

## Comparative Study Report On the Influencing Factors of the Psychological Status of the Seafarers in China and Japan

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**Keywords:** Cultural background, economic differences, hull facilities, social status, marriage and children

**Abstract:** With China's accession to the WTO, the trade volume on the Sino-Japanese route has been increasing, and the frequent maritime economic activities between China and Japan have led to a certain development of the seafarer's career. At the same time, the psychological status of seafarers has also received much attention. This article aims to study the influencing factors of the psychological status of Chinese and Japanese seafarers on the Sino-Japanese route from the perspective of cultural background, economic differences, hull facilities, and social status.

### 1. The difference between the ship facilities of the two countries on the Sino-Japanese route

#### 1.1 Main ship types on the Sino-Japanese route

The ship types on the Sino-Japanese route are mainly container ships, bulk carriers and oil tankers. Since the Sino-Japanese route is for offshore navigation, the tonnage of ships is much smaller than that of ocean-going ships. The ship sizes of China on the Sino-Japanese route are as follows:

Bulk carrier: 80 ~ 140m

Container ship: 80 ~ 140m

The sizes of Japanese ships on the China-Japan route are as follows:

Bulk carrier: 80 ~ 100

Container ship: 100

#### 1.2 Comparison of working and living facilities on ships of China-Japan routes

##### 1.2.1 Comparison of working facilities between the two countries

Based on meeting IMO regulations and meeting navigation requirements, both countries are saving equipment costs as much as possible. The advantage of Japan over the country is that the improvement of some navigation equipment, especially the compass, is better than the domestic. The highly integrated circuit makes the compass greatly reduce the work pressure of the crew during maintenance. The advantage of our country is that although the domestically produced equipment cannot reach the export level in technology, its price is lower than that of the equipment made in Japan, and it can minimize the cost of the ship while meeting the demand for navigation.

##### 1.2.2 Living and entertainment facilities:

At present, most domestic bulk carriers and container ship crews on the China-Japan route use a multi-person one-room system, and a few adopt a one-person one-room system. However, Japanese ships do better in this respect, most of which are single rooms or double room. The main entertainment methods on board are: fitness, reading, chess cards and so on. With the development of information technology, the online life of seafarers has also been guaranteed to a certain extent. Domestic shipping companies generally have more stringent traffic requirements. At present, seafarers only have about 200mb of 2G traffic for one month to communicate with land. Tariff prices are relatively high, so although the crew's online life can be guaranteed on a basic level, it is not very

rich, at most limited to textual contact with family members. [2]

## **2. Comparison of economic differences between crew members on Sino-Japanese routes**

### **2.1 Income level**

#### **2.1.1 Chinese crew income**

According to the different grades and types of ships, the salaries of crew members are different. For cargo and tankers, the salaries of crew members are also higher. According to the 2020 International Marine Salary Table, the income of the second mate and second engineer is around 2700 dollars to 3500 dollars per month, and the income of the third mate and third engineer is around 2200 dollars to 2700 dollars per month. In general, the income of our seafarers is around the upper middle level of our country, and there is a certain guarantee in terms of economic income. [3]

#### **2.1.2 Japanese crew income**

The annual salary of Japanese second-class sailors is about 6 million yen to 8 million yen, and the salary of third-class sailors is about 5 million yen to 6 million yen. At the same time, in addition to the basic salary, the Japanese crew will also receive other allowances such as food allowance, family allowance, and overtime allowance.

On the whole, the income of seafarers in China and Japan is higher than the regional average income, which is at the upper middle level of the national income. The salary is relatively considerable, and the material life is guaranteed.

## **3. Cultural background**

### **3.1 Marine belief culture**

China sits on land, facing the sea on both sides. Since ancient times, the most important belief in Poseidon in China is the Dragon King and the Mazu. Diversity of sea god worship is a distinctive feature of China's marine beliefs. Nowadays, after the great development of navigation, the strong support of the state is the strongest belief in the hearts of seafarers. [5]

Looking at Japan, the country has a small territory and is surrounded by the sea. According to the records of "Manyoshu" and ancient history book "Nihonsyoki", the top of the ocean belief is the goddess of the East China Sea-Tianzhao Great God. Among the fishermen, the sentence of "avalokitesvara is the goddess of the East China Sea" is widely circulated. After modern times, Japan established the Seafarers 'Jewelry Association in 1880, dedicated to the welfare of Japanese seafarers, and the marine culture atmosphere became stronger.

### **3.2 Seafarer education**

Statistics show that under the same graduation situation, Chinese seafarer graduates will face more severe competition. At the same time, compared with Japan, China's seafarers' education is generally low, and the level of teachers in domestic nautical colleges is also relatively low. As a result, the communication of our seafarers to the outside is hindered to a certain extent, which affects the enthusiasm of work and is prone to loneliness, sadness and depression.

On the other hand, Chinese shipping companies use maritime college graduates to directly take over the positions of ordinary seafarers, causing a certain waste of high-quality seafarers. The Japanese maritime education system is more complete and advanced. Shipping companies independently develop seafarer training according to their needs and train high-quality talents more suitable for their positions.

## **4. Social environment**

### **4.1. Social insurance**

In China, most expatriate companies will not consciously pay their employees' pensions. At the

same time, China's legislation on work-related injury insurance for seafarers is still a blank.

On the Japanese side, seafarers' pension insurance has been incorporated into the two laws of the National Pension Law and the Pension Law. In addition, Japan's "Crew Health Insurance Law" has made detailed provisions on the crew's work injury insurance. In addition, some private seafarers' associations, such as the "All Japan Seafarers' Association", will also provide support to the crew in all aspects. In addition to the insurance related to the job, the crew also has various allowances available outside the occupation. There are nearly thirty kinds including production allowance, death and funeral expenses, injury hospitalization allowance, nutritional expenses, etc.

#### **4.2 Vacation time**

Taking the China-Japan-Korea route as an example, the length of the voyage depends on the ship type, the number and distance of ports of call, also depends on the specific conditions of the voyage. The company will arrange paid vacation after the end of a voyage.

The current crew working system in China is an internationally accepted standard. Each senior crew member works 4 hours a day and rests for 8 hours. The dispatched crew will arrange the rest time for each trip.

The working hours of Japanese crew members are also the internationally accepted "4 + 8" standard. For example, Japan Zhenghe Steamboat Co. Ltd.'s vacation time is: "Work 40 hours a week, paid leave of 24 days a year, and 96 days of land leave a year."

#### **4.3 Marriage and family**

In China, although the income of senior crew members is not low, many women will refuse to enter the marriage with the crew because they cannot accompany their families for a long time. Secondly, the seafarer's information was blocked during the ship. After disembarking, it was often difficult to have a common language with their wives, so the divorce rate of seafarers also remained high.

Choosing a spouse for a Japanese crew is still a problem, but the spouse of a seafarer can receive welfare subsidies from the government and trade union organizations. The National Japan Sea Women Association will also organize regular events. It can be said that the family members of the Japanese crew enjoy special protection from the government and society.

### **5. Conclusion**

This article elaborates on various factors such as the salary and benefits, insurance benefits, working environment, and social environment of seafarers in the two countries, and makes a comparison. Objectively demonstrated the advantages and disadvantages of seafarers of the two countries.

It can be seen from the above that in terms of salary, the income of seafarers of the two countries is higher than that of the land job of the relative level, but the low salary and various insurance costs during the low-pay vacations are not as impressive as the salary of the crew; Japan's policy on signing is more flexible than in China, and the vacation time is longer. In terms of promotion assessment, Japan's assessment method is more complicated than in China, but the sea age required for the promotion of senior seafarers is shorter than that in China. By comparison, this article objectively shows the advantages and shortcomings of the seafarers of the two countries and the impact of relevant policies on seafarers' work, which truly reflects the current status and characteristics of the work and life of seafarers on the Sino-Japanese route.

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