



2024

# Research Report

Seafarers' Experience in Vessel Clearance in Nigerian Seaports, Jetties and Terminals.





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study "Assessing the Impact of Vessel and Cargo clearance on Seafarers' Experience in Nigerian Seaports," examines the impact of improved vessel clearance procedures on seafarers' experiences and wellbeing. It aims to identify policy enhancements and further research avenues, utilising evidence-based research and a comprehensive survey of seafarers, by the National Seafarers' Welfare Board of Nigeria (NSWBN).

Forty (40) multinational seafarers, of which 55% were Nigerians, responded to the survey over a three month period. The survey revealed that seafarers face various challenges at ports, terminal, and jetties, influenced by factors such as the frequency of their visits, limited knowledge of standard operating procedures at offshore oil and gas terminals, and lack of access to diverse support needs.

While 35% of surveyed seafarers were happy with Port Officials signifying some improvement, most reported experiencing one form of demand for corrupt payment and a bribe, with some being forced to pay as a way of resolving issues arising during a clearance process.

Port agents and shipping companies, the data revealed, play a role in resolving issues, but not completely. Some of the respondents reported received training or guidance on how to interact with public officials, primarily

through e-learning methods. The findings highlight dealings with seafarers in the process of facilitating maritime traffic, and their support at Nigerian ports.

The study also highlights the importance of addressing the well-being of seafarers in Nigerian seaports, focusing on welfare, physical health, safety and fair treatment. It recommends tailoring trainings, better support from shipping companies and agents, promoting transparency in vessel clearance procedures, and implementing robust anti-corruption measures to improve seafarers experience and image of Nigeria. Further study is needed to investigate the long-term impact of port experiences on mental and physical health, job performance, and career satisfaction.

This report is structured to contain 14 sections, including references.

## ABOUT THE REPORT AUTHOR

The National Seafarers' Welfare Board of Nigeria (NSWBN) is a non-governmental organisation that coordinates the welfare and wellbeing of seafarers through its constituent members of seafarers' ports welfare committee in seaports, terminals and jetties. The Board conduct seafarers' welfare research, training and continuous professional development. NSWBN also advocates for the welfare of seafarers, their mental health, fair treatment, representation and attendance to those abandoned.

## DISCLAIMER

This study "Assessing the Impact of Vessel Clearance on Seafarers' Experience in Nigerian Seaports," is for information and academic purposes only. The findings and recommendations of the report are based on data from the survey available to NSWBN up to the research completion date and are subject to change over-time. The authors and their affiliated institutions are not liable for any consequences resulting from its use.

# **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

The maritime industry is a vital part of global trade, with seafarers playing a crucial role in navigating the challenges of living and working at sea. Vessel clearance is a crucial process that involves interactions with seafarers, port authorities, and governmental agencies. The experiences of seafarers during vessel clearance procedures impacts their job satisfaction, mental health, and commitment to the maritime profession. However, the specifics of vessel clearance implementation and the quality of interactions can vary across different ports and regions.

This study aims to investigate the impact of vessel clearance procedures on seafarers' experiences in Nigerian seaports, aiming to understand factors that contribute to the enhancement or degradation of seafarers' experiences. The insights derived from this report can inform policy, practice, and procedural reforms that can enhance port operations, efficiency, and the well-being of seafarers.

This introduction outlines the objectives, scope, and limitations of a study on seafarers' experiences during vessel clearance processes. It also explains the methodology, including design, data collection, and analysis that will enhance the facilitation of maritime traffic and seafarers' quality of life.

## **1.0. Objectives**

This study examines the interactions between seafarers and port officials in Nigerian seaports, focusing on vessel clearance procedures. It aims to examine challenges and impacts on seafarers' well-

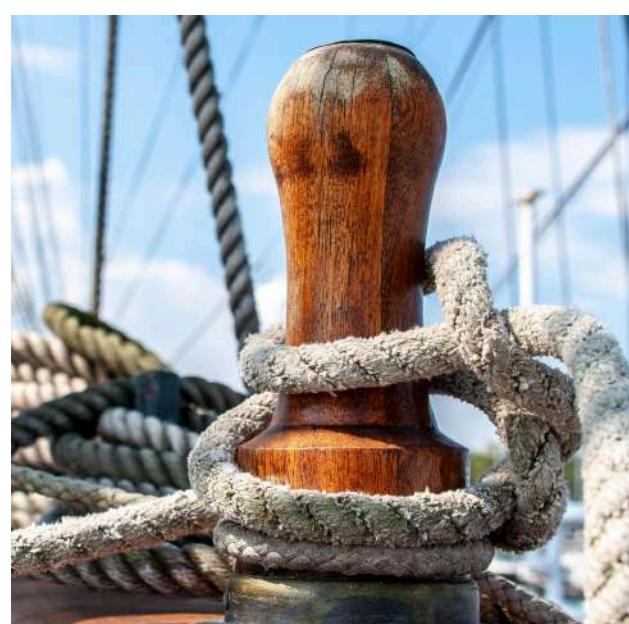
being, and job satisfaction, by identifying where applicable, corruption and bribery, exploring port agents' roles, and evaluating training and guidance for seafarers in the interactions.

## **2.0. Scope and limitation**

This study examines seafarers' experiences in Nigerian seaports, focusing on vessel clearance procedures, and acknowledging potential limitations due to subjective perceptions & data challenges.

## **3.0. Methodology**

The study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, used to gather data from seafarers. It analyses the data using statistical and thematic analysis techniques. The assessment commences with a literature review, profiling seafarers, their port experiences, characteristics and interaction with port stakeholders, the standard operating procedures, challenges to wellbeing, corrupt practices, port agents, shipping companies, and training.



## SECTION 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 1.0. Seafarers' Wellbeing and Experiences

The maritime industry is a unique and challenging one. Seafarers navigate not only the vast expanses of the open sea but also the intricacies of their own psychological and emotional landscapes. The demands of seafaring go beyond the physical tasks of operating a vessel. They extend to the psychological resilience required to cope with extended periods of isolation, rigorous work schedules, and the detachment from familiar support systems. As such, seafarers' experiences encompass a delicate equilibrium between the demands of their profession and the necessity for personal well-being.

Recent studies have shown the multifaceted dimensions of seafarers' experiences, uncovering the psychological stressors that accompany life at sea.<sup>[1]</sup> The extended durations away from home, coupled with the intense and often unpredictable nature of maritime work, can result in feelings of loneliness, emotional exhaustion, and even symptoms of anxiety and depression. The vessel clearance process, acting as a bridge between the maritime and terrestrial worlds, introduces a crucial element into the lives of seafarers.

The interactions that seafarers encounter during vessel clearance procedures hold significance that extends beyond administrative efficiency. These interactions whether positive or negative, can significantly impact seafarers' mental and emotional states.

A seamless and respectful encounter with port authorities and government agency officials can bolster seafarers' sense of dignity and contribute to their psychological well-being.

Conversely, encounters marked by bureaucratic hurdles, opaque processes, or even instances of corruption can heighten stress levels and contribute to the erosion of seafarers' mental health.

Furthermore, the implications of seafarers' well-being explore the broader maritime landscape. Their contentment and mental state are intimately linked with job satisfaction and performance<sup>[2]</sup>. Positive port experiences, characterised by transparent procedures and respectful interactions, have been shown to elevate seafarers' job commitment and overall morale. In contrast, negative experiences can lead to reduced job satisfaction, decreased motivation, and even consideration of leaving the profession. The consequences of these dynamics reach beyond individual lives, affecting the efficiency and safety of maritime operations.

The existing body of research provides insights into the complex interplay between seafarers' well-being and their experiences within the maritime domain. Recent studies have systematically analyzed various facets of seafarers' mental health, shedding light on the challenges they face and proposing interventions to improve their overall well-being. For instance, a systematic review by Brooks and Greenberg<sup>[3]</sup> delves into factors affecting the mental health of maritime

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[1] ISWAN's Seafarers' Health Information Program (SHIP). Psychological Wellbeing at Sea. Available at [https://www.seafarerswelfare.org/assets/documents/ship/Psychological-Wellbeing-at-Sea-English\\_2020-08-21-143048.pdf](https://www.seafarerswelfare.org/assets/documents/ship/Psychological-Wellbeing-at-Sea-English_2020-08-21-143048.pdf) Accessed on August 8, 2023

[2] Dr. Pennie Blackburn, Mentally Healthy Ships (2020), ISWAN. Key Findings from ITF Seafarers' Trust & Yale University Seafarer Mental Health Study. Available at <https://www.seafarerswelfare.org/assets/documents/resources/Mentally-Healthy-Ships.pdf> Accessed on August 8, 2023

[3] Brooks, S.K., Greenberg, N. "Mental health and psychological wellbeing of maritime personnel: a systematic review". BMC Psychol 10, 139 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-022-00850-4>

personnel, including demographics, work environment stress, family impact, coping strategies, and risk factors for poor mental health. This study suggests interventions that could potentially enhance seafarers' mental well-being.

Furthermore, another systematic review by Nittari et al[4] explores the factors influencing the mental health of seafarers onboard merchant ships. The review highlights risks stemming from isolation, health concerns, and work conditions that impact mental wellbeing. It emphasises strategies and potential interventions, including the role of telemedicine and regulatory improvements to address mental health challenges within the maritime sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic also casts a spotlight on seafarers' mental health. Research by Tang et al [5] examines the pandemic's effects on seafarers' mental health and evaluates supportive measures in place. The study reveals a range of supportive measures from stakeholders, including shipping companies, government agencies, and colleagues, and identifies effective strategies such as communication, crew changes, vaccination, and fostering of a positive atmosphere.

Moreover, the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in enhancing seafarers' mental well-being is explored in a study by Abila et al [6]. This mixed-methods research highlights the potential of ICT developments to empower seafarers, with a focus on factors like family support, internet access, and tele-counselling.

The study emphasizes the need for education, collaboration, and funding to harness ICT for seafarers' mental health improvement. In the context of Nigerian seaports, where reports of challenges and inefficiencies in vessel clearance procedures have emerged, these research findings assume heightened significance. They offer valuable insights into the intricate connection between vessel clearance experiences and seafarers' psychological and emotional states.

By drawing on these research perspectives, this study seeks to deepen our understanding of seafarers' well-being within the unique operational context of Nigerian seaports. Through the synthesis of existing literature, this chapter aims to pave the way for a comprehensive analysis of the impact of port experiences on seafarers' health and happiness within Nigerian seaports.

## **2.0. Impact of Port Experiences on Seafarers' Health and Happiness**

Beyond the rigours of maritime operations, the interactions that seafarers encounter during vessel clearance procedures and port activities hold profound implications for their overall health and happiness. Seaport experiences serve as pivotal moments in the lives of seafarers, bridging the isolation of maritime journeys with the dynamic realm of the port environment. These encounters range from administrative tasks to interactions with port authorities, government agencies, and other individuals within the port setting. The emotional impact of these interactions can be profound, shaping seafarers' perceptions of their

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[4] Nittari, Giulio, Gibelli, Filippo, Bailo, Paolo, Sirignano, Ascanio and Ricci, Giovanna. "Factors affecting mental health of seafarers on board merchant ships: a systematic review" *Reviews on Environmental Health*, 2022

[5] Lijun Tang, Sanley Abila, Momoko Kitada, Serafin Malecosio, Karima Krista Montes, Seafarers' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: An examination of current supportive measures and their perceived effectiveness, *Marine Policy*, Volume 145, 2022, 105276, ISSN 0308-597X, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2022.105276> (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X22003232>)

[6] Sanley Abila, PhD,1 Momoko Kitada, PhD,2 Serafin Malecosio, Jr, RMT, MS,3 Lijun Tang, PhD,4 and Rhea Subong Espina, MM5. "Empowering Seafarers as Agents of Their Mental Health: The Role of Information and Communication Technology in Seafarers' Well-Being" *National Library of Medicine*, 2023. doi: 10.1177/00469580231162752



Source: Lloydslist.com

profession and influencing their overall sense of self-worth. Positive port experiences, characterised by efficiency, respect, and transparency, contribute significantly to seafarers' mental and emotional well-being. Research reveals that respectful and friendly interactions with port officials can lead to enhanced job satisfaction, increased morale, and a sense of empowerment among seafarers. These interactions foster a positive psychological atmosphere, cultivating feelings of camaraderie, belonging, and shared purpose among seafarers. In contrast, negative port experiences, marked by bureaucratic obstacles, uncooperative officials, and corrupt practices, can engender emotional distress and have adverse effects on seafarers' mental health. Researchers have also emphasized that negative interactions during port activities are linked to decreased job satisfaction and motivation, potentially eroding seafarers' commitment to their profession.

Such encounters can contribute to feelings of isolation, anxiety, and frustration, further impacting seafarers' emotional well-being. This section explores the interplay between port experiences and seafarers' mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

### **3.0. Emotional Landscape of Port Experiences**

The emotional landscape woven into the fabric of seafarers' port experiences constitutes a complex tapestry, where a myriad of emotional nuances intertwines with the practical realities of maritime interactions. This section explores emotional dimensions that shape seafarers' encounters within port environments, shedding light on the profound impact of these experiences on seafarers' mental and emotional well-being.

## **4.0 Loneliness and Isolation**

The seafaring profession is inherently tethered to periods of solitude and isolation, with seafarers often grappling with extended separations from their loved ones and communities [7]. These prolonged absences contribute to a profound sense of loneliness and isolation, accentuating the emotional significance of interactions within ports. Seafarers tend to carry enormous emotional weight as they navigate the delicate balance between their maritime responsibilities and the yearning for meaningful human connections. This emotional struggle amplifies the importance of port interactions as potential sources of reconnection and emotional respite.

## **5.0 Anxiety and Uncertainty**

Port interactions introduce seafarers to a dynamic terrain of bureaucratic intricacies, procedural uncertainties, and regulatory complexities. The inherent unpredictability of these encounters can evoke heightened levels of anxiety and emotional distress. The emotional turbulence stemming from uncertainties inherent in port interactions highlights the potential impact of this emotional strain on seafarers' psychological well-being. The emotional toll of managing ambiguity underscores the imperative of fostering supportive and transparent port environments that mitigate anxiety-inducing factors.

## **6.0 Emotional Fulfilment**

While port experiences may encompass emotional challenges, they also provide avenues for seafarers to experience emotional fulfilment and accomplishment. Successfully navigating administrative intricacies, establishing rapport with port officials, and ensuring the seamless execution of vessel

clearance procedures can evoke feelings of achievement and professional recognition. These emotional rewards inherent in positive port interactions highlight a sense of competence and gratification derived from successfully overcoming challenges. These emotional dimensions of fulfilment also emphasize the role of positive port experiences in bolstering seafarers' emotional resilience.

## **7.0 Physical and Mental Health Implications**

The impact of port experiences extends beyond immediate emotional responses, influencing seafarers' overall physical and mental health. Positive interactions during vessel clearance procedures contribute to a supportive working environment that encourages effective communication, teamwork, and heightened job performance. These experiences are associated with reduced stress levels, improved mood, and enhanced overall psychological well-being.

Conversely, negative port experiences can manifest physically, potentially affecting seafarers' physical health and overall quality of life. The stress induced by unfavourable interactions during port activities can contribute to physiological responses such as elevated blood pressure, disrupted sleep patterns, and compromised immune function. Moreover, the cumulative impact of these experiences can contribute to mental health challenges, potentially leading to burnout, anxiety disorders, and even considerations of leaving the maritime profession.

This section evaluates the impact of port interactions on seafarers' physical health and mental wellness, shedding light on the complex interplay between the maritime environment and the physiological and psychological dimensions of seafarers' health.

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[7] Carotenuto, Anna et al. "Psychological stress in seafarers: a review." International maritime health vol. 63,4 (2012): 188-94.

**Physiological Toll & Psychological Wellbeing:** The exigencies of port interactions expose seafarers to a range of physical health challenges. Prolonged exposure to port environments and associated stressors may contribute to fatigue, compromised sleep patterns, and musculoskeletal strain. Oldenburg et al emphasize the physical toll of port experiences, noting the potential correlation between extended port stays and increased stress and strain levels[8], which in turn impact seafarers' overall physical health.

Additionally, navigational hazards and manual labour during port visits may heighten the risk of accidents, underscoring the need for robust safety measures and training interventions. Heightened stress, anxiety, and psychological distress due to the uncertainties and pressures associated with port procedures and experiences may impact seafarers' mental health, underscoring the importance of addressing psychological challenges arising from port interactions. Moreover, the isolation and separation endured during port visits can exacerbate feelings of loneliness, potentially contributing to mental health vulnerabilities.

## 8.0 Contextual Significance in Nigerian Seaports

In the context of Nigerian seaports, where reports of challenges and inefficiencies in vessel clearance procedures sometimes appear, the examination of the impact of port experiences on seafarers' health and happiness assumes heightened significance. Seafarers' interactions with port authorities and government agencies can influence their overall well-being and job satisfaction, thereby affecting the efficiency and safety of maritime operations within the nation. The contextual significance of port experiences within Nigerian seaports is a crucial focal point in understanding the broader implications of

improved vessel clearance on seafarers' experiences. The Nigerian maritime landscape presents a unique backdrop characterised by distinct challenges and opportunities, wherein measures have been instituted to enhance user port experiences and streamline vessel clearance processes. This section elucidates the contextual significance of Nigerian seaports within the framework of improved vessel clearance, highlighting key initiatives such as the Nigerian Port Process Manual (NPPM), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and Port Standing Task Team (PSTT).



Source: global dialogue.isa-sociology.org

[8] Oldenburg, Marcus, and Hans-Joachim Jensen. "Stress and strain among merchant seafarers differs across the three voyage episodes of port stay, river passage and sea passage." *PLoS one* vol. 14,6 e0217904. 4 Jun. 2019, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0217904

## **9.0 Port Service Support Portal (PSSP)**

One notable development that has garnered significant attention in recent years is the introduction of the Port Service Support Portal. This digital platform represents a pioneering effort by Nigerian port authorities to enhance transparency, streamline operations, and improve overall efficiency within the port environment. The Port Service Support Portal serves as an innovative response to the longstanding challenges faced by seafarers, port authorities, and other stakeholders in the Nigerian maritime sector. The Port Service Support Portal, often abbreviated as PSSP, is a comprehensive online system designed to facilitate and optimise various port-related processes and interactions. It offers a wide array of services and functions aimed at simplifying vessel clearance procedures and enhancing the experience of seafarers navigating Nigerian seaports. Key components of the PSSP include real-time tracking of vessels, automated documentation processes, online payment capabilities, and a centralised communication hub for port users[9].

One of the central objectives of the Port Service Support Portal is to reduce the bureaucratic bottlenecks and corrupt practices that have historically plagued Nigerian ports. By digitising and centralising essential services, the PSSP aims to minimise the need for in-person interactions with government officials and port agents, thereby mitigating the opportunities for extortion and bribery. This aligns with the broader goals of improving transparency and accountability in port operations, which are essential for fostering a favourable environment for seafarers and maritime trade. Furthermore, the PSSP has the potential to significantly enhance the overall experience of seafarers in Nigerian ports. With features such as real-time

updates on vessel clearance status, simplified document submission, and a user-friendly interface, seafarers can expect reduced waiting times, increased predictability, and a more efficient port experience. These improvements are not only beneficial for the well-being of seafarers but also contribute to the attractiveness of Nigerian seaports as vital hubs for international maritime commerce.

## **10.0 Nigerian Port Process Manual (NPPM) and Streamlined Procedures**

The Nigerian Port Process Manual (NPPM) stands as a seminal milestone in the endeavour to enhance user port experiences and expedite vessel clearance. Rooted in a comprehensive understanding of the Nigerian maritime environment, the NPPM embodies standardised procedures that facilitate seamless interactions between seafarers, port authorities, and government agencies. The NPPM's meticulous delineation of clearance protocols minimises ambiguity and promotes efficiency, ultimately alleviating the procedural burdens encountered by seafarers during port interactions[10].

This strategic intervention underscores the concerted effort to align Nigerian seaports with international best practices, thereby enhancing the overall quality of seafarers' experiences.

## **11.0 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Procedural Clarity**

The implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) augments the contextual significance of Nigerian seaports by establishing a framework of procedural clarity and consistency. SOPs delineate step-by-step guidelines for various port interactions, encompassing vessel clearance procedures,

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[9] Port Service Support Portal. <https://pssp.ng/SOP#/about>

[10] Nigerian Ports Authority. Nigerian Port Process Manual. 2020. <https://nigerianports.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Port-Process-Manual-2020.pdf>

cargo handling, and regulatory compliance [11]. The SOPs serve as a reference point for seafarers, port officials, and relevant stakeholders, fostering a shared understanding of expectations and responsibilities [12]. This standardised approach not only expedites vessel clearance but also mitigates potential misunderstandings, enhancing overall communication and collaboration within the maritime ecosystem.

## **12.0 Port Standing Task Team (PSTT) & Collaborative Synergy**

The Port Standing Task Team (PSTT) embodies the collaborative synergy vital for optimising users' port experiences within Nigerian ports. Comprising of representatives of various law enforcement and regulatory agencies, the PSTT manages interagency coordination, information exchange, and issues resolution. By convening stakeholders from governmental bodies, port authorities, and industry associations, the PSTT fosters a multi-dimensional approach to address challenges, streamline processes, and enhance vessel clearance efficiency. This collective action signifies a strategic commitment to harmonising efforts and engendering a conducive environment for seafarers' interactions within Nigerian seaports.

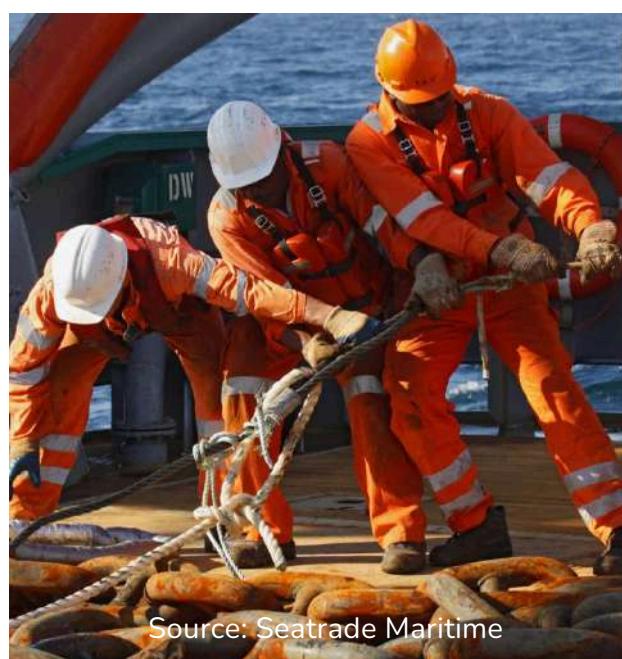
## **13.0 Enhancing Competitiveness and Economic Growth**

The contextual significance of improved vessel clearance extends beyond immediate procedural enhancements. Efficient port experiences amplify Nigeria's maritime competitiveness on the global stage, bolstering the nation's attractiveness as a trade destination. The harmonisation of processes, as facilitated by the NPPM, SOPs, PSSP, and PSTT, contributes to reduced turn-around times, increased throughput, and enhanced cargo handling

capabilities. These outcomes collectively contribute to improved economic growth prospects, positioning Nigerian seaports as vital gateways for international trade and commerce.

## **14.0 Role of Support Systems and Resilience**

Seafarers' ability to cope with the emotional and psychological demands of port experiences is influenced by various support systems and individual resilience. The presence of strong social networks, both onboard and ashore, can serve as a buffer against the potential negative effects of challenging port interactions. Onboard camaraderie and peer support can help mitigate the impact of negative port experiences on seafarers' mental health. Resilience, as a psychological trait, plays a significant role in determining how seafarers perceive and respond to port experiences. Seafarers with higher levels of resilience may adapt to stressors and navigate emotionally taxing port interactions better, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being.



Source: Seatrade Maritime

[11] Standard operating procedure (SOP) for shipping companies operating in Nigeria. <https://pssp.ng/SOP#/sop>

[12] Ships and Ports. Minister inaugurates Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Nigerian ports. 2016. <https://shipsandports.com.ng/minister-inaugurates-standard-operating-procedures-sop-for-nigerian-ports/>

## **15.0 Implications for Resilience and Coping**

The physical and mental health implications of port experiences accentuate the necessity of cultivating seafarers' resilience and coping mechanisms. The role of resilience in mitigating the effects of port interactions on seafarers' health cannot be over-emphasized. Resilience-building interventions are necessary to bolster seafarers' psychological well-being[13].

Fostering emotional and psychological resilience equips seafarers with the tools to navigate the challenges posed by port experiences, fortifying their ability to adapt and thrive in the maritime context.

## **16.0 Holistic Interventions: Nurturing Wellbeing**

The multifaceted implications of port experiences underscore the imperative of holistic interventions that address both the physical and mental health dimensions of seafarers' well-being. Comprehensive wellness programmes that encompass physical health assessments, mental health support, and coping strategies are paramount in safeguarding seafarers' overall health. Strategies such as mindfulness training, emotional regulation, and stress management workshops have been explored to enhance seafarers' resilience and improve their ability to cope with the challenges of port experiences.

## **17.0 Implications for Wellbeing and Job Performance**

The cumulative impact of positive or negative port experiences reverberates through seafarers' broader well-being and job performance. Positive interactions contribute

to enhanced job satisfaction, increased motivation, and a sense of fulfilment within their maritime careers. These experiences are linked to higher levels of psychological well-being, lower rates of burnout, and greater commitment to the profession. On the other hand, negative port experiences can have a cascading effect on seafarers' overall quality of life and job performance. Prolonged exposure to stressors associated with unfavourable port interactions can lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced job engagement, and a decreased sense of accomplishment. Furthermore, seafarers who endure chronic negative interactions may develop a negative perception of their profession, leading to decreased job satisfaction and intentions to leave the maritime industry altogether.

## **18.0 COVID-19 Pandemic and Port Experiences**

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic introduced new layers of complexity to seafarers' port experiences. Travel and shore leave restrictions, quarantine measures, and health and safety protocols significantly impacted how seafarers interacted with port authorities and government agencies. Challenges posed by the pandemic, included prolonged isolation, uncertainty, and limited access to port facilities, leading to heightened stress levels and mental health concerns among seafarers. However, innovative approaches emerged in response to these challenges, such as virtual communication platforms, telemedicine services, and enhanced support systems. These adaptations aimed to maintain positive port interactions and mitigate the adverse effects of the pandemic on seafarers' mental and emotional well-being. The lessons learned from the pandemic underscore the importance of flexible and supportive port procedures in safeguarding seafarers' health and happiness.

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[13] ISWAN's Seafarers' Health Information Program (SHIP). Psychological Wellbeing at Sea. Available at <https://www.seafarerswelfare.org/seafarer-health-information-programme/good-mental-health/psychological-wellbeing-at-sea> Accessed on August 10, 2023

## **19.0   Corrupt Practices and Challenges in Port Interactions**

The complex nexus between seafarers and port interactions extends beyond administrative procedures and official protocols.

Within the context of Nigerian seaports, the issue of corrupt practices and challenges in port interactions emerges as a critical dimension that profoundly impacts seafarers' experiences, psychological well-being, and the overall efficiency of maritime operations. This section delves into the multifaceted landscape of corrupt practices and challenges that seafarers may encounter during their interactions with some port authorities and some government agency officials.

## **20.0   Bribery Solicitations**

Port interactions often expose seafarers to instances of bribery solicitation, a practice that can significantly compromise the integrity of vessel clearance procedures. Seafarers sometimes encounter situations where officials solicit bribes in exchange for expedited clearances, preferential treatment, or the resolution of administrative issues. The experience of bribery solicitation introduces ethical dilemmas for seafarers, who are faced with the challenge of navigating between compliance with regulations and preserving their dignity. The pressure to comply with demands for bribes can lead to feelings of powerlessness, frustration, and moral distress. Seafarers find themselves at a crossroads, where ethical considerations intersect with the practical realities of conducting maritime operations.

## **21.0   Method & Frequency of Solicitation**

Bribery solicitations manifest through various methods, ranging from explicit demands for cash payments to more subtle forms of coercion and

manipulation. The methods employed by officials may include veiled hints, veiled threats, or leveraging discretionary powers to create a sense of dependency. The frequency of bribery solicitations further underscores the pervasive nature of this issue, with seafarers encountering such solicitations at different stages of their port interactions [14].

Port officials extracting payments via several methods not only affect seafarers' emotional well-being but also contribute to a culture of corruption within port environments, potentially eroding trust and confidence in regulatory processes.

## **22.0   Situations Requiring Bribe Payments**

Seafarers encounter situations where the payment of bribes is perceived as a means to navigate bureaucratic hurdles, expedite clearance procedures, or resolve unexpected challenges. These situations can range from routine administrative tasks to more critical matters, such as addressing discrepancies in documentation or securing essential services. The intertwining of corrupt practices with essential operational processes creates a complex ethical landscape for seafarers, influencing their perceptions of fairness and justice within port interactions.

## **23.0   Reporting of Bribery Incidents**

The reporting of bribery incidents poses a significant challenge for seafarers, as concerns about potential repercussions, retaliation, and the lack of effective reporting mechanisms often deter them from coming forward. The underreporting of bribery incidents not only perpetuates a culture of corruption but also hinders efforts to address and mitigate the impact of corrupt practices on seafarers' wellbeing. In recent times, several reporting

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[14] Rabarijaona, Mirana, "Impacts of anti-corruption interventions: measures in the shipping industry" (2017). World Maritime University Dissertations. 575. [https://commons.wmu.se/all\\_dissertations/575](https://commons.wmu.se/all_dissertations/575) Accessed on August 10, 2023

mechanisms have been put in place with attendant positive impact. The Maritime Anti-Corruption Network for instance was launched in 2011 with a presence in Nigeria shortly after. MACN and partner organisations such as the Convention on Business Integrity (CBI) have championed the anti-corruption drive within the Nigerian maritime landscape [15]. The Port Service Support Portal (PSSP) is another grievance reporting platform for seafarers and other port users [16].

In summary, port experiences hold a profound impact on seafarers' health and happiness, encompassing emotional, psychological, and physical dimensions. Positive interactions contribute to enhanced mental well-being, job satisfaction, and overall quality of life, while negative experiences can lead to emotional distress, compromised mental health, and reduced job performance.

The context of Nigerian seaports further accentuates the significance of understanding and optimizing these interactions to promote seafarers' overall well-being and the effectiveness of maritime operations. In the subsequent chapters, this literature review will serve as the foundation for exploring seafarers' interactions with port officials, assessing the impact of vessel clearance procedures on their well-being, and examining the prevalence of corrupt practices within Nigerian seaports. By critically analyzing collected data, this study aims to deepen our understanding of the multifaceted dynamics shaping seafarers' experiences and inform recommendations for policy and practice improvements.



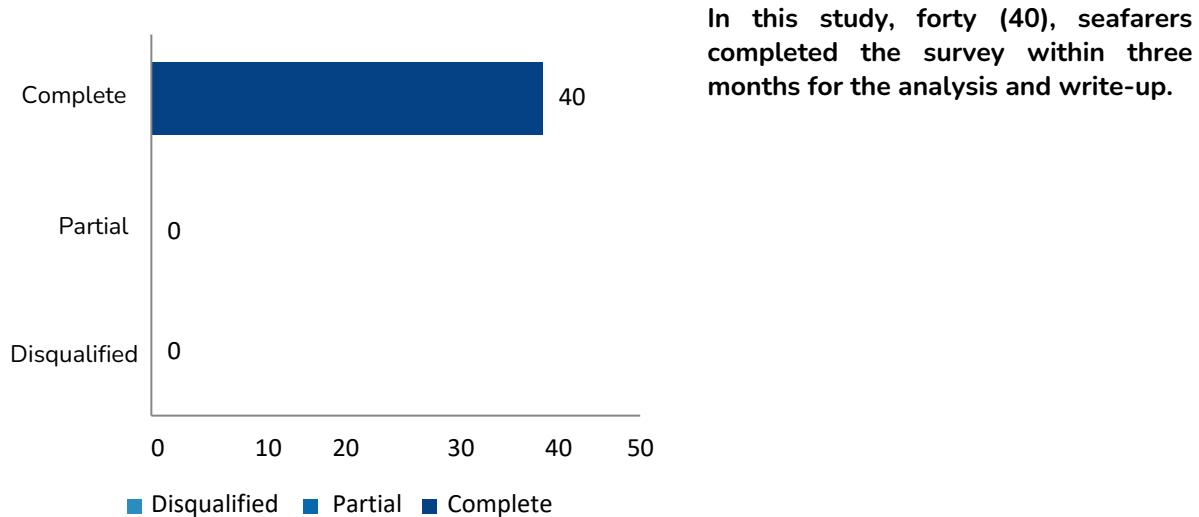
Source: Mission to Seafarers

[15] <https://www.cbinigeria.com/collective-action-projects/business-action-against-corruption/macn-nigeria/#efforts>

[16] <https://pssp.ng/#/about>

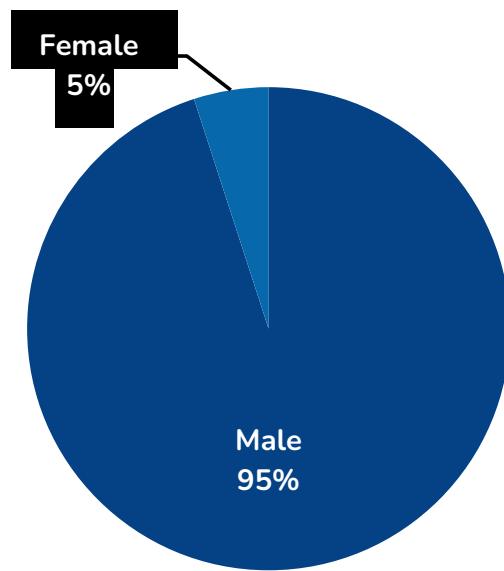
## SECTION 3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEAFARERS

### 1.0 Total response



### 2.0 Gender

The gender distribution reflects a substantial male majority, accounting for 95% of respondents, while female seafarers constitute 5% of the sample. This skewed gender ratio highlights the continued gender disparity within the seafaring profession, necessitating a focus on gender-inclusive policies and initiatives.



Value	Percent	Count
Male	95.0%	38
Female	5.0%	2
Totals		40

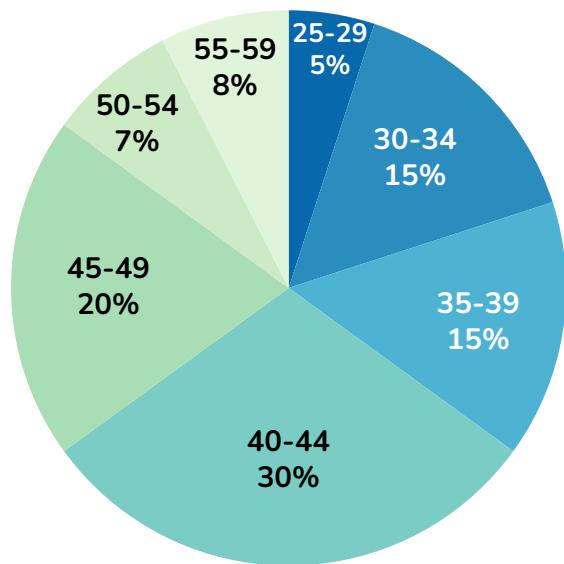
### 3.0

### Age Distribution

This analysis revealed a diverse range of age groups within the seafarers, with notable concentrations in specific categories. The largest group falls within the 40-44 (30%) years age bracket, and the least within the 25-29 (5%) age group, suggesting the prevalence of mid-career seafarers.

The age distribution data carries multifaceted implications. First, it reflects the distinct stages of age brackets in seafarers' careers, and the mid-career stage is the most dominant segment. Secondly, it has a bearing on the adaptability of seafarers to industry dynamics and technological advancements, with younger cohorts potentially more inclined toward embracing evolving maritime technologies.

Furthermore, understanding the age distribution is crucial for formulating targeted support systems and policies that account for the diverse needs of seafarers in different career phases. By analysing this demographic aspect comprehensively, maritime stakeholders can make informed decisions to enhance the overall well-being, job performance, and career sustainability of seafarers, ultimately fostering a resilient and prosperous maritime industry.



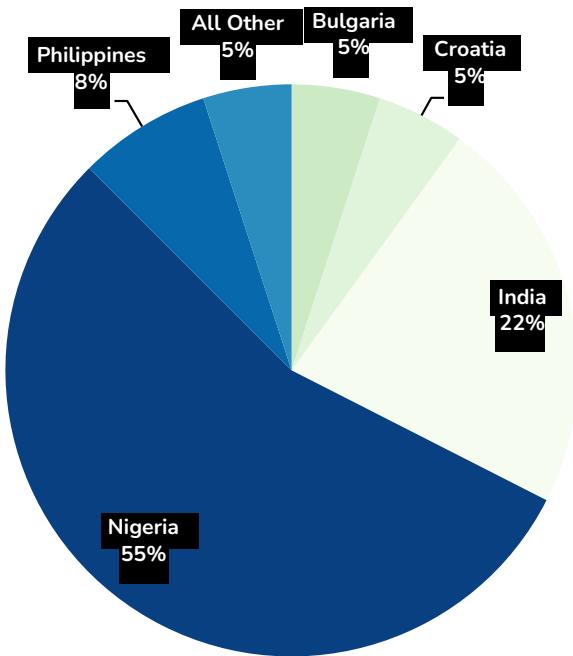
Value	Percent	Count
25-29	5.0%	2
30-34	15.0%	6
35-39	15.0%	6
40-44	30.0%	12
45-49	20.0%	8
50-54	7.0%	3
55-59	8.0%	3
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40</b>

### 4.0

### Nationality

Seafarers in the study represent a diverse range of nationalities, and the majority of the respondents being Nigerian 22(55%), followed by Indian 9(22.5%), Bulgarians 2 (5%), Philippines 3(7.5%), Russian 1 (2.5%), Croatia 2(5%), and Polish 1(2.5%). This international composition reflects the global nature of the maritime workforce, highlighting the importance of cross-cultural awareness and cooperation.

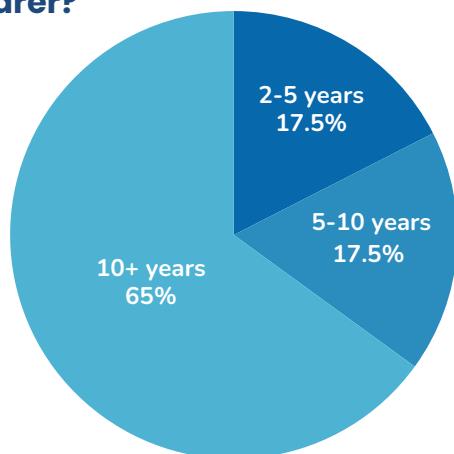
Value	Percent	Count
Bulgaria	5.0%	2
Croatia	5.0%	2
India	22.0%	9
Nigeria	55.0%	22
Philippines	7.5%	3
Poland	2.5%	1
Russia	2.5%	1
Totals		40



## 5.0

### How long have you been a seafarer?

**Experience Levels:** The experience levels of seafarers vary, with the study sample comprising individuals with 2-5 years (17.5%), 5-10 years (18%), and 10+ years (65%) of experience in the maritime industry. This distribution underscores the prevalence of seasoned professionals in the field, necessitating tailored programs for career development and mentorship for those in the early stages of their maritime careers.

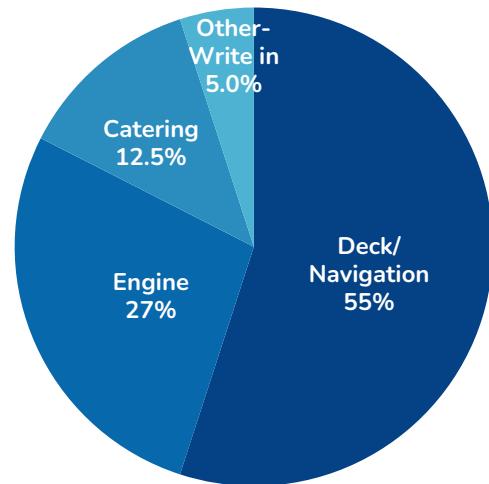


Value	Percent	Count
2-5 years	17.5%	7
5-10 years	17.5%	7
10+ years	65.0%	26
Totals		40

## 6.0

## What is your department on board?

**Experience Levels:** The experience levels of seafarers vary, with the study sample comprising of individuals with 2-5 years (17.5%), 5-10 years (18%), and 10+ years (65%) of experience in the maritime industry. This distribution underscores the prevalence of seasoned professionals in the field, necessitating tailored programs for career development and mentorship for those in the early stages of their maritime careers.



Value	Percent	Count
Deck/Navigation	55.0%	22
Engine	27.5%	11
Catering	12.5%	5
Other-Write in	5.0%	2
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40</b>

Other-Write in	Count
Maritime Administrator	1
Medic	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>

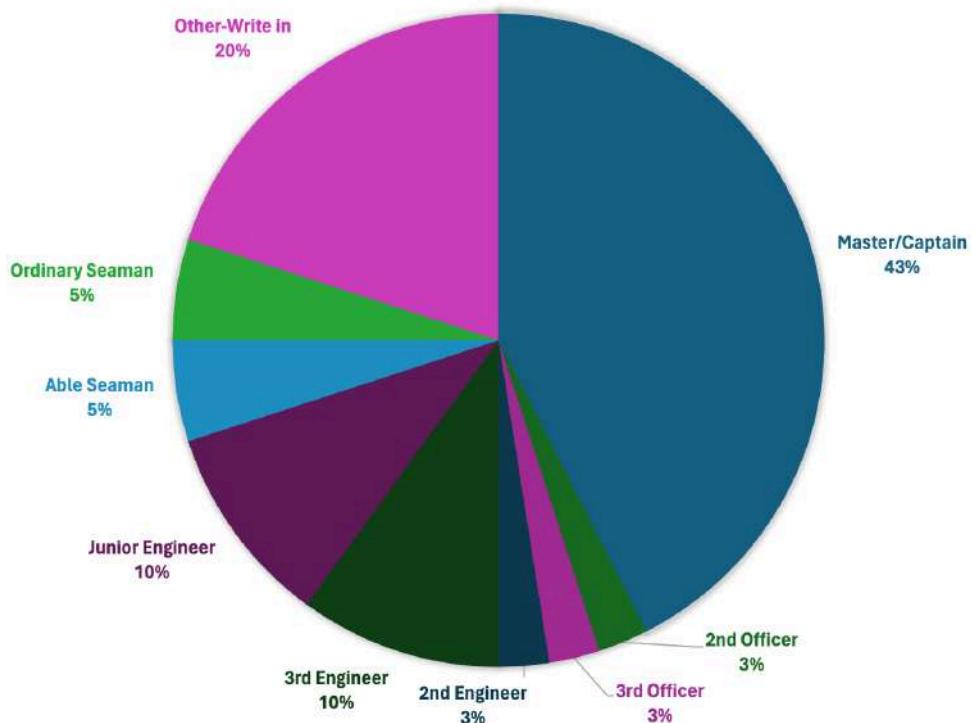
## 7.0

## What is your role/title/ position onboard?

**Roles/Positions:** Seafarers' roles and positions encompass diverse functions on the shipboard. The Master/Captain is the highest position and the respondents with 17 (42.5%) rate of response. Other roles include 2nd Engineer 1 (2.5%), 3rd Engineer 4 (10%), Junior Engineer 4 (10%), Able Seaman 2 (5%), Ordinary Seaman 2 (5%), and various other roles 8 (20%). The diversity underscores the multifaceted nature of seafaring employment.

Value	Percent	Count
Master/Captain	42.5%	17
2nd Officer	2.5%	1
3rd Officer	2.5%	1
2nd Engineer	2.5%	1
3rd Engineer	10.0%	4
Junior Engineer	10.0%	4
Able Seaman	5.0%	2
Ordinary Seaman	5.0%	2
Other-Write in	20.0%	8
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40</b>

Other-Write in	Percent
Cook	2
Steward	2
Camp Boss Chef	1
Machinist	1
Medic	1
Shore-based Staff	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8</b>

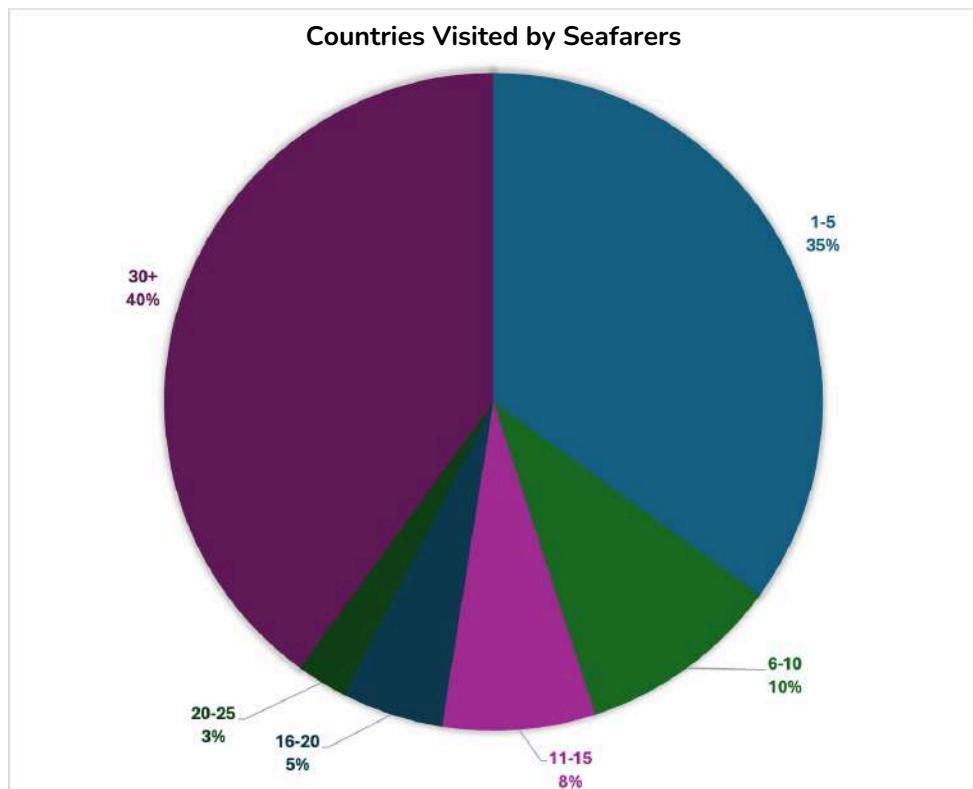


## 8.0

### How many countries have you visited as a seafarer?

**Countries Visited:** Seafarers' extensive travel experiences are evident, with a significant portion of respondents having visited 1-5 countries 14 (35%), followed by 6-10 countries 4 (10%), 11-15 countries 3 (7.5%), 16-20 countries 2 (5%), 20-25 countries 1 (2.5%), and 30+ countries 16 (40%). These diverse travel patterns emphasize the global reach of the seafaring profession and the need for support systems that cater to the unique challenges associated with international mobility.

Value	Percent	Count
1-5	35.0%	14
6-10	10.0%	4
11-15	7.5%	3
16-20	5.0%	2
20-25	2.5%	1
30+	40.0%	16
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40</b>



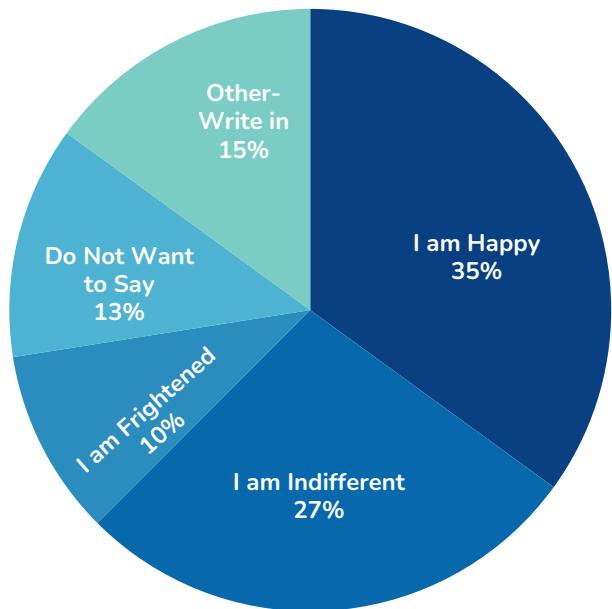
## SECTION 4. PORT EXPERIENCES

**1.0**

### **How do you feel about Government officials that will board your vessel?**

Seafarers exhibit a range of emotions towards Government officials boarding their vessels, with 35% expressing happiness and 28% displaying indifference. Understanding these sentiments can provide insights into seafarer-official interactions. Seafarers' feelings toward Government officials boarding their vessels provide an important perspective on the interpersonal interaction during the clearance process. The predominance of the feelings of "happy" or "indifferent" indicates that, in general, seafarers have a positive or neutral attitude toward the interactions. However, the presence of respondents who feel "frightened" (10%), or choose not to express their feelings (13%), reflects potential issues in communication, transparency, or perceived power dynamics during these interactions. These nuances are essential for identifying areas of improvement in the conduct of government officials during vessel clearance.

Additionally, seafarers' mixed feelings about visiting Nigerian ports underscore the need to further explore the factors influencing their preferences and apprehensions.



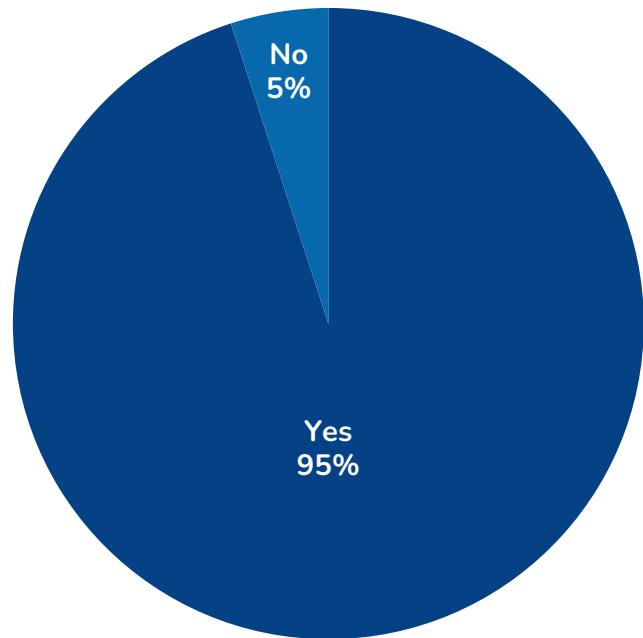
Value	Percent	Count
I am Happy	35.0%	14
I am Indifferent	27.0%	11
I am Frightened	10.0%	4
Do Not Want to Say	13.0%	5
Other - Write in	15.0%	6
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40</b>

Depends on which part of the world	1
Depends on which part of the world it is. Of course, in Nigeria, it is a challenge dealing with them because they come to find faults on a ship and expect something in return/fine	1
Generally, they are not helpful	1
To make quick money on board	1
Worried, uncomfortable	1
Worried, uncomfortable	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6</b>

## 2.0

### Have you previously visited Nigeria's seaports, terminals, or jetties?

Whether they have visited Nigeria before. The question on seafarers' port experiences and interactions relating to whether they have previously visited Nigeria's seaports, terminals, or jetties and it is revealed that the majority of respondents 38 (95%) had previous experiences with Nigerian ports, while only 2 (5%), reported first-time visits. This highlights the continued engagement among seafarers and emphasizes the importance of port experience and interaction in shaping their perceptions about vessel clearance processes in Nigeria.



## 3.0

### Number of times seafarers have visited Nigeria's seaports, terminals, or Jetty since 2019?

Seafarers' frequency of visiting Nigerian ports reveals diverse patterns. A substantial portion of 20 (50%) visited either the seaport, terminal or jetty twenty times, while 15 (37.5%) visited 1 to 5 times. Others simply stated many times and frequently indicating a consistent presence. The varied frequencies of the visits suggest how the patterns relate to seafarers' experience and their frequencies with changes in the vessel's clearance procedures.



**4.0**

**How many times have you visited Nigeria's seaports, terminals,  
or Jetty since 2019?**

Response	Response [Number of time of visits]
24	10
25	One
27	6
29	7
33	10
35	5
36	Over 20 times
37	2
38	5 years
39	10
40	6-8
41	Many
45	More than 20
46	1
47	Many times
48	5
52	15
53	7 times
54	Once
55	Many times
56	Frequently
57	Often and always
58	More than 10x
62	5
64	5
66	1
67	10
72	4
73	5
74	15
75	1 time (but coming to Nigeria since 2003)
76	1 time, 2 Ports (Apapa and Tin Can Island)
77	5
78	At least 4 times
79	Six (6)
80	At least 4 times
81	1 but coming to Nigeria since 2003

**5.0      When was the last time your vessel called at a Nigerian port?  
(State year and month, if remembered. E.g 06/2023)?**

Response	Response [Last time I visited]
24	07/2023
25	Sep-2019
27	07/2023
28	2002
29	06/2023
33	06/2023
35	07/2021
36	07/2023
37	23/08/23
38	No time
39	June 2023
40	05/23
41	08/2023
45	08/2023
46	07/2023
47	10 /8/2023
48	08/23
52	05/05/2023
53	02/2022
54	No
55	08/2023
56	08/23
57	Quite an age. 2-5-94
58	2022 / May 2023
62	11/2022
64	08/2023
66	8/2020
67	07/2023
69	2015
71	07/2014
72	Jul-2023
73	09/2023
74	08/2023
75	March 2022
76	15 July 2023
77	05/2023
78	August 2023
79	01 Sept 2023
80	August 2023
81	March 2022

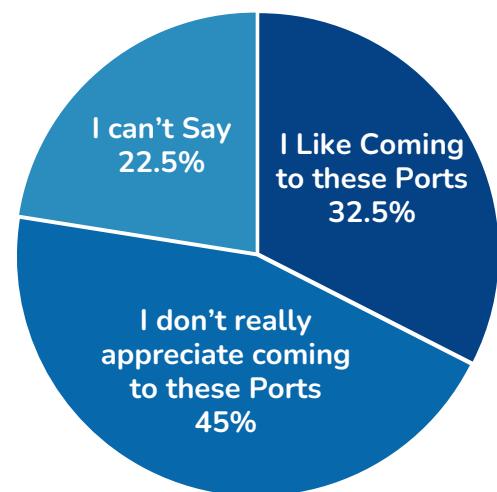


## 6.0

## Overall, how do you find it when visiting Nigerian ports?

Among the respondents, a substantial majority, represented by 18 (45%) individuals, expressed a negative disposition towards visiting Nigerian seaports, stating that they "Don't appreciate coming to these ports." This inclination towards an unfavourable view of Nigerian seaports could potentially reflect on the experiences that these seafarers have encountered during their visits. Such negative sentiments could be linked to vessel clearance procedures and interaction with port officials.

Understanding the specific pain points or issues that lead to this sentiment is equally crucial, as it sheds light on areas within the port system that require attention and reform. Conversely, the survey also captured the sentiments of 13 (33%) respondents who held favourable views about visiting Nigerian seaports, indicating that they like coming to these ports." These individuals may have had experiences or encountered during their port visits that left them with a positive impression. Furthermore, examining the demographic and experiential backgrounds of these seafarers helps in identifying trends or commonalities among those who hold unfavourable views, offering valuable guidance for targeted interventions to enhance the seafarer experience in Nigerian seaports



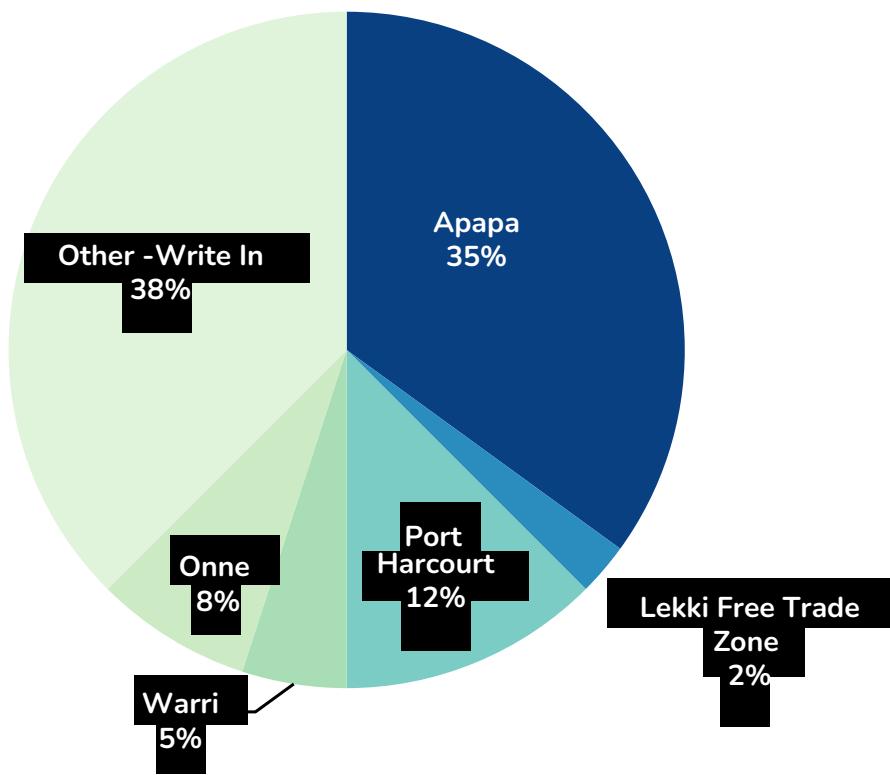
The 9 (23%) respondents who indicated "I can't say" represent a group that might fall in between the positive or negative view about their visits, and their responses warrant further exploration to uncover the reasons behind their ambivalence towards visiting Nigerian ports.

Value	Per cent	Count
I like coming to these ports	32.5%	13
I don't appreciate coming to these ports	45.0%	18
I can't say	22.5%	9
	Totals	40

## 7.0

## What port, terminal or Jetty are you currently in or have just departed from?

The distribution of the numbers of seafarers' respondents showed that 15 (38%) that simply stated "other" were in the majority from other terminals and jetties and wrote places like Bonny. It was followed by 14 (35%) recorded in Apapa, 5 (12.5%) from Port Harcourt port, 3 (8%) in Onne port and 2 (5%) Warri port and Lekki free port 1 (2.5%).



Value [Port in at time of Response]	Percent	Count
Apapa	35.0%	14
Lekki Free Trade Zone	2.5%	1
Port Harcourt	12.5%	5
Warri	5.0%	2
Onne	7.5%	3
Other - Write In	37.5%	15
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40</b>

Other – Write in[Port in at the time of response]	Count
Bonny	3
Egina Terminal	2
ASPM JETTY	1
Apapa and Tincan Island	1
Bonga & Forcados	1
Brass Terminal	1
Escravos	1
Forcados	1
I departed from Apapa Port by then.	1
Odudu	1
Yoho Terminal	1
Departed Qua Iboe terminal	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15</b>

## 8.0

### Which of the following best describes your experience with the Government agency's officials during your port call?

The assessment of seafarers' experience with government agencies is a pivotal component in understanding the quality of interactions between seafarers and government agencies during vessel clearance procedures. This chapter provides insights into seafarers' perceptions of port officials, shedding light on their competence, trustworthiness, clarity, and helpfulness, while also examining factors such as intimidation, friendliness, professionalism, and overall helpfulness.

**Competence and Trustworthiness:** While 12% of the seafarers described the agencies as competent, 8% attributed trustworthiness to the agencies as trustworthy. These results highlight the importance and role of port officials concerning effectiveness and ethics. The relatively low number of seafarers that attributed the agencies to competence and trustworthiness point to the traits as a potential area for improvement.

Competent officials are essential for ensuring the efficient and safe processing of vessels and cargo. Trustworthiness, in turn, is crucial for fostering positive relationships and compliance with regulatory requirements. To enhance these characteristics, continuous training and certification programs can be implemented to ensure that officials are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills required for their roles. Moreover, mechanisms for accountability and oversight should be strengthened to instil trust in the regulatory framework.

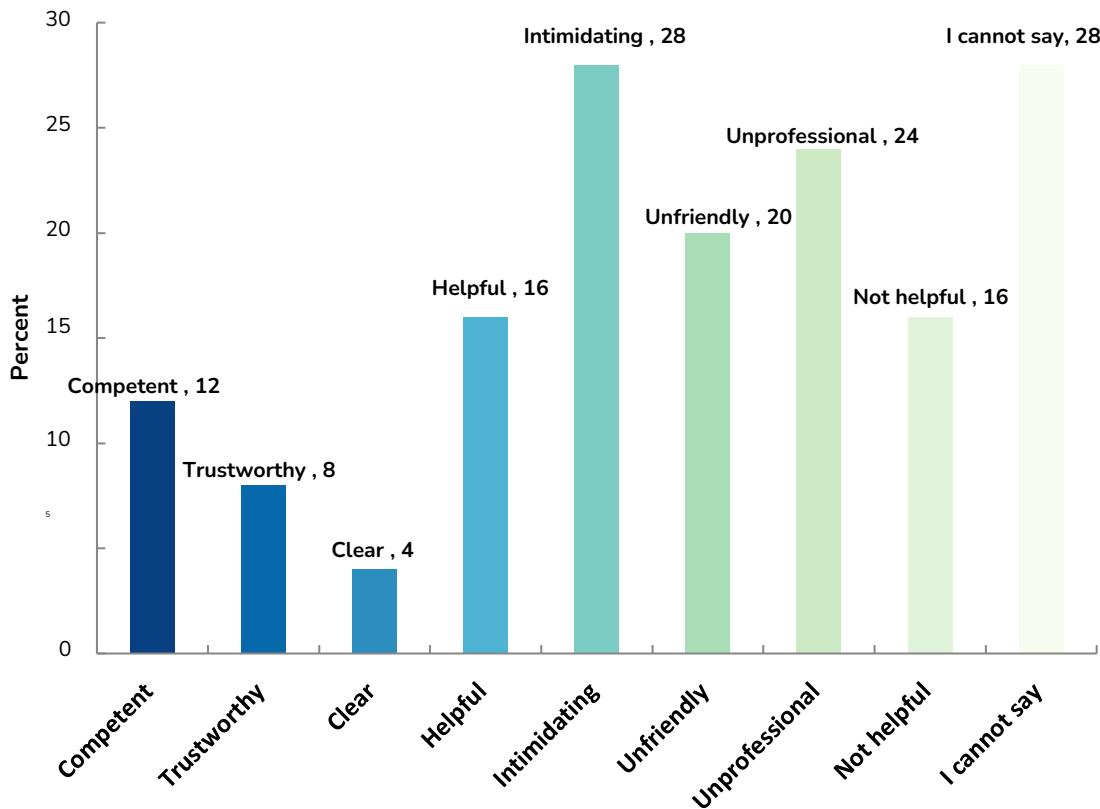
**Clarity and Helpfulness:** Some of the Port officials were considered helpful 4(16%), and 1(4%) were clear in their interaction. These attributes are essential for effective communication between officials and seafarers,

contributing to streamlined clearance processes and minimising misunderstandings. To improve on these strengths, training programs can emphasize effective communication skills and the importance of providing clear and helpful guidance to seafarers. Creating an environment that encourages open communication and collaboration can further enhance these qualities.

**Intimidation, Unfriendliness, and Unprofessionalism:** The survey also revealed several negative perceptions, with respondents describing some port officials as intimidating 7 (28%), unfriendly 5 (20%), and unprofessional 6 (24%).

**Not helpful and I can not say:** About 4(16%) found some of the officials not helpful while 7(28%) indicated that they can not say about their experiences.

In total the negative perceptions concerning intimidation, unfriendliness, and unprofessionalism among port officials are high and raise concerns. Intimidating behaviour can have detrimental effects on seafarers' mental well-being and job performance. Unfriendly or unprofessional conduct can hinder effective communication and cooperation between officials and seafarers.



### Experience with the Government agencies

Value [Experience]	Percent	Count
Competent	12.0%	3
Trustworthy	8.0%	2
Clear	4.0%	1
Helpful	16.0%	4
Intimidating	28.0%	7
Unfriendly	20.0%	5
Unprofessional	24.0%	6
Not helpful	16.0%	4
I cannot say	28.0%	7

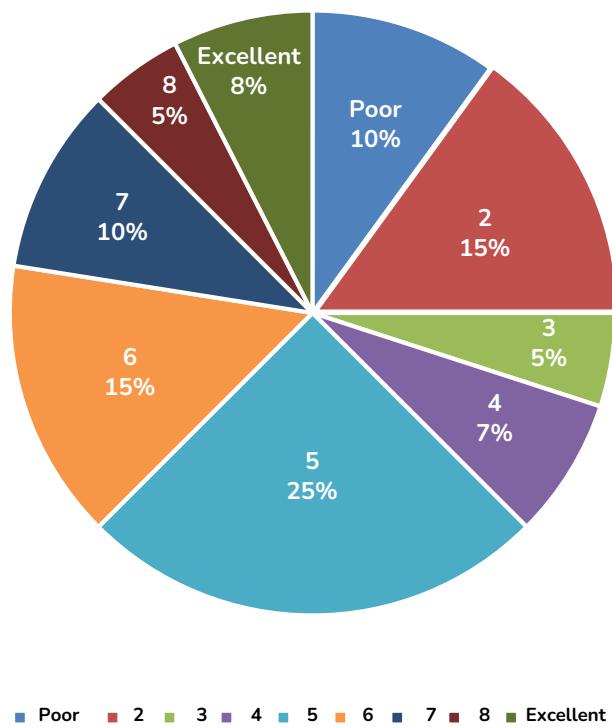
## 9.0

### On a scale of 1-10 and as a seafarer, how would you describe your experience in Nigerian ports, and terminals jetties in terms of the safety of seafarers and fair treatment during your vessel clearance?

The study provides an insightful experience about the seafarers within Nigerian seaports across several critical dimensions: safety, fair treatment, respect and friendly interaction, and welfare support. On a scale from poor to excellent, valuable insights from seafarers' views and about the overall port environment were obtained. In all, 25% of the seafarers were indifferent and 30% had somewhat positive experience of Nigerian seaports, jetties and terminals with 8% having excellent experience. However, 27% of the seafarers' had somewhat negative experience and 10% as poor.

**Safety of Seafarers:** The data reveals 7.5%(3) of the responses rated their safety and fair treatment during vessel clearance as high (excellent), indicating a satisfactory experience. While a few respondents rated it as low as 4 (10%), poor. These variations underscore the need for consistent safety protocols and practices within Nigerian seaports to ensure that all seafarers have a safe and secure experience. Ports should prioritise safety measures to enhance the overall well-being of seafarers.

**Importance of Consistency:** The presence of low ratings of 6(15%) and 2(5%), underscores the critical need for consistent safety protocols and practices in Nigerian seaports. Seafarers who perceived their safety to be poor are likely to experience increased stress and anxiety during their port visits. To enhance the well-being of all seafarers, port authorities must implement standardised safety measures and ensure their consistent application throughout all port interactions.



■ Poor ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ Excellent

**Positive Ratings:** The positive ratings may reflect instances where seafarers have encountered well-managed and secure port facilities or have had positive interactions with port officials responsible for safety. Identifying and understanding the factors contributing to these positive experiences can serve as best practice models for other ports and facilities.

**Implications for Seafarers' Well-being:** Safety is a fundamental component of seafarers' well-being. The variability in safety experiences showcased in this result implies that seafarers' mental and physical health can be significantly affected by the conditions they encounter in Nigerian ports. Unsafe or inconsistent safety practices can contribute to stress, anxiety, and, in some cases, physical harm. Therefore, addressing safety concerns is paramount for enhancing the overall well-being of seafarers and ensuring their continued contribution to the maritime industry.

There is a need for continuous safety training for port officials, consistent enforcement of safety protocols, and investments in infrastructure and technology to enhance security. Also, feedback mechanisms through which seafarers can report safety concerns or incidents, ensuring that their voices are heard and acted upon should be further encouraged.

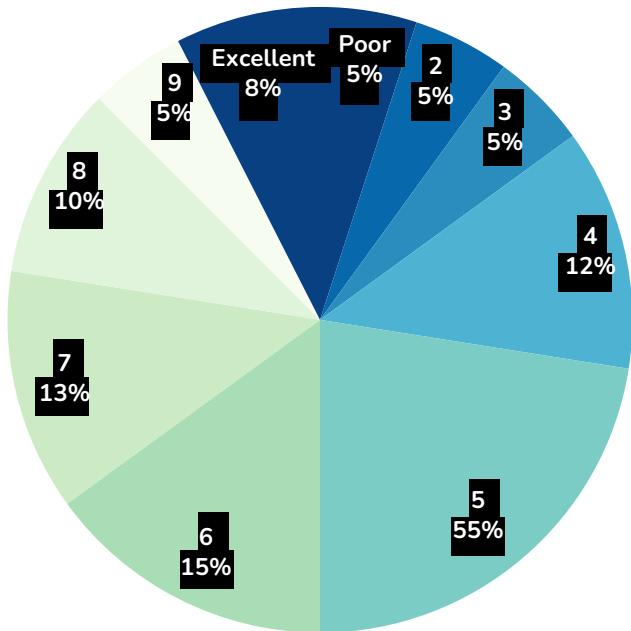
Value [Safety and fair treatment]	Percent	Count
Poor	10.0%	4
2	15.0%	6
3	5.0%	2
4	7.5%	3
5	25.0%	10
6	15.0%	6
7	10.0%	4
8	5.0%	2
Excellent	7.5%	3
Totals		40

## 10.0

**On a scale of 1-10 and as a seafarer, how would you describe your experience in Nigerian ports, and terminal jetties in terms of respect and friendly interaction (1 being poor and 10 being excellent)?**

**Respect and Friendly Interaction:** The analysis shows that seafarers generally rate their interactions within Nigerian seaports positive in terms of respect and friendliness. 8% described their experience as excellent, while 28% reported some what a positive and 37% were indifferent and 22% found it somewhat negative. However, a few of the seafarers' respondents 2(5%), rated their experiences poor, suggesting that there is room for improvement in the promotion of respect and amicable interactions within ports.

Seafarers who perceived their interactions with port officials and personnel as positive 7(13%) and above, are likely to experience reduced stress and a more favourable work environment. Conversely, those who report poor 2 (5%) treatment may face increased stress and job dissatisfaction, which can negatively affect their mental health and job performance.



Respectful and friendly interactions may also be linked to seafarers' safety and well-being. Seafarers who are treated with respect are more likely to feel comfortable reporting safety concerns or incidents. Consequently, fostering an environment of respect and friendliness can contribute not only to improved well-being but also to enhanced safety within Nigerian ports.

The variation in ratings also suggests that cultural sensitivity and communication skills are crucial for port officials. Interactions with seafarers from diverse backgrounds require an understanding of cultural nuances and the ability to communicate effectively. Port authorities should consider training programs that promote cultural awareness and inclusivity to ensure that seafarers from different nationalities are treated respectfully.

The data also highlights the need for consistent respectful interactions across all Nigerian ports and terminals. Seafarers should not experience significant differences in how they are treated when moving between different locations. Standardising respectful and friendly interaction practices can contribute to a more positive overall experience for seafarers visiting Nigerian ports.

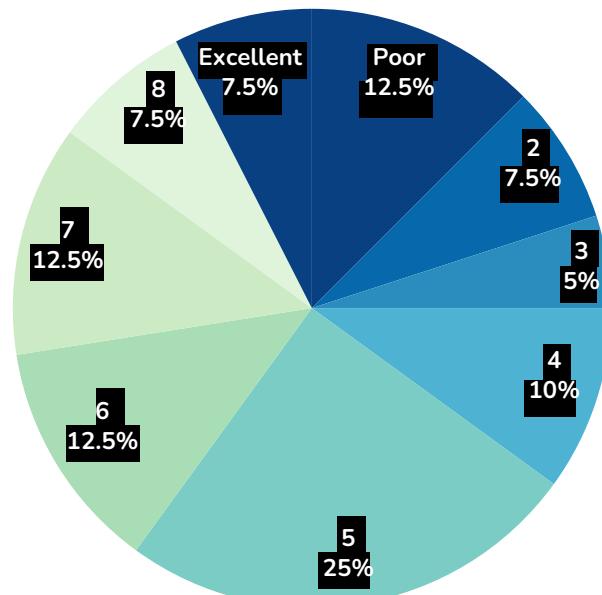
## 11.0

### **On a scale of 1-10 and as a seafarer, how would you describe your experience in Nigerian ports, and terminal jetties in terms of welfare support (1 being poor and 10 being excellent)?**

Seafarers' perceptions of welfare support within Nigerian seaports vary. 25% felt welfare support were indifferent whilst 32.5% found it somewhat positive against 22.5% who found it somewhat negative. About 12.5% responses, indicated a 'poor' experience and 7.5% indicated their experience as excellent. This suggests that while some seafarers receive adequate welfare support, there is still a need for improvement in this area to ensure that the well-being of all seafarers is consistent.

The data suggests that improving the welfare support can lead to a more positive experience for seafarers visiting Nigerian ports. This can be achieved through partnerships between port authorities, maritime organisations, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) specialising in seafarer welfare.

Collaborative efforts can lead to the development of comprehensive welfare programs and services tailored to seafarers' needs. Similarly, comprehensive welfare services such as access to medical facilities, communication with family and friends, recreational activities, and counselling services are to be continuously provided. The provision



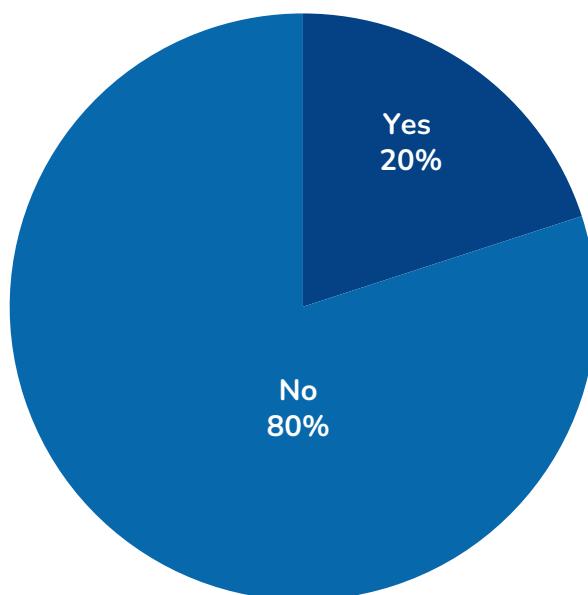
of such services can significantly contribute to seafarers' overall comfort and well-being during their time in Nigerian ports.

In another vein, the variability in welfare support ratings across different ports and terminals highlights the need for consistency in the provision of these services. Seafarers should have access to similar welfare support regardless of their port of entry. Standardizing welfare services can ensure that seafarers receive equitable treatment and support throughout their visits to Nigerian ports.

Value [Welfare support]	Percent	Count
Poor	12.5%	5
2	7.5%	3
3	5.0%	2
4	10.0%	4
5	25.0%	10
6	12.5%	5
7	12.5%	5
8	7.5%	3
Excellent	7.5%	3
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40</b>

## 12.0 Have you experienced any welfare/well-being challenges during your port call in Nigeria?

The view on welfare and wellbeing seems not better as 32 (80%) of the respondents said they have encountered welfare challenges either in the port, terminal or jetty whereas 8 (20%), did not experience any challenges. Going by the provisions of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 as amended, port-based welfare facilities relate to internet services, and telephone for communication and recreation. Perhaps, access to these basic facilities informed the response.



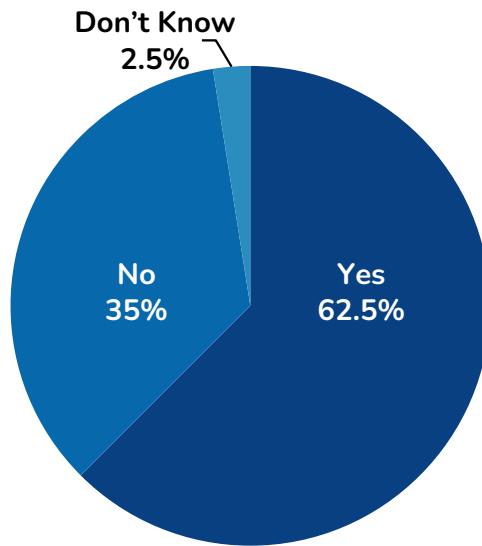
Value (Welfare and Wellbeing Challenge)	Percent	Count
Yes	20.0%	8
No	80.0%	32
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40</b>

## SECTION 5. PORT INTERACTIONS

1.0

### Have you interacted with any Nigerian Government agency's officials or any other organisation during your port call?

The majority of the seafarers 25 (62.5%), interacted with Government agencies during port calls whereas 14 (35%) did not. One(2.5%) seafarer affirmed that he didn't know.



Value [Interaction with Government Officials]	Percent	Count
Yes	62.5%	25
No	35.0%	14
Don't Know	2.5%	1
	Totals	40

2.0

### Please specify the Government agency or other organisations you have interacted with.

Seafarers' interactions with Nigerian Government Agency Officials during vessel clearance processes in Nigerian seaports represent a multifaceted aspect of their experiences:

**The Immigration Services and the Nigerian Port Health** account for the highest number of officials the seafarers interacted with 22 (88%) and 21 (84%) respectively. The fact that seafarers mentioned having interactions with mostly the Nigerian Immigration Services and Port Health is indicative of the fundamental importance of the two Agencies in the Ports. These interactions are primarily focused on verifying seafarers' health and immigration status and ensuring compliance with international health regulations and immigration laws. Given the vital importance of these checks for public health and security, seafarers' experiences and perceptions regarding these interactions can greatly influence their overall well-being and port perception.

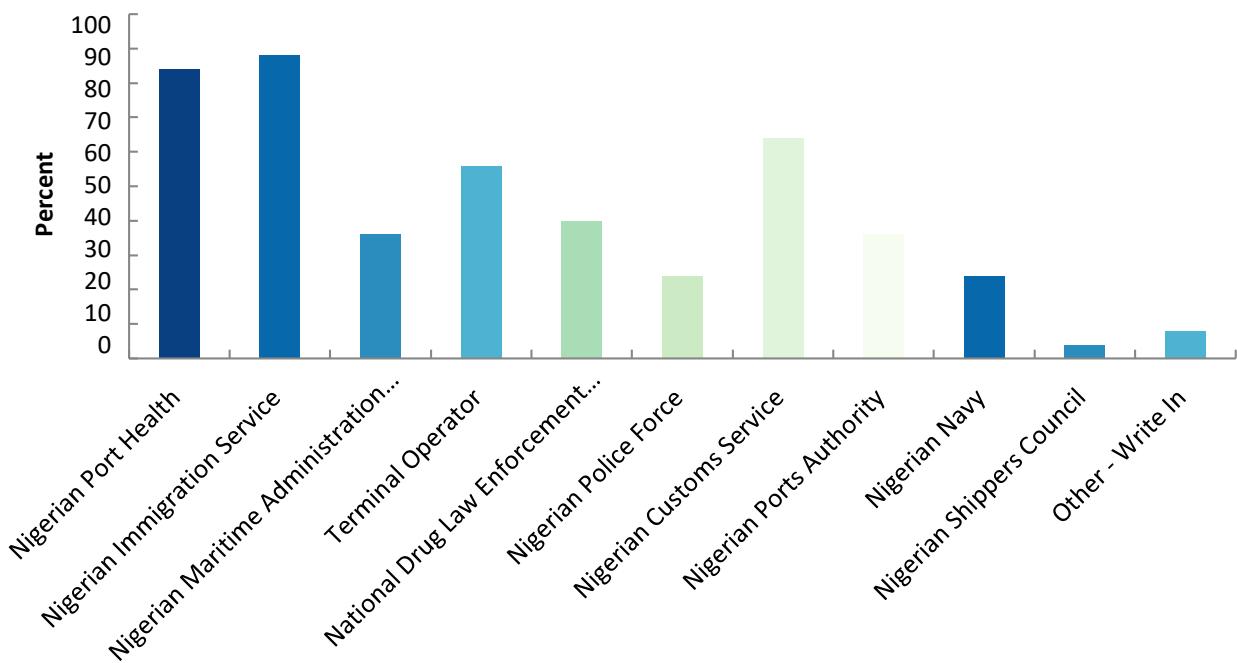
### **Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), and Terminal Operators:**

The presence of NIMASA for Port State Control duties and the Terminal Operators underscores the importance of regulatory and operational oversight exercised by these entities in Nigerian ports. It is noteworthy that while NIMASA's role is critical for ensuring adherence to maritime safety and environmental standards, the responses also indicate that terminal operators play a substantial role in the clearance process. The quality of interactions with these entities has significant implications for seafarer experiences, operational efficiency, and the overall reputation of Nigerian ports in the international maritime community.

### **Other Government Agencies and Responses:**

The responses mentioning agencies such as the

National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Nigerian Police Force, Nigerian Customs Service, and Nigerian Ports Authority, highlight the multi-agency nature of port clearance procedures. The involvement of various government bodies reflects the complex regulatory environment in Nigerian ports. Each of these agencies has specific mandates, and their interactions with seafarers can differ significantly. These interactions may range from security inspections and customs clearances to maintaining law and order within the port area. A detailed examination of these interactions, including their frequency and quality, is essential for a comprehensive understanding of seafarer experiences in Nigerian ports.



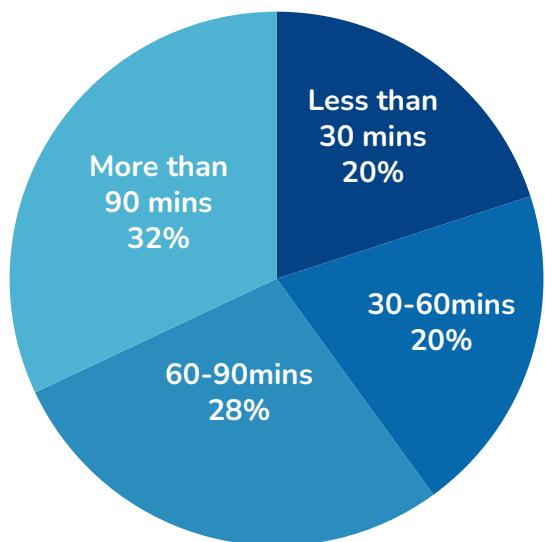
Value [Government Agencies interacted with]	Percent	Count
Nigerian Port Health	84.0%	21
Nigerian Immigration Service	88.0%	22
Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (port State Control)	36.0%	9
Terminal Operator	56.0%	14
National Drug Law Enforcement Agency	40.0%	10
Nigerian Police Force	24.0%	6
Nigerian Customs Service	64.0%	16
Nigerian Ports Authority	36.0%	9
Nigerian Navy	24.0%	6
Nigerian Shippers Council	4.0%	1
Other - Write In	8.0%	2

Other - Write In	Count
MARPOL	1
MARPOL enforcement, National Security Agency	1
Totals	2

### 3.0 On average how long did you spend during these interactions?

The duration of seafarers' interactions with port authorities in Nigerian seaports plays a crucial role in shaping their overall experiences. These interactions as revealed a diverse range of time frames, and the diversity warrants a closer examination to discern its implications on seafarer well-being and the broader context of vessel clearance procedures.

Among the surveyed seafarers, a notable portion of 5 (20%) reported that their interaction lasted between 30 minutes to 60 minutes. On the other hand, a similar number of the contingent, 5 (20%) of seafarers reported that their interactions were less than 30 minutes. These brief interactions could be reflective of streamlined clearance processes, where port authorities swiftly handle documentation and inspections. While shorter interactions may seem favourable due to reduced waiting times, they also raise questions about the thoroughness of inspections and the completeness of clearance procedures.



Value[Length of time spend on interaction]	Percent	Count
Less than 30 minutes	20.0%	5
30 minutes to 60 minutes	20.0%	5
60 minutes 90 minutes	28.0%	7
More than 90 minutes	32.0%	8
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>25</b>

Conversely, 68% of seafarers surveyed are within the 90 minutes Government interaction limit and 32% are above the limit. Prolonged interactions may result from various factors, including rigorous inspections, documentation discrepancies, or delays in the clearance process. While these interactions may ensure a thorough vetting of vessels and cargo, they can also lead to frustration, increased operational costs, and potential delays in maritime operations.

Longer interactions might be associated with heightened scrutiny, contributing to safety and security but possibly at the cost of operational efficiency. In contrast, shorter interactions might expedite clearance but raise concerns about the adequacy of inspections. Balancing efficiency with security and seafarer satisfaction is a critical aspect of optimizing vessel clearance procedures in Nigerian seaports. This analysis underscores the importance of examining interaction durations as a key factor in understanding the broader context of seafarer experiences and port operation.

Further analysis of the duration of interactions in Nigerian seaports should consider the potential impact on seafarer well-being, vessel

#### **4.0 Please select the challenge(s) you have faced during the interaction**

Seafarers 11(62.5%) that responded to this specific question expressed varied challenges faced while 1 simply stated "Good" meaning he did not experience challenge, while 10 out of the fourty(40) seafarers surveyed either faced harassment(37.5%), arrest or detention of vessel 1(12.5%), crew change issue 1(12.5%), other challenges and discrimination 1(12.5%)

**Harassment:** 3 (37.5%), respondents reported instances of harassment during their time in Nigerian seaports. Harassment can encompass a wide range of behaviours, including verbal abuse, intimidation, or unwanted advances. Understanding the specific nature and context of this harassment is crucial for addressing and preventing such incidents in the future. There is also a need to identify the underlying causes of harassment, such as cultural factors, inadequate policies, or lack of awareness, which is crucial for developing effective preventive measures. Based on the findings, the implementation of anti-harassment policies, training programs, and reporting mechanisms such as the PSSP will ultimately create a safer environment for seafarers.

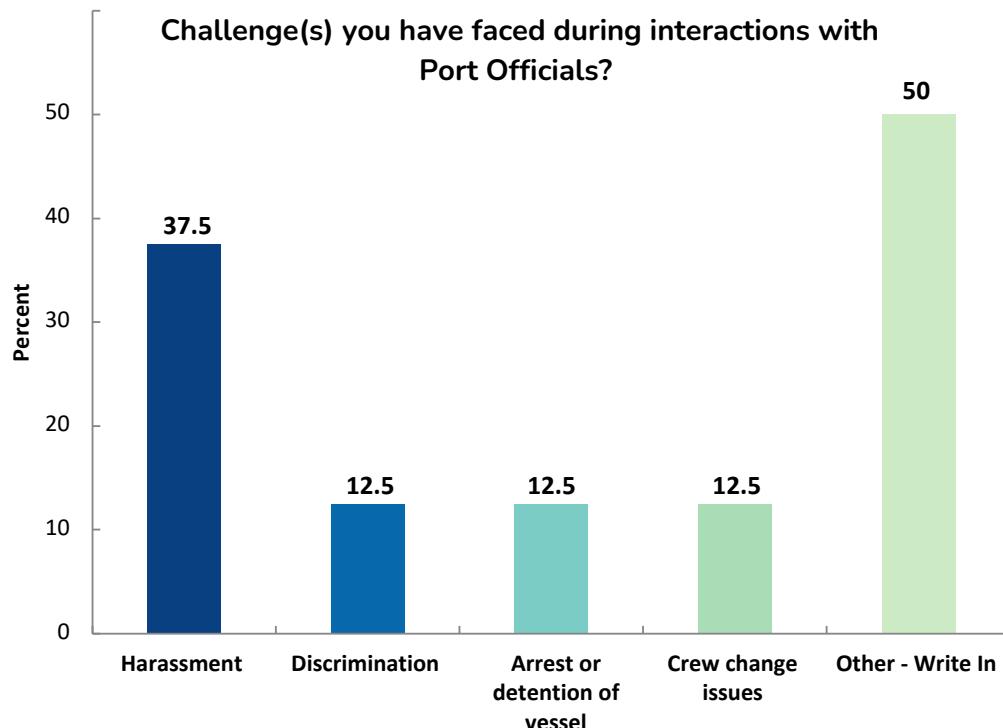
**Arrest or Detention of Vessel:** 1 (12.5%), respondents indicated the arrest or detention of their vessel as a challenge. This issue can have serious implications for seafarers, including delays, legal complications, and financial burdens. This challenge can result from various factors, such as disputes over cargo, unpaid fees, or regulatory issues. Investigating the circumstances surrounding vessel detentions is essential for identifying potential areas of improvement in port procedures and legal frameworks. Analysing incidents of vessel detention can:

- Lead to improvements in legal frameworks governing maritime disputes and cargo handling.
- Help to address the financial burden on seafarers resulting from vessel detentions while protecting their rights and livelihoods.
- Help to identify common causes of vessel detentions and inform efforts to expedite dispute resolution processes while minimising disruptions to seafarers' schedules.

**Crew Change Issues:** Another respondent 1(12.5%), mentioned crew change issues as

a challenge. Crew changes are vital for maintaining the well-being of seafarers, and any difficulties in this process can lead to extended work periods, fatigue, decreased job satisfaction, and mental and emotional stress. Examining the specific issues related to crew changes is essential for streamlining procedures and ensuring the welfare of seafarers. To address crew change challenges, it is essential to investigate the specific causes of crew change problems, such as visa issues, bureaucratic processes, or insufficient facilities, which can serve as a guide to targeted solutions. Advocating for policy reforms and international cooperation on crew change protocols is also a step in the right direction.

**Other Challenges:** 4 (50%), respondents reported facing challenges that fell into the category of "other." These challenges may encompass a range of issues not explicitly mentioned but are nonetheless important for understanding the comprehensive landscape of difficulties seafarers encounter in Nigerian seaports. By understanding the nature, causes, and impacts of these challenges, stakeholders can work together to create safer, more supportive, and efficient port environments for seafarers.



Value	Percent	Count
Harassment	37.5%	3
Discrimination	12.5%	1
Arrest or detention of vessel	12.5%	1
Crew change issues	12.5%	1
Other - Write In	50.0%	4

Other - Write In	Count
Good	1
Intimidation	1
On Outstanding payment, on bargains agreement.	2
Totals	4



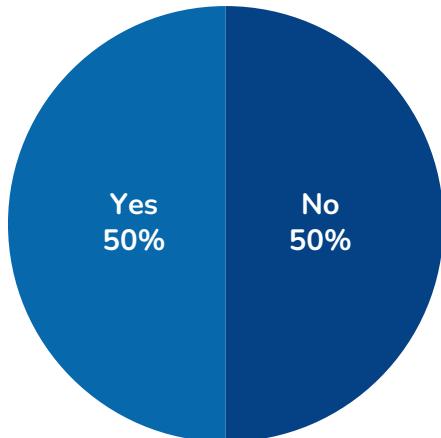
## **SECTION 6. AWARENESS OF NIGERIA'S STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs)**

### **1.0 Are you aware of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the Nigerian Government agencies?**

The section six examines the awareness and accessibility to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) among seafarers operating in Nigerian seaports. SOPs are crucial documents that provide structured guidelines for port clearance procedures, ensuring efficiency, safety, and adherence to regulations. This analysis considers the survey responses regarding seafarers' knowledge of SOPs and their access to these critical documents.

### **2.0 Knowledge of SOPs:**

The survey reveals a notable divide among respondents regarding their knowledge of SOPs. 20 (50%) respondents indicated awareness of SOPs, and the equal number of the respondents 20 (50%), stated that they were not aware about the SOPs. This disparity suggests that there may be inconsistencies in the dissemination of information regarding SOPs among seafarers. Interestingly, most of the Seafarers who indicated that they were aware were in Apapa, Tin Can, and Port Harcourt international ports while those from the Oil and gas terminal and jetties were neither aware nor knowledgeable about the SOPs and suggests the need to cover the offshore areas.



### **3.0 Do you know where or how to access the SOPs of Nigerian Government agencies?**

The majority 24 (60%) of the respondents indicated that they know where and how to access the SOPs. Whereas, 16 (40%) respondents reporting that they do not know where and how to access to the SOPs. Ensuring that seafarers have access to SOPs is essential for them to follow the established procedures effectively. To address the development, the implementation of user-friendly methods for seafarers to access SOPs digitally on port's websites, distributing printed hard copies at port facilities, or disseminating them through ports and ships agents.

When seafarers are well-informed and have easy access to SOPs, they can contribute to clearance processes more smoothly. This, in turn, can minimize delays, reduce the potential for errors, and foster a culture of adherence to international maritime regulations

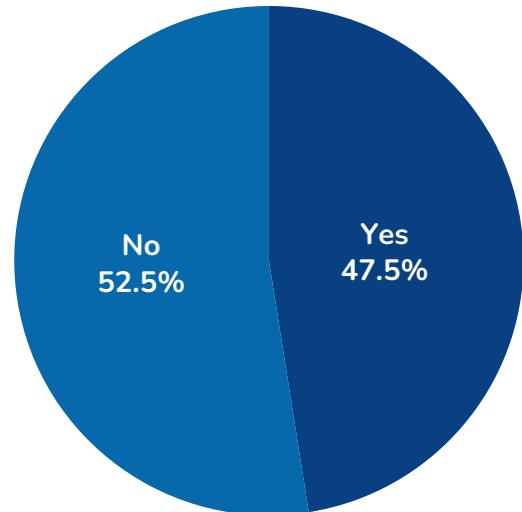
Value	Percent	Count
Yes	60.0%	12
No	40.0%	8
	Totals	20

## 4.0

### Have you received training or guidance for interacting with Government officials?

Out of the forty (40) surveyed, 19 (48%) reported having received training or guidance for interacting with government officials during their port/terminal/jetty visits. This indicates that a portion of seafarers operating in Nigerian seaports have access to preparatory resources to navigate encounters with public officials. The majority of 21 (52.5%) respondents did not receive training or guidance for interacting with government officials during port visits. Understanding the impact of training and guidance on seafarers' port experiences is important in assessing its efficacy in facilitating smooth interactions with government officials.

This aspect involves variables such as competence, trustworthiness, and clarity of port officials. Seafarers who received training are aware of proper procedures, regulations, and their rights during interactions with government officials. This awareness can lead to increased confidence and reduced stress levels when engaging with port authorities. Additionally, training can equip seafarers with conflict resolution skills, helping them navigate challenging situations with professionalism and composure.

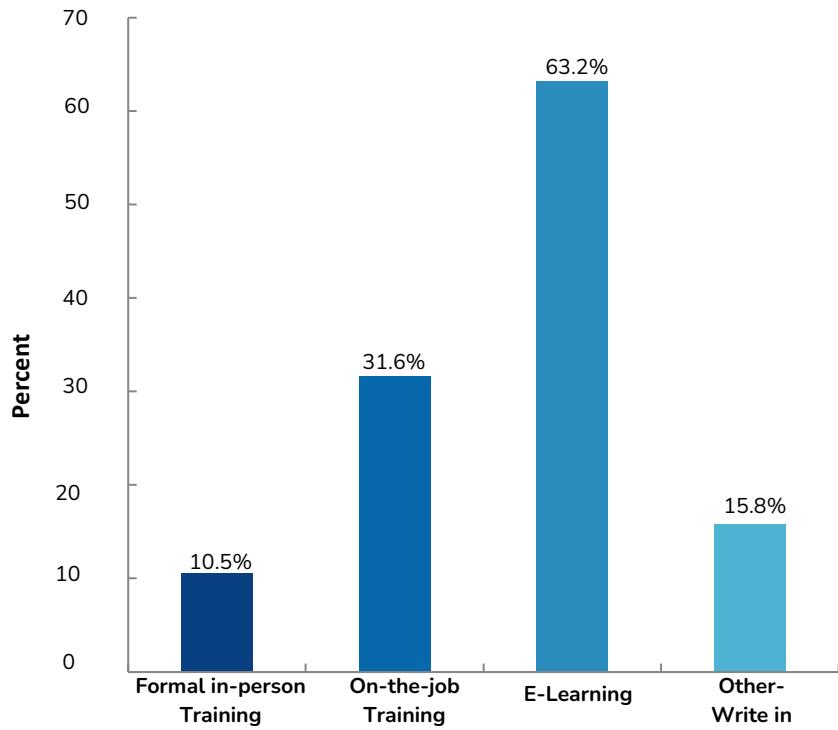


On the other hand, the effectiveness of training may vary depending on its content, quality, and relevance to real-world scenarios. If training materials do not adequately address the specific challenges faced by seafarers in Nigerian seaports, their impact may be limited.

## 5.0

### What type of training?

Seafarers that responded to receiving training, have 2(10.5%), mentioned having received a formal in-person training, 6(31.6%), reported on-the-job training, and the majority of 12 (63.2%),respondents received training through e-learning methods. Most of the e-learning compared to other forms of training suggests it as the most acceptable approach to training delivery, considering its flexibility and suitability to seafarers' schedules.



Other - Write in	Count
Company and MACN Bulletins	1
MACN TRAINING which was held online through the company	1
MACN TRAINING which was held online through the company	1
Totals	3

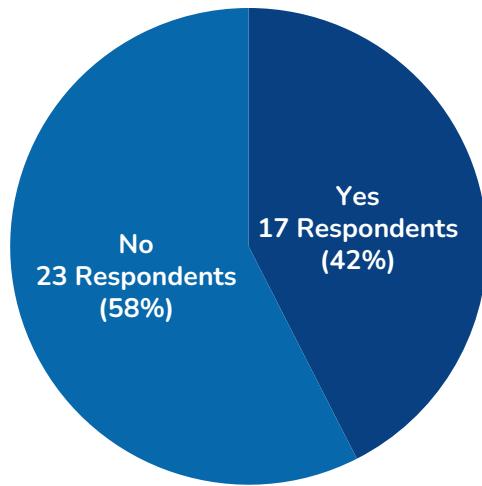


## SECTION 7. CORRUPT PRACTICES

1.0

### Have you ever been asked for a gift, facilitation payment, or bribe at any Nigerian port, terminal, or jetty?

Seafarers' experiences with bribery solicitations within Nigerian seaports underscore the prevalence of corrupt practices. A total of 17 (42%) out of 40 respondents reported being asked for a gift, facilitation payment, or bribe during their visits to Nigerian seaports. However, 23 (58%), did not experience bribery. This section explores the implications of these solicitations and the methods used, shedding light on the challenges faced by seafarers in this regard.



2.0

Please provide more information: 1. who made the request?; 2. how the gift or bribe was requested (directly or indirectly)? 3. was there any implied consequence (e.g., delay, fines, etc)

Respondent	Responses to [Who made the request?, How it was requested? and Whether there as implied consequence such as delay and fines?]
27	The agent made the request. Directly, Port Authorities through the Agent. All of them are connected and working together [1].
28	Custom, Immigration and Quarantine Officials Gift/Bribe were demanded directly [1].
33	None
39	Blank
64	Prefer not to say as vessel visits Nigerian Ports regularly. Yes, always [2]. Delay clearing vessel, fines, threatening to take away documents and requiring master to come to harbour master ofc, rummaging of vessel to find discrepancies in declarations etc.[3].
66	1. immigration 2. Indirectly 3. Rethreatening to find the vessel
69	Practically all officials this way or another will request for gift or direct money[1]. The direct request came from Immigration, threatening the vessel with a big official fine (around 10000\$) and/or vessel detention and stating they are open for other proposals, which I understand as a clear bribe demand. Fine not based on any reasonable grounds[3]

Respondent	Responses to [Who made the request?, How it was requested? and Whether there as implied consequence such as delay and fines?]
72	Demands were made earlier i.e., 2019 and not made during the most recent call[3].
73	Govt. officials made demand for gifts in the beginning for vessel clearance, however with firm refusal from ship staff, they conceded and did not create any trouble for vessel[1].
75	Everyone visiting[1]. Both ways-money is asked for indirectly, Everything else? Yes, cigarettes, food, clothes, and working shoes directly[2].
76	There were hints of facilitation to smooth arrival/sailing formalities from boarding authorities[1]. General hospitality and an amicable attitude with sufficient time spent eventually help vessels avoid any facilitation to be given. In the case of PSC inspection, it resulted in a few dubious deficiencies raised on negligible observation but formally accepted by the ship in good faith[3].
77	Port workers[1]. Asked for gifts but was rejected by me to offer[2] None[3]
78	Immigration and Custom authorities[1] Have had both in terms of cigarettes as payments[2]. There were no fines/delays after cigarettes were given. However, this was 2 years back. The last call to Egina was handled well without cash/cigarette.

### 3.0 Does this happen frequently?

A notable portion of respondents 8 (47.1%), reported experiencing solicitations 100% of the time they visited Nigerian seaports. An additional 6 (35%), respondents encountered such solicitations about 75% of the time, indicating a prevalent issue. 1 (12%), seafarer mentioned encountering solicitations 50% of the time, highlighting the inconsistency in corrupt practices. Only 1 respondent experienced solicitations below 25% of the time.

Value Per cent Count		
Yes, 100% of the time	47.1%	8
About 75% of the time	35.3%	6
50% of the time	11.8%	2
Below 25%	5.9%	1
	Totals	17

## 4.0

## Did you make a formal report of the demand?

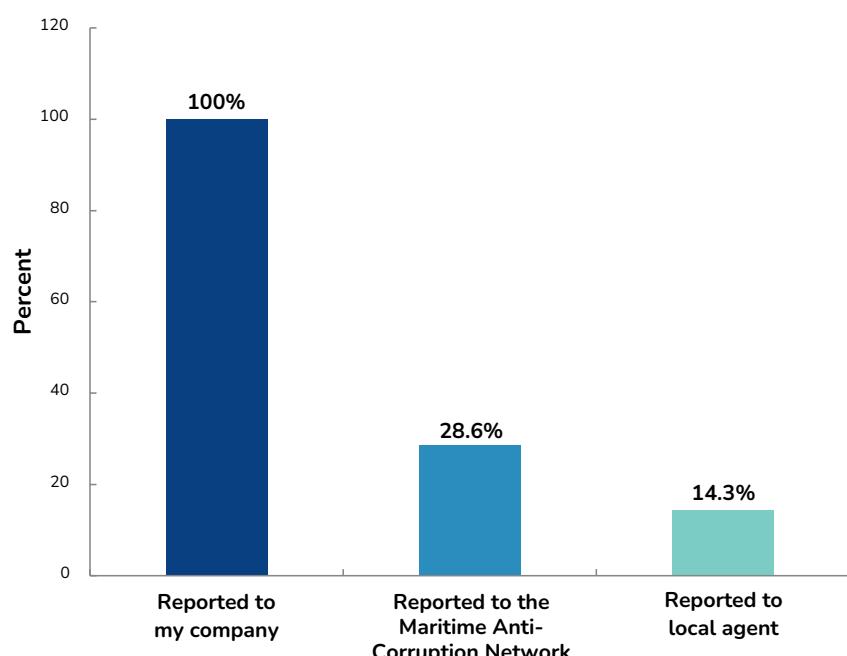
Only 1 respondent out of the 7 (41.2%), who experienced bribery solicitations and reported the demand formally. This low reporting rate suggests a lack of confidence in the efficacy of reporting mechanisms or potential fear of reprisals. Respondents who did report the demands typically reported them to their respective companies, highlighting the importance of internal reporting structures. Notably, one respondent reported the demand to the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN), demonstrating the potential role of external organizations in combating corrupt practices within Nigerian seaports.

Value	Per cent	Count
Yes	41.2%	7
No	52.9%	9
Don't know	5.9%	1
	Totals	17

## 5.0

## Who did you report the demand to?

Out of the 40 respondents, 1 (14.3%), reported that their ship's port agent who they reported the demand to, had helped resolved challenges encountered during their port visits. This suggests that port agents play a significant role in assisting seafarers in navigating through some of the challenges faced by seafarers' during port operations. Of the respondents, 7 (100%), out of 40 reported that their shipping companies had assisted in resolving challenges encountered during port calls. This positive response suggests that shipping companies are actively engaged in supporting seafarers in addressing some of the issues related to vessel clearance and port interactions. Additional respondents 2 (28.6%), reported to Maritime Anti-Corruption. This variation in responses underscores the need to further investigate the factors that influence the level of engagement and support provided by shipping companies.



Value	Percent	Count
Reported to my company	100.0%	7
Reported to the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network	28.6%	2
Reported to local agent	14.3%	1

## 6.0 Have you ever felt that the only way to resolve an issue is to bribe an official during a port call?

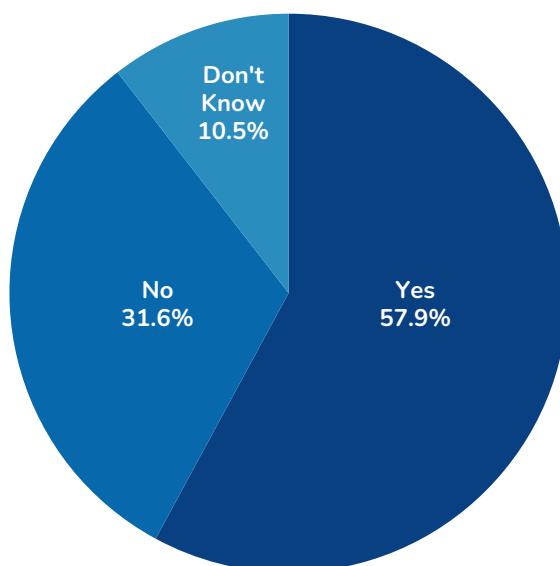
A total of 10 (25%) out of 40 respondents acknowledged feeling that offering a bribe was the only way to resolve specific issues during port calls. This perception raises concerns about the extent to which corrupt practices are intertwined with routine port operations.

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	25.0%	10
No	60.0%	24
Don't know	15.0%	6
	Totals	40

## 7.0 Has your ship's port agent helped resolve challenges?

Port agents 11 (58%), played a role in issue resolution for a portion of seafarers, although this support was not universal as expressed by some of the seafarers'.

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	57.9%	11
No	31.6%	6
Don't know	10.5%	2
	Totals	19

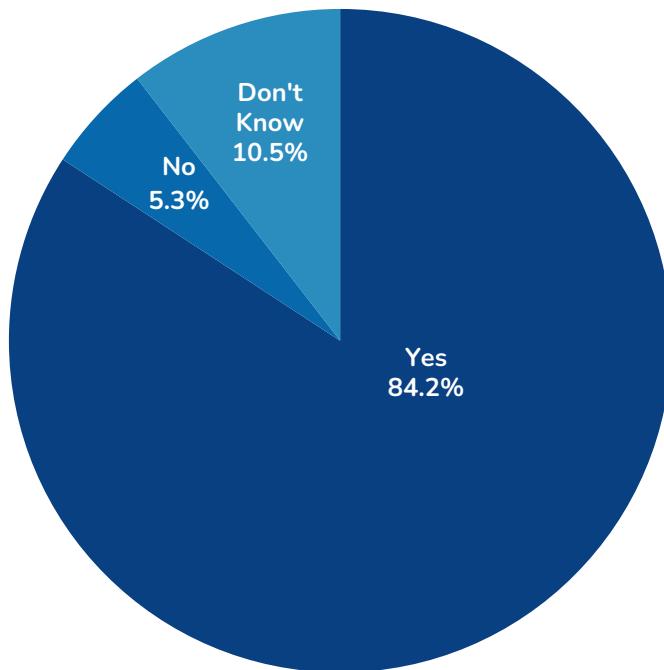


## 8.0

## Has the shipping company helped resolve challenges?

Shipping companies were involved in issue resolution for some seafarers, which also indicates a potential avenue for support. 16 (84%), of the seafarers said shipping companies helped resolve the challenges they faced in the ports/terminals/jetties.

Value	Per cent	Count
Yes	84.2%	16
No	5.3%	1
Don't know	10.5%	2
	Totals	19



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## SECTION 8. SUGGESTIONS BY THE SEAFARERS

**1.0**

**Based on your experience, what other suggestions can you provide to improve vessel clearance processes in the Nigerian seaports, terminals, or jetties?**

Response ID	Response [Suggestions by the seafarers']
24	"All port authorities are to be briefed on welcoming seafarers in Nigeria port and terminal".
25	"This Call experience was much better than previous calls".
27	"Before and after coming to/from the ship, Port authorities and Agents to be fully searched for money and gifts, this is the only way".
28	"The vessel clearance process should be faceless. Vessels are to send all requested documents by email and clearance is to be given by email. Ships are not to be visited by these officials unless there are reasonable grounds for the need to visit the ship".
29	"Agent's support is compulsory. Reduce the number of port officials for ship's clearance"
33	"Training".
35	"Nor"
36	"I'd suggest they should be swift in signing and delivering clearance papers to the ship so certain operations can commence and finish on time and not make the ship crew have to work extra hours".
37	"No idea".
38	"We don't use to know how it works as a seafarer, because our company is in charge of everything".
39	"Government officials should do their jobs without the thought of getting something in return or seeing it as an opportunity to extort".
41	"Nigeria's seafarers should be well taken care of and NIMASA should do the needful with companies with seafarers welfare.Thanks".
45	"Pilots should always keep to time onboarding The officials should be professional in dealing with matters and not after gifts and bribery. They should show concern about the welfare of the crew onboard ask about their wellbeing and have a private heart-to-heart talk with the crew. They should see that the agreement between the company and the seafarers is in line with MLC/ILO regulations".
46	"On like Warri, seaport, I think if the waterway is been cleared and the water channel open the traffic would be much and business would pick up and it will call for more investors".
47	"The rate of vessel clearance should be reduced".
48	"Let's try and make our Lagos port very special and unique".
52	"Online clearance".
54	"They need to assess the vessel very well before giving a clearance".
56	"Proper supervision".
57	"Vessels should not stay long outside the bar, before entering to berth at jetty. by the Abhor. The alongside most Vessels are not accurately okay at the gangway is not properly stable but swinging while

	<i>clamping. The gangway operator must notice the Stability so as not to overboard anyone or cause any injury. Thanks".</i>
58	"Huge charges and excess tax charges to seafarers should be looked into".
62	"No Suggestions".
64	"MACN representative to be on board the vessel along with authorities to deal with any/all requests from authorities. Availability on the phone is not of much use especially when the authorities do not wish to talk to the MACN representative on the phone".
66	"Put stiffer penalties on officials asking for any kind of facilitation gift or payments".
67	"The police should stop searching seafarers at the port".
69	"Anti-bribe policy is the right direction. If no one pays authorities will have to accept that. In our case the vessel left port without any delay or paying anything, however cannot say how that was solved. As far as I know the case was dealt with by an agent, "behind the scenes", also I don't know how much support was given by Nigeria MACN, which had been contacted. Despite the fact, the level of corruption in Nigeria looks extremely high, my opinion is that if more shipowners join MACN better results will come. Any support from other parties - Oil Majors, Charterers? Are the real efforts being taken from the government? Who and how is setting the regulations? For example, if you classify aspirin as a narcotic, what is the purpose of such regulation?".
71	<i>It was a bit difficult to deal with Government agencies when comes to vessel clearance but when you stay firm on your grounds of Anti Bribery and inform them in advance that you are part of the MACN group, they will just take a lot of additional time of yours to clear the vessel. You have to be mentally prepared and keep yourself calm to deal with authorities and make them realise that you are not running short of time and they can take whatever time they want to clear the vessel".</i>
72	"From Offshore Terminals no individual is landing in Nigeria, all remain on board. Where there is no crew change immigration clearance may be done online".
73	"Govt. officers visiting onboard should be encouraged not to make unjustified demands from vessel staff".
74	"Electronic submission of documents to stakeholders".
75	"Not to go to Nigeria".
76	"In my experience (regrettably without many of the neighbouring countries visiting) Nigeria has the most complex/extended foreign vessels inward clearance policy/procedure, by implementing electronic clearance and reducing physical ship's visits to at least a moderate number might have a favourably effect on the whole issue".
77	"The port workers need to be trained on how to relate with crews during operations".
78	"Well, a lot depends on the paperwork and vessel preparedness. However, this should not be the case. Also, the agent is a good agency like GAC, then they are better I feel as if they are aware of MACN and they handle things with authorities better. Normally after clearance is completed the agents ask on

	<i>behalf of the authorities for some sort of gratuity which should be abolished”.</i>
80	<i>“Well, a lot depends on paperwork and vessel preparedness. However, this should not be the case. Also, Agents of a good agency like GAC, then they are better I feel as they are aware of MACN and they handle the things with authorities better. Normally after clearance is completed the agents ask on behalf of authorities for some sort of gratuity which should be abolished”.</i>
81	<i>“Not to go to Nigeria”.</i>

## **SECTION 9. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS**

The research conducted in this study has provided valuable insights into the various aspects of seafarers' experiences in Nigerian seaports. The following key findings have emerged:

### **1.0 Port Experiences and Interactions**

Seafarers reported varying frequencies of visits to Nigerian ports, and that their experience with the local processes of vessel clearance and interaction with port officials has implications for their psychological and physiological well-being. The Initial interactions with port authorities significantly influence seafarers' perceptions and experiences. Also, long interactions with some of the government agency officials in areas that are not relevant to vessel clearance contribute to stress and frustration. Seafarers' perceptions of government agency officials range from competence, and trustworthiness, to instances of intimidation, fault findings and greed.

### **2.0 Awareness of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

An equal percentage (50%), of the seafarers reported that they know the standard operating procedures, and it also revealed that the same percentage are not knowledgeable about the SOPs which could potentially affect their ability to effectively interact with the Port Official. The finding also showed that access to the SOPs varied, and this has implications for seafarers' preparedness and interaction.

### **3.0 Challenges to Wellbeing**

While a substantial number of seafarers faced challenges during port visits, there was a variation in the types of challenges experienced. Seafarers expressed the need for welfare facilities and services if available to enhance their well-being during port calls. Most of the seafarers who responded to this question reported incidences of harassment, arrests, issues with crew change, and health-related challenges during their port visits.



Source: Lloydslist.com

#### **4.0                   Corrupt Practices and Bribery**

Some seafarers reported being solicited for bribes or gifts by some government officials and agents. Bribery solicitations varied in terms of who made the request, the methods employed, and the frequency of such requests. Some seafarers felt compelled to pay bribes to resolve issues during port calls, raising concerns about transparency and fairness.

#### **5.0                   Roles of Port Agents and Shipping Companies**

Seafarers believed port agents played a role in the issue of resolution of the challenge experience during vessel clearance, although the support according to them was not universal. Shipping companies were also involved in the issue of resolution on behalf of seafarers, a potential avenue for continuous support.

#### **6.0                   Training and Guidance for Interacting with Public Officials**

Some of the seafarers received training and guidance on how to interact with government officials, primarily through e-learning methods. Training on port experiences showed a positive impact on the seafarers and it also depends on the contents and relevance to all the stakeholders in the Ports/Terminal and Jetties.

## **SECTION 10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Based on the findings, the following are recommended**

1. Develop tailored training programmes for seafarers on vessel clearance.
2. Train shipping companies and port agents in seafarers' dispute resolution and the promotion of Nigeria's image.
3. Promote transparency in vessel clearance procedures.
4. Promote the assessment and annual deserving integrity awards (DIA) to an individual and a Shipping Company, Government Agency, Terminal and Jetty that exceptionally comply with and exhibit anticorruption standards in a Port, Terminal and Jetty.
5. Maintain robust anti-corruption measures and mechanisms for reporting bribery solicitations.
6. Enhance safety measures during port visits to prevent harassment and arrests.
7. Need for comprehensive training and awareness programs for all port stakeholders on vessel clearance and interaction with shipboard crew in ports, terminals and jetties.
8. Advocate for efficient and transparent vessel clearance.
9. A visit to the challenges faced by Government Officials in the conduct of its functions in the seaports.
10. Promote the use of electronic technology in processing documents and limit the presence
11. Reduce the number of port officials involved with vessel clearance by introducing the use of electronic technology (the single window concept).
12. Prioritise seafarers' well-being in line with national and international regulations in force.
13. Reduce rates and tax charges on vessel clearance.
14. Suggest the need for a Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN) physical presence on board vessels.
15. Impose stiffer penalties for officials requesting facilitation gifts or payments.
16. Ensure access to necessary medical facilities and support in ports
17. Address issues related to harassment, arrests, and crew change problems.

## **SECTION 11. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The study highlights areas for further research, including examining the long-term effects of seafarers' port experiences on their mental and physical health, comparing experiences in Nigeria and globally, developing port experience training programs, and analyzing vessel clearance regulations.

## **SECTION 12. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the study explores seafarers' experiences in Nigerian seaports, highlighting challenges and support mechanisms. It emphasizes the need for tailored training, transparency, anti-corruption measures, and support to improve safety and well-being. It calls for continuous research and evaluation.

## **SECTION 13. ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This report was produced as part of a seafarer's experience study in collaboration with the Maritime Anticorruption Network project in Nigeria on challenges faced by seafarers' and the Maritime organizations in the cause of vessels clearance, and the need to improve and sustained Nigeria's image on vessels clearance in the Country's Seaports, Terminals and Jetties.

The study was carried out by the National Seafarers' Welfare Board of Nigeria (NSWBN), an advocacy and non-governmental organization that coordinates and compliment seafarers' welfare activities of members that subscribed to the Board. The questionnaires was developed jointly with MACN, administered, analyzed and the report written by the NSWBN.

The NSWBN would like to thank the MACN who contributed their time during meetings and provided inputs on the survey. Thanks also to the national and international seafarers' that participated in the study. The Board also plan to carry out a similar study of the maritime organization's experience in Seaports, Terminal and Jetties.

## **SECTION 14. REFERENCES**

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