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Could it be any easier?

Measures to deal with harassment at sea

Bachelor thesis for the Marine Engineering Program

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DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICS AND MARITIME SCIENCES

CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
Göteborg, Sweden, 2021

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PREFACE

This bachelor's thesis constitutes 15 credits and is a compulsory part of the four-year marine engineering program, within the Department of Mechanics and Maritime Sciences at Chalmers University of Technology.

Thank you to all of you who took the time to contribute with your experiences, ideas, and suggestions. I hope your generosity and your insights are appreciated and well received, wherever you are.

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SAMMANDRAG (in Swedish)

Trots insatser från organisationer och intressenter inom svensk sjöfart för att förbättra arbetsmiljön och jämställdheten i branschen har studier förtydligat att trakasserier och kränkningar fortfarande sker och att de verkar förekomma i större utsträckning än vad som rapporterats. Därför har en tematisk analys genomförts för att ta reda på vad 12 anställda ombord från fyra olika svenska rederier identifierar som hinder för rapportering av trakasserier och kränkande särbehandling, varför sjöfarten kan ha mörkertal och vilka förbättringar som kan effektivisera befintliga verktyg inom arbetsmiljö, likabehandling och rapportering.

Deras svar visade att systematiskt arbetsmiljöarbete (SAM) är något de är väl förtrogna med och något som kontinuerligt efterföljs. Men trots aktivt ansvarstagande och deltagande i SAM, och rederiernas ansträngningar rörande den psykosociala arbetsmiljön, såsom att anta policyer och utbildning i bland annat likabehandling, förefaller det som att det råder bristande på tilltro för de tillgängliga verktygen, baserat på brist på öppenhet, samförstånd och uppföljning. Dessa brister, i kombination med en relativt liten industri som tycks ha en befintlig tystnadskultur, kan vara några av anledningarna till mörkertalen. Därför dras slutsatsen att det finns goda förutsättningar för att bygga på och komplettera de nuvarande systemen för likabehandling, med förbättringar i två huvudkategorier: att organisationer centralt bör klargöra vad som menas med trakasserier och kränkningar samt hur dessa ska hanteras, och att organisationer kan använda sig mer utav tre av deras redan befintliga instrument, nämligen SAM, den anslutna företagshälsovården samt deras chefer och ledare.

Denna uppsats är skriven på engelska.

Nyckelord: trakasserier, arbetsmiljö, systematiskt arbetsmiljöarbete, tystnadskultur, normer, polarisering, ledarskap, uppförandekod.

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ABSTRACT

Despite efforts made by organizations and stakeholders within Swedish shipping to improve the work-related environment and equality in the industry, studies have clarified that harassment and violations still occur and that they seem to occur to a greater extent than is reported. Therefore, a thematic analysis has been carried out in order to find out what 12 onboard employees from four different Swedish shipping companies identify as barriers for reporting harassment and abusive discrimination, why shipping may have dark numbers, and what improvements could streamline existing tools for work environment, equal treatment and reporting. Their answers showed that systematic work environment management (SAM) is something they are well acquainted with and something that is continuously followed. But despite active responsibility-taking and participation in SAM, and the shipping companies' efforts concerning the psychosocial work environment, such as adopting policies and training in equal treatment among other things, there seems to be a lack of trust in the available tools, which seems to be based on a lack of transparency, consensus, and follow-up. These shortcomings, combined with a relatively small industry seemingly to have an existing culture of silence, may be some of the reasons for the dark numbers. Therefore, it is concluded that there are good conditions for building on and complementing the current systems for equal treatment, with improvements in two major categories: that organizations should centrally clarify what is meant by harassment and violations as well as how these should be handled, and that organizations can use more of three of the already prevalent instruments, namely SAM, their occupational health services and their managers and leaders.

Keywords: harassment, work environment, systematic work environment management, culture of silence, norms, polarization, leadership, code of conduct.

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ACRONYMS AND TERMINOLOGY

| | |
|---------|---|
| CBT | Computer Based Training |
| ITF | International Transport Federation |
| MLC | Maritime Labour Convention |
| Ratings | Unlicensed crewmembers |
| SAM | Systematiskt arbetsmiljöarbete (Systematic work environment management) |
| SFS | Svensk författningssamling (Swedish Code of Statutes) |
| TAP | Tillfälligt anställd personal (Temporary Staff) |

1. INTRODUCTION

Psychosocial ill-health is not only a problem within Sweden but a global societal problem (Hupke, u.d.; Braun & Clarke, 2006). The shortcomings in the psychosocial work environment and conditions are one of the reasons why many people feel bad, something that is very relevant in the shipping industry. In October 2019, Yale University (Lefkowitz & Slade, 2019) presented a study in which 1,500 seafarers with different backgrounds and positions were asked about their mental health onboard. The results showed that every fourth seafarer was depressed and every fifth had suicidal thoughts. Research also shows that the proportion of suicides among seafarers is higher compared to the proportion on land population (Iversen, 2012). According to the study from Yale, some of the reasons why seafarers feel bad may be a lack of appropriate training for their role, the feeling of lack of control and influence on their role or that the work is not perceived as satisfactory (Lefkowitz & Slade, 2019; Iversen, 2012). The feeling that no one cares and that they sometimes endure violence or threats of violence were also stated as causes, the latter being directly related to depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts (Iversen, 2012).

In Sweden, a survey was conducted in 2015 with the purpose of examining the working environment and safety of Swedish ships (Forsell, Eriksson, Järvholm, Lundh, & Nilsson, 2015). One of the results of the survey showed that harassment and abusive discrimination onboard were common, as 24 percent of respondents indicated that they had been exposed to this in the past 12 months, especially when it came to younger and female employees. In the essay “*En sjöman är alltid en sjöman*”- *Kränkningar och trakasserier bland sjömän på svenska fartyg*’, a follow-up interview study was conducted to understand the reasons behind the results found by Forsell et al. (2015) (Hodge & Widerström, 2017). This study showed that harassment often occurs at sea, is reported to a lesser extent by staff at sea than on land, and that it occurs at all levels, horizontally and vertically. This is not something specific to a distinct group onboard but something that occurs in general. The results showed a few different reasons why harassment can occur and why they are not reported further, such as difficulties in being anonymous, risking losing your job or turning a blind eye to the problems (Hodge & Widerström, 2017). Those who were interviewed seemed to be aware of what can be classified as harassment, many had experienced them themselves. Despite that, they had still not chosen to go any further, leading to thoughts about what the reasons are for the lack of reporting. (Hodge & Widerström, 2017). Given the above-mentioned studies showing that harassment and abusive discrimination are present onboard and a major problem, risking causing mental illness, there seems to be a dark figure. Vulnerable people are reluctant to report and deal with difficulties that have arisen, while previous research also shows that despite incidents being reported, measures have not been taken and denouncers believe measures have been lacking (Forsell et al, 2015). Knowledge requirements, goals, workload, working hours and abusive discrimination, have been regulated in Sweden since March 2016 in the Swedish Work Environment Act where the general demands and regulations regarding the environment at work are described (SFS 1977:1160, 2020; SFS 2008:567, 2020). The regulations are adapted to today's working life, clarifying what employers and employees shall do within the framework of the systematic work environment management for which all employers are responsible. It is the employer's responsibility to clarify that abusive discrimination is not accepted and should be expressed within the framework of the work environment policy that must exist in accordance with law. Therefore, the work against harassment needs to start from the top throughout the organization's policies and clear guidelines including the employee's responsibility to follow and actively work to prevent and deter abusive discrimination.

Swedish shipping has tried to address the problems surrounding the psychosocial work environment, discrimination, and harassment. Organizations and stakeholders within the

industry have, among other things, joined forces to produce action plans on how the endeavour should proceed (Sjöfartshögskolan vid Linnéuniversitetet, 2012). The trade union SEKO-sjöfolk have since 2018 been devoted in investigating and revising an action plan for gender equality in order to provide a safer work environment where the psychosocial environment is in focus (Handlingsplan för jämställd representation 2020, u.d.) . The study that forms the basis for that revision, showed that some of the existing obstacles to solve the problems surrounding the psychosocial work environment are, among other things, the culture and jargon onboard associated with harassment (Handlingsplan för jämställd representation 2020, u.d.). The survey showed that even though a large part of the respondents had experienced harassment, this neither has been reported nor had the situation been remedied, something that was to be confirmed in a survey conducted by the Swedish Transport Agency in 2019. This survey showed that abusive acts and harassment continue to be a problem, as 27 percent of the respondents without an officer position and 13 percent of those with an officer position reported to have been exposed to them (Ekeström & Persson, 2019).

1.1 Background

As the above-mentioned studies of Swedish shipping have focused on identifying and establishing delimitations and definitions of the existing work environment problems, how harassments are asserted at sea, and to what extent, it is now relevant to focus on solutions to the identified problems, rather than on the problems themselves. Given that members and stakeholders of Swedish shipping have already begun the endeavour to find solutions in the industry, it is therefore of interest to assess what measures can further facilitate the continued effort.

1.2 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate what barriers there might be preventing onboard employees from reporting harassment and abusive discrimination, and whether anything which could facilitate handling and reporting is missing.

1.3 Research questions

- What has prevented onboard employees and officers from proceeding to take measures or reporting harassment?
- What are the reasons to onboard staff showing lower number of reports than the average amount of reports ashore?
- What is missing for reporting and measures to take place?

1.4 Delimitations

Although there are many international laws and regulations that affect Swedish shipping, this study will only consider results from the Swedish shipping industry and legislation, since it is based on previous findings particularly focused on Swedish shipping. Further explanation can be found in section 2.7.

In 2016, the term '*psychosocial work environment*', was changed into '*organizational and social work environment*' in the regulations concerning it (Gunnarsson, Johansson, & Stoetzer, 2016), which is explained in further detail in section 2.7.2. In this study, however, the earlier expression has been used deliberately in order to emphasize the participants' subjective experiences and the topic of mental health.

2. THEORY

As the seafaring profession may differ from occupations ashore, a brief account of what the seafaring profession can mean and entail is therefore the first topic to be addressed in section 2.1, which is closely related to section 2.2, with focus on certain factors specific for the shipping industry and their relationship to harassment. This section is concluded with a summary of some of the current events taking place within Swedish shipping regarding the topic.

Section 2.3 describes some of the effect's harassment can have on a health, professional and social context.

Thus, some of the organizational factors affecting the occurrence of harassment in the workplace are described in sections 2.3–2.6, where some of Sweden's laws are summarized in section 2.7 to facilitate understanding of what the law requires regarding harassment and certain organizational factors.

2.1 Being a seafarer

There are many perils involved with being a seafarer by profession. The incidence of cardiovascular disease, infections, and gastrointestinal diseases as well as the risk of dying from cardiovascular disease (Eriksson H. , 2019), accidents, cancer (Forsell et al., 2018), liver cirrhosis and suicide is higher among seafarers compared with the land population in Sweden as well as internationally (Carter & Jepsen, 2014). In 2014, a compilation based on the effects of exposure to health hazards in the maritime sector, more than 15 major categories of physical threats were addressed, which include everything from exposure to hazardous chemicals to seasickness (Carter & Jepsen, 2014). Though the range of risks is wide (Bloor, Thomas, & Lane, 2000), the following paragraphs will only focus on some of the physical and psychosocial aspects that are causes to stress.

Seafarers have an occupation that differs from many other professions due to the necessity of periodically living in their workplace, where shift work and unpredictability are part of the maritime life (Allen, Wadsworth, & Smith, 2008; Chung, Lee, & Lee, 2017) as most ships are in traffic all year round (Sampson & Ellis, 2019) requiring staffing around the clock, causing different types of mental strain, stress, and risks of becoming exhausted (Lefkowitz & Slade, 2019; Chung, Lee, & Lee, 2017). Prolonged work-related stress can impair the employee's quality of life, well-being and can adversely affect health (Carotenuto, Molino, Fasanaro, & Amenta, 2012) making it harder to make important decisions, and more difficult to select between priorities among other predicaments, eventually leading up to burnout, as the person becomes emotionally, mentally, and physically exhausted from the workload as well as resulting in physical illnesses such as heart disease, migraines, stomach issues and back problems (Iversen, 2012; Chung, Lee, & Lee, 2017).

How work-related stress arises is separated into either subjective or objective factors. The objective factors depend on the physical working conditions onboard such as noise, vibrations, and temperature changes. The subjective factors consist of the seafarer's personal perception of work-related satisfaction, self-confidence, and general well-being amongst other things (Carotenuto et al., 2012; Lefkowitz & Slade, 2019). For instance, reports published between 1996 and 2001 showed that labor in the North Sea oil industry involved psychosocial aspects that would be classified as unacceptable for similar industries on land (Allen, Wadsworth, & Smith, 2008). Health and safety statistics have shown that compared to other occupations, seafarers are prevalent in figures when it comes to fatal injuries, infections, suicide, and high stress levels (Bloor, Thomas, & Lane, 2000).

In 2019, the Swedish Transport Agency conducted a survey of seafarers' working and living conditions, showing that one of the biggest issues' seafarers may experience is a high workload in relation to the lack of recovery. Although there are industries with a greater workload according to surveys, the link between fatigue and the risk of accidents means that fatigue onboard can be an immediate danger and an issue that should be taken seriously (Ekeström & Persson, 2019). The survey showed that more than a third of the respondents felt that they could do nothing but rest after the end of the work shift, and that a fifth did not consider themselves being able to complete their work tasks within scheduled working hours or having an acceptable workload (Ekeström & Persson, 2019). This is not a new phenomenon as The International Transport Federation (ITF) reported as early as 2012 that the global number of working hours for seafarers was very high, where a quarter of the sample group stated working on average more than 80 hours a week and that several specified feeling tired after resting, especially during the first week onboard (Carotenuto et al., 2012). In parallel with a high workload, the registration and review of working hours does not take place in an efficient manner as crew members do not report the actual hours worked, but rather write reports that seemingly comply with what rules and laws stipulate (Smith, Allen, & Wadsworth, 2006). When seafarers were asked why this was happening, they explained that the current manning system does not meet the requirements for the ship's operations in relation to the regulatory requirements regarding rest hours. In fear of the consequences, would there be violations detected during inspections, they therefore concealed evidence of non-compliance with illegal adjustments to working time reports and registers. This approach being perceived as a less risky alternative compared to enduring the company's dissatisfaction if inspections would lead to remarks (Baumler, Singh Bhatia, & Kitada, 2020).

In periods, while the ships are on voyage, the workload can be low, and the crew's primary tasks frequently consist of monitoring largely automated systems that nowadays can require little effort. When the ships then arrive at port areas with heavy ship traffic and limited range of movement, the workload shifts to become high as many operations and decisions must take place in a short time and staff might be required to partake in operations outside their ordinary working hours. This distribution results in mental strain in two different ways, on the one hand the work can be monotonous which can lead to inattention, on the other hand the high workload can lead to making wrong decisions due to stress (Pollard, Sussman, & Stearns, 1990). This kind of tension, shift work, fatigue and the impact on safety are directly related to each other as it has emerged that the risk of accidents is highest during work at night, lower in the afternoon and lowest in the morning, and that the risk of accidents increases during a series of shifts, especially at night and when the shift length is over 8 hours (Allen, Wadsworth, & Smith, 2008). A large proportion of seafarers, especially onboard ships crossing several time zones, experience that they do not get good enough quality nor quantity of sleep due to continuous interrupted rest hours and disturbed circadian rhythm (Carotenuto et al., 2012).

Part of the reason for lacking good quality sleep is the effect noise and movement has on sleep and performance, which has been assessed with both subjective and objective measuring instruments (Smith, Allen, & Wadsworth, 2006). A study showed that exposure to ship engine noise at 65 decibels, which is approximately the average level for ships over 3,000 tons, has a negative effect on sleep. The participants in the study proclaimed they had become accustomed to the noise and that it did not affect their sleep, but when their sleep was mapped using actigraphy, where a sensor worn on the arm registers a person's movement patterns in order to estimate the individual's circadian rhythm and sleep quality (Walia & Mehra, 2019), it emerged their subjective perception did not correspond to reality. Another study showed 44 percent of

the respondents reporting noise was a problem. When the same survey was conducted on a noise-reduced vessel, only eight percent of the respondents reported experiencing stress related to noise (Smith, Allen, & Wadsworth, 2006). Depending on the weather conditions, even the waves of the ships are tiring as the crew members constantly parry rocking movements to maintain their position and balance while performing their tasks (Pollard, Sussman, & Stearns, 1990). There is also evidence to suggest that the effects of constant ship movement can impair performance when it comes to psychomotor listening tasks and that cognitive processing becomes significantly slower (Smith, Allen, & Wadsworth, 2006). Interviews have also shown that motivation decreases the longer seafarers are away from home, especially when planned disembarkations are delayed, where 48.6 percent of those surveyed also perceived the fatigue and stress levels to be higher towards the end of a trip. This can have consequences for safety, as it increases the risk of self-overestimation, taking shortcuts and not following fixed procedures (Barnett, Kecklund, & van Leeuwen, 2017).

Long voyages with fast turnaround times are not the only contributors to insufficient and interrupted sleep patterns and stress experiences, so are also reduced crew sizes, especially for seafarers on coastal routes with several ports of call (Bloor, Thomas, & Lane, 2000). As a result of the ongoing globalization the size of onboard crews has not only decreased, but also made them to become more multinational, meaning they are composed of people of different nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds, something that has contributed to increased psychological problems (Rydstedt & Lundh, 2010; Carotenuto et al., 2012; Iversen, 2012). In Sweden, for instance, shipping companies' fleets may consist of up to 75 percent temporary staff (TAP) from countries outside the European Economic Area in accordance with an alternative collective agreement, the so-called TAP-agreement (Svensk sjöfart). As multinational crew members often work under different types of contracts, this can mean higher staff turnover. It has been shown that crews consisting of officers and crew who had continuously served together onboard the same vessel for several years had much lower fatigue levels than crews' onboard vessels with frequent staff turnover. The reason to this is that members of a crew who continuously collaborate, can do their jobs with little instruction or supervision, while crews experiencing lack of continuity in staff turnover, have increased workloads since the crew must dedicate several hours each day to monitor, train, and be trained (Pollard, Sussman, & Stearns, 1990).

The linguistic or cultural differences between the employees onboard can also lead to significant communication problems, not only in terms of verbal barriers but also when it comes to the factors that create mental or physical stress (Jensen & Oldenburg, 2020). Data show, for example, that ships where officers were mostly represented by Europeans and the crew mostly by Southeast Asian seafarers, differ when it comes the sources of what causes them stress. The officers usually indicated subjective mental stress caused by high responsibility, extensive administrative tasks, and lack of qualification among seafarers, while the crew were more likely to become physically stressed. At the same time, almost twice as many of the Southeast Asian seafarers stated that they often felt alone onboard compared to the Europeans (Jensen & Oldenburg, 2020).

Racism and abusive treatment occurs on many ships (Iversen, 2012) which, in combination with conflicts and communication difficulties, may lead to further isolation, especially when supervision and support is lacking (Carotenuto, Molino, Fasanaro, & Amenta, 2012). The Swedish Transport Agency's previously mentioned survey showed that almost a third of the respondents within the ratings, and just over a fifth of those within the licenced crew, experience stressful conflicts. Housekeeping staff and female crewmembers are the ones reporting the most

stressful conflicts (Ekeström & Persson, 2019). The study also showed it is more common for ratings to have been subjected to abusive acts and harassment, compared to licensed mariners. The violations usually come from a manager or supervisor, followed by colleagues, where women being more frequently exposed to gender-based violations and harassment, while men more often being offended and harassed due to their age. It also showed that a quarter of the respondents felt they neither receive regular feedback on their work from their managers nor have regular workplace meetings where the work environment is discussed and that just over a fifth of them felt they may not influence decisions concerning work tasks (Ekeström & Persson, 2019).

In conclusion, although seafarers' lives can be dangerous, there are some risks that can be minimized (MacLachlan, Kavanagh, & Kay, 2012), such as unrealistic workload, fatigue and conflicts through increased focus on the organizational and social work environment with the help of systematic work environment management, and more consistent contact between managers and employees as this increases opportunities for seafarers to discuss improvements and makes it easier to apprehend dissatisfaction among staff in an early stage (Ekeström & Persson, 2019).

2.2 Harassment at sea

Many of the physical risks associated with shipping have been mapped, but there is relatively little empirical data concerning seafarers' mental health in general as well as in relation to the general population (MacLachlan, Kavanagh, & Kay, 2012), probably since seafarers are largely recruited on a temporary basis with fixed-term contract after presenting documentation they have passed an approved medical examination, which screens out workers who are unable to work for health reasons thus making it more difficult to find suitable reference groups to compare with (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). Secondly, seafarers are a mixed, dispersed category of workers who might be difficult to get in touch with and thirdly, it is very difficult to get a random sample of international seafarers employed by different organizations (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). Yet the few available data seems to indicate higher prevalence of mental illness and conditions related to mental illness such as alcoholism, among seafarers compared to many other professions (Sampson & Ellis, 2019).

In a comparative study of the health of the active seafarers, it turned out that short-term mental disorders had increased among them during the period 2011-2016, showing that 37 percent of the active seafarers had experienced a recent onset deteriorated mental health (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). As this figure compared unfavourable to most similar studies of the general population and considering the deterioration in the mental health of seafarers in such relatively short period of time, the study regarded the results to be a cause of concern (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). A collection of 20 published reports between the years 1960 and 2009 showed that 5.9 percent of a total of 17,026 seafarers' deaths were due to suicide. A further compilation of 12 reports from the years 1992 and 2007 showed that out of 4,573 deaths due to illness, 13.1 percent of them were suicides. Scientists also believe that at least half of the individuals who have been reported as lost at sea are suspected to be suicides (Iversen, 2012).

In a study where 1,265 seafarers were asked about what affects their mental well-being negatively, the biggest factors were related to ship- and crew-specific conditions such as bad relationships onboard, fatigue, bullying and long trips. Missing family members and poor recreational facilities, poor food and poor access to the Internet were often mentioned as well (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). When defining what poor relationships onboard meant, the seafarers took into account both their relations with superiors as well as with colleagues,

choosing one or more behaviours or actions that made negative impact on their wellbeing. Of those surveyed, 55 percent answered that what made them feel the worst in relation to superiors was getting the blame for something they had not done. A superior yelling or shouting at them got 48.3 percent, to have a dominant captain got 45.1 percent, to be discriminated against by a superior got 43.1 percent and to not get along with a superior got 39.9 percent (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). When it came to relationships with colleagues, 38 percent of those surveyed answered that they felt most bad about not getting along with colleagues, 31.3 percent were affected by bullying, 28.6 percent were affected by being teased, 19.6 percent stated that they could not make friends, or were unable to fit in with 19.2 percent, being physically beaten up 14.9 percent, being subjected to sexual harassment 5.3 percent and to be sexually abused got four percent (Sampson & Ellis, 2019).

Table 1

Poor relationships onboard with the most negative impact

| Reasons to feeling bad: | Percentage: |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Being blamed unfairly | 55 |
| Shouting superior | 48.3 |
| Dominant captain | 45.1 |
| Discriminated against by superior | 43.1 |
| Not getting along with a superior | 39.9 |
| Not getting along with colleagues | 38 |
| Bullying | 31.3 |
| Getting teased | 28.6 |
| Inability to make friends | 19.6 |
| Not fitting in | 19.2 |
| Physical abuse | 14.9 |
| Sexual harassment | 5.3 |
| Sexual assault | 4 |

Comment. Seafarers ranked what poor relationships and actions affected their mental well-being the most. *Source:* own table based upon results by Sampson & Ellis, Seafarers' mental health and wellbeing, (2019).

In a report from Arbets- och Miljömedicin from 2015, a quarter of the 1 972 surveyed employees stated that they had been subjected to abusive acts or harassment at their workplace. In terms of gender, 22 per cent of the men and 45 per cent of the women had experienced abuse ((Forsell et al, 2015). In 2014, a survey was conducted on women's health and welfare at sea which showed only 17 per cent of the female seafarers reported sexual harassment to be a problem even though almost half of the participants indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment onboard in a preliminary survey. The differences between the results of the two surveys can be explained by the fact that the respondents in the preliminary survey had lower positions, while the main survey was answered by women in supervisory roles, which may connote that women with less power in the workplace are more exposed to sexual harassment (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020).

Despite limited research on sexual harassment in the maritime sector, it turns out that female professionals at sea are more exposed to sexual harassment than female professionals on land. The cramped space onboard, the design of the ship's accommodations and the isolation increase the risk of sexual harassment while inappropriate behaviour often remains unchallenged nor reported due to the lack of reporting strategies as well as the victims' fear of losing their jobs if they do report problems (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020).

But this is not just a problem concerning women. In a survey, 79 percent of the respondents felt their experience of being bullied, discriminated against, or harassed, affected their work ethic and performance, which means that harassment not only do affect employment opportunities but may also have a significant impact on the organization's productivity and business profits (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020)

A study, conducted in 2019, aimed at producing recommendations for what is to be done to increase the well-being of seafarers, recommended that the shipping industry should, among other things, increase awareness that mental illness is increasing among seafarers and that it needs to combine efforts to support good mental health, as well as physical health and well-being onboard to proactively reduce the risk of accidents, anxiety, and depression among seafarers (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). The advice for corporations and partners was to provide funds for seafarers to maintain and improve personal mental strength, to implement and apply policies against bullying and harassment, to ask leaders to be trained in creating a positive atmosphere onboard and to be able to give positive feedback about the work when appropriate, as well as in having a respectful collaboration with subordinates and to provide seafarers the option to turn to confidential advisory services when needed (Sampson & Ellis, 2019).

But above-mentioned recommendations are not recently obtained understanding. For instance, the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) has since 2006, made it clear to seafarers and other stakeholders in the shipping industry the need to make use of various reporting mechanisms. Various standards and guidelines state that all ships in the Member States must adopt procedures that allow fair, efficient, and expeditious handling of seafarers' complaints about breaches of occupational health and safety requirements, including harassment, open or confidential, and that it is prohibited and punishable to prevent seafarers from leaving filed a complaint. Reported lawsuits and incidents must be investigated by the company and by the flag state as to make the problem evident. Informal and formal methods tackling reported charges, should be based upon the victim's willingness to meet the accused, while the method of investigation should be chosen based on the accusation roughness. The purpose is to create visibility by requiring companies to make a written commitment to combat harassment while establishing adequate procedures for reporting and investigating complaints (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020). Also the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network demonstrates that clear policies from employers for dealing with harassment and bullying are important, and that seafarers should be able to feel comfortable to report incidents which caused them, thus providing "Seafarer Help", a phone line where seafarers can contact trained officers around the clock if they need help with concerns or problems (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020).

2.2.1 What is happening in Sweden?

When it was reported in Sweden in 2015 that students were being harassed at their internship, the Maritime Academy in Kalmar, Swedish shipping, and the Maritime Education Institute, gathered industry organizations to bring about a change (Eriksson J. , 2018) consequently creating a joint strategy and an action plan for equal treatment in Swedish

shipping. (Sjöfartshögskolan vid Linnéuniversitetet, 2012). The action plan was, among other things, intended to shed light on and inform about problems across the maritime workplace concerning discrimination. Furthermore, those who are subjected to abusive discrimination, harassment or discrimination shall receive help or support and all reported and suspected cases of abusive discrimination, harassment or discrimination shall be investigated, remedied, and followed up (Sjöfartshögskolan vid Linnéuniversitetet, 2012). Schools should continuously evaluate the content of education in terms of measures against discrimination, harassment, and abusive discrimination and to develop information and training materials for officers, supervisors, and other staff on what constitutes discrimination, harassment, and abusive discrimination (Sjöfartshögskolan vid Linnéuniversitetet, 2012).

Based on training material and the action plan, a Computer Based Training (CBT) was developed, to make it possible for all positions onboard and ashore to be able to educate themselves. (Sjöfartshögskolan vid Linnéuniversitetet, 2012) With grants from the Swedish Seamen's Foundation, the above-mentioned group therefore developed an equal treatment education online, purposed to provide knowledge about why harassment occurs and what applies based on Swedish law. Although it is primarily aimed at students who matriculate on a ship for the first time, there is also the prospect the training might strengthen passive employees to act, namely those who may not dare to report misconduct (Eriksson J. , 2018)

In connection with the *#MeToo* appeal starting in 2017, the Facebook group *#lättaankar* was also launched, which in 2018 consisted of almost 1,200 Swedish female seafarers who have either endured abuse or who recognize behaviours and power structures that are linked to *#MeToo*. The initiators of *#lättaankar* then presented the group to the industry and showed a film with testimonies at the beginning of 2018 (Johansson, 2018). One of the driving forces behind the project, Cajsa Jersler, said that the gender equality issues should be a work environment issue because it is constantly relevant, and should be included in the training, in routine descriptions onboard, and in government supervision of ships (Johansson, 2018). The effect of *#lättaankar* in the Swedish shipping industry clearly showed why formal as well as informal reporting channels are necessary, such as in this case when social media became the forum where the problem was discussed. The campaign gave female seafarers the opportunity to collectively identify unacceptable behaviour and begin to talk about an otherwise rather taboo subject (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020). Those who shared their stories during the movement revealed various serious abuses experienced by female seafarers, which span decades and include everything from subtle comments and discrimination, to groping and rape. These problems have been an open secret, hidden in several norm-setting institutions, which deny and rationalize the abusive behaviour in the industry and are largely based on the silence of both victims and spectators (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020).

Silence around harassment can be grounded in a lack of trust in an employer but can also occur due to fear that the situation will get worse. Stefan Blomberg, psychologist, and researcher in Occupational and Environmental Medicine at the Linköping University Hospital, points out that it is the employee's responsibility to speak up against and report discrimination, but also clarifies that it is not enough for a workplace to announce that there is zero tolerance for harassments within the organization, but must also act in terms of written action plans and routines (Loftås, 2018). This is because violations and bullying create severe anxiety and fear that entails a high risk of mental illness in the future and it is the employer's duty to protect the employee, as the employee's freedom is to some extent reduced compared to their leisure time, partly because it is not possible for an employee to choose their colleagues or go home if the workplace is perceived as unpleasant. The freedom of an on-board employee is even more limited since seafarers are living together with their colleagues while at work, and there is a

mutual dependence on each other's lives and security, in a way and level that is not very common in occupations ashore, which requires not only trust in colleagues but also in the organization. For the same reason, it can therefore be extra difficult for an employee to risk worsening an already intense situation by reporting (Loftås, 2018).

In an interview in the magazine *Sjöfarten*, Momoko Kitada, associate professor of gender-related issues in shipping at World Maritime University in Malmö, said no matter the work roles onboard, there are quite good settings for the industry to be able to create equality, as there are clear job descriptions and routines to follow, regardless of who is performing the job, but that part of the reason there is silence surrounding harassment is due to the fact that shipping consists of mechanical organizations, where the individual is very easily replaceable (Johansson, 2018). This means that some may choose to be silent, partly out of fear of being moved in the event of a complaint because the person complaining can be seen as difficult, partly out of fear of not getting good credentials, for the future or when recruited (Johansson, 2018), not to mention the fear to talk about such issues in the small sphere a ship constitutes, with the prospect of destroying the harmony of the crew (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020). The campaign on Facebook also showed the need for zero tolerance policies which is initiated with a clear and strong statement from the company management and is implemented from the top down. In the public sector and other land-based organization, research has shown how important it is to have several means to combat harassment. The task requires personnel onboard being made aware of the zero-tolerance policy or programs endorsed by senior management, by way of statements, training, formal presentations, posters placed in conspicuous places, reminders in the form of e-mail, or even social media because as it encourages feedback (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020).

In 2019, the same participant who signed up for an action plan for equal treatment in 2015, signed a joint declaration of intent for the long-term task (Svensk Sjöfart, 2019). In relation with this, Svensk Sjöfart also started an equal treatment group and produced information material about the preventive work against harassment and abusive discrimination and for a world-class work environment (Svensk Sjöfart, 2019).

2.3 Mental health and harassment

Mental health is an all-encompassing concept that can be defined as the lack of mental illness, where there is an opportunity to develop and feel good emotionally, psychologically, and socially (Vingård, 2020). When studies were conducted on what a health-promoting workplace entails, it showed that such a workplace encompasses more than just physical wellness, requiring a respectful culture that supports the psychosocial needs to promote good mental health. Such a culture consists of respectful personal relationships, flexible work, supportive leadership, and good communication (Forte, 2015; Hupke, u.d.).

At work, psychosocial health is affected by physical health, job security, work organization, commitment to work, benefits and pay, as well as productivity at individual, corporation, and societal level. About ten percent of the workers in Europe are exposed to bullying in the workplace and up to 20 percent of the workers are exposed to negative social behaviours that can be considered as serious stressors (Zapf, o.a., 2020; Hogh, M. Hansen, G. Mikkelsen, & Persson, 2012). These negative social behaviours, such as occasional harassment, aggressive behaviours, gossip and the withholding of information, form part of the basis for bullying in the workplace, which is defined as an escalating process in which the victim's exposure to negative actions it cannot defend against increases over time, gradually ending up in a worse position (Vingård, 2020; Vartia, 2001). A study showed that the negative consequences for the work experience and health were clear even when employees were merely at risk of bullying

(Blomberg & Rosander, 2019; Vartia, 2001). Harassment, bullying and lack of support are some of the risks that can lead to mental illness in the form of depressive symptoms, emotional exhaustion, sleep disorders and even suicide (Vingård, 2020).

According to an estimate of the total loss to society linked to all reported sick leave for 2018, it amounted to SEK 64 billion, of which SEK 30.7 billion consisted of sick leave caused by mental illness (Skandia, 2019). To gain an understanding of what this figure implies, a one-third reduction in this type of sick leave could save more than SEK 10 billion per year, which corresponds to the salary for just over 25,000 nurses in Sweden (Skandia, 2019). Although not all mental illness is related to harassment and bullying, it still contributes to such a large extent, that it has been deemed to be worth investing governmental resources in order to counteract it. Among other things, the Swedish Parliament decided in October 2020 to commission the Ministry of Gender Equality to map existing research on the connection between gender equality and mental illness, focusing on abusive discrimination and harassment in the workplace, as it accounts for a significant part of work-related ill health and is a strong contributing cause of sick leave (Regeringsbrev för 2020)

But preventive work must also be organized in the workplace, where both the employer and the employee have a responsibility to participate and enable good working conditions, as it has been shown that individual efforts have a short-term effect (Vartia, 2001). If the measures can be combined or replaced with organizational measures, they can have more long-lasting and enduring effects (Vingård, 2020; Hupke, u.d.). This is especially important when relating to harassment as it has been shown that the behaviours behind harassers, can be a result of the combination of propensity for it and lack of organizational inhibitors of the behaviours (Einarsen, 2005) and the longer a person is bullied, the more people become involved and participate in the bullying (Zapf, o.a., 2020).

2.4 Culture of silence

The focus has long been on how to bring about victims of harassment daring to speak up earlier and more clearly when in fact there are more aspects to silence (Hershcovis, Vranjes, Berdahl, & Cortina, 2021) when examining why so many people kept extensively quiet about harassment before the *#MeToo* call took off, silence was defined as consisting of three different aspects: to be silent, to be silenced and to not be heard, meaning this is a problem going beyond individuals and rather more about the social networks the individual belongs to because those networks will define the norms for what is treated with silence, silenced, and not heard (Hershcovis et al., 2021).

Culture of silence in an organization is characterized by two public perceptions: speaking up about problems within the organization does not pay off and to expressing own opinions and concerns is dangerous (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Verhezen, 2010). Reporting harassment is often a long process with several steps for most people, beginning by ignoring or avoiding situations where harassment may be manifested, trying to do something about it themselves, perhaps telling friends or colleagues before finally formally informing a manager or authorities, requiring moral courage to do so (Lawrence, 2020; Goodwin, Graham, & Diekmann, 2020).

Reluctance to report and cultures of silence are not phenomena exclusively associated with harassment. In 2019, the Swedish Crime Prevention Council published a study on cultures of silence within five different categories of crime, of which one of the categories was crime against and within organizations. Part of the purpose of the study was to see what different reasons or mechanisms exist preventing crime victims and witnesses from providing

information, reporting, or testifying about crime (Skinnari, Jonsson, & Vesterhav, 2019). Concerns about what happens to the victim and the perpetrator, to surrender and not know that it is possible to get the right support, or what the consequences will be after reporting, may be a reason for not moving forward, especially if the person does not have previous knowledge of how the legal process works or have low confidence in the police, bad experiences or is unaware of what the police do with information provided (Skinnari, Jonsson, & Vesterhav, 2019; Verhezen, 2010). This also applies to witnesses to an incident who may not understand how their observation can be important. Prejudices, misconceptions, and fears can produce the same results such as fearing not being believed, of appearing awkward or stupid, or worsening the situation by reporting (Skinnari, Jonsson, & Vesterhav, 2019). In addition, the longer the time elapsing from an event to reporting, the easier it becomes forgetting or backing away from information previously provided because there has been more time to worry and make tactical considerations (Skinnari, Jonsson, & Vesterhav, 2019). Similarly, companies with a zero-tolerance policy for harassment where the structure for reporting a formal complaint involves too many steps or is too sterile or rigid, such as demanding written descriptions of the events before investigating or requesting gathering the accuser, the accused, and witnesses to be questioned prior to deciding whether there has been harassment, lead to silence (Lawrence, 2020; Verhezen, 2010) and might generate low confidence in the system. On the bright side, zero-tolerance policies requiring formal ways of reporting empowers greater accountability and can assist in tracking recurring offenders but may also be discouraging as it can be perceived as a heavy process to get through, or to not be in proportion to the perceived violation, but also because it does not encourage addressing sensitive and emotionally upsetting issues (Lawrence, 2020).

While investigating the effect of what a culture of silence can lead to, when 1,025 managers and employees were asked to report on events worrying them at work which they had not reported, as well as describing how the organization was affected by their silence, the most common and expensive subjects that people fail to report emerged, namely not reporting or confronting rude, defensive and disrespectful colleagues, which included not to confront hard jargon, bullying, harassment, the withholding of information and resistance to feedback and input (Maxfield, 2016; Maxfield, Grenny, Lavendero, & Groah, 2011). Furthermore, failure to speak up against factual errors or wrongful reasoning, especially when managers make decisions without first consulting experts or not responding to employees' concerns, failure to talk to colleagues about or report their poor work habits, incompetence and lack of commitment, and failure to openly discuss disturbances occurring when superiors rely on their position to pursue their own agenda were also identified. Likewise, work role uncertainty, unclear responsibilities, as well as vague specifications and timelines, are among the topics not spoken about, largely due to the perception that it is impossible to speak about above mentioned topics without risking retaliation (Maxfield, 2016; Maxfield et al., 2011). Instead of communication about these issues, the respondents wasted an average of seven days in complaining about them to other colleagues, doing extra or unnecessary work, dwelling on and being angry about the issues, with one third of the respondents wasting two weeks or more. The average person's silence was estimated at \$ 7500, with a fifth of the sample group estimating to cost the company more than \$ 50,000 by avoiding difficult conversations, in addition to the silence debilitating employee commitment, relationships, deadlines, budgets and culture (Maxfield, 2016). With the results of the study shown, it was therefore concluded that it is likely that all employees in an organization increase the total cost of silence as it turned out that less than one in ten dares to communicate openly about the above topics (Maxfield, 2016; Maxfield et al., 2011). Where there is a worry of being troublesome or being labelled as someone who points out problems and therefore becoming rejected, there will

measures and actions be affected in both the individual as in the organizational level (Hershcovis et al., 2021; Verhezen, 2010) out of fear of the consequences of a damaged reputation rather than the reputation itself. For an individual, the fear of a damaged reputation is in how it will affect their status within a group or network as in being "punished" by ostracization or losing affiliation (Verhezen, 2010). This is especially evident when the victim of or the discoverer a violation is part of the same family or is a colleague of the perpetrator. As for an organization, the fear lays within how a damaged reputation or brand will negatively affect profitability and the decreased possibility of remaining as an organization due to damaged trust in it (Skinnari, Jonsson, & Vesterhav, 2019).

As previously mentioned, there is more about silence than just simply being silent, it constitutes being silenced and not being heard (Hershcovis et al., 2021). A factor that contributes to the creation of a climate of silence is the fear of negative feedback, especially in concern to managers fearing feedback from subordinates. As individuals often feel threatened by negative feedback, regardless of whether it is directed at them personally or at a behaviour they identify with, it leads to trying to avoid or ignore getting negative feedback, or once they receive such feedback, dismissing it as incorrect or attacking the credibility of the source (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Some managers are especially prone to avoid negative feedback from subordinates, perceiving it as less accurate and legitimate and more threatening to their power and credibility, than had it come from a superior. If managers feel a great need to avoid embarrassing situations, threats and feelings of vulnerability or incompetence, they will be avoiding any information making them appear weak or calling their approach into question (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

Not being heard is affiliated to organizational silence, which occurs when a problem, or someone who draws attention to or reports problems, is dismissed, trivialized, or negated (Hershcovis et al., 2021). This behavior can come from anyone within a network or organization but is yet again far more impacting if it comes from managers. Some managers may have more or less unconscious implicit assumptions, that employees are self-interested, unreliable and act on to maximizing their individual gain, are opposed to hard work and that it is not possible to rely on subordinates to act in the best interests of the organization without any kind of incentive or sanction, conveying managers to act implicitly or explicitly discouragingly towards upward communication (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000) It has been shown as individuals advance within an organization, they become less likely to identify with subordinates and receive different perceptions and values than employees below them, which facilitates the creation of above generalizations about employees (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000) hence reinforcing a "management knows best" belief, namely that a manager must know best and most, given his superior position in the organizational hierarchy. Such leadership will build structures and policies that either complicate or discourage upward information flow where managers unlikely engage in informal feedback from subordinates (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Instead, on an unconscious level, they will seek feedback from like-minded people who are expected to share their perspective and who are unlikely to give negative feedback, since individuals generally tend to interact with those, they perceive most like themselves (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000). When managers respond to employees' opinions with resistance or denial, it is likely that employees interpret that it is risky or not worth the effort expressing their concerns or ideas (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Hershcovis et al., 2021).

2.5 Polarization

Individuals adapt their behaviour to the social norms they perceive to be typical or desirable in a group or in a situation, especially when it comes to reference groups, that is, the groups they are involved in and that they care about (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

Norm perception and adaptation is a dynamic process that occurs over time while the person interacts with their group or learns about their group through other sources, also meaning that behaviours and norms can change over time, it being easier for individuals to accept norm changes that are close to the characteristics and behaviours they already identify themselves with and care about (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Adjusting between a new norm and a personal opinion usually means a person begins to behave in the way she already prefers behaving, but individuals can also follow a norm contradicting their personal opinions if the norm is perceived to be so strong that they will be punished socially if they deviate from it (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

Although the existence of the #MeToo campaign showed a decrease of denial of the occurrence of sexual assault towards men and women among individuals with lower gender identification, meaning those who identify less with the attributes and behaviours considered typically female or male, perceptions among those with high gender identification did not change. In general, men with low gender identification are more engaged in equality issues than men with high gender identification, while the opposite applies to women (Szekeres, Shuman, & Saguy, 2020).

When comparing incidences and perceptions of harassment between officials and workers, a study showed that most men and women experienced mild forms of sexual harassment. Nevertheless, sexual harassment was perceived as behaviour aimed at women by men. Employees of companies with sexual harassment policies had a better understanding of what sexual harassment implies and a decrease in these, with men more likely than women to accurately identifying behaviours that constitute sexual harassment. These results led the authors of the study to conclude that the involvement in conversations about harassment introduces the development of an understanding of what sexual harassment constitutes and the consequences associated with it is, contributing in turn to lesser probability of gender differences in the behaviour and experience of the behaviour (McCabe & Hardman, 2005).

Where the overall tolerance for sexual harassment was low, men seemed to tolerate this behaviour more than women, while where the overall tolerance for sexual harassment was high, men and women's tolerance did not differ, assuming it to be the result of women accepting sexual harassment as a normal part of their work environment, culminating in attitudes not differing from their male peers (McCabe & Hardman, 2005). Men were more tolerant of sexual harassment in general, but both men and women were less tolerant of sexual harassment towards female victims than when the victim was male. The respondents who were least tolerant of sexual harassment were also those who were the least likely to have experienced them before and the most likely to perceive what behaviours ensue sexual harassment (McCabe & Hardman, 2005). This relationship showed that if individuals who tolerate harassment identify fewer behaviours as offensive, they may also commit harassment without realizing they are being offensive or seeing the negative consequences of their behaviour. They may also continue to be harassed without any objections (McCabe & Hardman, 2005). This compares with crime statistics showing there are times when victims or communities are unsure or unaware certain incident is a crime, it is either due to a lack of knowledge or difficulties in assessing when an act becomes a criminal offence. This is especially prevalent when ethical limits for when an act becomes a criminal offence are diffuse and can be misinterpreted as 'bad behaviour, malice or poor working environment (Skinnari, Jonsson, & Vesterhav, 2019). Normalisation of crime

also makes reporting more difficult. If minor crimes are tolerated frequently in the vicinity of the victim, recognizing a serious crime becomes more difficult, especially if it is recurrent since it emanates believing that the problem must have already been noticed by some authority (Skinnari, Jonsson, & Vesterhav, 2019). However, if organizations specifically identify and communicate through training what behaviours they consider to be or bring about sexual harassment as it is a criminal offence, workers may be less likely to tolerate these behaviours as well in the future (McCabe & Hardman, 2005).

Introducing changes while pointing out individuals to be the problem or part of it, will ensure them becoming defensive hence much less likely wanting to be part of the solution, possibly even resisting it (Dobbin & Kalev, 2020). An individual's initial attitudes can be strengthened and intensified following heavy exposure to a subject depending on how legitimate they perceive the matter to be, which can lead to attitude polarization (Saguy & Szekeres, 2018). The appeal that *#MeToo* was, is an example of such powerful exposure that has the potential to polarize opinions, meaning those initially already sympathising with the concept of the kind of inequality the petition exposed, are likely strengthened in their perceptions, while those not sympathising, either due to perceiving gender inequality as legitimate or due to not believing inequality exists, are further strengthened in their perceptions (Saguy & Szekeres, 2018). Whereas individuals feel pressured to accept a particular opinion, they can react by strengthening the opposing attitude, promoting even less interest in the needed changes (Saguy & Szekeres, 2018). As previously mentioned, men with a high gender identity, strongly identify with male characteristics and behaviours, are less likely to change their opinions when it comes to equality (Szekeres, Shuman, & Saguy, 2020). As society has organised men and women in a hierarchy with men as favoured group members and women as disadvantaged, men tend to react more strongly to feedback threatening their gender status than women. Changes threatening to render men more disadvantaged will likely induce men with a high gender identity more attached to masculine characteristics and the male gender group, increasing his defence of the current system as being fair (Kray, Howland, Russell, & Jackman, 2017).

One way to reach those who do not sympathize is through empathy by assuming those individuals still have constructive intentions towards the group and wish to maintain a positive long-term relationship (Saguy & Szekeres, 2018). When men with high gender identification had to take a stand on changes not mentioning consequences on the statuses between men and women, it was shown they did not feel threatened by the change, but instead that fixed roles were limiting for them. Therefore, by not focusing on women's rights or their need for higher status, but on the benefits the changes imply for all involved, men with a high gender identity are given the chance to see them as an opportunity rather than a sacrifice (Kray, Howland, Russell, & Jackman, 2017). To make it clear, it is not about changing individuals gender identification but focusing on issues outside gender roles and statuses. Instead of focusing on what should not be done, the focus should be on what should be achieved. In a case study of two offshore oil platforms focusing on improving safety and efficiency, a culture was created that inadvertently caused the male workers to let go of stereotypical ways of acting. Instead of having to prove how tough, skilled, and strong they were, as had previously been commonplace, platform workers could instead acknowledge physical limitations, admit mistakes, and draw attention to their own and others' feelings without being less masculine (Ely & Meyerson, 2010).

2.6 Norm changes and leadership

Presenting descriptive norm information about a group is a common way to change that group's norms, where the purpose is to influence established norms by changing individuals' personal

and subjective perception (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). This can be done either positively or negatively, where descriptions of a positive nature give better results when changing norms. This was shown, for example, when a national park placed signs describing that many former guests had left nature intact (positive) versus that many previous guests had taken petrified wood as souvenirs from the forest (negative). As a result, thefts of petrified wood increased when using the negatively descriptive signs of guests' behaviour, as they showed stealing wood was the norm (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Descriptive norms can be especially effective when individuals need social motivation or permission to engage in behaviours that are already in line with reference groups important to them and which they identify or associate with (Tankard & Paluck, 2016; Hershcovis et al., 2021). If they do not already support the behaviour described, normative information is useful to encourage them to support and engage with it. (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). In other words, it is again a question of focusing on what should be achieved rather than what is forbidden, though it is not enough to simply describe the desired behaviours for these to become the norm.

For interpersonal social behaviours such as harassment, it may take an individual role model to communicate a new norm rather than just descriptive summaries of group behaviours or organizational changes (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). It should therefore be clearly demonstrated that harassing peers and colleagues puts the reputation and social status of all individuals within the network at risk as well as clearly demonstrating that the norm of talking about and reporting harassment does not lead to a loss of social status, occurring when group members act in accordance with the norm or "punish" another person for deviating from the norm (Tankard & Paluck, 2016; Hershcovis et al., 2021). The more people accepting the norm, the easier it becomes for new members to accept it too (Cunningham, Drumwright, & Foster, 2019)

However, in order to introduce new or change existing standards, not only those, but also work roles and what they imply, should be clear. High psychosocial demands at work, such as role conflicts, workload and cognitive requirements, that is, to constantly be concentrated and careful at work or needing to pay attention to several things simultaneously, have been shown to be related to increased risk of bullying in the workplace due to stressors in the psychosocial work environment thus creating breeding grounds for frustration, irritation and interpersonal conflicts (Zahlquist, Hetland, Skogstad, Bakker, & Einarsen, 2019; Rydstedt & Lundh, 2010). Stressed people are more likely to act in a provocative manner, using a harsh language, with lower thresholds of aggression, less time for conflict resolution and polite and friendly treatment of colleagues, thus making it easier for potential perpetrators to have leeway for unwanted behaviours (Zahlquist et al., 2019) and where there is scope for potential perpetrators, not only will they become stronger, so will the structures strengthening the unwanted behaviours (Cunningham, Drumwright, & Foster, 2019).

Companies choosing to address conflicts early on and adopting an active management strategy report fewer incidents of bullying, demonstrating that a climate that allows conflict management, and a high level of security when it comes to psychosocial work environment, is an important resource because it contributes to the actual management of interpersonal frustration and conflicts at an early stage and puts an end to problems that otherwise may escalate (Zahlquist et al., 2019). It is the responsibility of the organization to create a climate that is responsive to these interpersonal issues, with clear guidelines on how to handle arising conflicts in a safe and fair manner. Since climate and norms are most easily shaped by people with power and influence (Hershcovis et al., 2021), it is therefore important that managers and leaders are trained in conflict management procedures (Zahlquist et al., 2019). They can in turn communicate to their respective subordinates whom to contact and what actions to take if they

are involved conflicts, as well as what arrangements they can expect from management to resolve such cases, as results show that functioning conflict management exists at the team level (Zahlquist et al., 2019). A study of 38,000 members of the U.S. Department of Defence clearly noted that the incidence of harassment was the highest when workers believed their commanders encouraged sexual harassment compared to when they perceived the commander as neutral or against harassment (McCabe & Hardman, 2005). Another study noticed that women who had not been sexually harassed in their workplace believed this was most likely due to their employers being good role models for employees, making reasonable efforts to prevent sexual harassment (McCabe & Hardman, 2005).

As certain factors, such as role conflicts and stress (Rydstedt & Lundh, 2010) have consistently been proven to be a strong psychosocial prerequisite for bullying in the workplace and given the aforementioned potential costs of harassment, abuse and bullying in terms of silence, productivity and likelihood of sick leave, prevention in form of increased clarity both in terms of roles and conflict management, should be much more cost-effective than strategies to address consequences (Zahlquist et al., 2019) A strong conflict management climate allows employees to feel confident about expressing their concerns and creates self-assurance and knowledge about whom to turn to and what to do when conflicts arise with the support of the organization and management to resolve them (Llorens, Navarro, Salas, Utzet, & Moncada, 2019; Zahlquist et al., 2019). This increases not only the feeling of control over the work situation, but also the feeling of social support coming from supportive and informed superiors (Llorens et al., 2019; Zahlquist et al., 2019) since thought the negative impact on the health and well-being of the victims, is reduced a bit when they receive support from close employees, it decreases all the more when management is perceived as supportive. The stronger perceived support, the less serious the negative health effects of exposure to bullying become (Blomberg & Rosander, 2019). When people experience a lack of support from their superiors or have little confidence in them, the support of fellow employees will not dampen the negative health effects of abuse and bullying (Blomberg & Rosander, 2019). Having supportive managers who may help vulnerable individuals to feel better is good, but what is even better is that they can influence the likelihood of harassment occurring at all, as there is a strong correlation between increased risk of bullying and leadership not taking responsibility for tasks, showing low concern for the well-being of subordinates and avoiding dealing with problems (Nielsen, 2013).

Committed and supportive leaders are therefore important not only for health reasons, but also for the work culture as they have the power to change norms and behaviours that affect the working environment for the better for all concerned by either demanding obedience, or by reshaping group norms without even asking for it. If leaders are perceived as legitimate, fair, and prototypical, that is, is considered a good reflection of group identity and resembles many group members, they can make a difference by creating changes in group norms and becoming sources of normative information about them (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). But even manager who are not prototypical can make a difference just by example, by reflecting what the group's standards should be like since they have been given legitimate power. In other words, this means a person leading by example can make a bigger and longer-lasting difference than by demanding it by obedience or order (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

As mentioned earlier, empathy as a more effective approach of influencing others than coercion, (Saguy & Szekeres, 2018) was proven to be successful when managers with empathetic leadership styles were examined (Shuck, Alagaraja, Immekus, Cumberlund, & Honeycutt-Elliott, 2019). The above study concluded that managers do not have to be empathetic individuals to have such a leadership style, instead by applying six distinct themes: integrity,

compassion, accountability, authenticity, presence, and dignity, the leadership will be empathic independent of personality (Shuck et al., 2019). Their definition of integrity revolved around professional transparency, consistency in the actions regarding what had been said and keeping their word, even when priorities change. Compassion is strongly tied to responsibility subsequently characterized by actively choosing the most understanding approach without backing away from either receiving or delivering "bad news", since a good leader holds himself and his subordinates accountable even when mistakes are made, and therefore does not ignore erroneous behaviours that could be improved or allow bullying to happen (Shuck et al., 2019). To be able to pay attention not only to what is obvious, but also to what is not said outright, a presence is therefore required through awareness and attention to the situation and the environment, as well as commitment and focus on the characteristics and challenges of others. Being able to gain this understanding depends on the leader himself being authentic through openness and vulnerability in sharing own successes and failures. In this way, the leader shows through the own example that no matter who, each single individual has a fundamental value and a right to be respected regardless of their characteristics or experience (Shuck et al., 2019). Since workplace bullying can complicate communication and collaboration between staff, this can indirectly incite dangerous situations by reducing vigilance, communication, coordination, and work performance between employees in safety-critical operations. The authentic type of leadership mentioned above has (Nielsen, 2013) been shown to contribute to lower incidences of bullying and harassment, as it benefits from, and promotes, both positive psychological and ethical aspects, motivating a positive perception of what safety means and therefore harassment sim sees a safety risk (Nielsen, 2013).

2.7 Code of Conduct, core values, or policy?

A Code of Conduct is a document in an organization describing the ethical position and conduct the company strives for in the long term and how it is approached. The code is aimed at everyone within the company as well as its stakeholders and can be described as a four-level pyramid where mission and vision are the tip of the pyramid at the top (Kaptein, 2008). The mission and vision describe the company's strategic goals and what they stand for, in other words, why the company exists and what its leitmotif is. The next level of the pyramid describes the core values, that is, the keyword directing the company and creating its culture. These values are depicted in such a way that it gives all employees in the organization a clear picture of what attitude is expected without being explicit instructions on how to behave (Kaptein, 2008). In the third level, it is described what the company's stakeholders can expect from them and the fourth and final level describes norms, rules, and policies (Kaptein, 2008). It is important to note that the code of conduct should be seen as an instrument in actively accomplishing ideals rather than merely a description of an idyllic company.

As the adoption of codes of conduct becomes the norm among companies, there is an increased likelihood that certain codes will be designed for the sake of appearance or only as short-term solutions to problems. It has been shown that the introduction of a formal code of conduct is already a good start even when the content is short-sighted or unclear as it signals that the company values certain behaviours before others, but unfortunately those positive effects wane rapidly after the initial enthusiasm, especially if behaviours that go against the Code of Conduct are allowed to continue without sanctions (Erwin, 2011). Simply creating codes of conduct can serve to increase understanding for what behaviours to avoid, but the application will only take place in those who are most conscientious, disciplined and most likely to follow rules, others will dismiss them as the novelty wears off (Slaughter, Cooper, & Gilliland, 2020; Verhezen,

2010) and, above all, if it they are obviously implemented for the sake of appearances (Kaptein, 2008).

In practical terms, it is recommended the establishment and implementation of a code of conduct must start from the top of the organization with senior management who, in unison with the HR department and other key personnel, develop what keywords for conduct are to be included (Lloyd & Mey, 2010). Management's contribution to the task should also consists of reminding of the keywords the business operates under as often as possible, especially at the beginning of the implementation, in addition to setting an example (Lloyd & Mey, 2010; Kaptein, 2008). A good code should be comprehensive, morally justifiable, credible, and useful (Kaptein, 2008; Verhezen, 2010). Next, to ensure all employees complying with the Code of Conduct, there are concrete steps that organizations can take to streamline implementation such as a clear communication of it, in the form of trainings, exercises and other forums where there it should be possible to discuss and ask questions about it, to ensure that employees really understand what it means (Slaughter, Cooper, & Gilliland, 2020; Kaptein, 2008). However, there should also be ways of detecting infringements as well as specific disciplinary measures for specific breaches of the code of conduct, reinforcing consistent implementation, which must also be as transparent and clear as the code. (Slaughter, Cooper, & Gilliland, 2020) Equally, if not more, there should also be ways of identifying and rewarding good behaviours and improvements employees participate in, not only because it strengthens the legitimacy of the code but also because rewards are by far the most important formal influence on employee behaviours an employer can have (Lloyd & Mey, 2010; Llorens, Navarro, Salas, Utzet, & Moncada, 2019).

The companies that have succeeded in designing effective codes, as in really having an impact on the organizational climate so that it has become consistent with the company's values, are those that devote special human and capital resources both to the development of high-quality systems, and to the follow-up of these (Erwin, 2011). Since they have both formal and informal communication channels, which allow not only reporting of deviations but also positive feedback (Verhezen, 2010), they can work continuously to systematically review new codes or revise existing codes that have little obvious effect, often leaving their codes of conduct available to the public thus allowing comparative analysis of their own code in relation to other organizations' codes (Erwin, 2011).

What pertains to codes of conduct is applicable to policies: when people are aware of their existence but not in what way or how strongly they are applied, policies will not be taken seriously (Roehling, 2020). Without meaningful information on how a policy should be applied, there is also a risk that employees will be surprised once action is taken and consider them as unfair and leeway for own interpretations, different standards, and measures. This, in turn, undermines the validity of the policy because it will appear arbitrary (Roehling, 2020). For example, since many companies use the term "zero tolerance" in connection with equal treatment or harassment policies, this has been studied and found out to often be meant figuratively as a means of communicating that the organization may consider acting against an employee who violates the employer's definition of harassment (Roehling, 2020). This vagueness is one of the reasons why these policies sometimes do not work, since the meaning of "zero tolerance" involves different things to different people (Roehling, 2020). The risks of not defining what the term means can, among other things, lead to deterring reporting of harassment for fear of excessive punishment for the harasser when the person being harassed simply wants a colleague's behaviours to stop, but not necessarily the dismissal of the colleague (McGinley, 2020; Roehling, 2020). Furthermore, not clearly defining what is meant by

harassment also makes it more difficult to define the consequences and in turn more difficult to apply the policy (Roehling, 2020).

For an anti-harassment policy to be applicable and functional, in addition to defining what harassment and consequences mean, there should also be a clear grading of their severity (Becton, Gilstrap, & Forsyth, 2017). This does not mean that a policy should contain a list of every way possible to harass someone, but rather what leads to stricter consequences, such as repeated harassment or superiors harassing subordinates will be branded as more serious (Roehling, 2020). Measures and processes should ensure swift corrective action to stop ongoing harassment, considering the integrity of both the victim and the accused, as well as ensuring the protection of complainants and witnesses from retaliation (Becton, Gilstrap, & Forsyth, 2017).

Therefore, it is recommended to convene with the union and leaders when designing an anti-harassment policy to ensure that it is understandable to employees and that the consequences for violations are consistent with employees' assessments of proportionality (Roehling, 2020). The organisation is also recommended informing about, and ensuring, that those responsible for implementing the policy will be held responsible for the application and observation of it, by evaluating the incidence of harassment in the workplace and through employee surveys where questions are asked directly addressing the effectiveness of managers' and human resources' management of harassments (Roehling, 2020; Becton, Gilstrap, & Forsyth, 2017) which in turn requires training that provides opportunities and encourages employees talking about, and discussing policies rather than being plain informative (McGinley, 2020). Furthermore, such conversations provide opportunities for participation, a sense of control and a sense of appreciation, since it signals that the individual's participation is of value to the organization (Llorens et al., 2019).

2.8 Swedish Laws

As has been mentioned earlier, harassment is not only a problem, but also illegal. While the Swedish Work Environment Authority (Arbetsmiljöverket) supervises compliance to health and safety laws and regulations ashore, the Swedish Transport Agency (Transportstyrelsen) supervises shipping's compliance to them.

The Swedish Transport Agency's mission includes, among other things, the establishment of certificates and verification of compliance with the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), (International Labour Organization, 2021) which for Sweden covers all traffic with gross tonnage 200 or more sailing 20 nautical miles¹ from the shoreline with exception for fishing vessels and warships, as well as all vessels of gross tonnage of 500 or more in international traffic or operating in the waters of another country. (Transportstyrelsen, 2021) The MLC, which came into force on 20 August 2013, aims to establish the rights of seafarers at a global level, where rules and codes are grouped into five chapters:

1. Minimum requirements for seafarers to work on ships
2. Employment procedures
3. Housing, recreation opportunities, food, and catering
4. Health, welfare, and social security
5. Fulfilment and application (Transportstyrelsen- del 2, 2021)

¹ Derogation for waters off Gotland, where the border is 5 nautical miles from the shoreline.

Since the Swedish Code of Statutes (SFS), together with rules, regulations, and collective agreements, covers most equivalent provisions covered by the MLC, therefore only the laws in Sweden regarding rules and responsibilities in the work environment will be explained as well as the definitions of what harassment and violations are, since these are collective concepts regulated within different laws that together contribute to the protection of individuals.

Harassment in general is regulated by the Discrimination Act, which defines what discrimination is and in what way it is forbidden to discriminate. The purpose of the Work Environment Act is to prevent ill health and accidents at work and, through systematic work environment management (SAM), achieving a good work environment that also includes the psychosocial work environment. For shipping, certain special rules apply to the working environment, which are regulated, among other things, by the Ship Safety Act. Once harassment has occurred, the Criminal Code and the Damages Act, which regulates the penalties, will also come into count. Below follows an in-depth description of respective acts and regulations mentioned except for the MLC.

2.7.1 Harassment and abuse

To understand how the Damages Act and the Discrimination Act complement each other, the concept of *violation* should first be understood. The Damages Act defines violations as offences towards someone's person, freedom, peace, or honour and invading the privacy of another person who does not himself invite to the violation (SFS 2001:732).

The Discrimination Act defines seven different grounds for discrimination and six different forms of discrimination (DO, 2020). The seven grounds of discrimination make it clear that it is forbidden to offend, namely, to offend an individual or his or her privacy, based on the person's "*gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation or age*" (SFS 2008:567).

The forms of discrimination clarify what ways of discrimination are prohibited. In other words, it is forbidden to offend someone through direct and indirect discrimination, lack of accessibility, harassment, sexual harassment and by instructions to discriminate against others. As the name indicates, **direct** discrimination involves treating someone openly unfairly based on one of the grounds of discrimination (SFS 2014:958) **Indirect** discrimination entails a provision, claim or procedure leading to someone being treated unfairly for the same reasons as in the case of direct discrimination, unless it is possible to prove specific reasons for it (SFS 2014:958; SFS 2008:567). Discriminating through **lack of accessibility** means that disabled individuals should be treated indiscriminately as persons without disabilities or offered equal opportunities (SFS 2014:958). **Harassment and sexual harassment** relate to conduct or behaviour that violates a person's dignity whether the violation is of a sexual nature or not. Finally, the last category criminalizes giving another person, **instructions** to execute an order or act that leads to any of the above form, especially if the person who is to execute the order is in a position of obedience or dependency to the person giving the order (SFS 2008:567)

2.7.2 Working environment

The idea of the Work Environment Act is to prevent ill health and accidents at work and to achieve a consistently good working environment, where there is room for rich work content, job satisfaction, community, and personal development (SFS 1997:1160; SFS 1994:579; SFS 2003:365). When it comes to the implication of ill health, the Swedish Work Environment Authority makes it clear that it considers both diseases according to medical criterion, or functional disorders such as stress reactions and occupational strain, as they can lead to illness.

What determines whether a disability can be classified as ill health or not depends on how long and how strongly it has been experienced and how much it affects work capability (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2001).

The law, which has also encompassed onboard operations and work since July 2003, introduced two additional paragraphs in April 2018 that increase shipping companies' responsibility for the work environment (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2018). For Swedish-flagged vessels, these laws apply within as beyond Sweden's maritime territory. The only thing that separates shipping from land is that the Swedish Transport Agency has supervision onboard the ships instead of the Swedish Work Environment Authority (SFS 1977:1160).

According to the Work Environment Act, it is the employer's responsibility to take all necessary measures to prevent the employee from being exposed to ill health or accidents, to ensure that employees are well aware of the conditions and risks involved in the work and to have the necessary training to carry out their tasks or to avoid the risks those may implicate, taking into account the different circumstances of people (SFS 1977:1160; SFS 2002:585). Therefore, to meet the requirements of the Work Environment Act, occupational injuries must be investigated, risks and measures for identified risks at work must be taken immediately if possible, otherwise scheduling in an action plan to take measures as soon as possible. (SFS 2010:1225; SFS 1977:1160). The law also requires the employer to clarify that abusive discrimination is not accepted and to take measures preventing conditions in the work environment leading to abusive discrimination (AFS 2015:1)

However, the employee is also responsible for contributing to the work environment management, as well as participating in the completion of the arrangements required to achieve a good working environment (SFS 1994:579), including conduct and behaviours counteracting offensive discrimination (AFS 2015:1). It shall also follow the rules laid down, use the protective devices in place and exercise the care required to prevent ill health and accidents. Should an employee realise a task posing an immediate and serious danger to life or health, the employer or safety representative must be informed. In addition, both the employer and the employee must ensure safety representatives receiving the necessary training (SFS 1977:160; SFS 2003:365).

Therefore, the Swedish Work Environment Authority has established regulations specifying how employers, safety representatives and employees should fulfil their responsibilities, with supplementary general advice and comments giving examples of what the regulations relate to. The regulations state continuous SAM should be carried out as a natural part of day-to-day operations and cover the physical, psychological, and social conditions affecting the working environment, not only when it comes to factors that adversely affect health, but also those contributing to good health (AFS 2001:1). As part of SAM, there should also be a work environment policy describing how the company's processes manage to meet the work environment requirements and procedures as well as how SAM should be carried out. If the company has less than 10 employees, the policies do not have to be in writing, as opposed to risk assessments, summaries of damages and incidents and action plans that must always be in writing independent of the size of the organisation (AFS 2001:1). It is important to point out that SAM not only recognizes the employer's obligations, but also obliging employees to be active in the work environment management. One of the aims of SAM to make the work environment part of the daily work, requires a commitment from everyone, which also means the determination of risk assessments, action plans and the like (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2015). There must be action plans conveying procedures for dealing with abusive discrimination, clearly stating whom to inform, how reported information is managed, what the recipient of

such report should do, and how and where a victim can be quickly helped, as employers are obliged to investigate and take action if it comes to their attention that there is harassment (AFS 2015:4; SFS 2008:000) This procedure must also be communicated to all employees (AFS 2015:4).

Within the employer's obligations also lays delegating parts of the work environment management to managers and supervisors (AFS 2001:1). However, it must be clarified that even if the employer may delegate certain issues or tasks, the responsibility for the work environment may never be delegate nor disclaimed since the employer is ultimately responsible regarding to law. Therefore, it is also the employer's responsibility ensuring that those receiving delegated work environment management, have sufficient knowledge and competence to carry out their tasks (AFS 2001:1). The general advice therefore recommends managers and supervisors, among other things, to have good knowledge of how people react in different situations, being aware of what offensive discrimination implicates, and what discrimination, violence and threats can elicit in terms of health, as well as awareness and understanding of the existing regulations and subsequent applications, particularly when it comes to preventing, observing and dealing with abusive discrimination (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2015; DO, 2021). If the knowledge or competence is not sufficient to cope with SAM, the employer must use occupational health care services or other external help with the right expertise for the purpose (AFS 2001:1).

Finally, it should be added that the concept of 'psychosocial work environment' was changed to 'organisational and social work environment' when AFS 2015:4 came into force on 1 March 2016 (Gunnarsson, Johansson, & Stoetzer, 2016). The purpose of the name change was to shift the focus from individual perceptions to organizational and social conditions, since these are something, employers can and are expected to control (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2015).

2.7.3. Ship Safety Act

In the case of shipping, on ships with at least five on-board staff, at least one safety representative must be appointed as well as a substitute for each safety representative chosen. For ships with a crew normally consisting of at least 12 persons, there must be a safety committee composed of shipowner representatives and on-board staff (SFS 2003:364; Ship Safety Act, 2020)

Although it is the obligation of the ship commander to monitor health conditions on-board, the safety committee is expected to be involved in the planning of the work environment management and monitoring the implementation. The Safety committee shall monitor developments in issues related to protection against ill health and accidents and work towards satisfactory working conditions, participate in the work on occupational health care issues, action plans, planning changes in work organisation and its use of substances that may cause ill health or accidents, and be involved in training on the working environment and adaptation. (SFS 2003:365).

When it comes to documents, it is the commanders duty to ensure there are accessible copies of the shipping company's document of compliance (SFS 2003:364 Fartygssäkerhetslag, 2020) and that no one may be refused access to the contents of the certificates or other documents issued for the ship, if needed in order be able to exercise their right (SFS 2017:306).

2.7.4. Consequences

As it has previously been explained, harassment is regulated by various laws, as are the adjacent sanctions for noncompliance. An employer is always under the obligation to investigate and remedy harassment come to their attention, whether evidence has been given directly or noted in any other way. In the event of harassment, if the employer is found breaching that obligation, a discrimination settlement must be paid as well as compensating damage caused by the offending employee (SFS 2008:000). If the employer has not been informed of the ongoing harassment, they may still be found guilty of violating the Work Environment Act, as is the employer's responsibility to ensure a satisfactory work environment. (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2015; DO, 2021) It is worth noting that if the person reporting discrimination can show circumstances giving sufficient reason to suppose their report as described is probable, the burden of proof may shift to the accused showing no discrimination has taken place (SFS 2008:567).

Depending on the nature of the harassment, the harasser may also be found guilty of crime according to the Criminal Code. This law defines derogatory or humiliating insults and behaviours based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin, creed, sexual orientation or transgender identity or expression as criminal, which may result in fines or imprisonment of up to one year (SFS 2018:1745; SFS 2017:1136). Threats, trespassing, molestation, and sexual assault may result in a fine or imprisonment of up to six months, unless repeated, thus resulting in up to four years in prison (SFS 2018:409).

As explained in a previous paragraph, abuse is an assault on a person, their freedom, peace, or honour, where the right to compensations is deemed by the Damages Act. The amount of the compensation is assessed based on the degree of violation the person has suffered, as well as the duration, considering whether the abuse contained degrading or nefarious elements, was meant to provoke serious fear, or intended to attract public attention. It is also considered whether the victim had particular difficulties in defending their personal integrity or if the offense entailed abuse of a relationship of trust or confidence (SFS 1972:207)

3. METHODS

Since the aim was to create an understanding of a chosen phenomenon, a qualitative method was deemed most suitable to identify and explain underlying mechanisms of what hinders communication and actions.

The participants volunteered to participate following an invitation through emails sent to seven different shipping requesting the attached information to be forwarded to on-board staff. Two shipping companies declined participation, one due to already participating in other ongoing studies and one due to high workload because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the email the background and purpose of the study were attached in both English and Swedish, as well as the ethical rules of conduct the study would adhere to and which the participants who wanted to participate in could sign. According to the rules of conduct, participants agreed to be recorded and allowed their answers to be used their anonymity was maintained. Owing to the above-mentioned pandemic, it was not appropriate to meet in person for interviews, instead the participants were able to choose to be contacted by phone or zoom. All were ultimately contacted by phone and the calls were recorded with their approval (Cachia & Millward, 2011).

At the beginning of each conversation, participants were given a very brief review of the background and a reminder of interviews being recorded, as well as reassurance they could withdraw at any time. They were also told the interviews were estimated to last about 30 minutes but depending on how much they wanted to share they were welcome to speak longer. The shortest interview lasted 28 minutes, the longest lasted an hour and the average was 47

minutes. The approach was based on a semi-structured interview (Cachia & Millward, 2011) and after the interviews they were first transcribed verbatim including false starts, repetitions, and the like, to later be rewritten without them (Willig, 2013).

3.1 Semi-structured interview

Prior to the interviews, a basic interview template was formed with mostly open questions (Cachia & Millward, 2011; Roberts, 2020) to encourage longer descriptive answers (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The questions were meant to be either affirmative, corrective, or both, meaning some questions answering multiple themes at once. (Willig, 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2006) An example of such a question is "what defines good work environment for you?" (see appendix III). The idea behind this question was that the answer would, on the one hand, clarify how closely related the participant's definition of a good working environment was in relation to what the Work Environment Act defines, and inform whether the remaining questions would need adaptation, and on the other hand, if all participants had given different definitions, it could also show a hindrance to consensus and, consequently, also for reporting. Therefore, the follow-up questions and the order of the questions could vary from person to person, depending on the direction the talks took as well as to capture different opinions and ideas emerging during the interviews. To keep the interviews active but also more relaxed, the questions were not asked in turn based on the themes below but started with less charged questions the switching to more complex ones (McIntosh & Morse, 2015; Willig, 2013).

To answer the research question, the interviews were based on the following five themes:

1. What tools are available to deal with harassment?
2. What is it that has prevented harassment reporting?
3. What is it that makes the reporting onboard lower than ashore?
4. What is missing for reporting and action to take place?
5. What could improve anti-harassment work?

Below follows a brief description of the purpose of each theme and the type of questions asked.

1. What tools are available to deal with harassment?

The aim was to find out what instruments the interviewees knew about and/ or had access to, to deal with harassment within each position and organization, as well as how well familiar they were with them.

2. What is it that has prevented harassment reporting?

The purpose of this theme was to find out what mechanisms prevent someone from reporting whether they are practical or psychological barriers. Regardless of whether they had experienced harassment or not, they were asked to base their answers on the tools available to them. They were asked to share what they thought about them, the pros, and cons of them, and consider how effective the measures really are in the event of harassment. They were also asked the same questions about some measures they had not mentioned or had access to.

3. What is it that makes the reporting onboard lower than ashore?

To answer this theme, participants were briefly presented with statistics on harassment and reporting at sea related to land (Forsell, Eriksson, Järholm, Lundh, & Nilsson, 2015; Ekeström & Persson, 2019; Hodge & Widerström, 2017) and were then asked to decide whether or not it was an impression they agreed with. Whether they agreed with the statistics or not, they were also allowed to develop their thoughts on how researchers might arrive to these results. The

idea was primarily to see if it were possible to identify factors that could explain the statistics, but also to see how they positioned themselves in regard to them and why.

4. What is missing for reporting and action to take place?

These questions were based on the answers they had given within the second theme. When it came to the tools and measures, they considered to be good, they were asked if there is anything that could make them even better. When it came to those, they did not find efficient, they were asked about what they would change about them thus making them efficient. They were also asked if there were other methods, measures, or instruments, previously not mentioned they thought could make a difference.

5. What could improve anti-harassment work?

Here they were also asked about how they felt, what they perceived to be a satisfactory work environment and whether their opinion was consistent with the work environment they were in. They were also asked about their perception of alternative ways of reporting, such as through occupational health care services.

3.2 Sample group

The group of volunteers interviewed consisted of four commanders, two chief engineers, three junior officers, two service staff and one motorman from four different shipping companies. Of these 12 participants, three were women, the rest were men. Three people had resigned and are now working on land. One of them stated they had quit to spend more time with family but had enjoyed their time while onboard. The other two said they had quit because due to disliking, among other things, the atmosphere, the lack of leadership and a hierarchical structure allowing favouritism and unfair treatment. The rest had been at sea mostly all their working lives and enjoyed their duties and positions even though they were differently satisfied with the shipping companies they worked for.

To protect the anonymity of the participants, neither ages nor genders will be disclosed in relation to the positions or responses, as such information could facilitate identification. Therefore, neither will the respective shipping companies employing them be mentioned.

3.3 Thematic analysis

The collected information was analysed using thematic analysis aimed at identifying, encoding, and categorizing patterns or themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Since this method requires good knowledge of the collected information, this approach is time consuming and therefore it is desirable not to have excessive data collection in relation to the size of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The coding can be done either manually or electronically, by selecting certain words, counting the number of times a theme is repeated and the like. Themes can be recoded to answer multiple questions or just one. Even contradictory or divergent themes that not fitting in or responding to the purpose are also results and must not be forgotten. (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The number of interviews was limited to 10 at the beginning to avoid excessive data collection, but in the end amounting to 12, to see if the answers began to repeat themselves often enough to consider a saturation of responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Willig, 2013). When the questions written down prior to the interviews, number references were made by the questions assumed to be the most relevant for the answer to the above-mentioned themes. The first step after the interviews was to get acquainted with the collected data and go through it in different ways. As has been mentioned before, the interviews were first transcribed verbatim, and proofread, then compared to the recording to ensure nothing was missed. The second reading consisted of getting a general idea of the person's language and way of formulating themselves, as the answers were also processed by removing repetitions, false starts, and the like. Since there were several cases where certain questions were not asked when the participant answered them in connection with the answer to another question, the third review was to see whether all the main themes had been answered or whether follow-up interviews were needed.

When the information was read through enough times, trends and themes began to be roughly identified and then grouped and encoded, partly in relation to the number references made before the interviews and partly by seeing if other topics also provided relevant information. In this task, all coding was done manually by counting the number of times certain words and

topics appeared in connection with the participants' answers and then summarizing the answers to as few words as possible, aiming to capture the meaning. Then the themes which the codes could be catalogued under were identified. To see how the codes related to each other, they were compared by setting up tables in Excel.

Table 2
Excerpt from excel table during the analysis

| | Policies |
|------------------------------|--|
| Reporting in practice | Available |
| Barriers to reporting | Seen as another document to keep track of Lack of knowledge of the content One in the crowd meaningless |
| Difference to working ashore | Land has progressed further due to the public sector Isolation Small industry |
| Missing measures to report | Consequences Action plan for implementing follow-up |
| Improvements | Classify it as a security issue Core values Shipping company should be clearer |

Comment. Some of the work on developing themes was structured as described above. By summarizing the participants' answers to as few words as possible, the work of finding similarities and differences was facilitated.

Finally, the answers were grouped so that each main theme was given subcategories. An analysis of the content for each theme was carried out, but also of what was interesting about them and why, not only based on themselves and their respective subcategories but also in relation to each other and how they fit in their entirety, in order to find the quotes best representing the themes.

4. RESULTS

The overall responses from the interviews yielded a total of 21 sub-themes in response to five main themes, the distribution of which can be seen in Table 3. Each main theme is presented under its own heading with a summary, followed by the respective sub-themes.

Table 3
Overview of themes

| Main themes | Sub-themes |
|--|--|
| 1. What tools are available to deal with harassment? | 1.1 Policies /Law 1.2 Equal treatment training/CBT/Toolbox Meetings 1.3 Opportunities for confidential contact 1.4 Access to occupational health care services |
| 2. What has prevented on-board employees and officers from moving forward or reporting harassment? | 2.1 Varying knowledge of tools 2.2 Lack of confidence in the tools 2.3 Varying focus on the working environment 2.4 Varying perceptions of the existence of harassment/need for anti-harassment work 2.5 Unwillingness to increase one's own workload |
| 3. What is it that makes the reporting onboard lower than ashore? | 3.1 Nature of work 3.2 Fear of consequences in a small industry 3.3 Distance from the land organisation |
| 4. What is missing for reporting and action to take place? | 4.1 Action plans in the event of harassment 4.2 Clearer measures/ consequences for reporting 4.3 Clearer recruitment 4.4 Guaranteed support for the victim |
| 5. What could improve anti-harassment work? | 5.1 Shipping companies introduce clear core values 5.2 Treat harassment as a security risk 5.3 More focus on personnel responsibility and leadership for managers 5.4 Introducing performance appraisal talks 5.5 Collaboration with occupational health care services |

Comment. All the sub-themes that emerged after analysis of the participants' answers to the five basic themes to be answered during the interviews.

4.1 What tools are there to deal with harassment?

All interviewees were asked to describe the tools their company had against harassment, if they knew what the law stipulate and how reporting was expected to happen. Most responded that equal treatment policies existed, where these could be found, and that they believed there was a possibility or program in where to report issues or events in a confidential manner. Several had in one way or another received some kind of training in how they were expected to treat each other or received information concerning everyone should be treated equally onboard. To explain the policy is to instruct the crew but it turned out that far from everyone had experienced it being put into practice. Those who had access to occupational health services, telling there are many different healthcare options offered and considered to have good occupational health services.

Table 4
Existing tools

| Main themes | Sub-themes |
|--|---|
| 1. What tools are available to deal with harassment? | 1.1 Policies /Law 1.2 Equal treatment training/CBT/Toolbox Meetings 1.3 Opportunities for confidential contact 1.4 Access to occupational health care services |

Comment. The sub-themes summarize different tools participants had access to, to different extents.

4.1.1 Policies/ law

Half of those surveyed answered with certainty that there were equal treatment policies and that they could be found in the ship's Safety Management System (SMS). Although they did not know the content them nor the Swedish laws by heart, they were still able to summarise or explain them without much hesitation when asked. Two of the participants also looked them up in the SMS to check their answers, turning out to be very close.

Three employees replied they were sure that policies could be found in the ship's SMS as they had memories of going through them on at least one or two occasions but were not sure what was in them, "*well there is something in some binder if I do not remember wrongly*"

The remaining three were not sure if they existed at all, which showed that although the shipping companies on a high level are leading the work, it does not reach all the way down.

4.1.2 Equal treatment training/CBT/Toolbox Meetings

Several stated that everyone onboard must complete a class in Equal Treatment remotely, so-called computer-based training (CBT) because their respective shipping companies require it. On several ships, the training was included as part of the required process for new crew members and certain visitors of getting acquainted with the ship and its safety features, most commonly and henceforth called familiarization. Some could even choose to take the class ashore before they came onboard while others did not have a training, but it was enough that they read through the ship's policy. Several had also experienced the topic of equal treatment had been raised during one or more toolbox meetings. A third had not done such training because it was not a requirement and could not remember whether it was a subject ever to be discussed.

4.1.3. Possibilities to confidential contact

Half of those surveyed knew it to possible to contact persons outside the ship through either an existing programme or in other ways, in a confidential manner. Several of them also knew that they could go directly to the HR department on land and ask to report confidentially. Two individuals added that it was also possible to contact the flag state if there was really a need to keep out the shipping company all together. There were also those who did not know if there were any options offered to contact the someone in company confidentially, but that they knew that it was possible to report an incident to the police if an incident is serious enough.

4.1.4. Good occupational health care services

Those who had access to occupational health care services declared being satisfied with the care offered, including access to psychologist and therapy if someone was not feeling mentally well. Therefore, some counted occupational health care services as an instrument to deal with harassment, although more intended in terms of support for a victim than as a way to actually deal with an event.

'I don't see how it works with the confidentiality, I guess what you tell in confidence they can't pass on, which means they may not be able to intervene, but they can certainly support and help in the meantime.'

4.2 What has prevented on-board employees and officers from moving forward or reporting harassment?

Participants described how well they thought the tools they had access to worked and why they believed so. From their answers, it seems that there is lacking a robust and transparent systems, clarifying what the purpose and expectations are with it. Shipping companies seem to have the will and ambition to have a favourable working environment, where the physical aspects of it are prioritized but where the measures in place to combat harassment have not been clearly articulated from the outset. It is not clear what different processes lead to, leaving room for personal interpretations, where managers, whose responsibility for the work environment is high, seem to lack the prerequisites to carry out their task. This is demonstrated by the fact that the lower down in the organization a person is, the lower the knowledge and confidence in the tools. Instead, they are perceived as forced elements increasing the workload, where the lack of consequences and boundaries breeds a permissive climate lacking the impetus to change.

Table 5
Existing obstacles

| Main theme | Sub-themes |
|--|---|
| 2. What has prevented on-board employees and officers from moving forward or reporting harassment? | 2.1 Varying knowledge of tools 2.2 Lack of confidence in the tools 2.3 Varying focus on the working environment 2.4 Varying perceptions of the existence of harassment/need for anti-harassment work 2.5 Unwillingness to increase one's own workload |

Comment. The themes that may hinder the reporting of harassment.

4.2.1 Varying knowledge of the tools

It turned out that all senior officers interviewed were the most familiar with the tools offered both in terms of anti-harassment measures and the reporting options, although not everyone was as sure on how these tools are used or functioning in full.

"There has to be some kind of feedback, otherwise it doesn't work, because if you're going to report something anonymously and nothing happens from the other side, there's no point in it... but what it is, I have no idea."

For example, a commander recounted a time when they had personally asked a crew member confiding an incident in them, to also report confidentially through a program available onboard, because they wanted to make sure the incident got documented. When asked what happened to that message, the answer was:

'It's possible to report confidentially but who receives the report, I don't know, I think it goes to that human resources manager, but that system isn't used very often, I don't know what it should be like because I haven't experienced any feedback.'

Of those surveyed who did not have a managerial position, knowledge of what reporting possibilities they had, varied between either reporting to their immediate manager or captain onboard. Three people did not know if there was any way to report confidentially at all and assumed it could be possible to contact the HR department or designated person (DP) on land if they felt it impossible to turn to anyone onboard but were not sure.

Regarding policies, there was also uncertainty about what was written, partly because they did not have the same perceived and expected demands to stay informed as senior officers had. One interviewee explained the reason they had never read the policy onboard was as follows:

"It was part of my familiarization, then my boss showed me the binder and said, 'there it is and this and that policy, you should know they're here in case someone asks, ok?'. Nothing more, so I never read from the binder."

4.2.2 Lack of confidence in the tools

As confidence in the different reporting tools was perceived as low for different reasons depending on which of them is concerned, they are therefore divided into different categories below.

Policies

Perceptions of the benefits of having policies varied. Several of the interviewees expressed that they did not believe that policies surrounding equal treatment or against harassment were something that could make a difference. Of those who had low confidence in policies, half said they believed the reason to why policies are introduced or followed at all, depends on what the company needs to operate in the industry regardless of whether it is something they really want to work on or not, and that it is also regulated for financial reasons. Especially when it came to staff on ships undergoing vetting, it was pointed out that the work and the press are more about what it would mean to receive remarks during a vetting rather than being something they are really passionate about.

"The oil companies audits us because they want the vessels to transport for them. So, they're making sure there is a policy. They like to say that 'this must not happen' but [...] the audits are 95-98 percent paper, reality they do not give a shit about. A letter wrong in a checklist, they scrutinize that, but that someone's been beaten up the week before, it's not something they care about... the audits are very square."

For example, one person explained that they could meet more than the minimum environmental and emissions requirements but being better performances means a price increase the customer is not willing to pay for when there are cheaper alternatives even when the customer himself says that they want to be environmentally friendly. This means that they fold at a lower level than they could be in, in order not to be outcompeted. It was therefore concluded that this also applied to other policies, including equal treatment policies. Another person explained the reason they believed to why the company had introduced an equal treatment policy was because the company probably did not want to be mentioned in connection with *the #MeToo*, but that they did not think that the company cared for real about what was going onboard.

All interviewees pointed out in different terms that a policy that is not understood, followed, or implemented is ineffective. A third person said that some policies within their companies are not always up to date or followed, leading to a general distrust of them.

"It doesn't matter anyway because every time you refer to manuals or policies or job descriptions you still get the answer 'it's old, it hasn't been

updated for a long time, so it doesn't apply, what I'm saying now is what applies', they can always be bypassed."

Report to the nearest manager/confidential

In some cases, there was a lack of confidence to report an event confidentially due to a lack of knowledge about what such contact could produce. Some of the concerns mentioned were not knowing who received the report and whether the recipient had the competence to deal with it, whether it was indeed confidential and how feedback would be provided.

However, half of the interviewees who saw reporting to the nearest manager as the natural step in case of abuse, indicated that they would probably still prefer to sort out the situation themselves with the person in question. Someone who had not experienced harassment himself thought that they probably would not have reported even when they were younger because "*jobs do not grow on trees*".

Of those who lacked confidence in reporting to the nearest manager, it was mostly due to who the manager was, so it was not a general distrust of managers as a position. Four of them had either witnessed or reported events themselves to managers who had led nowhere. In one case, a person had seen how a person who reported an incident had not been taken seriously and received the comment "*that's just who he is*" by their manager. Therefore, they waited for the reliever because they knew that that embarking manager "*is not afraid to deal with things*", subsequently telling him about what had happened and that the exposed colleague was still sad, so that they could get help.

In another case, the person not having confidence in the managers of their company, was a fill-in and felt the general attitude of temps were not being worth as much as permanent employees, that the managers were unfair and favoured certain people and that "*it is very difficult because the person to whom I am supposed to turn, my boss, he is the one who has treated me badly*".

However, there were also difficulties in defining or explaining certain cases of harassment, which in turn led to uncertainty about how it should be reported in such a way that it is taken seriously even when there is no clear evidence.

"I would think that 95 percent of the bullying consists of talking behind your back. The problem is that you don't hear that you're disliked, but you feel it, you feel the tone change towards you, how the mood changes when you come in and it's really hard to report. If you want to stop it, you have to report it but it's hard if you can't point it out."

CBT

Several of the interviewees had access to Computer Based Training (CBT). As the name suggests, it is a form of training where the primary means of delivery is a computer. This may be a software product installed on a single computer, available on an intranet, or as web-based training over the Internet. All of those who had undergone a CBT had done the web-based training offered by Seably (Seably, 2020) considered it to be decent and found it valuable it was offered, especially when there are new crew members onboard. What was particularly positive about it was the option available to do it at an own pace and not bound to a specific place. Several pointed out that it is not always easy to gather a crew to go through a course or training as not everyone onboard has the same working hours, let alone to gather an entire crew, and send them ashore for training.

But the criticism consisted of it sometimes being too basic and not being followed up, added on, or repeated continuously, making it difficult to expect it to remain in memory. Fire drills

were used as a comparative example, as it is something done continuously onboard. They explained the reason to repetitive fire drills was not because fires are continuously occurring, but because if it does happen, the reaction should be immediate and imprinted in the "spinal cord" because there is no time to think about what steps should be taken then.

"It needs a little more depth, I think it's too basic, [...] something you should do continuously because this is not something that you can solve with just a CBT, it's something that's more profound."

As has been pointed out earlier, despite the requirement of going through a CBT as part of the familiarization was seen as positive, the downside of doing it in conjunction to the same was that it made it "too easy to simply tick it off" and thus losing some of its value.

"We need the certificates and a piece of paper that says we've done it, and the shipowner just wants us to have the correct paper, so just graze the course, then it's nothing more than that."

Two officers explained that they could only verify that the course was completed but not the understanding or proceeds of it. They also pointed out since the course is not limited in time and possible to carry out unlimited times, it practically possible to complete it without actually comprehending any of the content.

Meetings

Some also listed morning meetings, toolbox meetings and the like as possible tools, but also these were regarded with little trust. This could be because the meetings were either perceived as too focused on practical issues relating to day-to-day work or because they felt irrelevant.

"Those meetings are both good and bad. Bad because we're supposed to be discussing, but we know all that already and something has to be said, but nobody wants to talk first. But it's good when you're tired because then you can rest a little bit."

Another aspect was that some were hesitant that toolbox meetings are suitable forums for discussion because they were perceived as modules, where documentation and interaction on different topics is expected, making them too rigid and stiff, especially when it comes to more sensitive topics.

"We're sitting there ticking off a lot of different things and everyone knows that nobody wants to sit there, and it has to be explained what an androgynous human being is, 'no, it's not a kind of robot' and then you just want to disappear because it's so embarrassing, can't we just agree that everyone is different?"

Leadership

When mixed crews from different nationalities were mentioned, there was a perception that there were difficulties in communicating because of the different cultural backgrounds. Several individuals in managerial positions described that although they did their best to ensure that the atmosphere onboard was good, there was little certainty that some of the crew would turn to them to report harassment.

"a Filipino would never, ever admit that he does not like it. You must understand the pressure. He might be sustaining 5-6 people at home and he

knows there are many people who can replace him and that he doesn't have an unemployment benefit, he's not going to risk his job.'

4.2.3 Varying focus on the working environment

All interviewees were asked about what they perceived as a good working environment, whether they were satisfied with the company's investment in it, and whether they liked it.

The factors listed most often as important for a favourable work environment were mainly related to physical safety at the workplace such as the right protective equipment and work ergonomics. Next, to have efficient tools whether it involved procedural tools, machines, or actual tools. Equally often, gyms, internet onboard and satellite television were mentioned. Finally, to have a good atmosphere onboard and colleagues who could be trusted and to have fun with.

Among the ship's officers, most of them also included good quality contact with the land organization as high-ranking factor for a good working environment.

"We can reach them 24 hours a day. They want us to know that it is never wrong to ask for help, that it is safer to ask for help once too much than to miss something. I think that's very, very nice to know."

Half said that they were satisfied with the company's investment in the work environment and that they did well since their perception of a favourable work environment was consistent with what the employer was investing in. Of the rest, three people felt comfortable onboard even if the company did not meet their perception of a satisfactory working environment as it was difficult to access certain protective equipment such as work clothes and gloves or clear guidelines. Finally, three people said that they did not thrive at all and that the work environment was unpleasant because, among other things, there were no guidelines, rules and instructions were inconsistent, with a strong hierarchy, gossip, and lack of leadership present. When it came to the topic of what a favourable psychosocial work environment entails, the answers varied far more. Several were unsure the meaning of the expression and what it implies, thus reformulating the expression "psychosocial work environment" as "work environment that makes you feel good mentally".

"I think that was a difficult question [...] I think it's up to oneself to feel good."

Many responded by assuming it should entail agreeable work colleagues, fair teamwork, as well good cooperation, and safety onboard. When asked whose responsibility it should to make sure that was the case, the answers ranged from suggesting being it the captain's responsibility, the immediate managers, the safety representatives, or oneself, but the answers were hesitant. The responses varied not only between the participants in the study, but also within the same conversation. Of those reviewed, all 12 stated a satisfactory work environment to be an important issue, but only half considered psychosocial work environment to be important.

Although the perception of who is responsible for it varied, one thing in common amongst all senior officers was everyone counting themselves as responsible for the health wellness onboard whether they also mentioned anyone else or not. Nine participants also shared that regardless of what they thought about the work environment, they were well versed in SAM and what it involves in practice, as well as knowing who the safety representatives were and what was expected of them.

4.2.4 Varying perceptions of the existence of harassment/the need for work against harassment / what harassment is.

The participants were informed about some brief statistics on harassment, dark numbers, and the prevalence of mental illness onboard, subsequently asked to consider how well the data matched their own estimation, and whether they had any theory as to why it could be as the statistics described.

Four people their picture agreed fully with the presented, either due to experiencing first-hand or witnessing such events, believing them to spring from lack of knowledge, poor leadership, or lack of consequences.

A quarter said it was probably mostly an issue affecting female seafarers.

Some stated since there is, or has been some jargon at sea, and the ordering process at sea sometimes can be very straight and direct, it may be perceived as harassment for the unfamiliar. Another approach to how the numbers quoted could be so, was to believe them depending on sample group they were based upon, as working environment might differ between different flag States or perhaps by the way they had been calculated. Several also pointed out that even if harassment takes a toll on land, it could do so far more for those at sea since it is not possible to get a distance from ongoing harassment.

"You can't go home for the day, do homework with the kids and relax with your partner. You're onboard all the time physically and mentally, you can't get out of here at all. So the impact will be much, much greater onboard than on land due to the restrictions, on the turns, how long you are on the boat."

4.2.5 Unwillingness to increase own workload

Some people also believed that some of the dark numbers could be based on an already pressured work situation onboard ships with the minimum number of crew members required to make the ship safe, meaning minor incidents onboard are not reported as it implicates additional work for those affected. One person related about how the first time they reported a minor body injury, taught them to be careful with wording in the future:

"Then I put it [on the incident list]. After 10:00, [the colleague] walks by, sees it and says, 'You can't write like that! If the safety officer sees it, we're going to have meetings until the end of days and measures and then more meetings and then the shit's going to be there anyway, write like this instead.'"

As explained, all incidents that are a deviation from the usual routines should be reported but doing so would take too much time and resources. Another participant related about a ladder beginning to give off strange noises. The sound came from the ladder hitting the floor as a retaining bolt had broken by constant vibrations. This incident should have been reported, but as the ship was about to go to port, it was instead chosen to weld a new bolt in place while the chief engineer introduced a new routine consisting of periodic inspections of the ladders. In that manner, the staff avoided the reporting process at the same time giving the impression of working proactively. The participants therefore concluded that reporting of harassment may occur more frequently than the figures show, but that less serious incidents are "*resolved quietly*" in the same manner as mentioned above.

This procedure was believed to also apply to the land organization dealing with staff who had been caught harassing others, as it was assumed they too had a lot to do and wanted to avoid lengthy processes as well.

" The person may resign [...] The person who is made redundant will not be affected, the shipping company and the office will not be affected, and everyone is happy except for the person who has endured sexual harassment, that person is set aside."

4.3 What is it that makes the reporting onboard lower than ashore?

The participants were asked to reflect on what reasons there could be explaining the lesser account of reported harassment in the shipping industry compared to land. For the most part, distance to land both physically and mentally as well as the culture onboard and in the industry, was widely presumed to strongly influence the will to report, as it is feared that any negative consequences of reporting are more tangible for both daily work and career opportunities at sea than on land.

Table 6

Reasons for low reporting rates

| Main theme | Sub-themes |
|--|---|
| 3.What is it that makes the reporting onboard lower than ashore? | 3.1 Nature of work 3.2 Fear of consequences in a small industry 3.3 Distance from the land organisation |

Comment. Barriers to reporting likely to be related to characteristics of the profession or industry

4.3.1 Nature of work

All the participants stated they enjoyed being at sea, regardless of whether they liked their workplaces or not. The most common responses to what attracted were the feeling of freedom, that one day was not the other alike and the long continuous leave. The disadvantages most often mentioned were the distance to loved ones and the long turns at times being stressful due to the infeasibility to "turn off" work or colleagues while onboard. Therefore, a good relationship to and with colleagues and managers was rated highly as a determining factor in how well they thrived. This did not only refer to similar values and camaraderie, but also to the required trust since the duties and safety strongly depend on each other in a way that was supposed to be different from land.

This can therefore make it more difficult to report incident because there is a fear of either "being the one who spoils the mood" or becoming ostracized by colleagues "because then you might as well be on another planet, you are alone for real". In addition, it was also pointed out that jargon or seafarer culture does not allow for anything that can be perceived as weakness before "making a name for yourself". When asked how it is possible to make a name for yourself, one of the answers was as follows:

"[You] work 150 percent, don't complain, don't argue, do everything you're told [...], work twice as fast as everyone else, always chip in on everything, work overtime without questioning whether there will be extra payment, then you may be permitted back."

Another theory mentioned by different participants was the turns and leave specifically may be one reason for low reporting. Since the leave is usually as long as the time onboard, it may be that people choose to muzzle themselves and say nothing because 'there are only three weeks left until you are home and then you can relax'.

The hierarchy onboard can also be a difficulty not only in relation to reporting but also the treatment of others. One officer described that they are extra careful about how they express their orders to younger crew members, especially female members, as they do not want them to be offended.

"Just because you give someone an order or instruction doesn't mean you give a person shit, it's just a matter of staying short and concise."

4.3.2 Fear of the consequences in a small industry

Most people believed that the fear of getting branded as being a troublesome person in a small industry is a barrier to reporting. One person explained new staff members or substitutes in particular may face complications if they report something which is not kept anonymous.

"then you will be singled out [...] on a boat, things spread a lot, regular staff have been there for a very long time, they know each other and then it takes a couple of seconds before everyone knows and then the story builds on and it's not always the truth that goes around but one hears something and builds on and then it gets bigger and bigger."

This fear is directed not only at the consequences in the everyday labor, but also at how it can affect future career opportunities as it can lead to the person not getting a renewed contract or getting bad references for another job.

"... but it is a very small industry, the human resources managers talk to each other [...] there is a great risk that you get a name about you of being awkward, or whiny or tedious. I don't know if it's true, but I think a lot of people think that way and think that you have to put up with it a little bit to get your first job, since everyone knows everyone."

But while senior officers stated contact with and support from the land being important, trust in the land organization for junior officers waned, to be almost non-existent for crews. The concerns towards the land organisation seemed to lie primarily in the physical distance to it also becoming a barrier, partly because it was not always clear what the land organization could do or who should be contacted, and partly because trust in the competence and reception was low.

"It takes a lot more to turn to the land organization, it has to be something really huge. If you do, the first thing they will do is inform the captain, then you are screwed in his eyes for passing him by."

4.4 What is missing for reporting and action to take place?

To understand what is missing for reporting and action to take place, participants were asked to talk about what they themselves felt was missing and why as well as whose responsibility it should be to introduce these changes. These changes should be based on their mentioned existing tools and measures. As had already emerged in the main theme two, there seemed to be a lack of a solid system and clear guidelines. In an industry where many operations require checklists going through the course of events point by point, the corresponding for the effort against harassment is missing. There is a need to clarify what should happen in the event of harassment, who this should be reported to, what the consequences will be and how the victim will be supported. Since senior officers in particular see it as their responsibility to ensure that the working environment onboard is good, they also need more support and clearer frameworks

to lean on in their labour in for them to succeed in leading the effort against harassment and to not just being supervising managers.

Table 7
Missing actions

| Main theme | Sub-themes |
|--|---|
| 4. What is missing for reporting and action to take place? | 4.1 Action plans in the event of harassment 4.2 Clearer measures/ consequences for reporting 4.3 Clearer recruitment 4.4 Guaranteed support for the victim |

comment. Improvements and changes based on what participants already have access to.

4.4.1 Distinct reporting measures/ consequences

As mentioned earlier, there is a belief that reporting does not pay off, as more than half of the participants talked about events where reporting had not led to any consequences, leading them to conclude that there is no genuine interest in solving the problem.

Therefore, the most frequent response was also that reporting must lead to clearer measures and that the measures must be communicated openly, not only to those involved but to everyone within the company, that responsibility starting with the highest management of the shipping companies.

"The shipping company can make a huge difference by preceding. That is, if a person is reported, take that person off duty, fire bullies. If someone gets fired, go out and say, 'this person got fired because of this'. In practice, it doesn't happen, because when people mess up then [the shipping company] says, 'well, let's shut up about this, you resign and that's it'.

Even when it does not lead to dismissal, there must still be clear feedback, as it signals that the company takes it seriously. It must be clear that *'it should not pay of to be mean'* and it should be done as early as possible.

"it must absolutely not be accepted. There should be zero acceptance, certainly not allowing bullying. It should be addressed immediately, even when you see such tendencies, they should not have the time to go [into bullying]".

The lack of action is seen not only as a barrier to reporting, but also as a potential danger, with several referring to the threat to the health of the exposed primarily, but also to others. One contributor suggested that the measures must come before that day comes, when *"someone snaps"* and there is a fatal hand-to-hand fight, which they fear will happen before the industry takes the issue seriously.

4.4.2 Guaranteed support for the victim

While shipping companies need to show more clearly that it is not worthwhile to harass anyone, it was felt that they also had to show that it pays off to report.

Several of the participants had their own experiences where reporting of harassment did not lead to feedback for the victim and four had themselves seen either the denouncing person or themselves being the one getting punished.

I wrote down dates, what had happened, how I felt and that I wasn't alone in being exposed, that I had seen the person do this to others. That same

day, [my bosses] called me up, we sat down in a meeting without the person who harassed me and went through the incident. I ended up having to change ships and take a temporary post there. The person [who harassed] was allowed to remain and is still at the company, in the same ship and the same position."

Another contributor said that the person who chooses to report probably already feels bad and that not even receiving feedback only exacerbates the situation. In addition, they believed that clarity or appreciation for the denouncing person would do much for public civil courage.

"Everyone wants to hear that they're doing a good job, that 'I'm glad you told me'. As it is, one doesn't want to interfere, then maybe it will be my turn [to be harassed]."

4.4.3 Action plans in the event of harassment

Although the trust in equal treatment policies was low, as has been mentioned above, it was mostly associated to its existence alone not being enough but should rather be seen as a start. Although several contributors argued that manuals cannot be made for all the different types of conflicts that may arise, more than half believed that a more structured disciplinary process was required. It could take the form of a general action plan or at least a standard form that facilitates the investigation and handling of reported harassment.

"The way to stop it is to report and that report needs to follow specific steps in a policy so that it is done properly. What happened? Is it really bullying or is it something else? Can you do that? What [action should we take], warning or what? If so, how do we carry out the evaluation? How serious is that? Has it happened before? [...] As it is, no one even knows where to start."

The advantage of an action plan was considered not only to facilitate management but also to provide reassurance that the outcome of the reporting does not depend on the recipient's personal circumstances or interests. As one person described it, *"it should be as rigid as insurance companies' forms for when you crash your car"*

In addition, two people believed that it would facilitate prevention because the documentation would be more uniform and therefore give a clearer *"sense of how to prevent it from happening over and over again"*.

4.4.4 Clearer recruitment

When it came to recruitment, it was unclear whether there is an established culture. Several officers explained focusing a lot on having staff members returning who work well together and fitting in in the team since they believe it is important both for safety reasons and the work environment. For the most part it tends to be the same crew for longer periods of time, but that since it can be up to 75 percent temporary staff (TAP) that do not go under Swedish agreements, there is always a risk that it is not possible to get the same individuals back, even if the shipping companies try to meet their wishes to retain staff. The fact that shipping companies listen to them was regarded positive because it is the staff onboard who have insight into the day-to-day work.

It also emerged that recruitment for new positions and recruitments, be it TAP or permanent staff with Swedish contracts, seems more focused on what certificates and certificates the person has than on personal characteristics. For example, one person explained they had been promoted on the day they received their papers of endorsement. Since that person was expected

to have more staff responsibility for each promotion, they were asked whether their competence in personnel issues ever had been tested, questioned or if they had been offered special support or education for new personnel responsibility in their work. The answer was negative and something that is confirmed by most people.

However, shipping companies being receptive to the ship's requests for personnel was not solely considered positive. One person told the following happened after they had spoken up about unfair treatment to their managers on several occasions:

"If it is to be done correctly, there is a person on land who manages the staffing, which I contacted. [They] said there was no need for staff. Then I met my old colleagues who told me that the replacement staff had been completely flooded with calls, because they needed so much help, and I understood nothing. But then it turns out that because I didn't get along with [the managers], they didn't want me back. They told land I couldn't come back, no matter how well I'd worked. Then when I got a job on another ship in the same shipping company, I stayed for 1.5 years without any problems and [my boss] there even called me personally and asked me to work".

Three other interviewees related seeing or experiencing similar treatment and in all cases the persons had also remained for several years without problems after moving to another vessel within the same shipping company. None of the three people who had personally experienced being transferred had been officially given an explanation as to why they had been relocated. Instead, they found out via word of mouth or hearsay.

4.5 What could improve anti-harassment work?

This section poses the most frequently proposed changes in what should be introduced, which at present either is missing altogether or existing to such a small extent that it does not make a difference. What emerged most often was the need for shipping companies to lead the way in the effort against harassment more clearly and to make stronger markings against them in the form of core values as, action plans and determined procedures about what is needed to be done. Why the work should start with the shipping companies is partly because they are influential in how the entire organization should be, and partly because the work cannot be put on individual ships or officers if the result is to be uniform, but also to give managers better conditions. Furthermore, it was suggested that harassment should be treated as a security risk, to give the problem more substance and to move away from possible existing polarisation, in where some groups do not feel affected by the problem. Finally, there was a desire for shipping companies to use occupational health care service as a neutral party and its resources to support the creation of a functioning system and greater trust within their own organisation.

Table 8
Improvements

| Main theme | Sub-themes |
|---|--|
| 5. What could improve anti-harassment work? | 5.1 Shipping companies introduce clear core values 5.2 Treat harassment as a security risk 5.3 More focus on personnel responsibility and leadership for managers 5.4 Introducing performance appraisal talks 5.5 Collaboration with occupational health care services |

Comment. The actions and improvements the participants lacked and considered can facilitate their work against harassment to make reporting easier.

4.5.1 Shipping companies introduce clear core values

All participants, except one, shared the view that the role and involvement of the shipping company was of the utmost importance to successfully change attitudes and combat harassment. Why the role of the shipping company is considered so important was explained because it is not only about the well-being of the staff, but because it is something that can also affect the efficiency and finances of shipping companies.

"I think this issue won't be talked about, unless it comes from above, you know. If you like your job and everything else is fine but [...] you get bullied, one of the consequences is that you must look for another job. If you are good, you have talent, you have gained experience and you have a good education, it should be easy for you to find a new job, but not when there is no energy left anymore. It is such a big loss, but also for the company because they lose all this as well, someone who is very valuable to the company, for all the wrong reasons. There are no winners."

As a solution, it was suggested, among other things, that shipping companies should supplement policies with clear core values with the associated Code of Conduct because the equal treatment policy explains what should not happen and the company's core values could provide the framework for what behaviours prevents it. All persons who suggested that core values should be introduced had previous experience of companies where they existed and functioned.

"... so we would discuss it as, just point by point actually. They took half an hour and went through every single point and said these are our core values and that's how we behave. It was really good actually [...] because you can't say later that you didn't know."

Another participant explained that core values were also a support for daring to speak up to colleagues independently of each other's positions because there were clear instructions on how staff was expected to behave.

"When I was working on land, [the company] had values that they wanted us to work by. Sometimes they felt like really American drippy, but it worked. Mostly because if someone did something stupid, they could point and say, 'Now you're not acting like the letter A'."

4.5.2 Treat harassment as a security risk

Something that was proposed to change the attitude surrounding equal treatment and harassment was to shift the focus on the name and valuation of policies. On the one hand, three people pointed out that although the terms *Equality Management* or *Equal Treatment* refer to everyone, they thought the terminology was more coupled with phrases like "*the girls against the boys*" and "*too soft*". This, they believed, meant that male crew members did not feel they were included or affected by them, especially since they felt attention to equal treatment arising or increasing after #MeToo and #LättaAnkar.

Furthermore, it was also suggested that the approach to equal treatment could be changed by treating the issue as if it were a safety risk in line with '*do not enter confined spaces without O2 meters*'. This would not only increase the valuation of the issue but would also help to make space for further development of the theme.

"If it were pinpointed as a security risk, we would have the forum, the SMS system to discuss this issue. If you said once a year or something like that 'this is okay, not this. This is the Code of Conduct. This is the law. Here are the consequences. And now we know because we have a meeting. This is one of the points we need to talk about'. But since it's not like that now, we don't have a forum to talk about it."

When those suggesting the issue should be treated as a security risk were asked why they thought it should be treated as such, the answer was uniform: they did not propose it as an empty or symbolic measure but because they really considered it to be a serious safety issue.

"I think because the consequences of bullying are so great. You know, if you're too late and you don't have the opportunity to report it or stop it [...] you can basically not only lose your job, you can get depression [...] and of course in the worst, worst case, suicide or stuff."

4.5.3 More focus on personnel responsibility and leadership for managers

As the participants were asked if they had been offered opportunities for further training in personnel issues, conflict management or similar, of the eight participants with any level of command, only one answered in the affirmative, although it had been a while ago.

When asked if they felt it to be necessary, most felt they had no need for it, although three pointed out that it would have been useful to them if they had got it early in their careers.

While asked what they thought of the leadership training included in their maritime officer program, the most common answer, if they remembered it, was that it had not been good. Either because it was too general or because it did not address anything they had practical use of later on, described as follows:

"More focus on how to handle the situations onboard in practical terms. Maybe not how to deal with the harassment, I think any normal person knows what is right and wrong, [...] but more practically, like if someone comes to me [with an issue], what is needed? "

When it came to the topic of how to handle different situations, their actions were based on their personal experience of what they thought was the best option. When they were asked how they would act in a hypothetical harassment case, all the answers were different. Nevertheless,

it is worth noting that everyone emphasized they wanted to do the right thing since they take their responsibilities seriously.

Given that one answer was not the other one alike and because the several examples given during the interviews of managers acting in a way perceived as unprofessional, it may still be the case that more attention should be placed on leadership.

"... then I called and asked if I could get help solving it. He replied 'actually I don't want to, but if I have to, I guess I have to...' After many ifs and buts, he came down and thought it was all a joke. But I didn't think it was funny at all, because he kept saying 'can't you do your job?'

"I'm here to make sure the job gets done, not to be your mother."

4.5.4 Introducing performance appraisal talks

Another proposal to facilitate anti-harassment work was to introduce performance appraisal talks. They do not necessarily have to be linked to salary but definitely as part of further development within the role. It was assumed that the effect of performance appraisal talks could indirectly counteract harassment because it could provide greater satisfaction with work, and partly to identify further education needs.

"I want to be able to do a good job but for the most part I feel I'm indistinguishable from the crowd. It would be nice to know how I'm doing."

It could also be seen as a safer forum to address how people are feeling, especially if it is a standardized part of the conversation. But also, as a natural forum for conversations with a person who is harassing or close to do so.

"Because I think that people who feel bullied during these conversations would have the opportunity to speak up, as well as bullies [getting] a reprimand you know, 'you do an excellent job but you're a bully. So, no good grades for you'"

4.5.5. Cooperation with occupational health care services

Those who had access to corporate provided occupational health care services also had included access to psychologists and the like. Therefore, it was suggested that shipping companies could make more use of occupational health expertise in the effort against harassment in three different ways:

By increasing knowledge about what harassment and poor psychosocial work environment can lead to, as well as how it is possible to identify signs of it earlier, but also to define what mental illness is and what it means for the work onboard. It was explained that only one question on the medical certificate for seafarers according to STCW Manila, concerns mental illness and that question is whether the person has previously been medicated for mental illnesses, but that they are unclear what an affirmative answer to that question leads to.

"I doubt that if someone sat and filled this out and had problems, that they would tick the box because it could mean that you don't get this certificate".

By carrying out surveys or even audits like how vetting's are executed in cooperation with the Swedish Transport Agency, on whether there is harassment and on the mental well-being onboard, which can be continuously presented in the form of statistics. It was expected the

statistics could help shipping companies identifying potential dissatisfaction within the psychosocial work environment before it leads to ill health but also since the trust in the confidentiality of health care services is high, thus making it easier for people to open up.

"I think some people would benefit [from mental health care]. I think most people can do without it, but with what I've seen over the years, there are a few who would have needed an evaluation on that part."

By offering support to people who report harassment. It was suggested that there should be a person available specifically in the event of harassment with expertise in the field, who gets knowledge about the issue at an early stage and who is allowed to participate throughout the process, to help with the processing of the emotions that arise and to start any possibly needed treatment early. This support should also be offered to managers dealing with incidents as it was assumed that handling such situations are stressful for them as well.

4.6 Other

During the interviews, when participants were asked about harassment, the questions were designed to only use the generic words "harassment" and "violations" as to not allow questions to hint at any specific form of harassment or abuse. Nevertheless, most of the participants assumed the questions mainly being about sexual harassment directed at women, although other types were also mentioned.

5. DISCUSSION

As has been described in the past, some of the mental illness in shipping is linked to deficiencies in the psychosocial work environment (Lefkowitz & Slade, 2019; Iversen, 2012), something not exclusive to shipping alone. When the movements #MeToo and #LättaAnkar brought attention to harassment being hidden for a long time in most industries, it also led to a desire and opportunity to create measures and improvements. In Swedish shipping, it assisted to take further action against harassment in the form of action plans and training, an endeavour already begun in 2015 (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020).

Part of the industry's willingness to make changes can be seen in connection with this study, as some shipping companies have, among other things, introduced equality policies and compulsory equal treatment training as part of familiarization, some possible to do remotely thus facilitating access for individuals. The participants also cited other positive elements showing the willingness to do the right thing, such as good existing procedures for SAM, good access to occupational health care services and health insurances, rapid response from shipping companies regarding requests for protective equipment or safer working environment, but also in terms of general support, such as technical support or doing their utmost to provide safe travel solutions for crew members embarking and disembarking despite an ongoing pandemic and adjacent travel restrictions. On the positive side, however, there is room for further progress.

5.1 Knowledge and confidence, clearness and follow-up

The purpose of this study was to hopefully identify where and what improvements can be made to facilitate reporting and action, based on the obstacles that exist at present for them to take place, which was why participants were asked to talk about what tools they knew, how well they knew them and how they had gained access to them or information about them. Overall,

the answers may lead to conclude that there is access to policies, training, and materials, that there are opportunities to report anonymously and opportunities to report to someone other than the nearest manager, and that work environment work is part of daily work (AFS 2015:4) but that there are some major obstacles that may be the reason to why reporting does not take place.

It can be difficult enough to report as it is (Lawrence, 2020) even when there is knowledge of what the possibilities are, but already in this part of the interviews some obstacles began to appear in the form of varying knowledge of the tools since the degree of knowledge about them was related to the position in the hierarchy: the higher the position, the better knowledge of the existing content, requirements and possibilities. It also turned out that the varied trust in the tools, even among participants who were well versed in their functions, consisted of four leitmotifs in a continuous spiral, namely knowledge, confidence, clearness and follow-up. Lack of trust, was founded on a lack of clarity that led to a lack of ability to follow up, which led to a lack of knowledge and, in turn, a lack of trust and so on, which is why these four factors can be seen as strongly related to each other as demonstrated on several different occasions (Lawrence, 2020; Verhezen, 2010; Kaptein, 2008).

In connection with the policies mentioned above, it was shown that in addition to the fact that knowledge levels regarding the existence of policies and their content were different, confidence in them was also varied. The reasons for the distrust were mostly based on the fact that the application of policies seems arbitrary, since it is sometimes easier and safer to circumvent them than to comply with them (Smith, Allen, & Wadsworth, 2006; Baumler, Singh Bhatia, & Kitada, 2020).

Workload was cited as a reason for their circumvention, which is discussed in more detail in section 5.2, but one reason for the low level of confidence in them can also be related to a lack of knowledge. Since participants assumed that policies, not just those related to equal treatment and harassment, are likely to be introduced for show and that they are sometimes not followed, it is concluded that there is a lack of transparency and clarity about what drives shipping companies to implement policies, the reasons for their compliance, and how this should be done, (Slaughter, Cooper, & Gilliland, 2020; Kaptein, 2008) which may result in employees' lack of knowledge on these issues undermining the value of policies (Erwin, 2011). The same is true of why training and toolbox meetings should be carried out, which is described as something "just ticked off", as rigid, forced, and ineffective.

In connection with training courses, it is recommended that they be designed so that there is room for discussion and questions, as well as the possibility to check that information has actually been understood (Kaptein, 2008; Slaughter, Cooper, & Gilliland, 2020), which is something that is missing in connection with CBT. Of those who had access to equality training via CBT, this was a mandatory part of familiarization which is followed up by superiors in the form of verification of a certificate confirming that the person has completed the course. Although the training was described as a generally good course, albeit at times too basic, there was little confidence in the effectiveness of the training, partly because superiors can only check that it has been completed and not whether the information has been understood or accepted, and partly because once it is done (Erwin, 2011), it is more or less forgotten. For practical reasons such as different home countries and different schedules, CBT may be an appropriate way to provide basic information and training, but the lack of follow-up and transparency has led to the ability of superiors to control their own and employees' knowledge levels, supplementary needs, or assessment of further training to be virtually non-existent, which in turn has led to low confidence in them making a difference.

When there was a lack of trust in confidential ways of reporting, the obstacle sprung to a certain extent in a lack of knowledge, that is, not everyone knew that the possibility existed, but also there is a lack of clarity as to what happens when that channel is used. Not knowing the consequences, the underlying processes that are started in connection with or the result of reporting can lead to silence (Skinnari, Jonsson, & Vesterhav, 2019; Verhezen, 2010). Even senior participants, who had encouraged employees to use this channel, were unsure of what results could be expected from such contact. In cases where that method had actually been used, feedback had not been received and therefore did not lead to any follow-up. These obstacles were similar for reporting to the nearest manager, which is discussed further in paragraph 5.3.

5.2 Agreeingly disagreeing

Another obstacle may be the mixed perception of what work environment and work environment management entails, and what the definition of harassment is and the need to act against them.

When the participants had to describe their definition of a favourable work environment, why they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the company's investment in it and their thoughts on what the purpose of the Work Environment Act is, the answers were varied, but mainly related to physical aspects of it, such as good protective clothing or clean cabins. Likewise, when it came to their grading of how well or much, they thought their respective shipping companies were investing in the work environment their answers were mostly concerning physical aspect as well as when they shared their thoughts on what the Work Environment Act was aimed at. Although some psychosocial concepts such were also mentioned as working routines, the atmosphere onboard, reliable colleagues and good contact with land organization.

When asked to describe what a favourable psychosocial work environment entails, the responses varied significantly not only between the participants, but also during the descriptions when the first mentioned formulations could be withdrawn or changed, and where some participants pointed out that they felt uncertain about the concept. Interestingly, even those who had mentioned psychosocial aspects of the work environment in matters that did not contain the word "psychosocial", were unsure of what is meant and whether it is important. Another point of interest was that the three most critical participants, who pointed out that they did not feel good in their workplace, describing their work environment as poor, cited almost exclusively psychosocial deficiencies as explanations for their opinions.

The fact that participants relied more on subjective perceptions of what defines psychosocial work environment is perhaps due to two different reasons. First, it may have to do with the use of the term psychosocial work environment, since it is now called the organizational and social work environment (Gunnarsson, Johansson, & Stoetzer, 2016), which they are perhaps more familiar with. Secondly, because there has been more emphasis and prominence on mapping physical aspects and risks, rather than psychosocial matters (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). Given the more acute physical risks to the health of seafarers (Carter & Jepsen, 2014), it is also no wonder that have been the main focus. When the above-mentioned questions were asked, there was also no expectation of participants giving any "right or wrong answer" because the work environment to some extent is subjective, as even laws and regulations are written in general terms when requiring employers to prevent ill health or accidents (SFS 1977:1160; SFS 2002:585). The reason why their response variation was nevertheless coded as an obstacle is because there seems to be no consensus on what a good work environment entails, in conjunction to psychosocial factors and their importance. When it came to physical aspects, for example, wearing the correct protective clothing and protective equipment was something

mentioned by everyone, regardless of position or shipping company, suggesting that the prevailing norm (Tankard & Paluck, 2016; Hershcovis et al., 2021) at sea in terms of protective equipment, is that it should be used and that it is important. The varying responses are also not interpreted as a complete lack of norms around psychosocial factors, since most of them were mentioned, but rather as a lack of conscious and clear descriptive norms as to their importance, their relationships and the benefits it can bring (Tankard & Paluck, 2016; Cunningham, Drumwright, & Foster, 2019). Therefore, it is also not surprising if psychosocial issues such as harassment, abuse and bullying are unclear or that half of the participants classify the psychosocial work environment as less important. However, since the stated reasons for dissatisfaction related almost exclusively to psychosocial aspects, it becomes understandable why the Work Environment Act does not distinguish between the physical, psychological, and social conditions that affect the work environment when it comes to SAM (AFS 2001:1)

Nor was there any expected "right or wrong answer" when it came to questions relating to harassment, but also these answers varied, leading to the same conclusion being drawn as for health and safety issues: there seems to be a lack of coherence and clearness in regards to the definition, existence and need to combat harassment (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Although the questions only asked about "violations" and "harassment", only one participant described all the grounds of discrimination. The other participants mainly described sexual harassment and talking behind the backs of others. Even if the purpose was not to see who could mention the most categories of harassment, and by taking into account that harassment and violations are to some extent based on subjective interpretations, still it is concluded that it may not be surprising if equal treatment policies or anti-harassment policies are not followed, when there is no agreement on what or whom these policies refer to (Slaughter, Cooper, & Gilliland, 2020; Verhezen, 2010).

But another reason why different definitions of harassment were coded as an obstacle was that, in contrast to the answers concerning the work environment, which, although they differed, were still something the participants recognized and related to their everyday lives, harassment rather seemed to be something concerning "others", hence potentially leading to silence. This was shown, among other things, in the surprise expressed when the statistics mentioned in the interviews turned out to be about Swedish ships, when participants could well imagine that the figures were right but must be about segments of Swedish shipping other than their own, or in the assumption that this is mostly a problem that concerns women.

One risk of dismissing, trivialising, whitewashing or invalidating problems is that it is one of the foundations for cultures of silence, (Hershcovis, Vranjes, Berdahl, & Cortina, 2021) but rejection can also be a sign of attitude polarisation (Szekeres, Shuman, & Saguy, 2020), further discussed in section 5.4.

5.3 If it is not heard, it does not exist

When it came to what might explain why reporting is lower at sea than on land, it was concluded that it may be partly related to certain physical factors (Allen, Wadsworth, & Smith, 2008; Carotenuto et al., 2012) of seafaring, but also that it may be due to some of the culture associated with being a seafarer (Ely & Meyerson, 2010).

Being at sea was associated with feelings of freedom and positively varying tasks for most of the interviewees, good relationship with and to colleagues provided. Although life onboard was described as hectic at times, good relationship with colleagues was crucial not only for increased general well-being, but also for mental well-being and the feelings of security and

safety, partly because it is difficult to "switch off" from problems onboard due to space reasons, but also because trust in colleagues can be crucial for safety reasons, which is consistent with analyses of what is highly valued among seafarers (Sampson Ellis, 2019; Carotenuto et al., 2012) and that positive experiences of subjective factors can counteract physical stress (Lefkowitz & Slade, 2019; Forte, 2015). While distance from family and friends was considered to be one reason why good relationships with colleagues are crucial for well-being onboard (Carotenuto et al., 2012), it also emerged that for shorter turns, poor relationships with colleagues could be more easily endured, as the person knew that they would soon go home and avoid the work environment, as confirmed by studies that showed the longer the tours, the increasing levels of stress (Barnett, Kecklund, & van Leeuwen, 2017) as well as this kind of "persevering" may be a reason to the lower amount of reporting for shipping compared to land since individuals have longer breaks from colleagues.

Although most people considered the staffing level to be acceptable when asked about it in direct terms, it indirectly emerged that the workload can sometimes be high and the efforts are primarily put on meeting tightly timed deadlines and economic efficiency (Smith, Allen, & Wadsworth, 2006; Rydstedt & Lundh, 2010) as participants described different instances where reporting of incidents and the like had not been done in strict accordance with rules and policies. This is done not out of laziness but owing to choosing the option with the least impact on an already squeezed schedule as well as out of fear of the consequences in case of receiving remarks (Baumler, Singh Bhatia, & Kitada, 2020). At the same time, it also shows that increased demands for following-up administrative tasks (Pollard, Sussman, & Stearns, 1990) can sometimes drive the focus to shift from doing the right thing to presenting the right paper. Considering Smith et al. (2006) and Baumler et al. (2020) studied and described adjustment of rest hours at sea 14 years apart; and since participants in this study talked about adjusted reporting, of not only rest hours, but also safety aspects, minor personal injuries and repairs, there is therefore reason to suspect that correcting or dimming data in reports may also encompass harassment and violations, which is consistent with the participants' own assumptions that this practice could constitute an obstacle to harassment being reported.

Although all participants work for or had most recently been employed by Swedish shipping companies, everyone had experience of working with multinational crews, something globalisation has made more common (Rydstedt & Lundh, 2010; Carotenuto et al., 2012; Iversen, 2012). Notwithstanding the fact that multicultural crew members were described in positive terms, at the same time it was told that certain cultural differences may make it difficult to address certain issues. Although none of those who encountered differences considered it to be problematic, it could be a potential source of stress as linguistic or cultural differences can lead to significant communication problems (Jensen & Oldenburg, 2020), which emerged indirectly as many of the solutions to differences between cultures were related to letting each group sort out their own problems or not pretending about them. Another way to circumvent cultural differences was to ask for the same crew back that had shown to work out well in the past. This is in itself something largely positive since it has been shown that crews continuously serving together onboard the same ship are doing and performing better than those with high staff turnover (Pollard, Sussman, & Stearns, 1990), but should not be seen as a long-term solution to conflicts or communication problems. Although some of the participants had experience of times when such recruitment had been to their disadvantage, the main problem, although not to be underestimated, does not lie in unfair recruitment. Rather, it is because the root causes of underlying conflicts are deliberately not prioritised and thus not resolved, which does not guarantee that the problem will not arise again (Zahlquist et al., 2019; Zapf, o.a., 2020

Although many of the physical risks to seafarers have and are being followed up, the mental health of seafarers has not been mapped as much, which is primarily assumed to be due to sailors having to present approved health certificates in order to be employable (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). After all participants had described what it takes to obtain an approved health certificate and described their trust in them, it raises thoughts about how strong the correlation is between an approved health certificate and a healthy individual. On the one hand, only one question in the certificate concerns mental health, where the person is asked if they have previously been medicated for a mental illness, and on the other hand, no one knew what the consequence would be to tick in the affirmative on that question. Therefore, it was concluded that although someone ought to actually answer yes to that question, it is unlikely to happen for fear of not getting the health certificate approved and therefore no job. This shows once again that silence affects not only harassment but also other areas, based on fear of consequences (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020; Hershcovis et al., 2021; Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

As has been described in the past, cultures of silence are about the prevailing norm being that it is dangerous and it is not worth expressing problems (Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000) and that silence has more sides than just not talking or speaking up (Hershcovis, Vranjes, Berdahl, & Cortina, 2021). When all participants were asked if they thought that the jargon at sea could be a reason for high numbers of harassed or an obstacle to reporting, the perception was that the jargon might be perceived as harsh for someone who is not used to it, but that it has become much better, is not meant negatively and probably should not constitute an obstacle to reporting. These answers raise the question of how a jargon, which has improved, is not meant negatively and which probably should not be an obstacle, can be something that requires habituation before it stops being perceived as harsh? Especially when at the same time it was told that part of the fear of reporting lies in the fact that no one wants to make a name for themselves about being troublesome in an industry where everyone knows everyone and where some qualities that are appreciated are described as: not complaining, do not contradict, to carry out everything ordered without questioning, to know your place in the hierarchy, to be tough by enduring, to endure jokes, to deal with the fact that it is "högt i tak²" but certainly not "to take shit", "to snitch" or to be a "quisling" because that "is how we are", it may indicate that although the jargon may have improved, the norm seems to be that silence is strength, and that such norm is strong.

When it came to the hierarchy, it was given both negative and positive examples of it, where it was both cause for problems and conflicts, but also a safety and security when situations were dangerous. That the communication should be straightforward and clear and that the hierarchy of responsibilities must be clearly defined in an industry with many dangers (Forsell, 2018; Carter & Jepsen, 2014; Eriksson H., 2019) is perhaps necessary, but a tough industry does not necessarily have to be associated with "tough" communication (Ely & Meyerson, 2010). The problems with the hierarchy were not only concerning tough communication, but also about the difficult situations when the person meant to be recipient of claims of harassment is the harassing party (Hershcovis et al., 2021; Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2000), especially when it was stated that it is not always welcome to "skip" someone in order and ranking.

5.4 Improvements are already under way

As has already been pointed out, there are already several positive aspects of shipping that facilitate improvements. This is positive because any improvements introduced will not feel too unfamiliar in current existing practices, standards, and culture.

² A Swedish expression meaning in the likes of openminded atmosphere with freedom of speech were almost no topic is taboo or with no formal boundaries

When new standards and attitudes are to be introduced, this is easiest by introducing ones that are already perceived as legitimate, familiar or related to the existing (Cunningham, Drumwright, & Foster, 2019; Tankard & Paluck, 2016; Hershcovis, Vranjes, Berdahl, & Cortina, 2021) ones. In contrast, if new norms are perceived as too foreign or enforced, it can lead to attitude polarization, which can strengthen the opposing attitude, which in turn can lead to even less interest in change and, at worst, direct resistance or counter-work, especially when it comes to more sensitive issues such as harassment (Saguy & Szekeres, 2018). As mentioned, some answers in paragraph 5.2 gave reason to suspect that this might have happened in shipping, being a male-dominated workplace.

It should be emphasized that the participants' answers certainly do not indicate them being the problem, polarized, or dismissive, but merely that their answers highlight a potential norm that may be an obstacle. Rather, when it comes to the participants, it is concluded that they are individuals who can be part of the solutions, their participation being voluntary and since they took the time to discuss topics often preceded by silence (Carballo Piñeiro & Kitada, 2020; Hershcovis et al., 2021; Goodwin, Graham, & Diekmann, 2020).

In the context of *#MeToo* and *#LättaAnkar*, stories of abuse and harassment of many different individuals emerged, but most commonly women who had been harassed by men, which can lead to an overly simple conclusion that the problem behind harassment must be men. There is a risk that men who do not recognise themselves in the presented problems associated with *#MeToo* and *#LättaAnkar* will be able to more easily dismiss it and perhaps also be strengthened in the perception that it is not a problem that concerns them (Szekeres, Shuman, & Saguy, 2020; Kray, Howland, Russell, & Jackman, 2017). It is not just a question of not believing that harassment occurs, it may be enough to believe that the reports are exaggerated to be strengthened in an attitude polarization (Hershcovis, Vranjes, Berdahl, & Cortina, 2021). But polarization is much more than just an "attitude" and definitely about more than singling out men.

When polarized opinions and attitudes are given space, it can lead to silence and unwanted norms (Hershcovis, Vranjes, Berdahl, & Cortina, 2021) regardless of who stands for them. For starters, dismissing, trivializing, or invalidating emerging issues is one of the fundamentals to creating a culture of silence (Hershcovis, Vranjes, Berdahl, & Cortina, 2021) (Llorens, Navarro, Salas, Utzet, & Moncada, 2019). Furthermore, if a person with strong influence within the organization is allowed to dismiss harassment as a problem that affects other countries or that is related to the way it has been reported, that person gives legitimacy to the fact that it is permissible to dismiss harassment, which in turn will lead to the norm being that (Tankard & Paluck, 2016) "for us, harassment is not a problem, so we do not have to address that." (Cunningham, Drumwright, & Foster, 2019)

But why work against harassment if it does not occur? Why fix something that is not broken at all? Not only because the law requires it, but also because the risks of harassment and silence surrounding it are not only costly from a social perspective (Iversen, 2012; Blomberg & Rosander, 2019; Forsell et al., 2015) but also from an economic one (Maxfield, 2016; Maxfield, Grenny, Lavendero, & Groah, 2011; Skandia, 2019). Even where there is currently no harassment, there are risks that they may arise, such as in the presence of stress. Shipping involves many risks, not least stress (Carotenuto et al., 2012; Lefkowitz & Slade, 2019), which can be preceded by role conflicts and ambiguity about the roles (Zahlquist, Hetland, Skogstad, Bakker, & Einarsen, 2019; Rydstedt & Lundh, 2010), not only increasing the risk of taking the wrong decisions (Iversen, 2012) and health issues (Carotenuto et al., 2012), but also inciting

individuals more likely to act in a provocative way through harsh language, with less priority for conflict resolution, courtesy and kindness. This leaves room for unwanted behaviours (Zahlquist et al., 2019), such as polarized opinions but also the structures strengthening them (Cunningham, Drumwright, & Foster, 2019). So, when reports emerge about high levels of stress in the shipping industry, about adjustments of the reports of rest hours, incidents, and environmental requirements, and where discrepancies found during audits can lead to costly consequences or even the risk of being outcompeted, the question is rather whether the industry can afford not to.

Fortunately, the shipping industry has the advantage of already having a history about, and the habit, of repairing things that are not broken. Routines for periodic work, redundancy and maintenance of machines and systems, as well as preventive procedures such as fire drills, man-overboard and evacuation training, are not about repairing things that are broken, but about preparedness, managing possibilities and building knowledge if and when something actually do fail. Therefore, it is also not surprising when participants in this study, with many years in the industry, suggest that harassment should be treated as a safety risk, as they are used to working in a preventive way. As described in section 5.2, despite varied descriptions of what a favourable working environment is, most participants were well versed in SAM and its impact on their everyday lives (AFS 2001:1). For them are, among other things, risk assessments, accident prevention and analysis of incidents (SFS 2010:1225; SFS 1977:1160), not simply something continuous, it is in fact the norm. Even more beneficial is that the problems do not rely on individuals, relying instead in organizational factors (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2015) which can actually be controlled, whereas much of the work is already covered by SAM (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2001) , which in turn is already a natural part of the Swedish seafarer's everyday life, thus showing the most beneficial thing, namely that there are individuals in Swedish shipping who have constructive intentions towards the group and want to maintain positive and long-term relationships (Saguy & Szekeres, 2018), a prerequisite for changing norms.

Treating harassment as a security risk could also remove some of the focus on polarized views such as "equal treatment is about the girls versus the guys" or that it's "far too soft," to focus more on the issue, something that has been shown to work in the past (Ely & Meyerson, 2010) in an industry just as tough as shipping. It could also contribute to the development of clearer policies and action plans, together with the introduction of core values and guaranteed support for those who are denouncing or being victims of harassment, all of which proposed by the participants as well. Since it has been shown that companies with high safety considerations when it comes to the psychosocial work environment by adopting an active management strategy when conflicts and frustrations arise, have fewer incidents of bullying, it seems that clear guidelines help to put an end to unwanted behaviours at an early stage (Zahlquist et al., 2019).

Therefore, since some of the aforementioned barriers for reporting harassment seem to be based on ambiguity and individual solutions, it is appropriate to start by creating clear guidelines for what is expected of employees, centrally, preferably by senior management (Kaptein, 2008; Verhezen, 2010), if possible through codes of conduct. In this way, making sure the message is uniform and that it really conveys what the organization means and considers important, becomes easier. Similarly, it facilitates understanding of why action plans and policies are expected to be followed based on the core values of the Code of Conduct (Kaptein, 2008). The establishment of a Code of Conduct includes the work of updating, changing, or creating policies and action plans for the organisation that is committed to achieving effective and long-

term results, as this has proved to be what distinguishes the organisations that have succeeded best (Kaptein, 2008; Erwin, 2011). Updating and improving policies and codes is something that should be kept alive (Erwin, 2011), just like SAM, as it facilitates detection of what does not work or has become out of date.

Another thing associated with the companies that have succeeded best is that they invest resources in training their leaders and holding them accountable for compliance with the Code of Conduct (Kaptein, 2008). Why the organization's managers and leaders are as important components in the implementation of and compliance to Codes of Conduct as they are in regards to policies is because it is not enough to simply let employees know about the existence of the documents, but they must also know and understand in what way and how strongly these will be applied, of which well-trained leaders are essential for (Roehling, 2020). But well-educated leaders are much more than just means of communication, they are precedents for what behaviours should be the norm, not only through the legitimate power that comes with the position, but also through their actions (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). In addition, well-trained leaders who take their responsibilities seriously can even contribute to better health in managing and responding to conflicts and problems with integrity, compassion, and authenticity (Shuck et al., 2019). In order to act in this way, they need support, tools and resources, something that during the interviews seemed to be lacking to some extent. An example of a resource that exists but is not fully used are the occupational health care services, which most people had access to and considered good. Therefore, it was proposed, for example, to allow mental health experts or harassment experts to be more involved in education, partly because they are more familiar with topic and partly because their credibility may be considered more legitimate.

Most senior officers also told that they had good support and good cooperation with the land organization, which was something they valued, but it also emerged that none of the officers except for one, had ever been offered any kind of leadership training during their careers, in any shipping company they had worked or was working in. Although it was not something they felt was a need at present, three of the officers pointed out that it would have been useful for them if they had received it early in their careers. However, leadership training is something that concerns not only the shipping companies but also the schools that provide maritime management education, since none of the participants who remembered their leadership trainings considered them to be good. The most common criticism was that the trainings were too broad, vague, and impractical.

Given that the above views, combined with the fact that the current promotion system can suddenly make an individual responsible for personnel overnight, performance appraisal talks should perhaps be introduced, something that does not currently appear to exist. This could be positive, partly because it allows for conversations on more sensitive topics such as harassment, physical and mental health, and partly because it allows for evaluation of which parts individuals may need to strengthen with more training or practice regarding the next level of command. It could also provide individual measurable goal and thus easier oversight and follow-up of compliance with policies and the like.

Finally, when all the participants expressed their desire to do a good job and that everyone took their responsibilities seriously, if they are the least representative of Swedish shipping, it would be a waste of resources not to give them every opportunity to succeed in what the industry is aiming for, namely a world-class working environment (Svensk Sjöfart, 2019).

5.5 Methodological discussion

The validity of a study depends on how appropriate the methodological choice has been in relation to the question (Eriksson Torstensen & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1998). A study with high validity will be able to answer the question in an acceptable way and be able to be put in context to previous or similar studies (Thane, 2019). This is something that is easier to do in connection with quantitative studies, but with qualitative studies what is examined is not always measurable or possible to put in context to previous studies, since often subjective perceptions are examined, which is relevant in this work (Roberts, 2020), thus also concerning the reliability.

This means that there is a risk that someone who re-performs the study may have different results, since several of the questions put to the participants are based on their own experiences and opinions (Willig, 2013). Although thematic analysis involves a relatively simple approach, there are some potential pitfalls that should be avoided as data collection is encoded and grouped without an underlying analysis and instead becomes merely a set-up of certain words or themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To avoid this, a rough breakdown of which subject areas relevant to provide answers to the five themes was made, but also to limit the interviews from moving away from the subject (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The questions were tested on five different individuals who were also allowed to come up with criticisms and ideas regarding the questions. The way the questions were tested was that they were not asked to answer them, but instead to reproduce in their own words what they perceived to be asked. In this way, it was ensured that the formulations were clear and kept to the subject requested to facilitate later analysis but also to clarify what was asked about for those wishing repeat the same study (Roberts, 2020).

Another difficulty is to assume instead that the answers to the interview questions are the themes identified and not what the interviewees actually say (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Therefore, the answers were summarized to as few words as possible in an attempt to find the very essence of what was said and the quotes were chosen after themes were found (McIntosh & Morse, 2015).

Where themes and codes occur so rarely that they do not really serve as a basis for analysis, the analysis risks becoming too weak (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As a result, although the restriction was first to perform ten interviews, it was changed to two more interviews after they had been conducted to see if these two would provide the same themes (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The idea was that if the two extra interviews had produced completely different results, two more would have been added and so on. In connection with the two additional interviews, the same themes were shown to recur. However, what may have the greatest impact on the results is that all participants were volunteers, which means that they are individuals who are already interested in the subject. The question is whether the same themes would have emerged if the participants had been randomly selected from the same industry.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this work was to investigate what obstacles there could be to reporting harassment and abusive discrimination and whether something could facilitate its handling and reporting.

The results showed that the obstacles lie in the lack of transparency and clarity in what is expected of policies and action plans, regardless of the good will. There is also a lack of dissemination in what the purpose is. These conclusions are based on the fact that, despite good conditions, the information provided by shipping companies does not seem to reach all parts of

the organisation when it comes to reporting harassment. This is evident, for example, when some shipping companies have introduced opportunities to report incidents anonymously but that this possibility is not used, because it is unclear who receives such a report, whether it is really anonymous and what happens after a report. Another example is equality training, which is considered good but cannot be followed up or assessed by the officers. In other words, more robust systems are missing.

At the same time, however, there are good conditions to build on and complement the current systems to facilitate harassment management. The improvements proposed can be divided into two major categories: that the organizations should centrally clarify what is meant by harassment and violations and how they should be handled, and that organizations can make more use of three existing tools, namely SAM, occupational health care services, as well as managers and leaders.

6.1 Recommendations for further research

Some thoughts that emerged during the work were that during the search for references it was difficult to find information about organizational, internal, intercultural, and strategic communication in the maritime segment unless it was about contact with stakeholders. It was also difficult to find studies on leadership at sea and what it means in relation to being in command of mixed crews. Therefore, these areas may be of interest for the future.

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APPENDIX 1-MAILINGS IN SWEDISH

Om studien

Finns det något som gör det lättare?

Åtgärder för att komma åt trakasserier till sjöss

Hej!

Jag heter Maria Montenegro och läser sista året på sjöingenjörsprogrammet på Chalmers. Det är dags för oss att skriva examensarbete och därför vänder jag mig till dig eftersom jag vill veta vad just du tycker. Nedan kan du läsa bakgrunden till mitt ämnesval samt syfte.

Bakgrund

Psykosocial ohälsa är idag ett globalt samhällsproblem (Hupke, u.d.; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Brister i den psykosociala arbetsmiljön och förhållanden är en av orsakerna till att många mår dåligt och forskning visar att detta problem är ungefär dubbelt så vanligt i sjöfarten jämfört med landbaserade yrken. I oktober 2019 presenterade Yales Universitet (Lefkowitz et al, 2019) en studie där 1500 sjömän med olika bakgrund och befattning tillfrågades om sin psykiska hälsa ombord. Resultaten visade att var fjärde sjöman var deprimerad och var femte hade självmordstankar. Några av orsakerna till att sjömän mår dåligt kan enligt studien från Yale vara brist på lämplig utbildning för sin roll, känslan att sakna kontroll och inflytande eller att arbetet inte känns tillfredställande. Känslan att ingen bryr sig samt att få utstå våld eller hot om våld angavs också som orsaker, varav det sistnämnda står i direkt relation till depression, ångest och självmordstankar.

De problem som presenterades i ovan nämnda studie är något branschen har försökt komma till rätta med. Bland annat har SEKO sjöfolk satsat sedan år 2018 på att undersöka och revidera en handlingsplan för jämställdhet som ska kunna ge en tryggare arbetsmiljö där den psykosociala miljön står i fokus (Handlingsplan för jämställd representation 2020, u.d.). Studien som ligger till grund för revideringen visade att några av de hinder som finns för att lösa problemen kring psykosociala arbetsmiljön är den kultur och jargong ombord som råder i anknytning till trakasserier (Handlingsplan för jämställd representation 2020, u.d.). Undersökningen visade att trots att en stor del av de tillfrågade varit med om att trakasserier förekommit, så har de varken blivit rapporterade eller åtgärdade.

År 2015 genomfördes en enkätstudie som syftade till att undersöka arbetsmiljön och säkerheten på svenska fartyg (Forsell, Eriksson, Järvholm, Lundh, & Nilsson, 2015). Ett av resultaten i undersökningen visade att trakasserier och kränkande särbehandling ombord var ungefär dubbelt så vanligt som iland. Uppsatsen "En sjöman är alltid en sjöman"- Kränkningar och trakasserier bland sjömän på svenska fartyg, utförd en uppföljande intervjustudie för att förstå vad som låg bakom dessa resultat (Hodge, E, och Widerström, E. 2017). Denna studie visade att trakasserier ofta förekommer till sjöss, rapporteras i lägre utsträckning av personal till sjöss än till land och att det sker i alla led, horisontellt och vertikalt. Detta är detta inte något specifikt för en särskild grupp ombord utan förekommer generellt. Resultatet visade några olika anledningar till att trakasserier kan förekomma. samt varför de inte rapporteras vidare, men drar inga generella slutsatser. De som blev intervjuade verkade vara medvetna om vad som kan klassas för trakasserier, många hade själva upplevt dem. Trots detta hade de ändå inte valt att gå vidare vilket leder till funderingar kring vilka orsaker det finns till att rapportering inte sker. I Sverige regleras kunskapskrav, mål, arbetsbelastning, arbetstid och kränkande särbehandling sedan mars 2016 i föreskrifterna om organisatorisk och social arbetsmiljö (AFS 2015:4) Föreskrifterna är anpassade till dagens arbetsliv och förtydligar vad arbetsgivare och arbetstagare ska göra inom ramen för det systematiska arbetsmiljöarbetet som alla arbetsgivare

har ansvar för. Det är arbetsgivarens ansvar klargöra att kränkande särbehandling inte accepteras och bör uttryckas inom ramen för den arbetsmiljöpolicy som ska finnas enligt lag. Därför behöver arbetet mot trakasserier börja uppifrån genom organisationens policys och tydliga riktlinjer som inkluderar den anställdes ansvar för att följa och arbeta aktivt för att förebygga och förhindra kränkande särbehandling.

Med tanke på vad lagen säger och att ovan nämnda studier visar att trakasserier och kränkande särbehandling är närvarande ombord och ett stort problem som riskerar orsaka psykisk ohälsa, verkar det finnas ett mörkertal. Utsatta tvekar att rapportera och hantera uppkomna problem och frågan är vad är det för barriärer eller hinder som omöjliggör rapportering av trakasserier trots att det är en orsak till psykisk ohälsa. Tidigare forskning visar också att trots att incidenter har rapporterats så har åtgärder uteblivit, alternativt att de utsatta upplever att åtgärder har uteblivit (Forsell, Eriksson, Järholm, Lundh, & Nilsson, 2015).

1.1 Syfte

Syftet med detta arbete är att undersöka vad det är som hindrar en ombordanställd från att rapportera trakasserier och kränkande särbehandling samt vilket stöd befäl i arbetsledande befattning behöver för att hantera incidenter som omfattar trakasserier och kränkande särbehandling på arbetsplatsen, vilka barriärer är närvarande samt om finns det något som skulle kunna underlätta hantering och rapportering.

1.2 Frågeställning

- Vad är tillvägagångssättet för att ombordanställda ska kunna rapportera trakasserier?
- Vad är det som skulle kunna hindra ombordanställda att rapportera och/eller gå vidare med trakasserier?
- Vad behöver kompletteras för att rapportering och åtgärder ska kunna ske lättare?

Vad som gäller för din medverkan kan du läsa om i nästa sida.

Tack för att du tagit dig tid att läsa detta och jag hoppas att jag får intervjua dig!

Medverkan

Innan vi ber om din medverkan vill vi informera om vilka **etiska regler** som gäller i projektet.

1. Ditt deltagande är frivilligt och du har när som helst under projektets gång möjlighet att avbryta din medverkan. Du behöver inte redovisa något skäl för detta. Skulle du välja att avbryta din medverkan kommer data kopplad till dig att lyftas bort och materialet förstöras.
2. Du garanteras anonymitet i projektet och data som kommer fram kommer att redovisas utan koppling till fartyg, person eller rederi. Dina uppgifter kommer att koda och kodnyckeln kommer att förvaras så att endast forskaren har tillgång till dessa uppgifter. Denna kodning är till för att göra det möjligt att kontakta försökspersonen för eventuella kompletterande uppgifter samt för att kunna identifiera att rätt material förstörs om du väljer att hoppa av studien.
3. Data som kommer fram i projektet kommer att redovisas i rapporter, på seminarier och konferenser. Om du så önskar så har du möjlighet att läsa och godkänna materialet innan det publiceras.

Om du vill ha mera information om projektet, är du välkommen att kontakta Monica Lundh från Institutionen mekanik och maritima vetenskaper vid Chalmers på 031 – 772 60 61 eller via e-post monica.lundh@chalmers.se.

- Jag har tagit del av ovanstående information och väljer att delta i projektet.
- Jag godkänner att intervjun spelas in i analysyfte.

| | |
|------------------------------|--------|
| Ort: | Datum: |
| Underskrift. | |
| Namnförtydligande: | |
| Kontaktuppgifter: FRIVILLIGT | |

APPENDIX 2-MAILINGS IN ENGLISH

About this study

Is there a simpler way?

Measures to deal with harassment at sea

Hello!

My name is Maria Montenegro, and I am on my final year to become a marine engineer at Chalmers university of technology. I am writing my bachelor thesis now which is the reason I turn to you, since I want your opinions and ideas for the thesis. Below you will find the background and aim of my study.

Background

Deficiencies in the psychosocial work environment and conditions are among of the reasons that lead up to mental ill-health and is a global issue nowadays. Research shows that this problem is about twice as common in the shipping industry compared to land-based occupations. In October 2019, Yale University (Lefkowitz et al, 2019) presented a study in which 1 500 seafarers from different backgrounds and positions were asked about their mental health onboard. The results showed that every fourth seafarer was depressed and every fifth had suicidal thoughts. According to the Yale study, some of the reasons to why seafarers feel bad may be a lack of appropriate training for their role, the feeling of lacking control and influence or that the work does not feel satisfactory. Feeling neglected together with enduring violence or threats of violence were stated as causes directly related to depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts.

The issues presented in the above study are something the industry has tried to remedy. Among other things, the Swedish service and communication union (SEKO) have since 2018 been devoted in investigating and revising an action plan for gender equality, focusing on the psychosocial environment with the purpose to provide a safer work environment for their members, of which seafarers are included. (Handlingsplan för jämställd representation 2020, etc.). The survey which the revision of the action plan is based upon, showed that some of the existing obstacles to overcome surrounding the psychosocial work environment are related to the culture and jargon that exists onboard in connection with harassment (Handlingsplan för jämställd representation 2020, etc.). The study showed that even though a large proportion of the participants had experienced harassment, they have neither been reported nor remedied.

In 2015, a survey was conducted aimed at examining the working environment and safety of Swedish ships (Forsell, Eriksson, Järholm, Lundh, & Nilsson, 2015). One of the results of the survey showed that harassment and abusive discrimination onboard were about twice as common as ashore. The essay “En sjöman är alltid en sjöman - Kränkningar och trakasserier bland sjömän på svenska fartyg” conducted a follow-up interview study to understand what laid behind these results (Hodge, E, and Widerström, E. 2017). This study showed that harassment often occurs at sea, is reported to a lesser extent by staff at sea than on land and that it occurs at all levels, horizontally as well as vertically, meaning that it is not something that explicitly targets a specific group but occurs in general onboard. The results linked a few different reasons why harassment can occur and why they are not reported further, but do not draw any general conclusions. Those who were interviewed seemed to be aware of what can be classified as harassment, many had experienced it them themselves. Despite this, they still had chosen not to take the issue further (Hodge, E, and Widerström, E. 2017).

In Sweden, knowledge requirements, goals, workload, working hours and abusive discrimination have been regulated since March 2016 in the laws and regulations concerning

the organizational and social work environment which all employers are responsible for (AFS 2015: 4). It is the employer's responsibility to clarify that abusive discrimination is not accepted and should be expressed within the framework of the work environment policy that must exist in accordance with law. Therefore, the work against harassment needs to start from the top of an organization through clear policies and guidelines, including the employee's responsibility to follow and actively take steps to prevent and deter abusive discrimination.

Considering what Swedish work laws mandate and that the above-mentioned studies show that harassment and abusive discrimination are present onboard there seems to be dark numbers. Vulnerable individuals hesitate to report and deal with problems that have arisen. Previous research also shows that although incidents have been reported, measures have not been taken, or alternatively that the exposed feel that measures have not been taken (Forsell, Eriksson, Järholm, Lundh, & Nilsson, 2015). This leads to queries regarding what barriers or obstacles there are present, making it impossible to report or deal with harassment, despite the fact it is not only a potential cause of mental illness such as anxiety, depression, and suicide in the worst-case scenario but also a subject stipulated by Swedish law to address.

1.1 Aim of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate what prevents an onboard employee from reporting harassment and abusive discrimination, what kind of support officers in senior management need in order to deal with incidents involving harassment and abusive discrimination in the workplace, what barriers are present and whether there are measures that could facilitate handling and reporting.

1.2 Research questions

- What procedures for onboard employees are there when it comes to reporting harassment and abusive discrimination?
- What could prevent onboard employees from reporting and / or proceeding with harassment and abusive discrimination issues?
- What needs to be added or complemented to facilitate reporting and counter measures?

If you would like to partake in this study, please read about what rules applies to your participation in the following page.

Thank you for reading and I hope I get the opportunity to interview you!

Participation

Before we ask for your participation, we would like to inform you about the ethical rules that apply in the project.

1. Your participation is voluntary, and you have the opportunity to cancel your participation at any time during the project. You do not have to state any reason for doing so. Should you choose to cancel your participation, data linked to you will be disregarded from the study and the material will be destroyed.
2. You are guaranteed anonymity in the project and emerging data will be reported without connection to ship, person, or shipping company. Your data will be coded, and the code key will be accessed and known by the researcher only. This coding will enable the possibility to contact the subject for any additional information, as well as identification of data linked to you in order to destroy it would you choose to withdraw your participation in the study.
3. Emerging data in the project will be presented in reports, at seminars and conferences. If you so wish, you can read and approve the material before it is published.

For additional information about the project, feel free to contact Monica Lundh from the Department of Mechanics and Maritime Sciences at Chalmers university of technology, by calling 031 – 772 60 61 or by email: monica.lundh@chalmers.se.

- I have read the above information and choose to participate in the project
 I agree to the interview being recorded for analytical purposes

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Place: | Date: |
| Signature: | |
| Name in block letters: | |
| Contact information: VOLUNTARY | |

APPENDIX 3 - INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Background / position

- What is your working position?
- How long have you been at sea?
- How do you work? Different shifts or passes? Free onboard / working every day, change of day etc.
- How large is your crew?
- How would you describe the atmosphere onboard? What makes it so? 2, 3
- What are the groups (machine, deck, stewardship) that work onboard your ship?
- Are there different nationalities onboard? How would you describe the collaboration between them? 2, 3, 5
- Why did you want to become a seafarer? 2
- Would you recommend anyone else to become a seafarer? 2
- What would you highlight? Are there any disadvantages to being a seafarer? 2, 3
- Where did you go to school?
- Do you think that your education gave you the right requirements for the profession? 1, 2, 3
- How was your on-board internship as a cadet? 3
- How were you treated as a cadet? Do you think other students are treated the same? 3
- Are you being treated differently now? How? 3

Health / work environment

- What defines a good work environment for you? Why? 2, 3, 5
- What do you think is meant by: The “Work Environment Act: prevent ill health / accidents at work + achieve a consistently good work environment, where there is room for rich work content, job satisfaction, community and personal development” (SFS 1997: 1160; SFS 1994: 579; SFS 2003: 365)? 2, 3, 5
- How prioritized do you think the work environment is onboard? (in what way / based on?) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Is this an important issue for you? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- How do you work with SAM? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Do you have external controls? 4, 5
- What is controlled then? 4, 5
- How do you prepare for those checks? 4, 5
- Is the work environment included in the controls? If yes, describe what is checked 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Is it common to also check the work environment? Should that be the case? 4, 5
If so, what should be included? Who would perform?
- What do you think is required to feel good psychosocially at work? 2, 3, 5
(the impact of social conditions on our mental lives)
- Who is responsible for a good psychosocial work environment? 2, 3, 5
- As for the psychosocial work environment, do you consider it to be as relevant as the physical work environment?
(Why / Why not?) 2, 3, 5
- Do you have occupational health care services? What is included in it? 1,4,5
- How does it work with certificates that need to be renewed? Is it the company that reminds or is it you who keeps track of it? Do you think the current way works well? 1, 2, 3

- When it comes to health checks, how often do you have to do them? 1,4,5
- Where do you do the health checks? Do you choose yourself? 1, 2, 3
- What is checked at the health checks? 4, 5
(Cardiovascular diseases, diabetes etc. / depression, anxiety etc.)
- Do you think that the health checks are good / relevant? Would you change anything? 4, 5
- Have you ever been asked if you consider yourself mentally fit for work? 4, 5
If so, by whom and in what context? What did you think of the question?
If not, would you appreciate it?
- Have you ever been asked how you feel mentally? 4, 5
If so, by whom and in what context? What did you think of the question?
If not, would you appreciate it?
- What do you think happens if you say that you are mentally ill? 4, 5
- Are control issues about mental well-being something that you think is missing? (Why / Why not?)
- Do you think it is needed in general? (Why / Why not?) 4, 5
- Do you think this issue is important? (Why / Why not?)

Policies / reporting

- What do you consider to be violations and harassment? 1, 4, 5
- Do you know what the law says about harassment / discrimination? 4, 5
- Does your shipping company have any training in equal treatment / harassment / mental illnesses? 1, 2, 4, 5
If so, why do you think they have it?
- Do you know if there is a code of conduct? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
If so, what does it say and where is it?
If not, do you think is it needed?
- Do you know what policies and action plans exists within your organization against harassment and discrimination? 1,2, 4, 5
If so, how did you get access / knowledge about them?
If not, do you think it is needed? Why?
- Do you remember what it says about harassment and discrimination in them? 1, 2, 4, 5
- Is there a requirement for you to read them? (what, how often, whose requirements?)
If no and the person has still read policies, why did they read it voluntarily? Should it be required? Why, why not?
If no and the person did not read policies, why not? Do you think that requirements are needed? Why, why not?
- Do you have meetings? Forums? Talks? (about above mentioned issues) 4, 5
- Do you think that your policies / training / action plans are good? Why, why not? 2, 4, 5
If this does not exist, describe a good policy / education / action plan.
- Do you think they are practical / functional / applicable? (Why / Why not?) 2, 4, 5
If this does not exist, describe what would make your described policy etc. practical / functional.
- Do you think that something should be changed in your action plans / policies etc.? What?
- What would you do in the event of harassment? Do you think others know?
If the person does not know, what would he do if he were theoretically harassed?
- Is there an external person to be contacted if a situation arises that no one takes care of onboard? 1,2,4,5

What do you think about it and why?

If not, is it needed and why?

- Whose power do you think it is to issue warnings or pass on harassment? Is that so now? 1,2, 4, 5
- Whose responsibility do you think it is to convey that "this is how we behave; this is our backing"? Is that so now? 1,2,4,5
- Have you ever received information that there has been harassment at any time? 1,2,3
If yes, by whom / what circumstances?
- Have you yourself been harassed / violated / discriminated against? 1, 2, 3
(if yes, ask about how reporting / solution went)
- Have you seen anyone else be harassed / offended / discriminated against? 1, 2, 3
(if yes, ask about how reporting / solution went)
- Do you think there are problems with harassment in Swedish shipping? 3
- Do you think it is more widespread at sea than on land? 2, 3

After reading statistics:

- Does this information match your own experiences? Why, why not? 2,3
If so, how come you had that information?
If not, how do you think these figures came about / calculated / based on? 2, 4, 5
- How do you think such situations can arise? 3
- Can there be anything in the seafaring profession that can make harassment more common? The culture? Jargons? 3
- What do you think makes people silent? (general) 2, 3
- Why do you think people keep quiet about bullying, harassment, etc.? 2, 3
If the person does not know: what would stop you from saying something if you were theoretically harassed?
- Do you think it would make a difference if there was more education around it? 4, 5
If so, what? Why?
If not, why not?
- How do you resolve conflicts onboard? Is it standard? 3, 4, 5
- What do you think makes you dare to tackle conflicts? 4, 5
- What do you think would make it easier for employees to dare to deal with conflicts with you? With others? 3, 4, 5
- If you could get exactly what you want, how would you solve harassment / silence / work environment problems? What would you ask your shipping company to do? Occupational health? The schools? 4,

Leadership

- How does your company handle recruitment? 1, 3, 5
- How were you recruited / employed? 1, 3, 5
- What do you think about the recruitment for positions of responsibility? 1, 3, 5
- (if the participant has personnel responsibilities: did you feel that you had the right personnel responsibility training when you received it?) 2, 3, 5
If not, what was missing / what do you wish you had known?
- (Without personnel responsibilities, how does the collaboration with your managers work? Why? Is there something you are missing?) 2, 3, 5
- Do you remember your leadership training during your studies? 1, 3, 5
If so, was it good? Why, why not?
If the participant does not have any such training, do you wish you could? 1, 3, 5
- Do you think that leadership training should be included in maritime studies? 4, 5
If so, what should they bring up?
if not, why not?
- If offered now, would you attend a leadership training course? 4, 5
- Are there further training opportunities at your company in any subject? 4, 5
- Would you ask for more leadership training yourself? 4, 5
- Would you like to be offered more education in any other topic? 4, 5
- Do you have follow-up meetings? Would you change that in any way? 3, 4, 5
- Did you get an education in school about harassment etc.? 3, 4, 5
- Do you think it should be included in maritime studies? 3, 4, 5

APPENDIX 4 - CITED STATISTICS DURING INTERVIEW

Sea: In a study from 2015, 24 percent of the surveyed seafarers stated that they had been subjected to abusive acts or harassment at some point in recent months, of which:

- (Women / men - 45 % / 22 %)
- (Manager (49%), employee (34%), passenger (9%) someone else (8%))

(Forsell, Eriksson, Järholm, Lundh, & Nilsson, 2015)

Land: About 1 percent of men and 4 percent of women had in 2017 been subjected to sexual harassment from bosses or co-workers during the past 12-month period. About 6 percent from people other than managers and co-workers at least once in the last 12-month period where:

- (Women / men aged 16–29 with 25 % / 4 %)
- Women / men aged 30–29 with 9 % / 2 %
- Women / men aged 50–64 with 4 % / [unknown]

(Arbetsmiljöverket, 2018))

Sea: In 2019, 22 percent of surveyed seafarers stated the same (Ekeström & Persson, 2019), 2019). According to the survey, it is most common for violations to come from a manager or supervisor, followed by colleagues (Ekeström & Persson, 2019). The analysis indicates that abusive acts and harassment at sea are more common, among both women and men, compared with the labour market as a whole (Ekeström & Persson, 2019).

For support on follow-up questions:

A few work environment factors that studies have shown may generate the increased risk of being subjected to violations / harassment onboard:

- different standards
- jargon
- an isolated work environment
- that seafarers are away for extended periods
- international crew
- hierarchically structured organization
- clear positions of power and subgroups

(Hodge & Widerström, 2017)

If needed about international statistics: The incidence of violations / harassment in workplaces in Europe usually ends up between 10–20 percent (Hodge & Widerström, 2017).

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