of

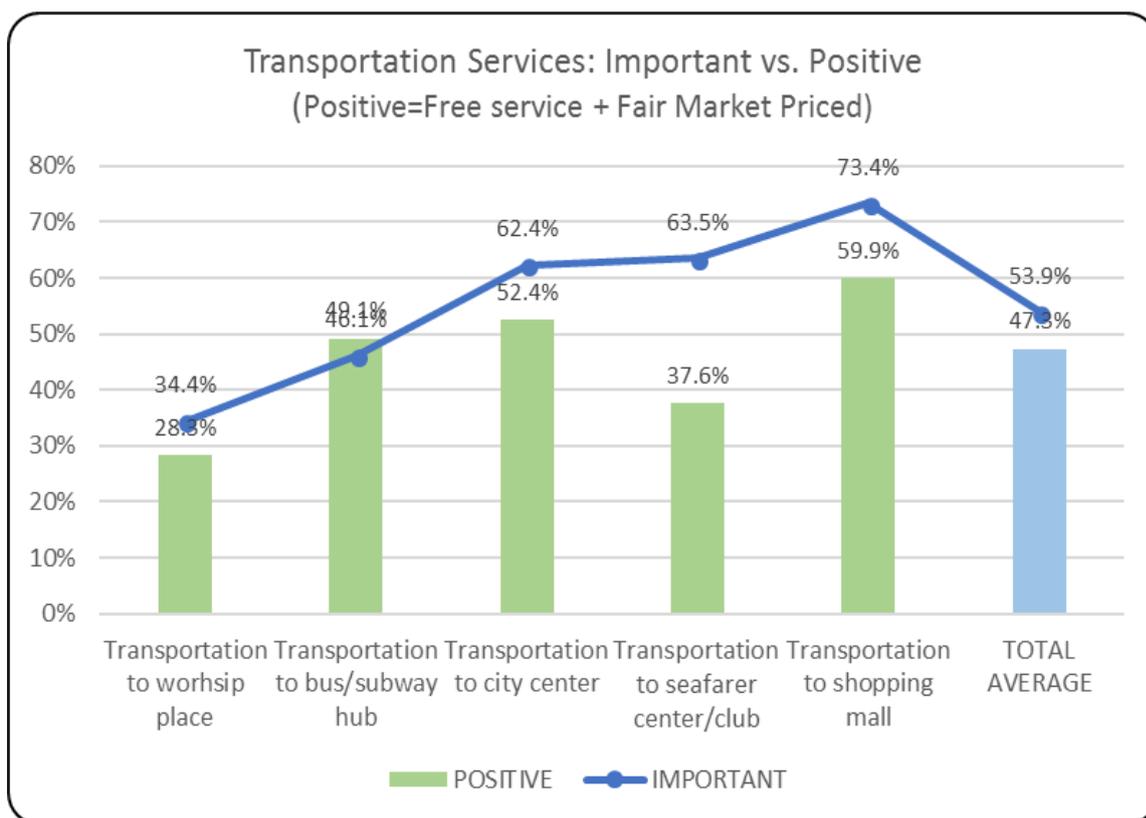
PBWS and their experience of them for the six groups comprising 24 items. Fifty four % of the seafarers consider BPWS to be important but only 48 % of them reported that they had positive experiences for them.

We now turn to specific comparisons.

5.1 Transportation services: Importance compared to positive experience

As Fig. 5.1 shows, the widest gap between importance and experience is for transportation service to seafarer centres: 64% of seafarers ranked this service as important to them but only 38% of them had positive experiences of it. For most of the rest of items, there are still gaps between importance and experience but they are smaller. The only item where there is a match between importance ranking and positive experiences was transportation to bus/subway hub. In general, the survey results shows that the importance that seafarers placed on transportation was not matched by their positive experiences of it.

Fig.5.1 Transportation services: Importance compared to positive experiences

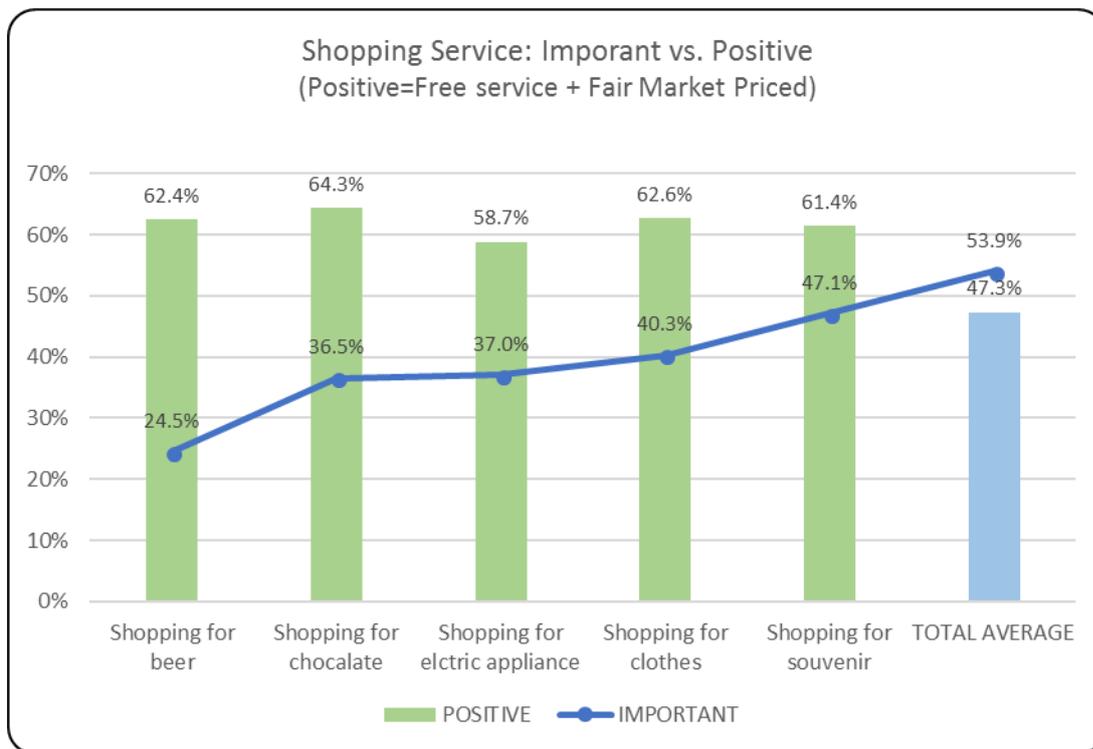


5.2 Shopping services: Importance compared to positive experiences

As Fig. 5.2 shows, the shopping services for various goods were revealing: the seafarers' positive experiences were consistently much higher than was the importance they placed

upon them – this was the only time this occurred in our survey. For instance, 25% of the seafarers considered shopping for beer to be important for them compared to 62% who reported positive experience when buying it. For instance, 47% of the seafarers considered shopping for souvenirs to be important compared to 61% who reported positive experience when buying them. Similarly, importance ranking versus positive experiences for shopping for chocolate was 64% compared to 37%, for shopping for electrical appliances was 37% compared to 59%, and for clothes shopping it was 40% compared to 63%. In sum, shopping was not a problem for the seafarers in China where the supplies of consumer goods are plentiful, with absolutely or relatively lower prices than many other countries. This indicates that the future efforts to improve PBWS should concentrate on other types of service items.

Fig. 5.2 Shopping services: Importance compared to positive experiences

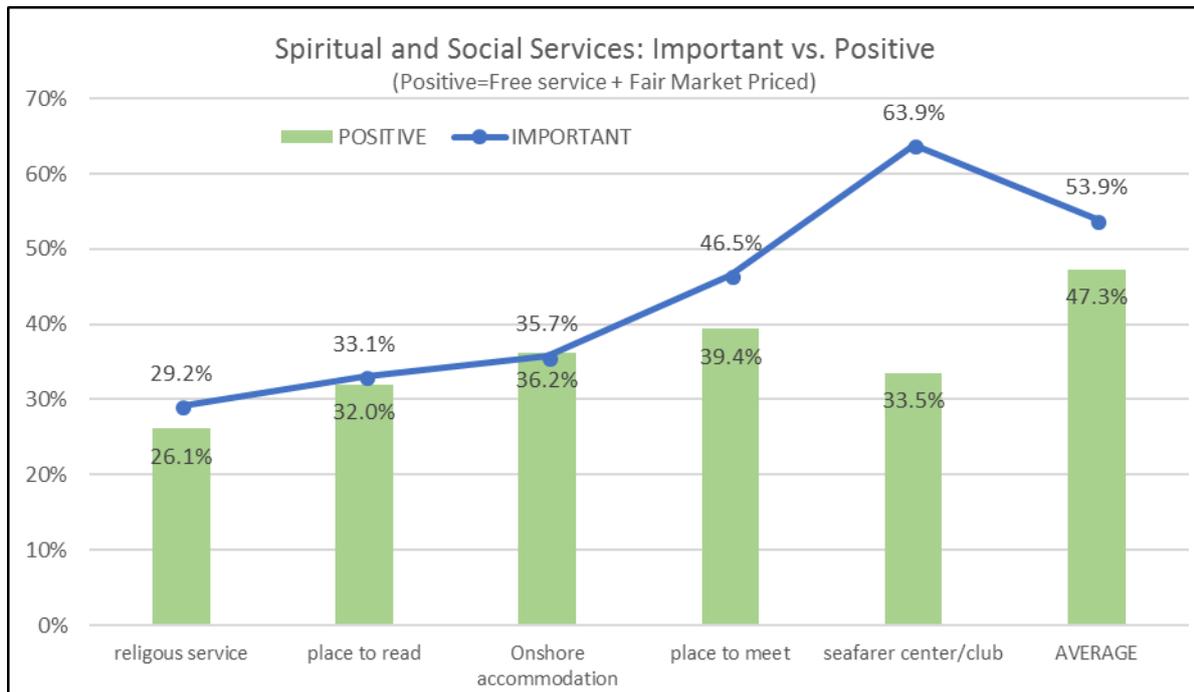


5.3 Spiritual and social services: Importance compared to positive experiences

As Fig. 5.3 shows, the gap between the importance seafarers placed on seafarers' centres or clubs and their positive experiences of these was large: 64% compared to 34%. This again suggest that building non-profit-driven seafarer's centres/clubs needs to be an important feature of the further improvement of PBWS. There was a smaller gap for places to meet other people: 47% compared to 39%.

For the other three items, religious service, place to read, and ashore accommodation, the gap between their importance ranking and positive experience was either small (for religious service was 29% compared to 26%) or non-existent – for a place to read, 33% compared to 32%, and for ashore accommodation, 36% compared to 36%.

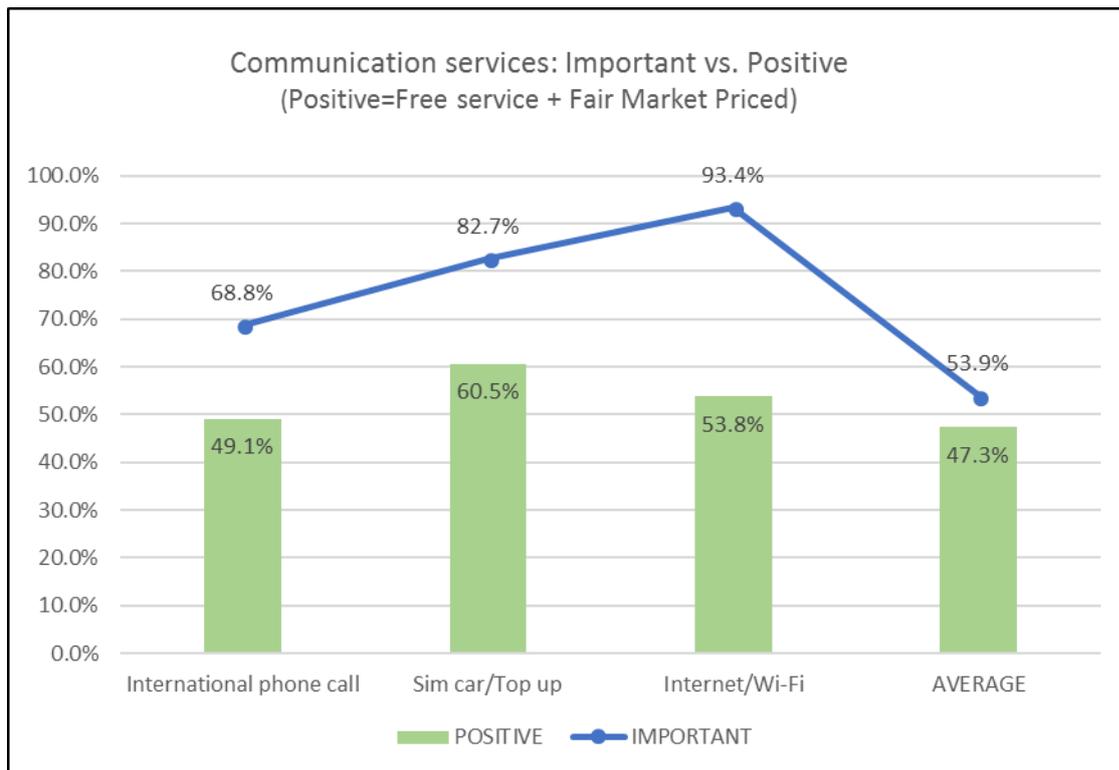
Fig. 5.3 Spiritual and social services: Importance compared to positive experiences



5.4 Communication services: Importance compared to positive experiences of seafarers

As Fig. 5.4 shows, the seafarers in the study ranked all three communication items as important, above their assessments of their positive experiences, despite their assessment of their positive experienced being higher than the average for communication services (47%). Thus, the supply of reasonable communication services lags behind what the seafarers desired.

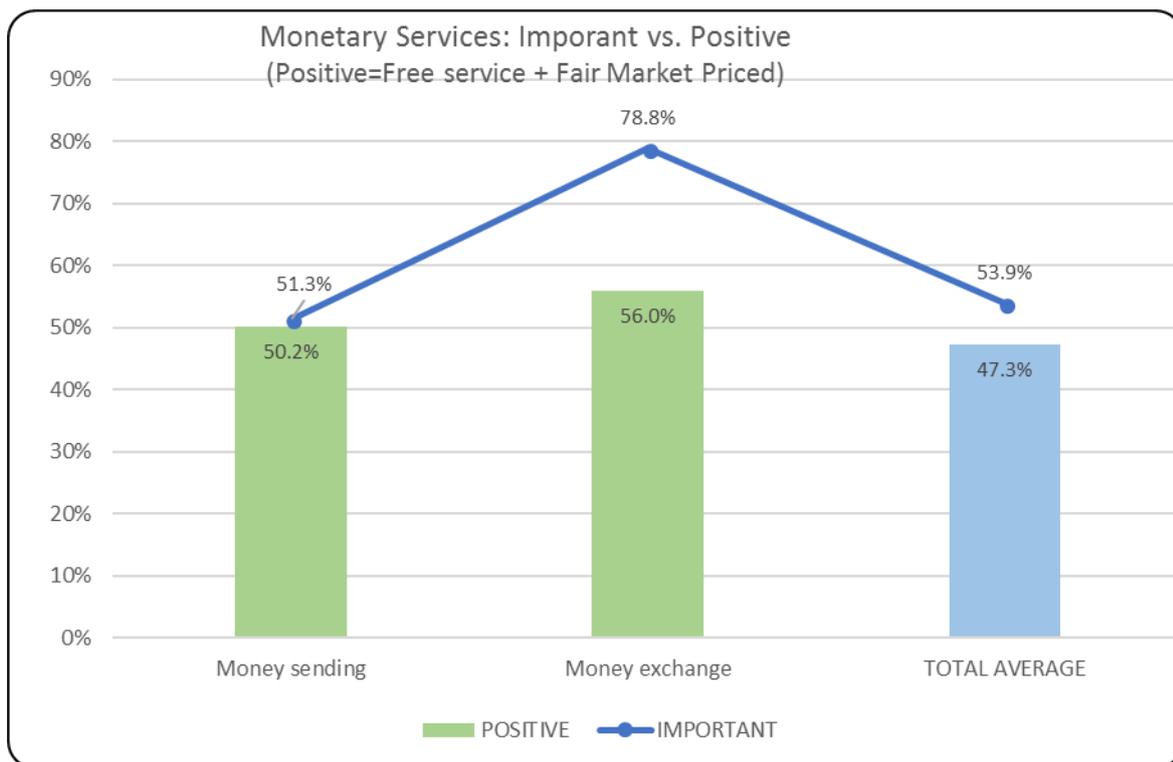
Fig. 5.4 Communication Services: Importance compared to positive experiences



5.5 Monetary services: Importance compared to positive experiences

Fig. 5.5 shows that the gap between importance and positive experiences was large for money exchange services: 79% for importance ranking compared to 56% for positive experiences. The gap between importance ranking and positive experiences for money sending services was small. This difference can be accounted for by comparing the different need for this service for officers and ratings. Ratings considered money sending to be much more important than did officers. Those with lower incomes and less savings were under greater pressure to send money home regularly for the support of their families at home.

Fig. 5.5 Monetary Services: Importance compared to positive experiences

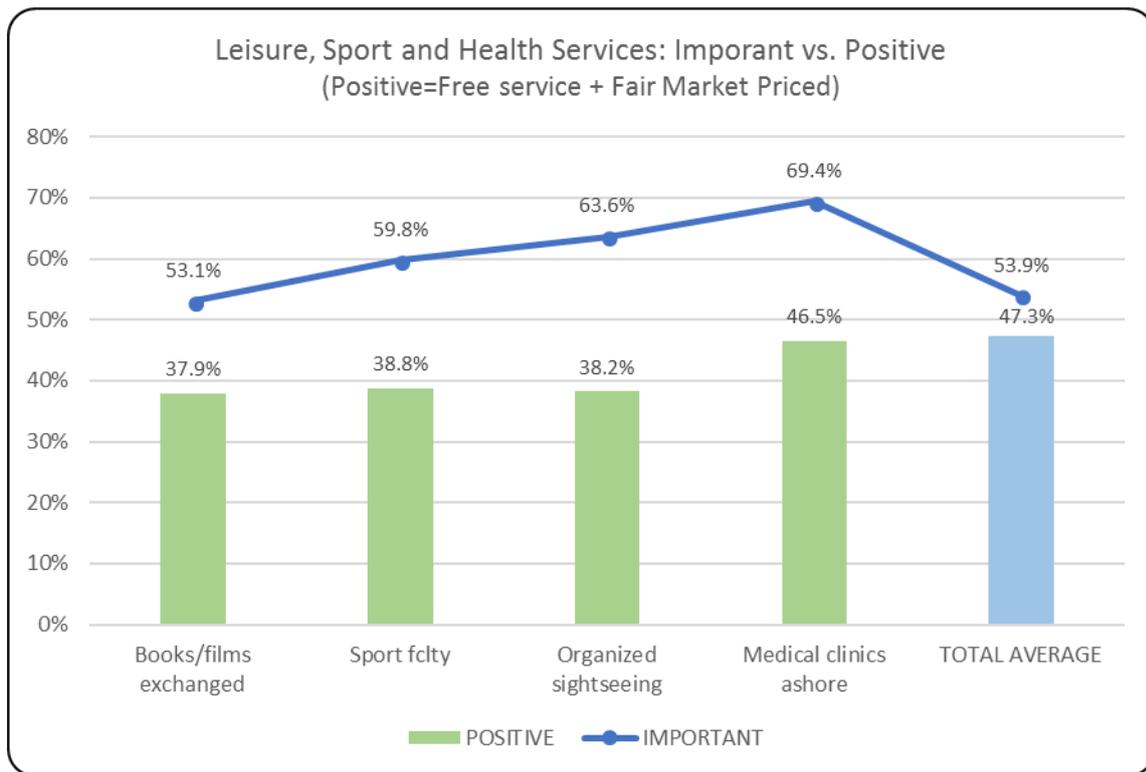


5.6 Leisure, sport and health services: Importance compared to positive experiences

Fig. 5.6 shows that, for all four items for leisure, sport and health services, the gap between importance ranking and positive experiences was consistently large: the seafarers' demands for these services were very high while their positive experiences of them were very low. To be more specific, the gap between the importance ranking and positive experiences was 53% compared to 38% for books/films exchange, 60% compared to 39% for sport facilities, 64% compared to 38% for organized sightseeing, and 70% compared to 47% for medical clinics ashore.

As discussed above in section 4, market forces tend to take part in providing these kinds of services. To fill the gap, coordinated efforts must be made by the stakeholders in the shipping industry to build up non-profit and public interest-orientated services and facilities for seafarers in ports, as pointed out by many of the stakeholders in our interviews.

Fig. 5.6 Leisure, Sport and Health Services: Importance compared to positive experiences



5.7 “Bad experiences” of PBWS in China

To further understand seafarers’ experiences of PBWS in China, we asked the seafarers in our survey whether they experienced any of four bad experience scenarios when they called at Chinese ports. They were asked to choose “No”, “Yes, occasionally”, or “Yes, quite often”. These four bad experiences were as follows:

1. Brought into an overpriced seamen’s club or centre (OVER-PRICED)
2. Rejected by taxi driver for journey to/from the port (REJECTED);
3. Did not receive service due to language barriers (LANGUAGE)
4. Got into a conflict/fight over unfair services (CONFLICTS)

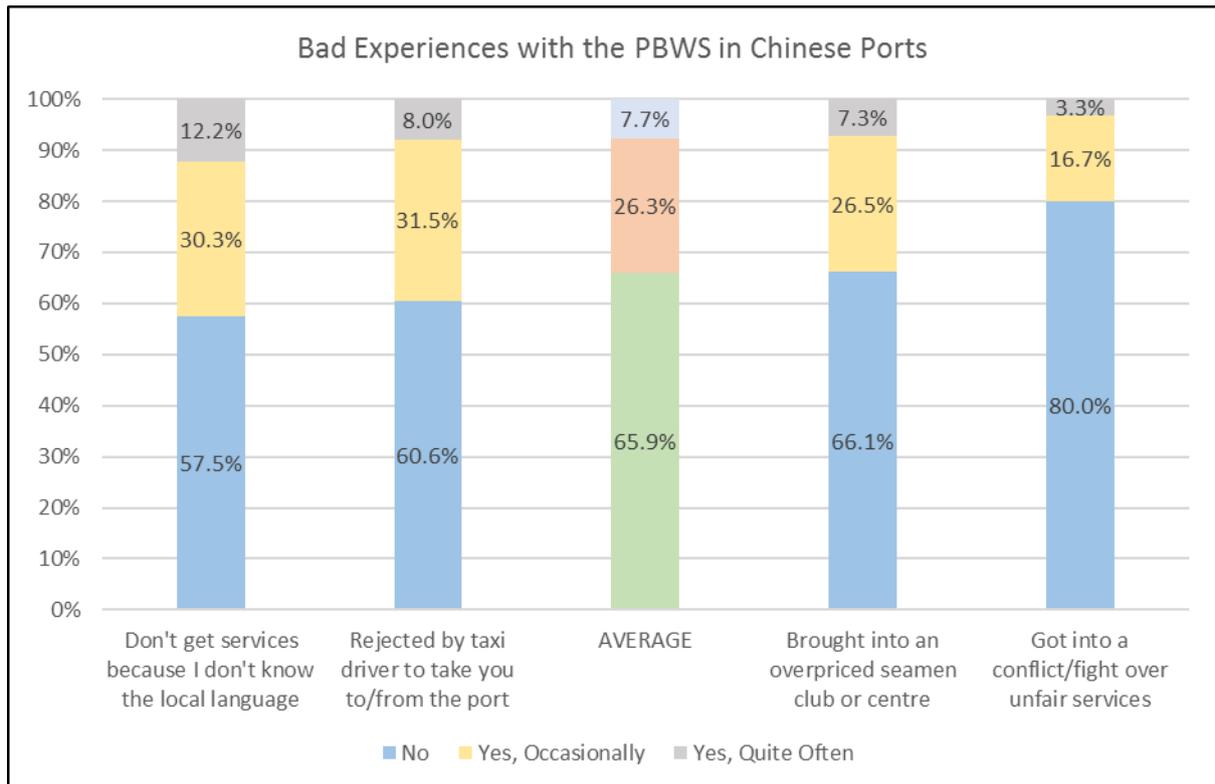
As Fig. 5.7 shows, an average of one third of the seafarers in our survey reported that they had had a bad experiences (“Yes, occasionally” and “Yes, quite often”) for the four scenarios.

More specifically, experiences of language barriers and taxi driver rejections stood out among the four types of bad experiences in Chinese ports: 42% and 40% of the seafarers reported experiences of these – higher than the average of 34%. Twelve percent and 8% of the seafarers reported that they had had these experiences “Quite often”.

A substantial 34% of the seafarers reported that they had been brought into an overpriced seamen club or centre, one that was likely to be the profit-driven rather than public interest-driven: 7% of them reported that they experienced this quite often.

A fifth of seafarers reported that they got into a conflict or fight over unfair services during their visit to a Chinese port either occasionally (17%) or quite often (3%). This last percentage is small, but it is, nevertheless, the most serious type of bad experience.

Fig. 5.7 Bad experiences in Chinese ports



5.8 Loneliness aboard and shore leave

Working aboard on long journey often leads seafarers to feel of socially isolated and depressed; sometimes even to feel suicidal. How to ensure seafarers have decent access to PBWS or facilities is a critical concern of the MLC 2016.

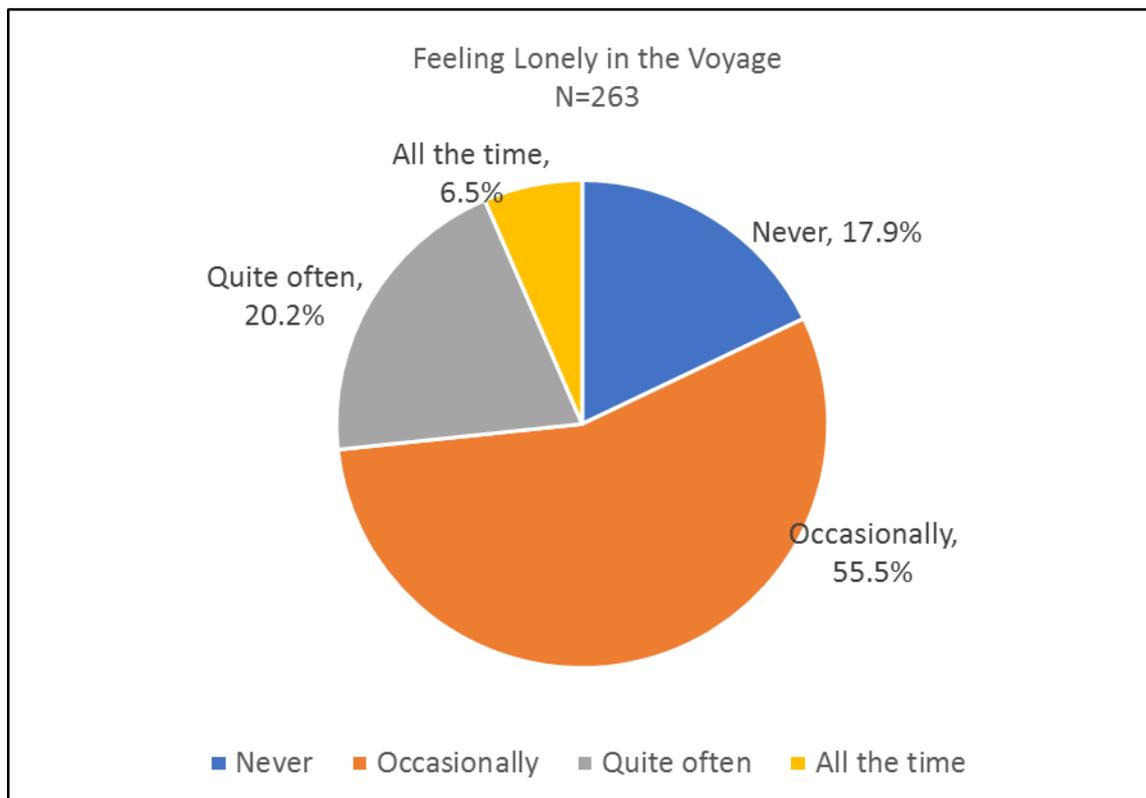
In our study, we investigated to what extend that the seafarers in our survey felt lonely aboard: whether they feel lonely all the time, quite often, occasionally, or never. The seafarers' response indicates the importance of their having a decent place in the port area in which to socialize when ashore during their voyages.

Loneliness

As shown in Fig. 5.8a, only 18% of the seafarers stated that they never felt lonely aboard, while 80% reported some degree of feeling lonely: 56% felt lonely occasionally, 20% quite often, and 7% all the time. The combination of the last two categories (“Quite often” and “All the time”) show that 27% of the seafarers suffered from a notable degree of loneliness.

Due to the seriousness of this issue, further research is needed with sufficient funding, to conduct a larger scale study with a robust random sampling design.

Fig. 5.8a Feeling lonely on the Voyage



Shore Leave in general and specifically in China

Taking shore leaves at port is acknowledged as an important means of reducing the negative impact on seafarers of the social isolation and loneliness that they suffer aboard, as well as reducing fatigue caused by their hard labour aboard. Shore leave is also codified as a social right of seafarers in the title 4.4 of MCL2006.

In our study, we investigated experiences of the seafarers in our study of taking shore leave in Chinese ports. We asked them about their shore leave experiences both in general and specifically in China

The seafarer’s shore leave experiences in general are set out in Fig. 5.8b and c.

Fig.5.8b Number of shore leaves in last 30 days

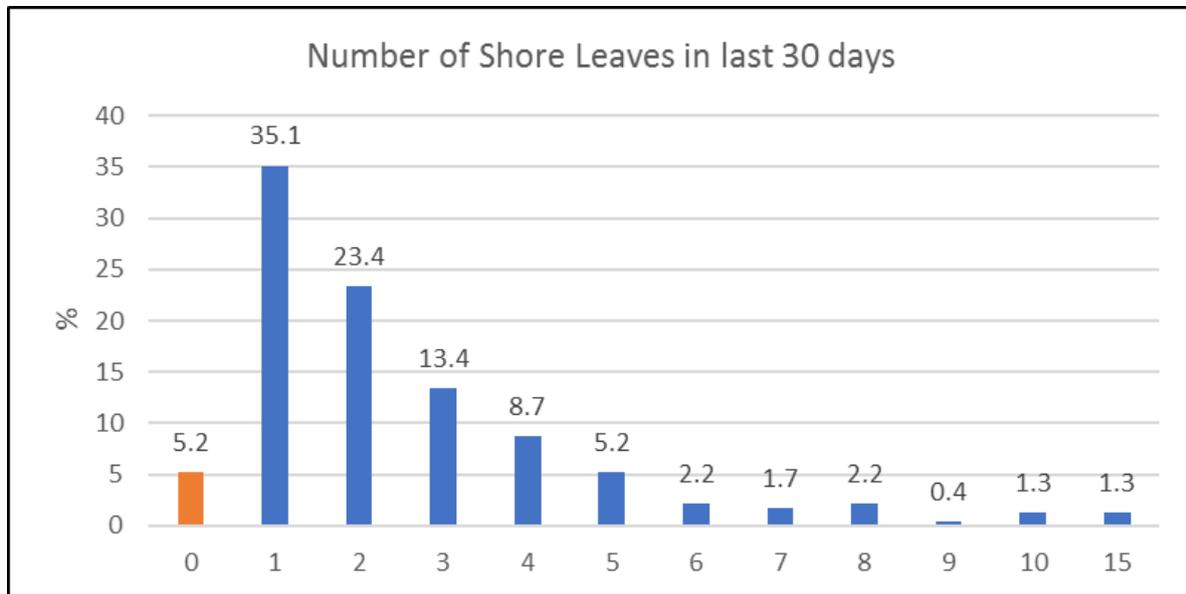


Fig.5.8c Descriptive statistics for seafarers’ shore leave experiences

| | Valid N | Missing N | Mean | Median | Mode | SD |
|---|------------|--------------|------|--------|------|--------|
| Ports visited last 30 days | 266 | 29 | 5.1 | 4 | 3 | 3.117 |
| Shore leaves last 30 days | 231 | 64 | 2.6 | 2 | 1 | 2.439 |
| Longest shore leave hours | 209 | 86 | 7.4 | 5 | 4 | 8.4081 |
| Shortest shore leave hours | 180 | 115 | 3.5 | 2 | 2 | 4.2461 |
| Average shore leave hours | 175 | 120 | 4.5 | 4 | 3 | 4.3722 |
| Hours of shore leave for all seafarers in China | 153 | 142 | 7.3 | 5 | 6 | 8.9647 |

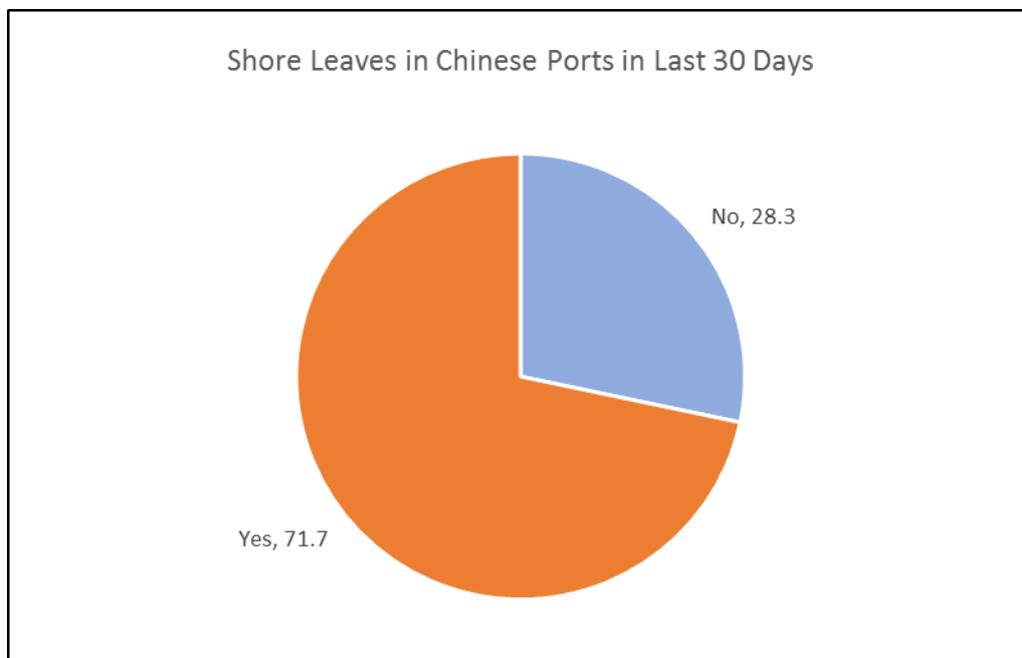
In terms of median value (the middle value of a survey, a measurement that reduces the impact of extreme observations), the seafarers in our survey visited five ports in the last 30 days, took two shore leaves, and spent four hours ashore (the longest was seven hours and shortest two hours). Only 5 % reported that they did not take any shore leave in the last 30 days. Most took between one and three shore leaves.

Specifically for their shore leave experiences in China, the median value of shore leave time was five hours per leave (the average was seven hours, reflecting very long leaves when a ship was being repaired in a Chinese dock). This is similar to the number of hours leave reported above for all ports (see Fig. 5.8c).

What is surprising is the percentage of the seafarers who were not able to take shore leave in China (28%). This is almost six times higher than the percentage of seafarers who did not take shore leaves in non-Chinese ports (5% only) (see Fig. 5.8d).

In our study, we investigated the reasons why more seafarers who took less shore leave in China than they did in other countries. We discuss these further below.

Fig. 5.8d Shore leaves in Chinese ports in last 30 days



Factors accounting for seafarers not going ashore in Chinese ports

In order to explore what factors prevented seafarers from taking shore leaves in China, we presented the seafarers with a list of seven possible barriers. The seafarers were asked to choose a response: “Not influential”, “Not very influential”, “So so”, “Some Influence” or “Very Influential”. The list of obstacles comprised the following:

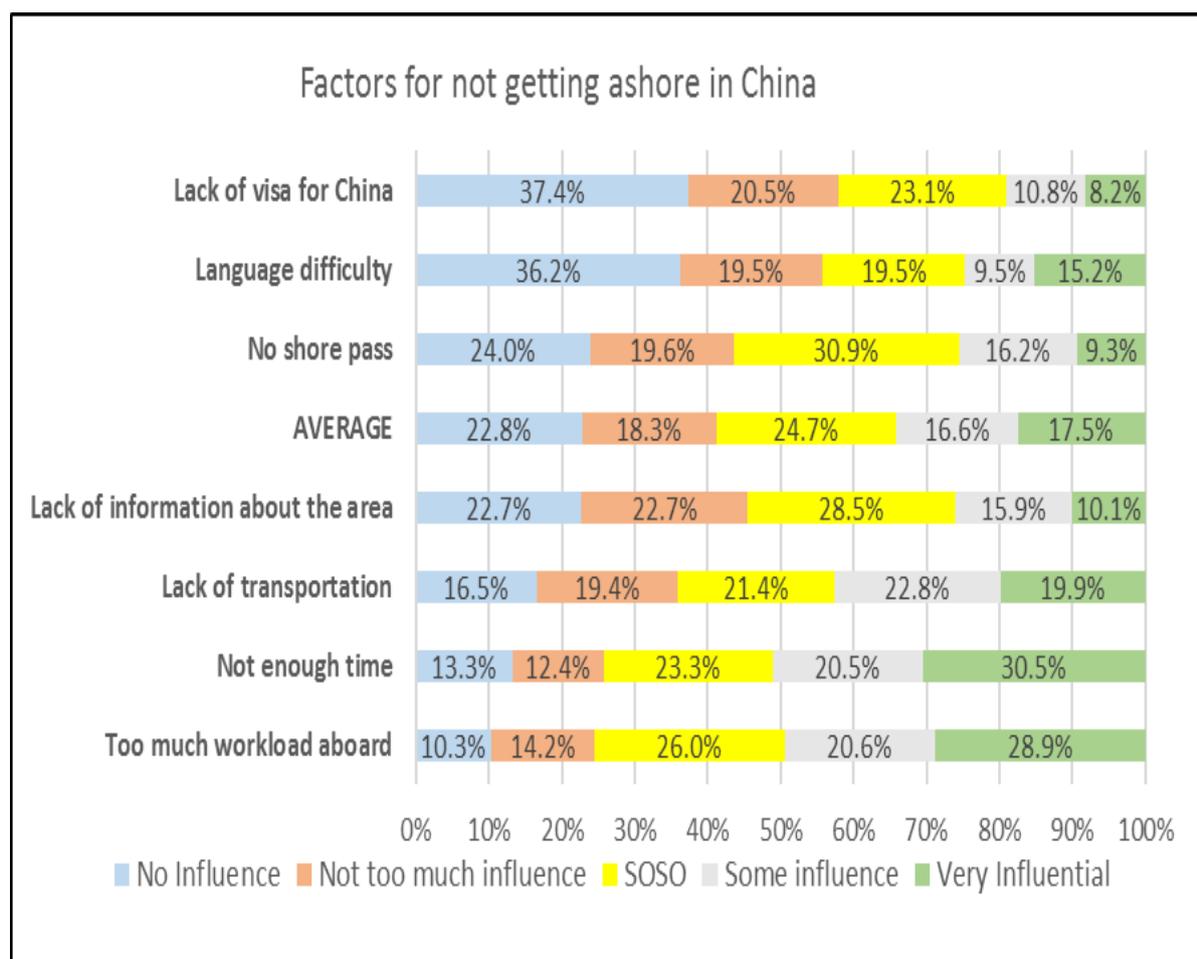
- Lack of visa for China
- Language difficulty
- No shore-pass
- Lack of information about the area
- Lack of transportation
- Not enough time
- Too much workload aboard

As Fig. 5.8e shows, the most important factors in preventing the seafarers taking shore leave in China were the last two items, Not enough time and Too much workload aboard: about 50% of the seafarers consider these two items were either of “Some influence” (21%) or “Very influential” (30%) in explaining why they could not take shore leave.

The next most frequently chosen item was Lack of transportation: 43% of the seafarers identified lack of transportation as an influential factor in preventing them getting onshore in China (23% opted for “Some influence” and 20% for “Very influential”). It is interesting to note that, according to our research, seafarers do not need visa to go ashore in Chinese ports. China has not yet ratified the ILO 185 but has been active in moving in this direction, as we found in our interviews with senior government officials in charge of maritime affairs.

For the other four 4 items, including Lack of information, No shore pass, Language difficulty and Lack of visa, between one fifth and one quarter of the seafarers considered these to be influential in preventing them from going ashore.

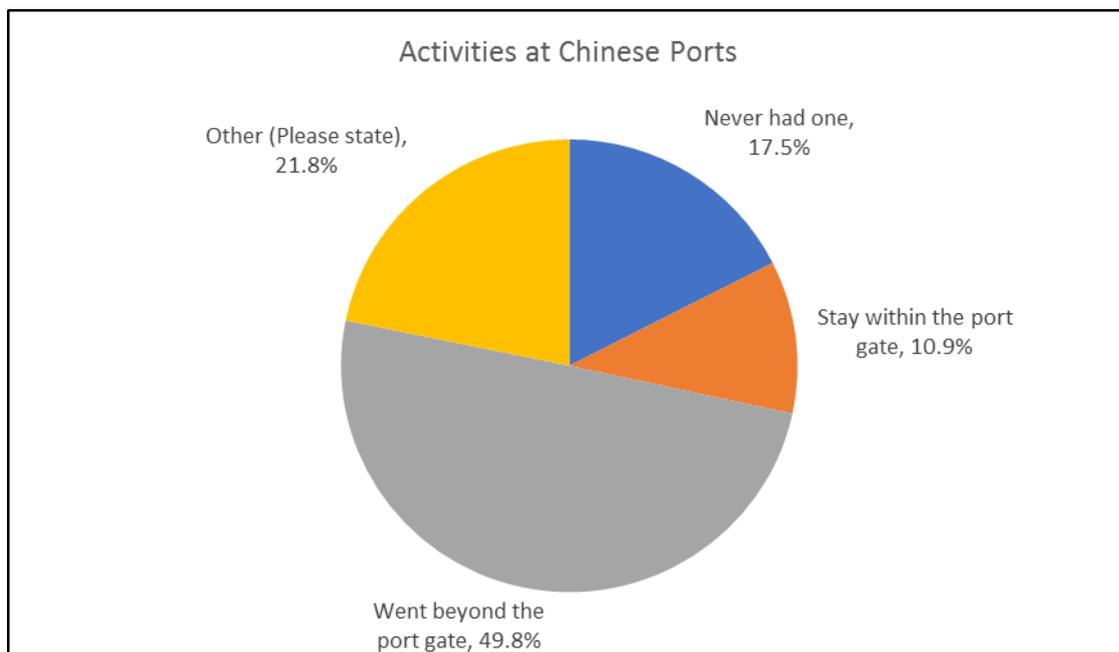
Fig. 5.8e Factors accounting for seafarers’ not going ashore in China



Activities at Chinese ports

We also asked the seafarers what they did in Chinese ports once they got ashore. As shown in Fig. 5.8f, about half of them stated that they went beyond the port gate. In contrast, 11% stated that they only stayed within the port gates and 18% stated that they never went ashore. Combining the last two items shows that about 29% of the seafarers who called at Chinese port did not go beyond the port gates. This is not surprising since most of the Chinese ports have no place for the seafarers to go to for relaxation and do not provide reliable transportation to take them away from the ports to other places.

Fig. 5.8f Activities at Chinese Ports



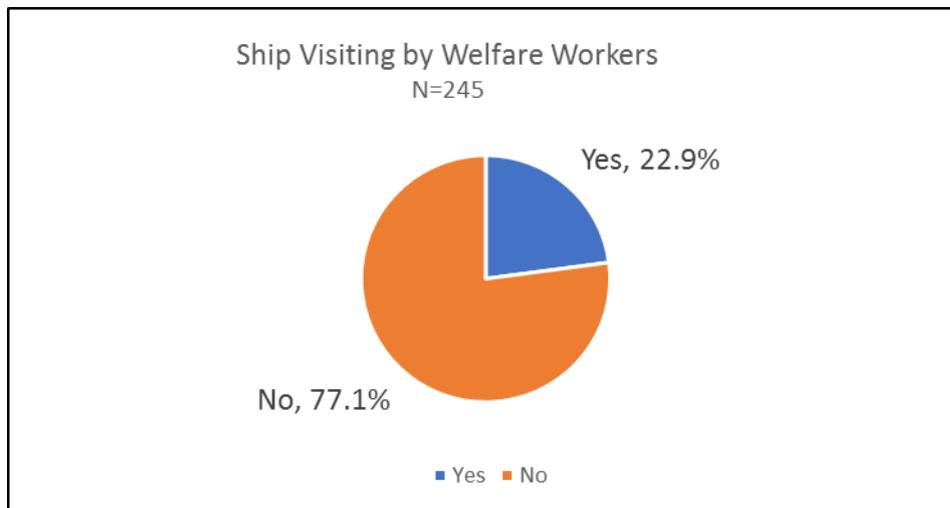
In short, our study shows that there are still substantial gaps in facilitating seafarers to take shore leaves and in breaking their social isolation.

5.9 Ship visits

Ship visits has been a standard approach to assist the seafarers to break up the social isolations aboard, especially those who do not have time to take shore leave. We asked what seafarers experiences when they called at Chinese ports.

For the question whether there was any welfare worker visiting the seafarer's your ship in a Chinese port, 23% answered "Yes" and 77% "No". See Fig. 5.9a.

Fig. 5.9a Ship visiting by welfare workers



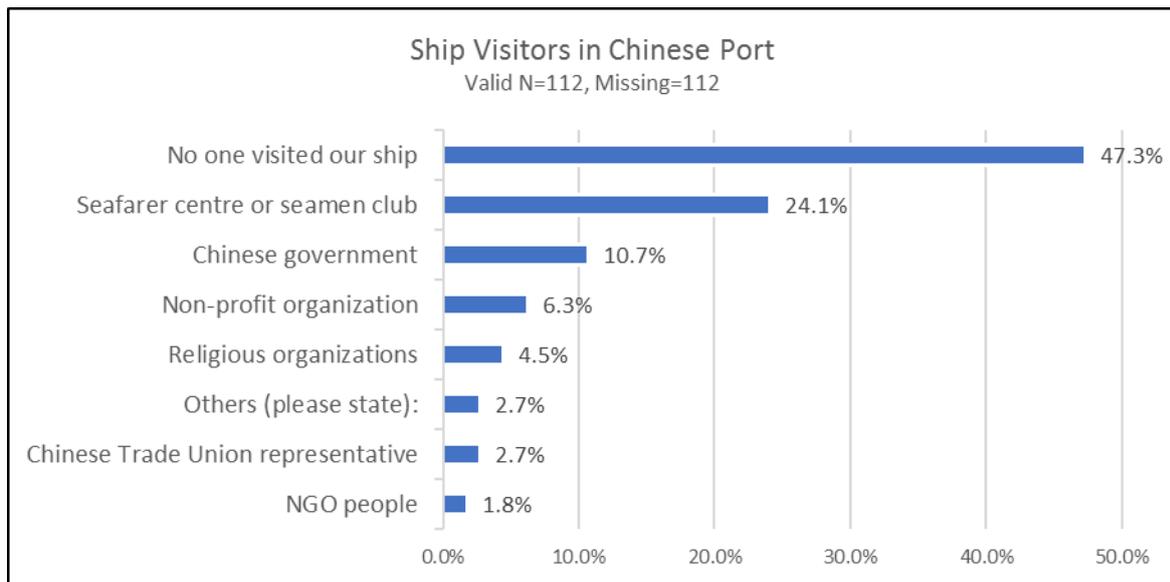
To explore who or which organisations visited ships visitors in Chinese ports, we provided the seafarers with a list of 8 choices:

- No one visited our ship
- Seafarer centre/club
- Chinese government
- Non-profit organization
- Religious organization
- Chinese trade union representative
- NGO
- Others

As Fig. 5.9b shows, among the seafarers who answered this question (N=112), 24% reported that visitors came from seafarer centres or seamen's clubs, 11 % from the Chinese Government, 6% from non-profit organization, and 5% from religious organization. 47 % stated that no one visited their ships.

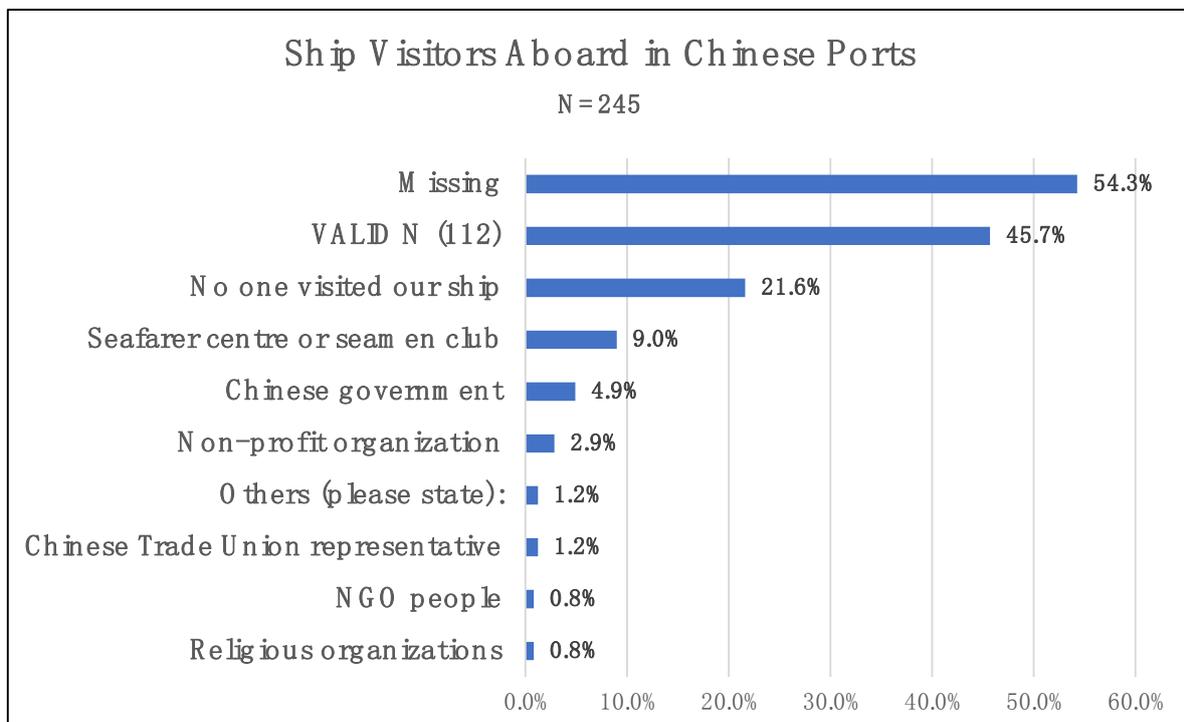
If we exclude the Hong Kong ports, only 19% of the seafarers' claimed that ship visitors in mainland Chinese ports came from a seafarers' centre or a seamen club and only 1.7% came from religious organizations.

Fig.5.9b Ship visitors in Chinese ports



If we calculate the distribution of ship visitors, taking into account all responses from the 245 seafarers, including those who did not answer this question, the number of ship visitors becomes much scarcer. In this case, only 9% of ship visitors came from seafarer’s centre or seamen club, 5% from the Chinese Government, 3% from non-profit organization, and about 1% from Chinese trade union representatives, from NGOs and from religious organizations (see Fig. 5.9c).

Fig.5.9c Ship visitors on board in Chinese ports

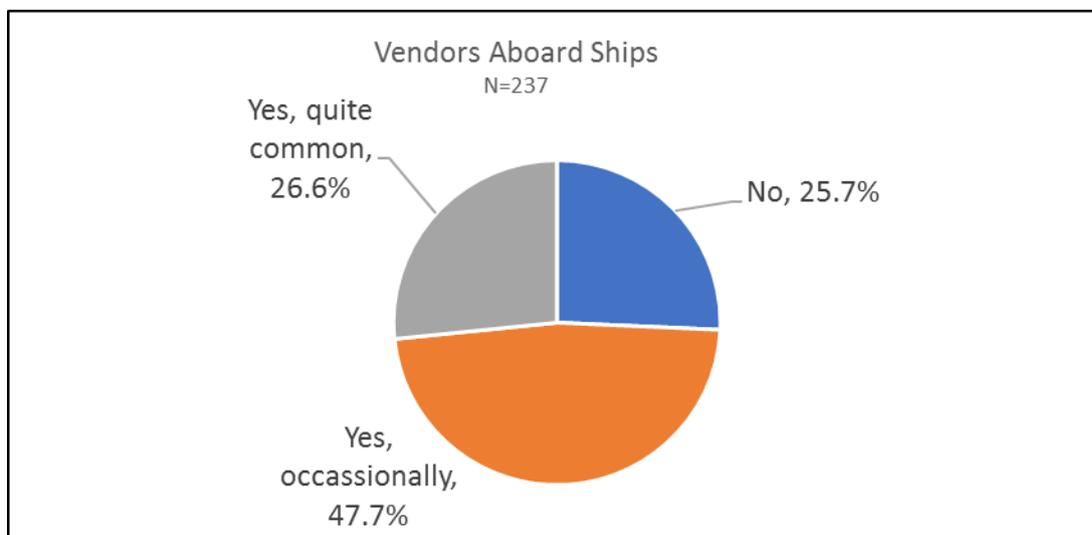


5.10 Seafarers' Experiences with vendors aboard

Vendors are small business people who manage somehow to get access inside the otherwise guarded ports to trade with the seafarers, either on the ships or right next to the ships in the berths. They represent an important market force meeting the seafarers' needs, especially in terms of purchasing of consumer goods. We investigated the presence of vendors in Chinese ports and how the seafarers evaluated their experiences of them.

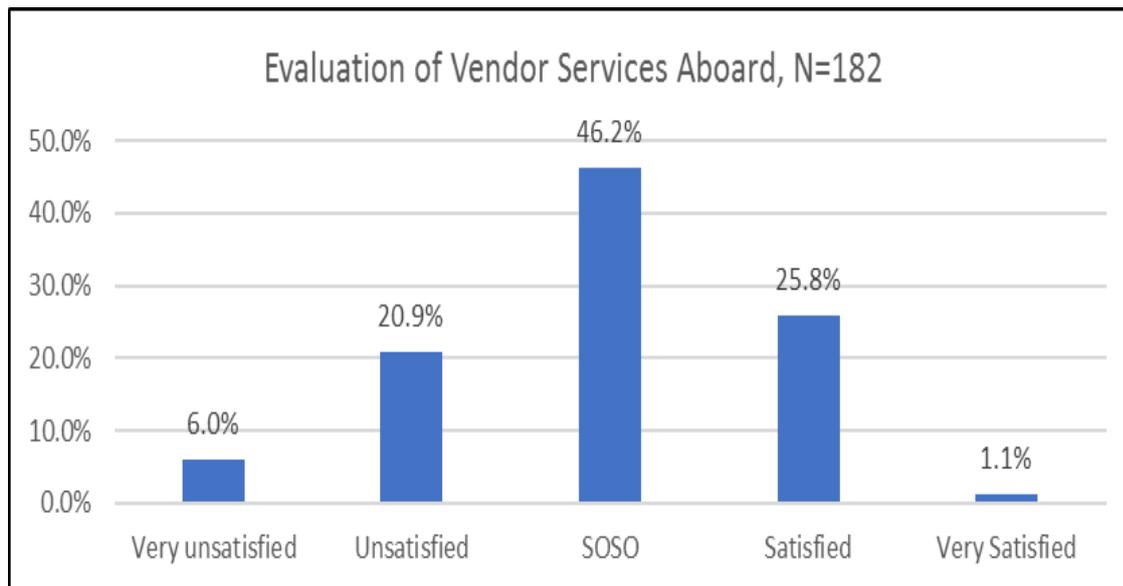
Our survey data shows that it is a common phenomenon to see small vendors aboard ship: only 26% of the seafarers stated that they never saw a vendor aboard, while 48% stated that they saw them aboard occasionally and 27% stated that their presence aboard was common. Altogether, 75% of the seafarers in our survey had encountered small vendors aboard. See Fig. 5.9c.

Fig. 5.9c Vendors on board ships



As Fig. 5.9d shows, the seafarers' rating of the services provided by the small vendors aboard was mixed; the distribution of their ratings approximated a normal curve. While 46% of the seafarers choose "So so", an indication of neither positive nor negative feeling, the distribution of satisfaction or dissatisfaction was the same: 27% were satisfied and 27% were dissatisfied. The number of extreme positive and negative ratings was small. The distribution of "very dissatisfied", was, however, six times larger than that of "very satisfied" (6% compared to 1%). In our interviews with the seafarers, a few seafarers complained that the products they bought from the vendors aboard were pirated and of poor quality. There were complaints about the poor quality mobile phones and sim-cards, as we discussed in 4.4 above.

Fig. 5.9d Evaluation of vendor services aboard



PART IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.0 CONCLUSION

The restructuring of the global shipping industry in the last few decades has resulted in many challenges for PBWS around the world. Ports are getting bigger and located further away from urban centres. Crew size is getting smaller. The turnaround time is getting shorter. In China, these challenges are compounded by the impact of wide-ranging social and economic transformation that has resulted in rapid marketization. Market forces and mechanisms have brought prosperity to China, helping make the country one of the major maritime nations in the world. At the same time, the Chinese State has withdrawn much of its resources from non-profit service sectors, including its funding for the international seafarers' clubs in Chinese ports. For most ISCs, state funding has been cut, with the result that their staff numbers have been greatly reduced and much of the ISCs' activities have been outsourced.

Our study found that the level of PBWS for visiting seafarers in Chinese ports was mixed. Most of the available services were provided via the market mechanism. While a small number of seafarers had positive experiences of the ISCs' provision of shopping opportunities, transportation, social activities, communication and leisure, sport and health services, the majority had negative experiences – a lack of services or information on services, and being overcharged. Overall, while seafarers' need for shopping is well taken care of by market forces, there is a large gap between their needs for transport, communication, and leisure, sport and health services and their experiences of provision of

these in non-profit-driven seafarers' centres/clubs. This gap between what seafarers want and what they have received deserves serious attention from policy makers and practitioners in the industry. Action needs to be taken in order to provide a better match between the provision of PBWS and seafarers' needs in Chinese ports.

Our study also found that, in China, both the shipping industry and the trade unions are particularly enthusiastic about Regulation 4.4 in MLC2006 and they have expressed strong interest in supporting the implementation of this provision. Interestingly, while the Government considers Regulation 4.4 to be important, officials at the local and provincial levels regard PBWS as the trade unions' responsibility. It is important to note that all the Chinese institutional stakeholders believed that Regulation 4.4 would be most efficiently and effectively implemented if the Central Government were to issue clear instructions for its implementation in Chinese ports.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the SWiC team would like to make the following recommendations for change and improvement of PBWS in the Chinese port:

- Despite current changes and challenges, ISCs in China remain the strongest available institutional and material infrastructure for the provision of PBWS for visiting seafarers. They should be revitalised and given more support from the Government, industry, trade unions, and other relevant parties or partners. Funding sources must be diversified to ensure that the ISCs have adequate resources to support their daily operation. Ship levies, which have been successfully utilised in some world ports, could be introduced as a relatively reliable source of income for these clubs.
- New facilities should be set up as soon as possible in the new/mega ports, especially at remote sites such as Yangshan Deep Water Port in Shanghai so that visiting seafarers' urgent welfare needs are met.
- "Fair-market forces" should be encouraged to continue to provide services for seafarers so that they do not feel exploited when purchasing these.
- Efforts should be made to enhance shipping awareness in China and to encourage non-Governmental Organisations including faith and other volunteer institutions to work with ISCs in providing PBWS for seafarers.
- The provision of PBWS for seafarers, a group of industrial workers with specific needs, must not be left entirely to market forces. The market's focus on financial efficiency could result in its providing only those services that are profitable. Much of the PBWS services have a social focus that this makes it hard for them to make a profit. Seafarers' need for non-profit driven seafarers' centres or clubs is imperative. As total dependence upon the State is unrealistic in present day China, and, as the State has subjected faith and volunteer organisations to strict party control, smart ways need to be developed in order to ensure sustainable PBWS for seafarers.

- It would be helpful if the ITF Seafarers Trust, in association with other stakeholders, could arrange for the ACFTU and representatives of ISCs from China to have a “study visit” that would provide an opportunity for the PBWS providers to compare notes and share experiences, including best practices, with colleagues at seafarers’ centres at selected ports in western counties.
- All the key stakeholders contacted for this study in China believe that a united front is necessary for the implementation of Reg.4.4, which would provide effective PBWS for seafarers in Chinese ports. Also pertinent is that the Reg.4.4 concept is essentially the same as the International Port Welfare Programme’s (IPWP) concept, which has recently made a breakthrough in China and has received very positive feedback in Shanghai as a result of the joint efforts of the ISWAN, the MNWB and the CCM. Thus, it is important for the partners involved in PBWS to develop further activities to promote the concept of the IPWP and to develop port welfare committees, or similar mechanisms, in Chinese ports. These promotional activities should continue to be carried out sensitively, preferably with support of key stakeholders in the Chinese Government, trade unions and the industry.
- Finally, given that the Chinese Government has attached great significance to developing the country into a maritime power under President Xi’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), it would be useful to encourage the ACFTU to utilise China’s existing maritime tri-partite mechanism to link Reg. 4.4 and MLC2006 to Xi’s BRI Initiative. This has the potential to win support from the Government: such support is the key to implementing successfully the ILO Convention and improving PBWS in China for world seafarers.

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