



Developing Occupational Health and Safety of Taxi Drivers in Hel- sinki

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Occupational health and safety of taxi drivers has always been a major concern for taxi companies. Similarly, drivers of a taxi company based in Helsinki also faced physical health issues like neck, shoulders, and back pain. Secondly, lack of motivation to work. Thus, the aim of the research was to gain insights from the taxi drivers about their health and safety problems. Especially, what are the effects of amendments of the law governing the operations of taxis in Finland since 1st of July 2018, on the health and safety of taxi drivers. The objective of the research was also to detail the duties and responsibilities of taxi drivers in Helsinki region to ensure their own health and their surroundings. The results of the research will be implemented in the case company to eliminate or reduce the risks. Also, it will be a guidebook for other taxi drivers to ensure their health, well-being, and safety at work.

The research consists of five qualitative interviews, a quantitative questionnaire survey of fifty taxi drivers and two expert opinions. A questionnaire survey was carried out among taxi drivers in Helsinki to identify work related accidents that are likely to increase the risk of neck, shoulder, and back pain. The expert opinion was taken to find the possible solution of this research problem. It was analysed that excessive workload, driving hours beyond limits and unhealthy eating habits with little exercises were the main reasons. It was noticed that new self-employed taxi drivers with no occupational health care doctor are at higher risks. Secondly, lack of motivation to work, anxiety and depression were directly related to the deregulation of taxi sector reforms and introduction of competitive market to heavily regulated industry. The research revealed that taxi drivers have an elevated risk of neck, shoulder, and back pain because of improper sitting position and no movement during work.

It has been recommended to the case company to have occupational health care doctor because the cost of employee's sick leave payment is more than the expenses of occupational health care doctor. Secondly, balanced diet, exercise, improving area knowledge and language skills is required. Besides the case company, the study has relevance to other taxi companies operating in Helsinki region. The study has also recommendations for legislative body. because deregulation of taxi reforms is one of the reasons behind lack of motivation to work, anxiety and depression of case company drivers and other taxi drivers in Helsinki region.

Keywords: Occupational Health and Safety, Taxi Drivers

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List of Abbreviations

SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
Oy	Osakeyhtiö (Limited Liability Company)
TRAFICOM	Finnish Transport and Communication Agency
TE-palvelut	Public employment and business services
MSDs	Musculoskeletal disorders
EU-OSHA	European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

1 Introduction

Taxi industry plays an important role in public transport system of Helsinki region and carry thousands of passengers each day. This research will identify the most common accidents and injuries faced by taxi drivers in Helsinki. It will also outline the current occupational health and safety concerns of taxi drivers in Helsinki metropolitan area i.e. Helsinki, Espoo, and Vantaa. It also details the duties and responsibilities of taxi drivers to ensure their own health and their surroundings. The result of this research will indicate how to eliminate or reduce the risks faced by taxi drivers to ensure their health and well-being. This research will be guidebook for taxi drivers to make their occupational health and safety better. The research will analyse the current health and safety practices of the case company. It will suggest policy which the case company and other taxi companies and drivers can adopt to ensure occupational health and safety. The research will collect data using semi-structured interviews, surveys, and expert interviews. This data will be analysed and compared to suggest possible improvements for the development of occupational health and safety in the case company.

1.1 List of important definitions, terms and terminologies

Risk: Dijk, Varekamp, Radon and Parra (2011) describe a risk is the chance, high or low, that people or the environment will be harmed by a hazard.

Hazard: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that a hazard is a situation or behaviour that has the potential to cause harm, injury, ill-health or damage to property and the environment.

Accident: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that an accident is a sudden event that may result in illness or injury.

Exposure: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that an exposure is a particular risk factor experienced by the worker, with the specific modifying factors of intensity, time characteristics and duration.

Disaster: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that a disaster is a catastrophic event that overwhelms the capabilities of an organization.

Incident: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that an incident is an unwanted event which, in different circumstances, could have resulted in harm to people, damage to property or loss to a process.

Mitigation: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that mitigation is to moderate (a quality or condition) in force or intensity, alleviate, to become milder.

Disability injury: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that disability injury is an injury that prevents a person from coming to work or doing his or her usual job duties.

Best Practice: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that best practice is a way of delivering risk control practices which have been recognized by an authoritative body as cooperating with the law.

Musculoskeletal disorder: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that Musculoskeletal disorders are disorders of the muscles, joints, tendons, ligaments, bones and nerves. Most work-related MSDs develop over time and are caused or exacerbated by the work itself and/or by the working environment, especially by using force, repetition of movements, awkward posture, or vibration. MSDs affect the back, neck, shoulders, upper and lower limbs. Health problems range from discomfort, minor aches and pains to more serious medical conditions requiring time off work and medical treatment. In more chronic cases the disorders could result in permanent disability and loss of employment.

Employee: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that employee is a person whose work activities are under the control of an individual or entity: minors and undocumented workers are included in the definition.

Occupational Health Physician: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that Occupational Health Physician is a board-certified physician trained in regulation, evaluation and treatment of occupational disease/injuries.

Occupational Health: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that Occupational Health is the relationship between a person's health and the working activities that they undertake.

Occupational Illness: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that Occupational Illness is an illness that occurs in employees who have been exposed to hazards whilst at work.

Risk Assessment: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that Risk Assessment is an examination of the potential risks in the workplace, with the aim of assessing whether enough precautions have been put in place to prevent harm. A risk assessment focuses on the relationship between the worker, the work being carried out, the equipment being used and the conditions of the working environment.

Risk Management: Dijk et al. (2011) conclude that Risk Management is the process of putting control measures into practice and monitoring the results, with the intention of reducing, or eliminating, the potential risks to health and safety.

1.2 Background

There has been discussion online about the recorded accident faced by the taxi driver in Helsinki metropolitan area (Enrique 2020). For example, a Somali taxi driver was assaulted in the center of Helsinki city center on 3 June 2012. The incident happened in the heart of the city center i.e. central railway station of Helsinki city. The taxi driver was approached by two customers who wanted to go to an unknown destination. The taxi driver refused to give ride to these two men because he was doubtful about the behavior of these two men. He was afraid that these two men can rob or beat him. These two men attacked the taxi driver and threatened to kill him when he refused to give ride. The taxi driver was taken to the hospital by ambulance and it took him several days to recover at home.

Besides this, Tulhonen and Teivainen (2014) described the chaos that customers were reluctant to get in a taxi with a dark-skinned driver. It happened on West Terminal in Helsinki. This incident happened with the same taxi driver three times in a row in just one week that customers refused to take the taxi of dark-skinned driver. It is sad to note that customers used racist comments too when they refused to take the taxi of dark-skinned taxi driver. It is very difficult for the taxi drivers to concentrate on the work if they face discrimination. However, experts say that sometimes elderly customers refuse to take taxi of taxi drivers from foreign backgrounds because they are doubtful about the Finnish language skills of the taxi drivers. The customers may presume that taxi driver of foreign background, do not speak Finnish.

Furthermore, in the end of the year 2019, it has been reported that two men entered the taxi and started talking with the taxi driver inappropriately. They used many racist words against the taxi driver. Hence, the taxi driver politely requested the two men to leave the taxi. He suggested them to take another taxi. But at that point, one of the persons attacked the taxi driver physically. This incident happened on Monday, 18th of November 2019 at Peltolantie taxi stop, in the city of Vantaa which is situated in Helsinki metropolitan area. (Foreigner 2019.)

In the light of above-mentioned accidents, there is no doubt that attention is required in the field of occupational health and safety of taxi drivers in Helsinki region. Secondly, occupational health and safety policy for one of the taxi company will be developed. The taxi drivers of case company have also faced many health problems which includes neck, shoulder and back pain, weakness, discrimination, lack of motivation to work and depression.

1.3 About the company

The case company is in operation since March 2018. The name and identification number of the case company is hidden as requested by the company. However, the company has allowed

to publish the result of this research online because the result will also be beneficial for other taxi companies which are operating in Helsinki region. The company is one of the simplest forms of company known as sole proprietorship. It consists of 1-4 employees. The company provides taxi services in Helsinki metropolitan area.

There are two main reasons why the author of this thesis has selected a small business for a research project. First of all, it will be easy and quick to apply research results in a small business. Secondly, the outcome of the implementation of research results can be noticed within few months.

1.4 Research questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. What are the current occupational health and safety practices in the case company and other taxi companies of Helsinki metropolitan area?
2. What problems or difficulties are faced by taxi drivers in Helsinki?
3. What measures can be adopted to improve occupational health and safety of taxi drivers in Helsinki?

1.5 Objectives

The objective of this thesis is to make an occupational health and safety policy for the case company. The reason for such policy is because of the reported accidents in the case company. Hence, there is an urgent need to analyze and develop current occupational health and safety policy of the case company. To achieve it, the awareness among taxi drivers about occupational health and safety will be analyzed. The degree of compliance with the legal acts of occupational health and safety will be surveyed. The number of different accidents in the taxi industry in the past will be studied. Lastly the experts will be approached to recommend possible solutions or improvements.

The research results will be guideline to maintain occupational health and safety of taxi drivers in Helsinki regions. It will be useful for other taxi companies operating in Helsinki region as well because other taxi companies have also faced many accidents as mentioned earlier. Other companies also have concerns about occupational health and safety of their employees.

Besides the case company, the results of this research will be useful for a number of different entities. For example, all the taxi service providing companies in Helsinki region and self-employed persons or freelancers who are not provided with occupational health care doctor or sick leave payment. They must take care of their social contributions themselves (Yle News

2019a). Traficom and other state and regional authorities can also use the results to make necessary amendments to the taxi reforms and implement better policies. The outcome of the research will be beneficial to the customers or residents of Helsinki as well. After applying the results in practical life, not only the safety of taxi drivers can be handled but also the safety of residents of Helsinki will be secured as thousands of people use taxi every day in Helsinki region. There have been earlier researches about this subject and this research will also help the future researches to work on this subject because there is a lot still to be researched.

2 Background theory

There have been several researches related to health and welfare of taxi drivers in different cities of Finland. For instance, one of the researches is about welfare of taxi drivers in the city Lappeenranta of Finland. In this research, according to Matikainen, Tynkkynen and Salla (2013), vast majority of the taxi drivers like their job. However, drivers have the concerns of low pay and long working hours because it effects their work abilities. The research also indicates that significant amount of taxi drivers in Lappeenranta region were exposed to some form of violence at work. This research was held in Lappeenranta region. It was quantitative research using 52 fulfilled questionnaire forms. The results of this research can be used for further studies on taxi drivers, but this research was held 7 years ago in 2013 and the taxi industry has changed so much especially after deregulation on 1st of July 2018.

Another research is about the assessment of taxi driver safety at work. According to Puuskari (2012), 86% of the taxi drivers in Finland have experienced violence. They have also been verbally threatened. The study points out that taxi drivers have faced many dangerous situations but only few taxi drivers think that the work is not safe. This study focuses on the taxi drivers of Mikkeli region in Finland.

Another research is only about the consequences of deregulation of taxi reforms in Finland which started from 1st of July 2018. This study focuses on liberated Finnish taxi market. According to Sandholm (2019), the main reason for deregulation of taxi reforms were to increase services and jobs in the transport industry. It was believed that the new taxi reform will decrease taxi prices and improve the quality of service. This study has gained insights from consumers i.e. taxi customers to analyze outcome of the deregulation and customer values. This study includes nine qualitative interviews. However, the results of the research show that the price of taxi has significantly increased after the reforms. The customers are afraid and feel insecure because taxi drivers do not now have enough area knowledge. Especially, elderly people are affected the most. It is important to note that the focus of this study was only on Oulu region. This kind of research will be beneficial for the author of this thesis because it gives a lot information about the taxi industry of Finland. For example, this

study tells us that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of taxi drivers or taxis in Helsinki after the deregulation of taxi reforms on 1st of July 2018. It will have an impact on the income of taxi drivers because the demand is the same, but supply has increased more than double.

However, there are number of researches about occupational health and safety in different companies in Finland. The results of these researches will be helpful to get familiar with occupational health and safety policies and strategies. For instance, one of the research is about developing occupational health and safety in a small and medium sized enterprise in Finland. The purpose of the research was to study occupational safety, health hazards and risks which are currently present in a small and medium-sized enterprise. It will develop occupational health and safety guidebook for the company. A risk assessment was conducted for the small and medium-sized enterprise and it utilized semi-structured interviews. The case company of this research employs 3-4 workers. A researcher has given a very good example in this study. According to Arnkil (2019), the effect of an occupational accident is far more on a small and medium-sized enterprise as compared to large companies. For instance, if any employee in any large company faces any occupational accident that makes him unable to work for few weeks. The large company can recover from this accident because it has enough resources or employees who can work instead of that injured staff member. Hence, the large company will not suffer especially with respect to productivity. On the other hand, if the worker of any small and medium-sized enterprise will face any accident at work because of which he is unable to work for few weeks. It will have a big impact on the productivity of a small and medium-sized enterprise because small companies do not have enough staff to work as a substitute. It is also important to mention that each person in any small and medium-sized enterprise has a very special role so the other staff cannot work instead of absent staff member because they do not have the same skills. Most of the taxi companies in Helsinki region just consist of 1-4 employees so this research of occupational health and safety in SME will be useful.

Furthermore, the most important legislation applied in Finland regarding occupational health and safety is Occupational Safety and Health Act 738/2002. The objective of this act is to improve the working conditions of employees. It also safeguards the basic interests of the employees and indicates the responsibilities of employees and employers at workplace as stipulated in the Occupational Safety and Health Act (Finland 2002). For instance, employers are required to take care of the health and safety of their workers being at work by taking the necessary measures depending upon the nature of the work. Employers should also work on improving the working conditions of employees. The employer should also take necessary measures for remedying the situation if harassment or other inappropriate treatment of an employee occurs at work. In case of alone working environment, the employer should ensure that any possible hazard or risk is avoided or minimized when the worker is working alone.

The employer should provide short time absence from work to the workers if the work requires staying continuously in one place. Lastly, the employer should provide possibility to workers to daywork too who are mostly working in the night to avoid risks to worker's health

Moreover, Occupational Health Care Act 1383/2001 is another important act regarding occupational health and safety in Finland. This act makes it mandatory to arrange occupational health care doctor for employees if certain conditions are fulfilled. It promotes cooperation between health care providers, employers, and employees. It is meant to prevent occupational accidents and ensure well-being of workers at workplace as stipulated in the Occupational Health Care Act (Finland 2001). For example, after the medical examination if it reveals that the worker is not suitable for any work, the employer shall not hire such worker. The information must be provided to occupational health care experts by the employer about working arrangements, occupational diseases, occupational accidents, workplace condition and any changes to these for analyzing and preventing work-related risks and accidents. The employer will be sentenced to a penalty if he or she deliberately or through carelessness fails to observe what is provided in the act. The health and safety policy for the case company will be drafted with respect to above-mentioned acts.

There are number of researches about occupational health and safety of taxi drivers in other countries. These results will be very useful and provide a good foundation to start the research process. Firstly, one research is about health and safety of taxi drivers and operators at work. According to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (2012), the most common risks and injuries faced by taxi drivers are indicated. It states how to eliminate risks to ensure the safety of taxi driver at work. It emphasizes that the taxi driver should be aware of his taxi and all the equipment. The taxi driver should make sure that the taxi is in roadworthy condition. The driver of that taxi should ensure that the safety equipment like security cameras are fitted and maintained well in the taxi. The taxi drivers should be given enough information on how to proceed in case of an unfortunate incident or accident. The taxi driver should make the taxi safe to passengers. It is also the responsibility of taxi owners or operators to provide necessary personal accident insurance to employees or provide the insurance at a reasonable cost to cover loss of earnings due to work-related accidents. The taxi drivers must comply with work health and safety instructions given by their owners or companies. A taxi driver must ensure the safety and health of themselves, their passengers and anyone who might get affected by their driving activities. It is the responsibility of taxi drivers to check the vehicle before starting their work shift that everything including safety equipment like camera and alarms are working properly. They should report every fault to the owners as soon as possible to get it repaired before driving the vehicle.

Especially, the drivers who are self-employed should take extra care of their own health and safety because they are responsible for it. According to the Department of Justice ad

Attorney-General (2012), the main reasons why taxi drivers are at a high risk of violence and aggression from passengers is because taxi drivers work alone. Also, passengers of taxi drivers can be under the influence of alcohol or drugs and they can hurt the taxi driver unconsciously. During this situation it is difficult to aid at once because the taxi driver can be in any remote area far away from the nearest health care. This study has given many recommendations to taxi drivers to protect themselves. For example, the taxi drivers should lock their doors properly when sitting in the car waiting for the customers. Also, they should not pick up the hailing customers in known high-risk areas. The study also suggests that taxi driver should discourage solo passengers from sitting directly behind him. The taxi driver should be given enough knowledge on how to deal with any emergency or to respond to criminal activity at once. It is also recommended to the taxi drivers to install proper surveillance and security equipment like cameras and security alarms to deal with any emergency. The study also tells that how a taxi driver can deal with aggressive passengers or how to minimize the risks.

According to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (2012), usually the customers behave aggressive under the influence of alcohol. A taxi driver can stop the vehicle few meters away from the passenger when hailed to assess the passenger. If the passenger does not feel comfortable to walk, then it can be noted that he or she is under the influence of alcohol and it is better to not provide any service to him. All taxi drivers should be alert and aware of their surroundings all the time. A taxi driver can also give a signal to the passengers that their behavior and conversation is being recorded. It may make the customer to stop inappropriate behavior. A taxi driver should remain calm and interact with the passenger. It will help to monitor them. A rear-view mirror can also be used to monitor the behavior of the customers. Furthermore, a taxi driver can have large amount of cash in their vehicles and they are at the risk of getting robbed. Hence, it is recommended that taxi driver should keep with himself as little cash as possible. He should not display his cash to the customers when a customer is paying the fare with cash. Also, a taxi driver should not show any expensive thing to the customers like smartphone or jewelry. This study also details that what a taxi driver can do to keep himself healthy. It is very necessary for a taxi driver to get out of the taxi and walk around to stretch his muscles. You should also adjust the mirrors to eliminate body being twisted. The adjustment of the driving seat is also very important. It should be adjusted with respect to the height and back rest so that the driver should feel comfortable and can easily reach vehicle controls. This study recommends taxi driver to handle the luggage of passengers carefully. For example, the luggage can be very heavy. Hence, the taxi driver should keep the luggage as close to the body as possible while lifting it and back should not be fully bent or twisted while doing it. A taxi driver should contact the qualified health professions as soon as possible if he experiences a knee sprain or strain injury.

Lastly, taxi drivers are likely to be at a high risk of fatigue due to their working hours. According to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (2012), a normal taxi driver works 60 hours per week or 12 hours per day. Their working shift can be outside of Monday to Friday 6 am to 6 pm time. They may have extended work hours and long periods of awake which can result inadequate amount of sleep or poor-quality sleep because of irregular working hours. The effects of fatigue include slow reaction time and decreased alertness. It can also decrease hand-to-eye coordination which is very necessary. A taxi driver loses awareness in critical situations and it will also affect his decision-making ability. It is important to note that a person cannot have self-assessment of fatigue. Self-assessment of fatigue is unreliable. However, there are some warning signs of fatigue which a driver can experience. These are blurred vision, poor concentration, difficulty keeping eyes open, microsleeps. It is also the responsibility of taxi company owners and providers to keep check and balance of the working hours of their workers. They should not make work list or roasters which may affect fatigue levels of taxi drivers. This study has also given some tips when it comes to diet. Taxi driver should drink plenty of water, reduce intake of fatty, salty and sugary foods. He should limit coffee intake and eat high-fiber diet.

Secondly, another study known as ‘‘Taxi drivers’ safety and health: A European review of good practice guidelines’’ will be a good literature to start work with. According to European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2010), the three main categories of risks faced by taxi drivers are physical risks, psychosocial risks, individual behavior, and chemical and biological risks. This study presents examples of guidelines and risk prevention recommendations for taxi drivers. This study provides guidance on how to prevent possible risks to taxi drivers. The report of this study is a collaboration between different authors from BGIA, HSL, KOOP and Prevent. They formed a part of EU-OSHA. The data was collected through the internet from various European Union member states which were Denmark, Sweden, Germany, United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Spain. Besides this, the information was also collected from USA and Australia. The report includes very good examples of practical guidelines and recommendations for preventing risks. The research includes car maintenance, safe driving, working hours and breaks of taxi drivers, training and supervision, stress, MSDs and what a driver can do if he has an accident. The report also includes checklist for risk assessment and examples of prevention.

3 Methodology

The method of the research is to have qualitative semi-structured interview from five taxi drivers. These interviews are used to answer the research questions. Semi-structured interviews are taken from normal taxi drivers. It was thought to have the interviews from experts, but it was not possible. It is difficult to get access to experts in this field. Secondly, the taxi industry has changed a lot in the past year. Now the taxi drivers who are working will be able

to expose the hidden secrets and explain their problems regarding occupational health and safety in taxi industry. Semi structured interviews are selected because the author of the thesis would like to get deep into the topic to explore every hidden secret. Using the questionnaire form it is not possible.

Gillham (2005, 5) purported that qualitative interviews become personal and they reach participants via a generic way. According to him, qualitative interviews are open and honest. The participants of the interviews might have to share very sensitive information about their working habits. Noaks et al (2004: 81) described semi-structured interviews as follows: “The semi-structured interview offers more opportunity to probe, typically with the use of follow-up questions. The interviewer will be equipped with an interview schedule but there is more flexibility in the order in which questions are asked”, “The semi-structured interview offers more opportunity to probe, typically with the use of follow-up questions. The interviewer will be equipped with an interview schedule but there is more flexibility in the order in which questions are asked”, “The semi-structured interview offers more opportunity for dialogue and exchange between the interviewer and interviewee. An important feature of this approach is that the interviewer has an understanding of the context of the project to facilitate alertness to significant themes”.

The author of the thesis would like to have open ended questions based on the situation. Each interview will take around 40 minutes. However, follow up questions may increase the length of the interviews. The interviews will be recorded on the smart phone after the approval of the participant and will be deleted after transcription. The semi-structured interviews will have at least following questions, additional follow up questions will be asked when needed:

1. How long have you been working as a taxi driver?
2. Why did you choose this profession? Is it your dream job?
3. How often do you work?
4. Have you ever worked more than 11 hours in a single day?
5. Have you ever worked more than 40 hours in a single week?
6. If so, why?
7. Do you work like a worker or are you self-employed?
8. What do you eat in a normal working shift?
9. How often do you exercise or go to the gym?

10. Is it stressful to work at night and wait in the taxi waiting for the order?
11. Have you received any racist comments from the customers?
12. How often customer misbehave at night as compared to the day?
13. How the new legislation in taxi industry which made it easy for everyone to get taxi license has affected your business or job?
14. Do you talk with customers while giving a ride?
15. What do you do when you are just sitting in the taxi waiting for the customers as it may take up to 2 to 3 hours?
16. If you work as a worker i.e. employee what do you think your company or employer can do to remove occupational health and safety concerns?
17. Do you have occupational health and safety doctor if you are self-employed?
18. What improvements can be made from municipal government and state governments in taxi industry?
19. What would you suggest to other taxi drivers to ensure good health and safety?
20. How many hours do you sleep at night?
21. Have you faced any accident at work? If so, please tell more about it.
22. Did you face any accident at work because of your own mistake? If so, please tell more about it.
23. What measures you would have taken to minimize the accidents you have faced at work?
24. What would you recommend to other taxi drivers based on your experience?
25. Is it possible to eliminate all possible work accidents while working as a taxi driver by following all the safety guidelines?

There are several advantages of qualitative interviews. Kelly (2018) describes that it is easier for the participants to share more information because of the open-ended questions. It will also provide a fast assessment of the attitude of the interviewee. Semi structured interview will make it possible to collect more data. It helps to develop a personal connection between the interviewer and interviewee.

These interviews will be very sensitive because it will ask for confidential information from the taxi drivers. For example, have they ever worked more than 11 hours in a single day? A taxi driver can work maximum 11 hours in one day. The researcher of this thesis would like to get true information, so it is very important to hide the identity of taxi drivers who are willing to give interviews. Five participants will be told that for what purpose these interviews will be used i.e. for writing a thesis for academic purpose. The interview will be taken face to face if they allow keeping in mind the corona virus situation. If not, then the interviews will be held on phone. These interviews will be recorded with the consent of the participants. However, only researcher will have access to these recordings to keep the confidentiality. These recordings will be transferred to the piece of paper and will be attached as appendix with the final work of the thesis. The names of the interviewees will be changed by other names. The data i.e. recordings will be saved on the USB data storage device with a password so that no one else can access the data because it might be possible to recognize the voice of the participants which may expose their identity.

However, there are many disadvantages of qualitative research as well. Gaille (2018) describes that the qualitative research is not a statistical representation of collection data. Hence, it is not possible to measure the data. The research relies upon the researcher. For instance, researcher must have the interviewing skills and courage to ask follow-up questions. A small qualitative research can create misleading conclusion. For example, in this case, the interviews of only five taxi drivers may not be enough to cover the perspectives of all the taxi drivers working in the Helsinki region.

In the light of all above-mentioned disadvantages of the qualitative research and on the recommendation of the supervisor of this research project, the author of this thesis will also conduct quantitative research and compare the results of both these research methods. A survey will be conducted using a questionnaire form. At least, fifty taxi drivers in Helsinki metropolitan area (Helsinki, Espoo, and Vantaa) will be approached to complete the questionnaire form. Only fifty taxi drivers will be approached because it is not possible to approach many taxi drivers nowadays because of the corona virus situation.

The questionnaire form for quantitative research will have twenty multiple choice questions so that it is easy for the participants to answer the questions quickly. The questionnaire form will include questions directly related to the research questions of this research. Taxi drivers will be approached in the taxi stands of Espoo, Vantaa, and Helsinki. They will be asked to fill in the questionnaire form. They will be informed about the purpose of the survey. They will be told that their identify will remain hidden so that it is easy for them to share the correct information. The data received via quantitative survey will be recorded in excel file. The data collected via qualitative and quantitative search will be compared and analysed.

Lastly, two expert interviews will be held to validate the results of above-mentioned qualitative and quantitative researches and ask for the possible solution to solve the problems faced by taxi drivers. The names of the experts are Timo Toiviainen and Henri Korttila. Timo Toiviainen has more than thirty years of experience in taxi industry and Henri Korttila is the owner of one taxi service providing company known as Aki Korttila Oy. The company has more than 60 years of experience in taxi industry in Helsinki region.

4 Results

The income of taxi driver is economically unstable because it depends on the demand i.e. the taxi driver gets 34-42 percent salary of all the income earned during a work shift. These details are found from the website of Employment Office. If you see any taxi driver job advertisement it will state that the salary is provisional i.e. around 34-42 percent of the income earned. (TE-palvelut 2020.)

Furthermore, the law transformed Finnish taxi trade on 1st of July 2018. According to this legislation, anyone can be a taxi driver. They just need to pass one simple test which takes maximum of one day of preparation. Now taxi driver can have flexible working hours, they can decide themselves when to go to work but it has many side effects like not having right to sick leave or summer vacations. (Yle News 2018.)

4.1 Qualitative Research

Five qualitative interviews were taken to ask the taxi drivers about their problems and what is the solution according to them. The names of the five participants have changed to Aleksi, Eetu, Juha, Petri and Ville to hide their identity for privacy concerns as they have shared very confidential information.

4.1.1 1st Interview

The first interview was taken from one of the drivers of the case company. The interview was held on phone as a precaution to corona virus. The interview lasted 34 minutes and it was recorded on one smart phone after the permission from the participant. However, the recorded will be deleted after the transcript as requested by the participant to hide the identity (Conversation with Aleksi, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

Sometimes Aleksi drives taxi more than the legal limit i.e. 11 hours continuously in a single day. He works more than 11 hours in a single day only few days a year. According to him, it does not harm his health and work abilities. He said that if a driver drives a taxi only few days a year more than the legal limit than it will cause no harm to the health. He also said that overall, he works 55 to 60 hours in a single week. The reason was low income nowadays in the taxi industry. For him, nighttime sleep is very important because he is not able to sleep in the

day. He has a foreign background, but he never faced any racist comments from the customers. Sometimes, the customers do not pay him correct fares. In his opinion, it is because he is a normal taxi driver. He believes that this does not happen to big taxi companies in Helsinki region. While waiting for the customers in the taxi he watches YouTube or use mobile phone. He does not have occupational health care doctor. He has neck, shoulder, and back pain (Conversation with Alekski, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

According to Alekski, he used to like his job as a taxi driver in the beginning but not anymore. The main reason behind it is deregulation of taxi reforms in Helsinki region. He said that his health is getting effected by the present situation because too many taxis in Helsinki region and not enough demand. He proposed that the government should stop issuing more permits to taxi drivers and taxi companies. He was not sure how this can be achieved. In his opinion, one of the solutions can be to stop issuing new permits for taxi companies and taxi drivers at all and then start it again after few years. After few years around 200 taxi driver licenses or taxi service providing company licenses would be enough. However, when asked about the requirement, he was not able to suggest anything. Alekski recommends to other taxi drivers that they should keep snacks with them during work shift to maintain the glucose level. The water bottle is also necessary to keep hydrated. He says that taxi drivers should not work more than the limit of 11 hours in a single day. He also said that exercise is very important, and every taxi driver should consider it (Conversation with Alekski, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

4.1.2 2nd Interview

Eetu has been driving taxi for around two years. He started working as a self-employed taxi driver few months after deregulation of taxi reforms in 2018. The interview was taken on phone as a precaution to the corona virus and the participant agreed that the conversation can be recorded and deleted after transcription. The interview lasted 18 minutes. The participant was informed that for what purpose this interview will be used (Conversation with Eetu, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

Eetu does not go to the gym but usually do exercise at home like planks. He prefers to work at night especially on weekends because taxi customers and fares are more at night. He does not have occupational health care doctor and has unhealthy eating habits. He has neck, shoulder, and back pain. He is not happy with his eating habits because he does not cook at home and rely on fast food, pizza, and kebab restaurants. He is not happy with his job because the job is stressful. He has received many racist comments from the customers on weekly basis. He is also upset about the behavior of the customers. For example, once one lady at night ran away without paying taxi fare. However, he complained to the police and the customer paid him the fare within next few days. He works at least once a week more

than 11 hours continuously per day which is against the regulations (Conversation with Eetu, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.). A taxi driver can work maximum 11 hours continuously in a single day as stipulated in Laki liikenteen palveluista (Finland 2017).

He recommends to other taxi drivers to also reserve some time for exercise. More importantly, he asks government authorities to stop issuing more taxi driver licenses and taxi service provider licenses in Finland. According to him, his life and all taxi drivers' life is becoming miserable because of the new taxi deregulation reforms. Now there are so many taxis. In other words, the supply is more than the demand. He does not have enough money to pay bills, so he must work more than the legal limit. According to him, taxi drivers are fighting among themselves for the customer. Most of the taxi drivers drive fast beyond limits to get the customer quickly. There is also stress and depression in taxi drivers now. When asked, that how government can make it possible to limit the number of taxi license, he recommends that taxi driver license must only be granted to a person who has been living in Finland for five years. It is not an easy job to drive taxi. It is different from driving a normal car so if the person has not spent five years in Finland, how he can drive the taxi. Secondly, Eetu is unhappy with the model of the taxi driving license test. He says that everyone can pass it, it is so easy. A person needs to memorize answers to pass the test. A taxi driver license should be issued to the ones who speak at least intermediate level Finnish. Lastly, he said that there should be a person who checks all taxis without any discrimination that all taxis in Helsinki region are following the rules (Conversation with Eetu, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

4.1.3 3rd Interview

Juha drove the taxi full-time for six months continuously. In the future, he may drive taxi part-time. The interview was taken on phone as a precaution to the corona virus. The participant allowed to record the call, but he requested to delete the recording after transcription. The interview lasted around 11 minutes. Juha has worked many times more than 11 hours in a single day. He says it can be 13 or 14 hours work shift. His average weekly hours were around 70 hours. But he says that it is not hard because he gets many breaks during the work shifts. Sometimes the break can be after every hour and the lunch break was of two hours. He does not have any neck, shoulders, or back pain because he goes out of the taxi on each break. He spends that time walking around and doing basic stretching exercises. He does not go specifically to the gym. He has never worked at night and always take seven hours of continuous sleep at night. He brings the food from home and keeps snacks with him during the work shift (Conversation with Juha, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

Moreover, he used to like the deregulation of taxi reforms because it made it possible for him to work as a taxi driver. However, he is not happy anymore with the legislation because now

there are more taxis than the demand. It makes the job of taxi driver very hard. He suggests that government should stop issuing more taxi driver licenses or taxi service provider company license. When asked, that it cannot continue like this forever so how government should start to issue licenses in the future. He replied that the solution would be first come and first serve i.e. whoever submits the application first, will be provided with the license (Conversation with Juha, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

4.1.4 4th Interview

Petri has been driving the taxi for one years. He is self-employed but also works as a worker. He usually works part-time. The interview was held face-to-face. It lasted for 10-15 minutes. According to Petri, his eating habits are very random. Sometimes, he cooks at home and takes the food with himself to work. Sometimes, he eats at the restaurants during breaks. Sometimes, he only survives on snacks. He does not like his job because of these eating habits. He also has physical health issues like neck, shoulders, and lower back pain. He is unhappy that sometimes customers do not pay the fare and we as a taxi driver must finally ignore it. He does not have occupational health care doctor now but earlier he had when he was working as an employee for another taxi company. He has worked many times beyond the legal limit i.e. more than 11 hours in one day (Conversation with Petri, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

Petri liked deregulation in the taxi reforms because it made it easy for him to start working as a taxi driver, but he is not happy with deregulation anymore because it effects his work. He says that now there are too many taxis, so it is impossible for everyone to get a customer. In his opinion, the government should stop issuing new permits to taxi drivers and taxi companies, but he is not sure how is it possible (Conversation with Petri, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

4.1.5 5th Interview

The fifth and last participant of the series of qualitative interview was Ville. He has been driving taxi in Helsinki region for several months. He is driving part-time as an extra job. He likes his job. The interview was taken face-to-face and it lasted 8 minutes. Ville has told that sometimes customers do not pay the fare properly. He has worked few times more than 11 hours in a single day. He always goes to home for the meal during work shift. He does not go to any gym, but he likes to play sports like badminton and sometimes he does exercise at home. He talks with customer and have not received any racist comments or behavior from the customer. He was asked that question because he has foreign background. He spends free time in the taxi while reading a newspaper, book or using mobile phone. He is not sure if he has occupational health care doctor or not because according to him, his company never told him about occupational health care doctor. He has pain in the neck, shoulders and back. He

says that company does not pay him sick leave payment so company should pay consideration on it because taxi driver can cause harm to himself and others' safety if he comes to work being sick. According to the interviewee, government should stop issuing new taxi drivers licenses and permits to taxi companies. However, he is not sure how it is possible (Conversation with Ville, Taxi driver. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

4.1.6 Summary

The most common problem told by all the participants was neck, shoulders, and back pain. The third interview participant Juha was the only exception who does not have any pain in the neck, shoulders or back. It has been noticed that the only difference between Juha and other four interviewees was that Juha always goes out of the taxi in free time or break and use this time to walk around or do basic stretching exercises. However, the other four participants of the survey spend free time sitting in the car using mobile or reading newspaper.

Besides this, around half of the participants have faced racist comments from the customers and fare payment problems. Also, all these participants are unhappy with the deregulation of taxi reforms and they appeal to the government to solve this issue on priority basis. There has been different opinion suggested by them but all of them ask government to completely stop issuing new taxi drivers licenses and permits to operate as taxi service provider in Finland.

4.2 Quantitative Research

The quantitative research was carried out to validate the results of quantitative interviews. Fifty taxi drivers were approached to answer a questionnaire from out of more than 4000 taxi drivers. (Yle News 2019c.) These taxi drivers were approached in the taxi stands of Espoo, Vantaa, and Helsinki. According to the survey, most of the taxi drivers are unsatisfied from their job. Figure 1 shows that 48 percent of the taxi drivers do not like their job. Only 26 percent of the taxi drivers replied that they like their job and 24 percent of the taxi drivers were not sure about it. One of the taxi drivers did not give any answer at all.

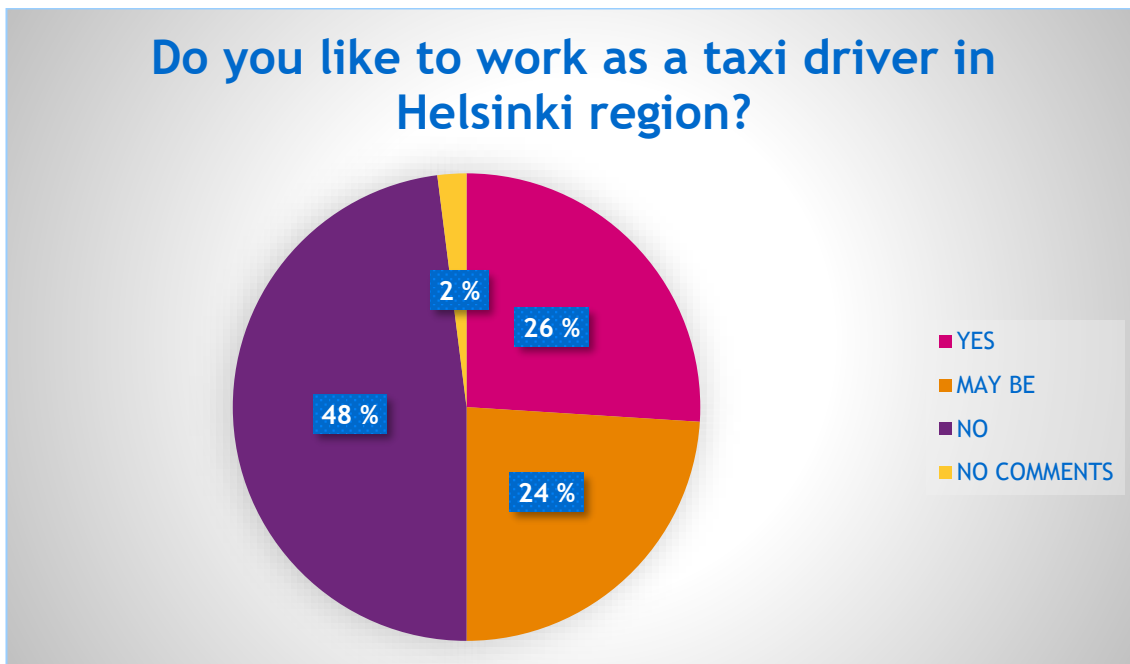


Figure 1: How many of the taxi drivers like their job in Helsinki region?

Secondly, taxi drivers of Helsinki region were asked in the survey that is their job of driving taxi stressful. It is visible in the figure 2 that forty-four taxi drivers out of fifty answered 'yes'. Only five taxi drivers out of fifty declared their job a little stressful. One of the participants did not wish to answer the question. It is alarming that none of the participant of the survey replied 'no'. Therefore, it is observed that most of the taxi driver find their job stressful.

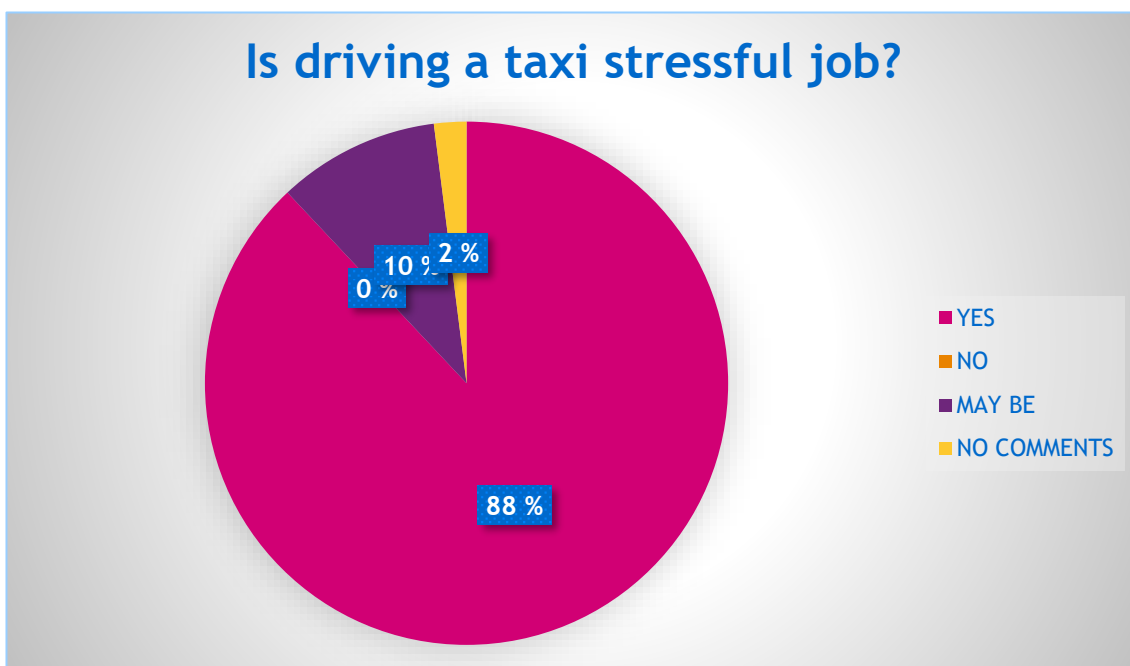


Figure 2: How many of the taxi drivers consider their job stressful?

Thirdly, according to the survey of fifty taxi drivers, is it also alarming that 82 percent of the taxi drivers in Helsinki region do not have an occupational health care doctor. As shown in figure 3, only 16 percent of the taxi drivers have occupational health care doctor. On the other hand, 82 percent of the taxi drivers operating in Helsinki region do not have occupational health care doctor.

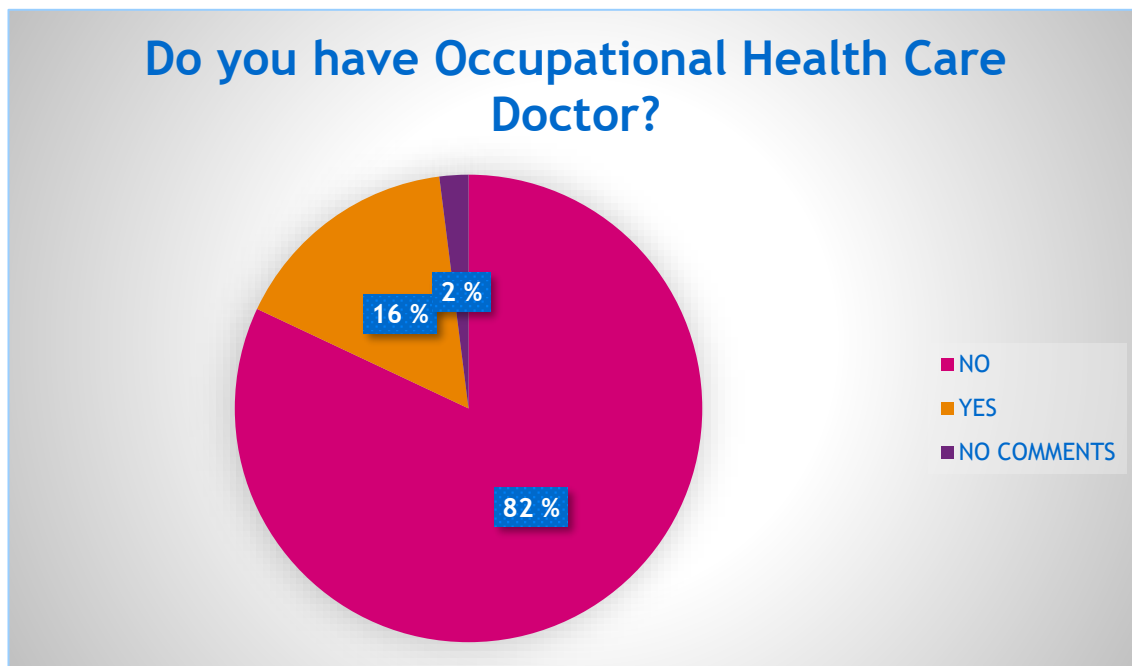


Figure 3: Percentage of taxi drivers with occupational health care doctor in Helsinki region?

Fourthly, it is also alarming that most of the taxi drivers in Helsinki region work beyond the legal limits. It was also noticed in the qualitative interviews with other taxi drivers. The figure 4 shows that in this survey fifty taxi drivers were also asked that how often they go for work. The results show that seven taxi drivers out of fifty taxi drivers go to work daily. Around half of the taxi drivers, to be exact, 21 taxi drivers out of fifty go to work six days a week and only get one free day. Similarly, 30 percent of the taxi drivers work 5 days a week and only 12 percent of the taxi drivers work part time i.e. few days a week.

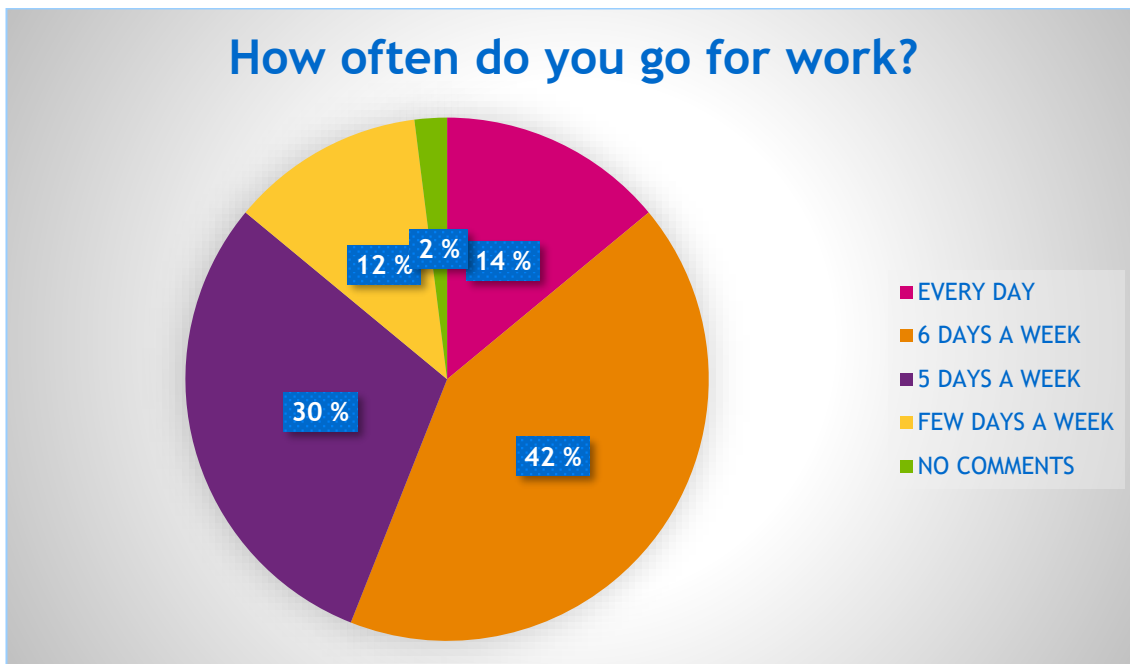


Figure 4: How many days a week a taxi driver works in Helsinki region?

Besides this, we can see that it is common among taxi drivers to have more than eleven hours long work shift. According to the survey, fourteen taxi drivers out of fifty work once a week more than eleven hours continuously in 24 hours. It is more than one quarter of all the taxi drivers. The figure 4 shows that sixty percent of the taxi drivers work at least once a month more than the legal limit of 11 hours a day. At least, 6 percent of the participants breached the law once a year. Only a small percent i.e. 4 percent of the taxi drivers have never worked beyond the legal limit.

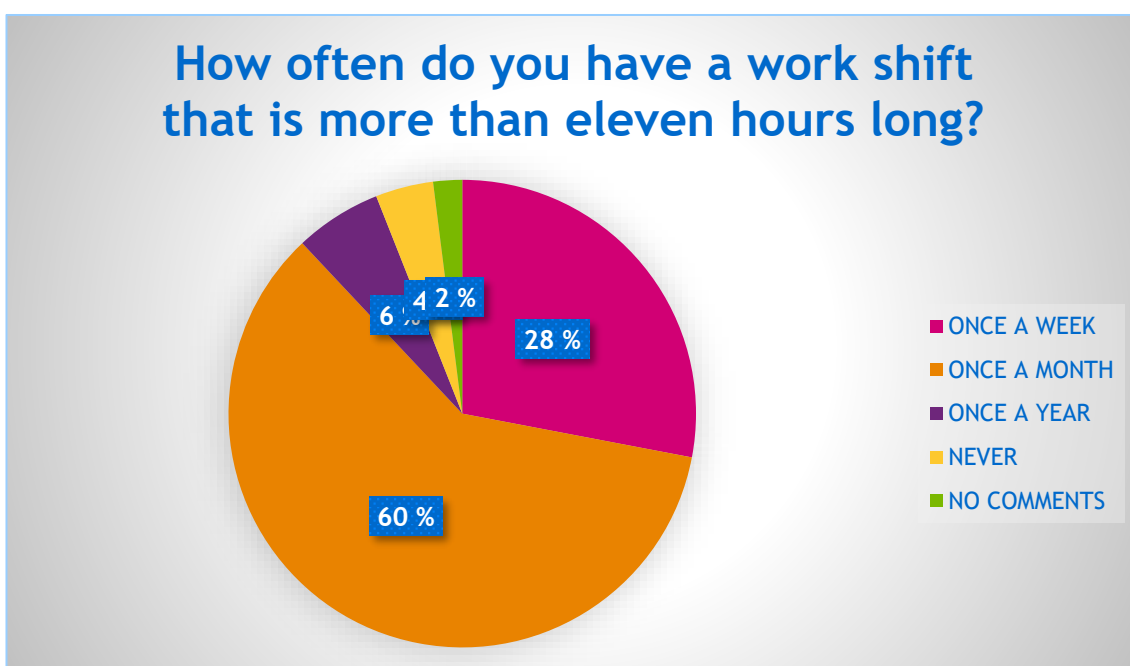


Figure 5: How often taxi drivers in Helsinki work more than 11 hours continuously in a day?

Moreover, the results of the survey show that it is common among taxi drivers to work more than 50 hours in a single week. The results are again alarming that none of the taxi driver always work according to the set legal limit. The figure 6 illustrates that 27 percent of the taxi drivers work every week more than the legal limit. 65 percent of the taxi drivers in the survey responded that at least one a month they cross the weekly working hours limit. Only 8 percent of the taxi drivers violate the rule once a year. Only 8 percent of the taxi drivers violate the rule once a year.

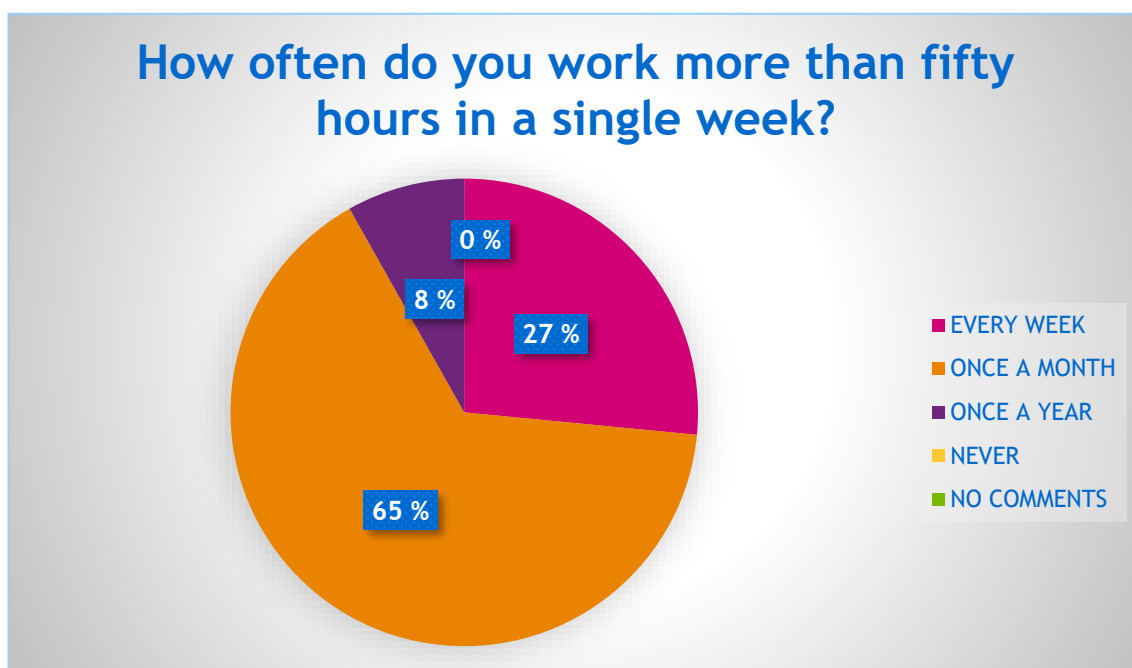


Figure 6: Percentage of the taxi drivers in Helsinki region who work more than 50 hours in a week.

Fifthly, taxi drivers in Helsinki region also receive racist comments from the taxi customers as most of the taxi drivers in Helsinki region have foreign background. It is true that such racist comments effect the well-being of taxi drivers. According to the figure 7, four percent of the taxi drivers receive racist comments weekly from the passengers and 10 percent of the taxi drivers have reported to receive such behavior from customers on monthly basis. 54 percent of the taxi driver receive such comments once a year and 30 percent of the taxi drivers have never received any racist or rude comments from the customers. However, it is not clear yet that what is the definition of racist comments in the perspective of each taxi driver.

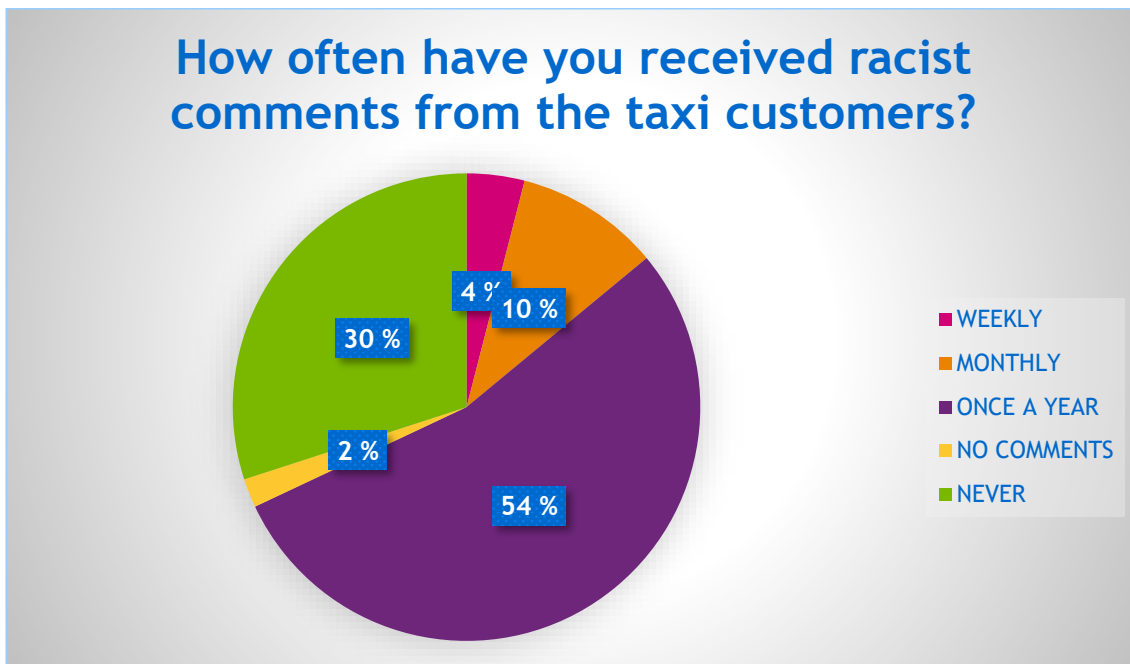


Figure 7: How often taxi drivers in Helsinki region have received racist comments from the customers?

Sixthly, many taxi drivers in Helsinki region also experience from neck, shoulder, and back pain. The figure 8 shows that only less than one quarter of the survey participants do not experience neck, shoulder or back pain i.e. 22 percent. A very big number i.e. 76 percent of the taxi drivers in Helsinki region have pain or soreness in the neck, shoulder or back.

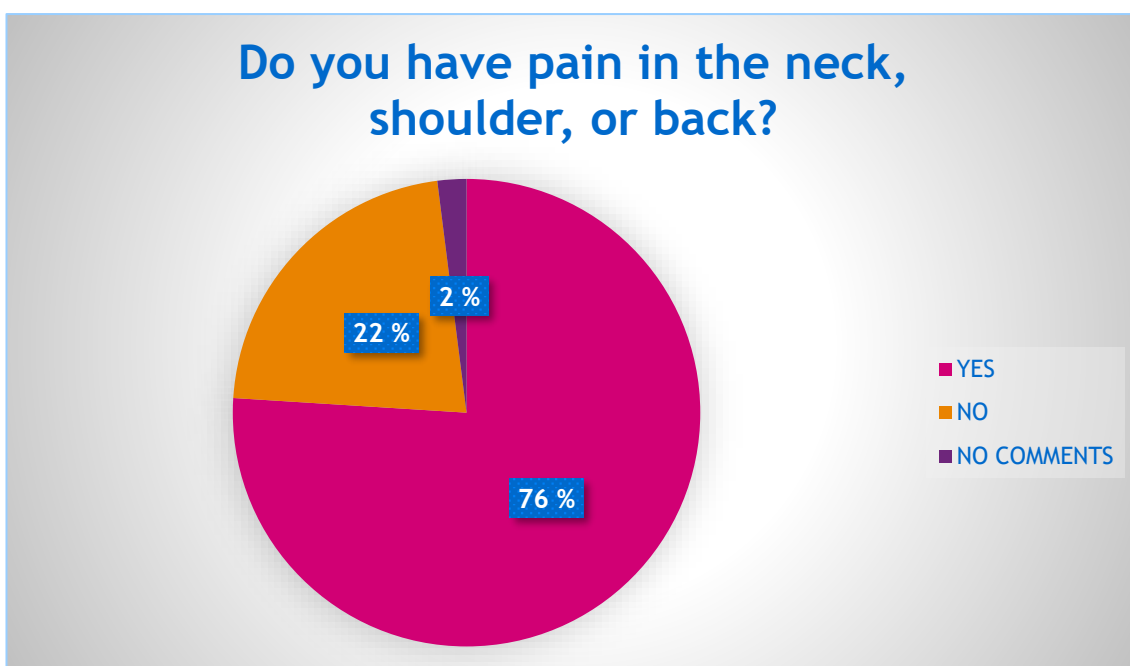


Figure 8: Percentage of the taxi drivers in Helsinki region who experience pain in neck, shoulder or back.

Seventhly, the taxi drivers in Helsinki region seldom face any accident at work. The taxi drivers in Helsinki face any accident at work maximum once a year. The figure 9 shows that 98 percent of the taxi drivers face accidents maximum once a year or not at all. 2 percent of the taxi driver(s) i.e. only 1 correspondent did not reply.

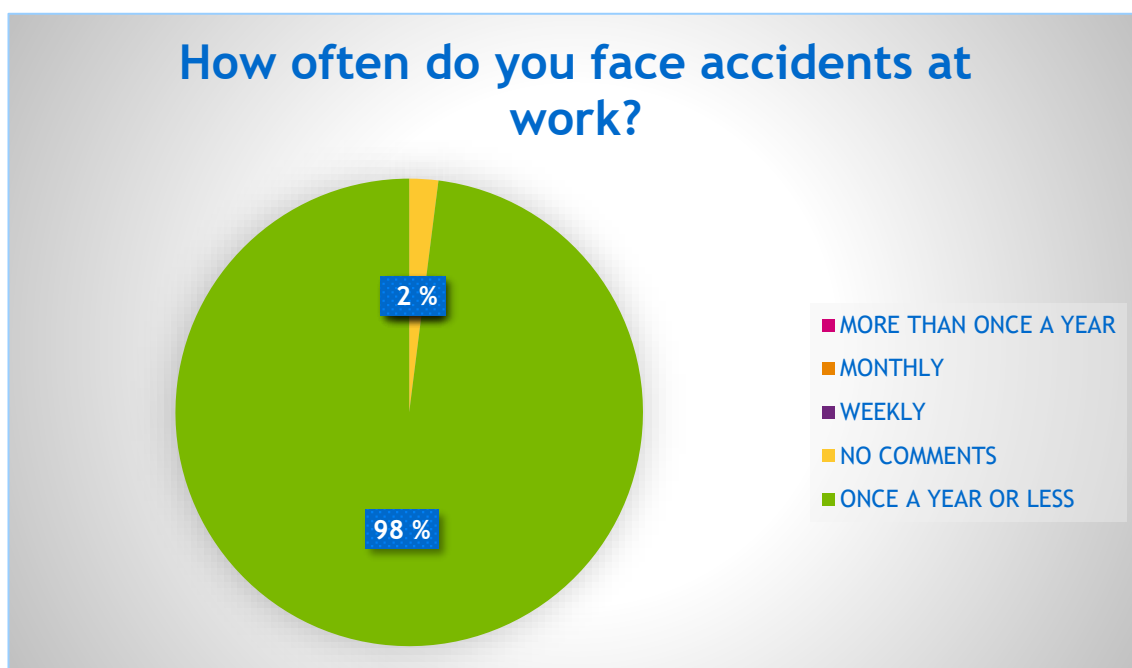


Figure 9: Percentage of taxi driver who faced accidents at work on a yearly basis.

Eighthly, this survey validates the results of quantitative interviews by showing that majority of the taxi drivers in Helsinki region are not satisfied with the deregulation in the taxi reforms which took place on 1st of July 2018. The following figure 10 illustrates that 49 taxi drivers out of 50 are not happy with the deregulation.



Figure 10: Percentage of taxi drivers who are satisfied with the deregulation of taxi reforms in Finland since 1st of July 2018.

Ninthly, no taxi driver in Helsinki is recommending others or new taxi driver to come to the profession of driving a taxi in the Helsinki region. The results were same via qualitative research interviews too. The following figure 11 shows that 98 percent of the taxi drivers of this survey are not recommending others the profession of a taxi driver in Helsinki region.



Figure 11: Percentage of taxi drivers who recommend other to work as a taxi driver in Helsinki region.

It is interesting to notice that those taxi drivers who have occupational health care doctor experience less pain in the neck, shoulder, or back as compared to those who do not have occupational health care doctor. The survey points out that eight taxi drivers out of fifty have occupational health care doctor. Among these only one have pain in the neck, shoulder, and back. The remaining seven does not have pain at all. On the other hand, there are 41 taxi drivers out of 50 who do not have occupational health care doctor. Among these, 37 taxi drivers experience pain in the neck, shoulders, and back. Only four taxi drivers among 41 do not have any pain at all. The figure 12 shows that among those taxi drivers who have occupational health care doctor, only 12 percent of the taxi drivers have soreness in the muscles. On the other hand, figure 13 shows that among those taxi drivers who do not have occupational health care doctor, around 90 percent of them have soreness in the muscles.

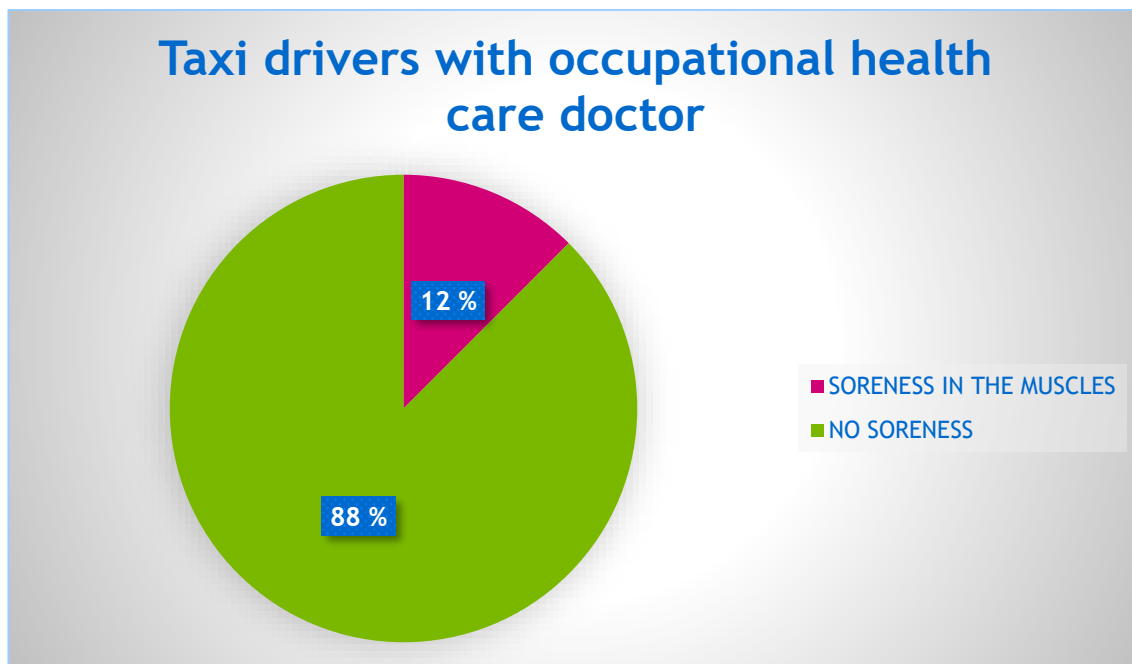


Figure 12: Percentage of taxi drivers with occupational health care doctor who experience pain in the muscles.

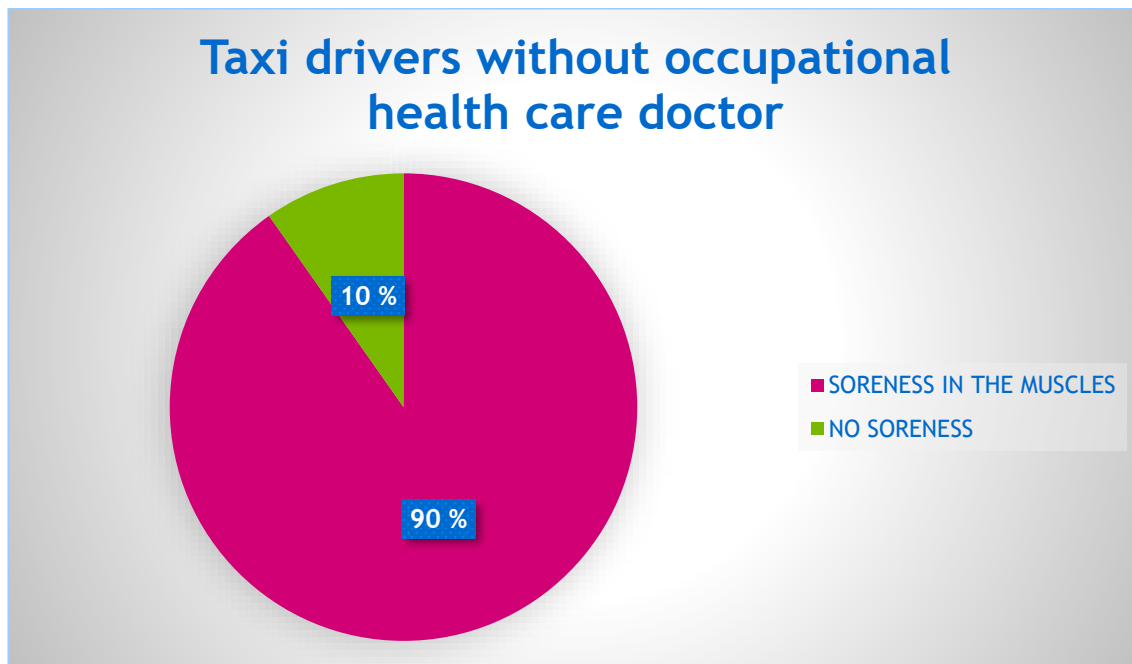


Figure 13: Percentage of taxi drivers without occupational health care doctor who experience pain in the muscles.

The results received by quantitative questionnaire survey of fifty taxi drivers are valid because they match with the results of qualitative interviews. Most of the taxi drivers do not have occupational health care doctor. 76 percent of the taxi drivers experience pain in the neck, shoulders, and back. It has been noticed that those taxi drivers who have occupational health care doctor and who go for exercises few days a week almost have no pain in their neck, shoulder or back. The results show that taxi drivers are unhappy about the deregulation in the taxi reforms on 1st of July 2018. Half of the taxi drivers are unhappy about their job. They declare their job stressful. They also receive racist comments from the customers and are not willing to recommend the profession of taxi driver to others. Most of the taxi drivers also work beyond the legal limits which is alarming because it effects the health and safety of taxi driver, the passenger, and surroundings.

4.3 1st Expert Opinion

It was necessary to validate the results of qualitative and quantitative research and ask experts about the possible solutions or recommendations. The first expert interview was held on the phone with Timo Toiviainen. The interview lasted for 57 minutes. The interview was recorded in the smart phone after the permission from the interviewee. The recording will be deleted after transcription. The interviewee has been told about the purpose of this interview that it is for an academic thesis and he has been told that this interview will be published

online (Conversation with T. Toiviainen, Sole proprietor, Timo Toiviainen Taksi 456. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

Timo Toiviainen has been working in the taxi industry in the Helsinki region for more than thirty years. He is expert in his field with years of experience and owns a taxi service providing firm which employs four workers. According to him, same rules applies to taxi driver when it comes to occupational health and safety. The act on occupational health and safety of Finland is same regardless of the field (Conversation with T. Toiviainen, Sole proprietor, Timo Toiviainen Taksi 456. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

According to him, the main reason for neck, shoulder, and back pain in taxi drivers is improper sitting posture. The solution would be to correct the sitting posture. He also recommends that exercise is very important. A taxi driver must exercise. Some of the examples of exercises he mentioned was walking, running and tennis. Indeed, walking and running as exercise are simple and easy to do. It is better for the circulation of the blood because taxi driver spends most of his working hours without moving (Conversation with T. Toiviainen, Sole proprietor, Timo Toiviainen Taksi 456. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

He also mentioned that occupational health care doctors are compulsory. A small company may think that it is better to not have any occupational health care doctor to save costs of the company but on a larger scale it costs more to pay for sick leave of the employees rather than to have occupational health care doctor for employees. He also gave example of one of his own workers, who used to be often sick. He asked him to go to the occupational health care doctor. He added that now the costs of occupational health care doctor are far less than the sick leave payments which his company used to pay (Conversation with T. Toiviainen, Sole proprietor, Timo Toiviainen Taksi 456. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

Moreover, he said that the employer should always ask for the sick leave certificates from the employees if they are not able to come to the work because of sickness. If the sickness reason is usually the same than it means that it needs to get diagnosed. Only occupational health care doctors can diagnose it better because they have more time as compared to normal Doctor of Public Health Care centers (Conversation with T. Toiviainen, Sole proprietor, Timo Toiviainen Taksi 456. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

As mentioned earlier, taxi drivers have been disappointed with the deregulation of taxi reforms since 1st of July 2018. All taxi drivers are asking government to stop issuing new taxi drivers' licenses and permits to companies to operate as a taxi company in Finland. However, taxi drivers are not sure how to do it. Timo Toiviainen said that it is not possible to stop the issuance of new permits because it will be illegal or against the law. At first, they must change the law. A good solution to this problem will be if government sets some requirements. For instance, whoever wants to operate a taxi company must deposit a sum of 5000 to

10,000 euros. Some amount from this deposit will be deducted if the company fails to follow the rules. Similarly, if it fails to pay compulsory social contributions and taxes. This sum will make sure that the taxi companies pay pension insurance and taxes. Otherwise, same situation will happen what happened in Sweden that pension companies will not be able to survive. According to Timo Toiviainen, if every company must pay social contributions and taxes than less people will be interested to operate as a taxi company in Helsinki region and market will not be saturated anymore. Besides this, the test to get taxi license should be harder. He added, now there is 33 percent probability that anyone can pass the test because there are usually multiple-choice questions. Lastly, he said that a taxi driver with foreign background can minimize racist behavior of the customer by improving Finnish language skills and becoming good at his profession by improving area knowledge and driving skills (Conversation with T. Toiviainen, Sole proprietor, Timo Toiviainen Taksi 456. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

4.4 2nd Expert Opinion

The second expert interview was also held on the phone as a precaution to corona virus. The interviewee was told about the purpose of the interview. The interview will be used to complete academic thesis and this interview will be posted online. The interview lasted for 9 minutes (Conversation with H. Korttila, Chairman, Aki Korttila Oy. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

Henri Korttila owns a taxi company which employs 6-8 workers in Helsinki region. The company was founded in 1960 and has years of experience in taxi industry. According to Henri Korttila, there should be a balance between work life and personal life. Exercise is very important for a taxi driver because he spends most of his work time while sitting in the car. It can lead to neck, shoulder, and back pain. A taxi driver must take at least one to two free days in a week. He must have good hobbies and should see friends. A taxi driver must not work every day as seen in the surveys. Taxi driver has long shifts, so it is not possible to work for every day. A taxi driver must care for his body (Conversation with H. Korttila, Chairman, Aki Korttila Oy. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.).

Furthermore, he said that it is not possible to reverse the deregulation of taxi reforms which started from 1st of July 2018 because now it is competitive market. However, there should be same rules for everyone. Every taxi company must pay taxes and social contributions. Every taxi must have sign on top of its roof. There should not be any taxis without the sign. If there is no sign on a taxi than it is difficult to recognize it and if it is difficult to recognize it then also difficult to monitor it. Another solution would be to have a same taxi meter for every taxi regardless of the operator. This meter will be allowed to send every data to tax authorities whenever they need. This way tax authorities can monitor every taxi (Conversation with

H. Korttila, Chairman, Aki Korttila Oy. 2 May 2020. Personal Communication.). The Taxi Drivers Association has also suggested that all taxis should be fitted with obligatory taxi fare meters, which would enable taxi authorities to clearly see information about every paid trip. (Yle News 2019b.)

5 Conclusions

It has been found by qualitative and quantitative researches that most of the taxi drivers have neck, shoulder, and back pain. Most of the taxi drivers are also not satisfied with their job and they declare it a stressful job. The taxi drivers who have occupational health care doctor and who go for exercises few days a week, experience almost no muscle soreness. The company should have occupational health care doctor for its employees because the costs of occupational health care doctor are less than the sickness leave payment. Taxi drivers with foreign background often face racist comments from the customers which can also affect their well-being at work. Most of the taxi driver also work beyond the legal limits set by the law because of low income in the taxi industry. Taxi drivers are unhappy about the deregulation of taxi industry. They are asking the government to stop issuing more taxi licenses. There should be same rules for every taxi in Finland.

The legislative body of Finland should make necessary amendments to the taxi reforms in Finland because it is causing more and more trouble with the passage of time. Taxi drivers are unhappy about it and some of the taxi drivers are working beyond legal limits and some of them are driving at over speed to get the customers at once because current taxi reforms have made a huge difference between demand and supply in the market.

This research may have sample bias, selection bias and cultural bias. It is very important to have enough sample size to produce valid research results. The larger sample will make the results more precise. Because of corona virus, it was not possible to have access to all the taxi drivers for quantitative research. The quantitative research includes response from 50 taxi drivers using questionnaire form. The statistical results need a larger sample size to be considered representation of the entire sector. Selection bias research error occurs when a probability sampling method is used to select a sample, but the sample does not represent the entire concerned population. It is possible that the five qualitative interviews and fifty quantitative interviews in this research is not truly a random sample. Lastly, more than 50 percent of the taxi drivers in Helsinki region have foreign origin. It has been noticed that more than two third of the participants who took part in the qualitative and quantitative interviews and surveys respectively have foreign background. Hence, there is a possibility that the research has only taken into consideration the response of taxi drivers with foreign background in Helsinki.

6 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been given to the case company based on the expert opinions, analysis of semi-structured interviews, questionnaire survey, research of The State of Queensland (Department of Justice and Attorney-General) and report of European Agency for Safety and Health at Work.). A taxi driver must go out of the taxi to stretch his muscles during breaks instead of sitting in the taxi and using mobile phone. A taxi driver must sit in a correct sitting posture while driving and waiting in the taxi. The drivers of the case company from foreign background can minimize racist behaviour of some customer by improving Finnish language skills and driving skills. The case company must have occupational health care doctor for the employees because cost of occupational health care doctor is far less than the medical costs or sick payment if the employee gets sick.

As stipulated in the Occupational Health Care Act (Finland 2001), the case company should arrange occupational health care at its own expense. A case company should not allow worker to perform his or her work duties if the medical test performed on the worker reveals that his or her health is at risk at work due to personal health characteristics. The case company shall provide occupational health care doctor with all the information. For example, working arrangements, occupational accidents and workplace condition to prevent and analyze work-related health risks of the employees. Besides this, the case company shall provide possibility to employees to daywork too who are mostly working in the night to avoid risks to employee's health and well-being as stipulated in the Occupational Safety and Health Act (Finland 2002).

The driver should maintain a good neutral posture while driving (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work 2010). Driving a taxi can be relatively inactive job so a taxi driver must exercise on off days and between the breaks to keep himself fit and healthy. A taxi driver must keep bottle of water with himself and drink plenty of water to keep himself hydrated. The taxi driver should always test the weight of the passenger's luggage before lifting or handling it. The luggage should be as close to the body as possible while lifting and the back should not be twisted or bent while lifting weights. The driver should adjust the seat and mirrors in such a way that he finds it easy to reach all vehicle controls and does not need to twist the body. The case company should make roster of the drivers which is realistic and include enough weekly and daily rest period. A taxi driver should reduce intake of caffeine, sugar, salty and fatty foods. He should eat high fibre foods which release energy slowly. (Department of Justice and Attorney-General 2012.)

On the other hand, the following recommendation are for the legislative body of Finland based on all the research of this thesis. There should be same rules for every taxi company operating in Finland. All taxis should be fitted with obligatory same taxi fare meters which enable tax authorities to see the information of every paid trip.

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Appendix 1:

Reserach Project

Developing Occupational Health and Safety of Taxi Drivers in Helsinki

Questionnaire

Please, complete the questionnaire by ticking or circling the right answer. You may select more than one option and leave the question unanswered if you are not sure about it.

1. How long have you been working as a taxi driver?
 - 1) 1 year or less
 - 2) 2 years or more
 - 3) 5 years or more

2. Do you like working as a taxi driver?
 - 1) A lot
 - 2) Yes
 - 3) May be
 - 4) No

3. How often do you work?
 - 1) Few days a week
 - 2) 5 days a week
 - 3) 6 days a week
 - 4) Everyday

4. How often do you work i.e. drive taxi more than 11 hours in a single day?
 - 1) Never
 - 2) Once a year
 - 3) Once a month
 - 4) Every week

5. How often do you work more than 50 hours in a single week?
 - 1) Never
 - 2) Once a year

- 3) Once a month
 - 4) Every week
6. Do you work like a worker or are you self-employed?
- 1) Employee
 - 2) Self-employed
7. How often do you exercise or go to the gym?
- 1) Never
 - 2) Monthly
 - 3) Weekly
 - 4) Few days a week
8. How often have you faced racist comments?
- 1) Once a year or more
 - 2) Monthly
 - 3) Weekly
9. Are you happy with the new taxi industry legislation which started 1 July 2018?
- 1) A lot
 - 2) Yes
 - 3) May be
 - 4) No
 - 5) I dislike it
10. How often do you talk with customers while giving a ride?
- 1) Every time
 - 2) Sometimes
 - 3) Very less
 - 4) Not at all
11. Is taxi driver job stressful?
- 1) Yes
 - 2) Little bit
 - 3) No
12. Do you have occupational health and safety doctor?
- 1) Yes

2) I do not know

3) No

13. Do you have pain in neck, shoulders, or back?

1) No

2) Yes

14. What would you suggest to other taxi drivers to ensure good health and safety?

1) Exercises at least few days a week

2) Eat healthy and balanced diet

3) Talk with the customers

4) Work maximum 8 hours a day

15. How many hours do you sleep at night?

1) 6 hours or less

2) 7 hours

3) 8 hours

4) more than 8 hours

16. How often do you face accidents at work?

1) Once a year or less

2) More than once a year

3) Monthly

4) Weekly

17. Did you face any accident at work because of your own mistakes?

1) Yes

2) I do not remember

3) No

18. What kind of mistakes have you made so far?

1) Working more than the recommended number of hours

2) Eating unhealthy food

3) Bad sitting posture

4) No exercise

5) Not talking with the customers

19. Would you recommend other people to work as a taxi driver in Helsinki region?

- 1) Highly recommended
- 2) Yes
- 3) No

20. Is it possible to eliminate all possible work accidents while working as a taxi driver by following all the safety guidelines?

- 1) Yes
- 2) May be
- 3) No

Appendix 2: Transcript of Interview with Aleksi

Unofficial translation from Urdu to English

Interviewer: T

Interviewee: A

T: How long have you been working as a taxi driver?

A: I have been working as a taxi driver since 2018 so about 1 and a half year.

T: Do you like your job?

A: I used to like my job in the beginning but not anymore because now there are too many taxis.

T: How would you rate your job on a scale from one to ten where 1 mean that you like your job a lot and 10 means that you dislike your job.

A: If I would have to rate my job on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1=I like my job and 10=I dislike my job; I would rate 4. Nowadays, I do not work at all because of coronavirus.

T: Have you ever worked more than 11 hours continuously in a single day?

A: Yes, I have worked more than 11 hours in a single day.

T: When was it?

A: It was new years' eve and when Finland won Ice hockey championship last year.

T: How often do you work more than 11 hours continuously in a single day?

A: On average, there are few days in a year when I work more than 11 hours continuously.

T: Why exactly?

A: In our taxi business especially in my job as I do not work with any big taxi company. I am self-employed and I drive my own taxi. In simple words, I just use my car as a taxi. I do not get many taxi orders so for us it is a lucky day if we get customers at once so if there is such kind of day we do not feel like to go back home. In other words, the main reason for working more than 11 hours continuously is because of low income in taxi industry nowadays.

T: Do you think it is not good for your health?

A: I do not think it is dangerous to work sometimes more than 11 hours in a single day. Because, in my opinion, if one works just few days more than 11 hours in a year than it does not harm your health at all. Especially, I rest a lot one day before such kind of long shift. For example, if I know that there is going to be a special day like New Year's Eve with lot of customers than I sleep one day before a lot, to get prepared for such kind of long day. I also take coffee and energy drinks with me which keep me awake on such days.

T: Have you ever worked more than 40 hours in a single week? As you know in most of the service sector like office work or restaurant industry, people usually work 40 hours a week.

A: I work 10 to 11 hours in a single day so

T: So, do you mean you work 10 hours a day so 5 days will make 50 hours per week?

A: Hmm, I work 6 days a week so around 60 hours per week. So around 55 to 60 hours per week because sometimes I just go home after 8 hours of work. Let us say 55 to 60 hours.

T: So, you take one day off at least?

A: Yes, at least one day off from work per week.

T: Have you ever thought about it that why do you regularly work every week around 55 to 60 hours per week. Isn't it like violating the law?

A: Yes, I thought about it but just thought about it.

T: Is it because there is low income in taxi industry?

A: Yes, we get customers after a long time. It usually takes 2 or two and a half hours to get a customer. If you are not 11 hours at work a day, then you will not make enough money. If I get customers like after 1 or one and a half hour than I will be happy to return to home after 8 hours of work.

T: You have already told me that you are self-employed so I will skip this question.

T: How about your diet? In general, what is your way of having food during the working shift which last 11 hours at least?

A: Normally, I eat around 13:00 in the noon. I just have lunch. I do not take breakfast.

T: So, you do not take breakfast at all?

A: Yes, not at all. It does not matter whether I am at work or not. Even if I am not driving taxi but still, I do not like to have breakfast. This is just my own choice. Only for dieting.

T: So, you wake up early in the morning around

A: Around 7:00 or 7:30 am

T: And you do not take breakfast and just leave to work around 11:00?

A: Yes, around 11:00 or 12:00 I leave my home from work. I do not eat anything. I just take coffee. When it is 13:00 or 14:00 then I eat lunch nearby the West Terminal, there is a Nepali Restaurant on Tyynenmerenkatu. Otherwise, I just take something from home to eat like sandwiches. And when I return to home at night around 9:00 pm then I eat dinner.

T: Alright, so what about snacks? Do you like to keep some in the car with you during work?

A: Yes, snacks like dry fruits and fruits I keep with me or salad. Also, I like to keep energy drinks with me because I like to take it if I feel lazy or not active.

T: What about exercise or do you go to the gym?

A: Yes, I go to the gym before going to work so around 10 and I leave to work around 11 and it is like 4 days week.

Interviewer: Do you think that night time work is more depressing?

Interviewee: Night work is more successful with respect to income but yes, I would say that my personal opinion is that night time work is more stressful or I just feel like that I feel more weak if I work at night. It is mostly because of my habit because I like to sleep at night. I am unable to sleep in the day so I just work few night a year which are very profitable like new years eve or or labour day eve.

Interviewer: Do you think that it is stressful to sit in the car waiting for the customers?

Interviewee: Well, it depends. If I am in a place like West Harbour in Helsinki than I am relaxed because I just go out of the taxi and walk around but if I am in a place where I need to be in the taxi all the time like airport or so than I am not relaxed and I will upset because you need to be in the taxi all the time at airport. It may take up to few hours to get the customer. One need to be almost all the time in the taxi but you have to move the taxi with the passage of time. Similarly if I am at the central railway station of Helsinki than neither am I relaxed because the driver continuously have to move the taxi after 5, 10 or 15 minutes.

Interviewer: Have you ever received any racist comments from the customers?

A: Nope, I have never received any such comments. But I have heard many times that my friends have had incidents. Once few customers said to me that they are racist but of course they just said so, they did not say anything to me.

T: What about the behaviour of the customers? Have they ever misbehaved with you?

A: Yes, at least it happened to me twice that customers agreed a sum of money with me to pay for the taxi ride but in the middle of the journey or after few minutes they say that they

will pay me less. So I just leave them to the nearby taxi stand and ask them to take any other taxi.

T: Why do you think customers do like that?

A: I am sure customers just do it with normal taxi they never do the same with a big company taxi. I think they do so because they think normal taxi drivers do not know anything and they just want to misuse us. Otherwise, maybe customers also think that the normal taxis will charge them more maybe that's why they try to bargain or save some money in advance. Anyway, I am not sure about it. Once I had a lady and she said she wants to go to Martinlaakso from West Harbour in Helsinki. We agreed a price of 50 euros but just after a few minutes of ride. She said that I can pay you 30 or 35 euros. She was also a drunk so I thought to save my time because it is a long journey and she might misbehave all the time so I left her to the nearest taxi stand of Ruoholahti. I even asked her that would you behave the same if you were in any other taxi like TaksiiHelsinki and she said no. So I am sure they just behave like it in other taxis.

T: Do you think that customers misbehave at night more than the day in taxi?

A: Yes, I think. Maybe it is directly related to alcohol as people can be drunk at night.

T: Do you talk with the customers while ride or not? Or how often do you talk with your customers?

A: Well, it depends on the body language of the customers. If I notice from the body language or facial expressions of the customer he or she is interested to talk with me then I talk. Otherwise I keep quiet. Because I do not want to disturb the customer. If the customer is just replying me with few words then I know that I am disturbing the customer or maybe the customer is busy on the phone.

T: What do you do when you are in the car waiting for the customer as it may take sometimes 2 to 3 hours.

A: I just read books or watch youtube but sometimes I go out for walk.

T: Do you have occupational health care doctor?

A: No

T: How many hours do you sleep at night?

A: 8 hours

T: Have you received any accidents at work?

A: No

T: Any other examples of accidents at work?

A: Not at all but yes one of my friend received a small accident.

T: Do you think that regional authorities or Traficom or legislative can do anything to improve anything for taxi driver?

A: First of all, I would say that now it is too late to do anything. They would have thought about it one year ago. Even right now they are issuing more permits to taxi driver and companies to operate as a taxi company. There should be any limit. Any limit. But they are issuing taxi driver and company permits without any limit. Now the market of is saturated and the demand is less but there are too many taxis in the market. So it was a mistake by the authority but even now if the authorities stop issuing more permit may be the situation does not get more worse. I can not say that the situation will become better because now it is too late but may be the situation does not get worse.

T: What should be the way to stop issuing new permits? I think it is not possible to completely stop isusing new permits because even if they do so one day again they have to open it because current taxi drivers or companies will not last forever? What should be the requirements?

A: Authorities must issue the licenses according to the needs of every municipality. They can calculate the ratio easily.

T: But what should be the requirement? For example, if the authorities say they will not issue any more permit anymore to taxi companies for at least 3 years and after that even year around 200 permit to taxi companies to operate as a taxi company in Finland.

A: Yes, it is fine, something that it

T: But what should be the requirement? Like these 200 permits per year, who can get it because I am sure the application will be 2000 so how authorities can decide who will get these 200 permits. For instance, earlier it was like that that taxi service providing companies only get taxi company permit if they are a pretty big company but now every individual can get it. How they will define that who get 200 permits from 2000 applications?

A: Yes, it is a good questions. I do not know about it. I would like to say first come and first serve but in this situation I am sure everyone would like to submit the application as early as possible when it will open online but it would be just like a lottery. I do not know what to say about it.

T: Alright. Keeping in mind all the issues like neck and back pain ..

A: Yes, I do have it and many of my colleagues

T: .. What would you recommend to other taxi drivers especially who are new regarding safety and health issues?

A: I would recommend that exercises is very important. You should stretch your body and muscles during breaks. Need to get out of the taxi if there are no customers. Secondly, do you work more than the legal limit which is 11 hours per day at maximum. A taxi driver should keep something to eat with him to maintain gulucose level. Also they should keep water to keep hydrated.

T: Okay. Do you think it is possible to eliminated all work related accidents and health issues?

A: I think it depends on your driving style. If you follow the rules then you can eliminate accidents but of course it also depends on your personal life and how active are you with sports and balanced diet. By following a balanced diet and being active in exercise or sports you can definitely eliminate health issues. Because it also depends on the age of the person.

T: Do you think that police should check the logbook of drivers often to ensure the safety of driver and passengers?

A: Yes, I think so because I noticed sometimes few taxi drivers, drive a lot like 14 hours or 16 hours continuously. So police should check often.

(opening greetings and closing statements of interview has been removed for privacy reasons)

Appendix 3: Transcript of Interview with Eetu

T: How long have you been working as a taxi driver?

E: Something like one and a half year.

T: Do you like working as a taxi driver?

E: Not really

T: How often do you work?

E: It depends. Nowadays not at all but it was a time when I used to work every day.

T: How often have you worked more than 11 hours in a single day continuously?

E: Many times, I don't remember exactly but lets see at least twice a week.

T: How often have you worked more than 40 hours in a week?

E: Almost every week.

T: So you are self-employed right?

E: Yes

T: How often do you exercise or go to the gym?

E: I don't go to the gym anymore but I exercise.

T: What kind of exercise?

E: Like going for a walk and at home.

T: What do you do at home?

E: Exercises like planking.

T: How often have you faced racist comments?

E: A lot, I can not count it.

T: Really, how often?

E: It is a normal thing now. It happens often.

T: But how often, like on monthly basis like once a month?

E: Hmm no even weekly like once a week at least.

T: What do you think that this behaviour is at night usually?

E: No, I do not think that day or night matter. It just depends on the person that what kind of person he is. In my opinion, it does not matter that it is day or night or whether the person is drunk or not.

T: Are you happy with the new taxi industry legislation?

E: Not at all

T: How often do you talk with customers while giving a ride?

E: Every time but it depends on the customer too that how he or she respond after greetings. At least, I always greet and go for a small talk. After small talk you can easily realize that is customer willing to talk or not. I always talk because I think it decrease the gap between driver and the customer because normal journey can last 15 minutes so it does not feel good if you are sitting still.

T: Is taxi driver job stressful?

E: Yes, a lot.

T: Do you have occupational health and safety doctor?

E: No

T: What do you eat in a normal work shift?

E: To be honest, very bad.

T: How? or Why?

E: I do not make food at home and usually eat outside which is fast food or pizza kebab, etc.

T: How about snacks?

E: Yes, I keep snacks with me or go for coffee breaks because without it I can not continue work for hours.

T: Have customers misbehaved with you? Or any clash on taxi fare?

E: Yes, misbehaved many time but not really any clash over payment but it usually happened that customers agree a destination but later on they say one person wants to drop at this point and the other few hundred meters away and so on. Once it happened that one woman took my taxi when we reached the destination than she ran away without paying the fare. I complained to police and she paid me my money after two days. So never any fare issue.

T: How about work-related accidents? Did you face any?

E: No, never.

T: How many hours do you sleep at night?

E: Around 7 hours or 6 hours.

T: What would you recommend to other taxi driver to ensure their safety and health at work and according to you what measure government or legislative or traficom or regional authorities can take to make the situation better?

E: First of all, authorities should stop issuing more permit to taxi driver or companies to operate as taxi service provider. There should be a requirement.

T: What kind of requirement?

E: For example, if one wants to work as a cleaner at the airport there is a requirement that a person is resident in Finland for 5 years. So if one wants to work as a taxi driver he must be resident of Finland for 5 years. Because if one has not driven a normal car in Finland for 4 or 5 years than how he can drive taxi in Finland. Secondly, there should be enough Finnish language skills. I know many driver who do not speak Finnish at all. I can not believe how it works. I am not saying that a taxi driver should speak Finnish fluently but he must be able to communicate in Finnish language.

T: So you mean that it is a false claim from the authorities that whoever pass the taxi driver license test, he speak perfect Finnish because the test is in Finnish language and only a person who understand Finnish can answer that test.

E: Completely wrong. A person can just memorize the answer. Listen, they have also removed area test to get taxi driver license. How can you be a good taxi driver without knowing the area.

T: So again I will repeat my question that what would you recommend to the other taxi drivers regarding health and safety?

E: I would say that exercise is very important. Being a taxi driver exercise is really important.

T: Thank you for your answers ..

E: I would request you to convey my message to the authorities to stop issuing more license but the situation is getting worse and worse. There should be a sequence number and how is getting the license.

T: What should be the requirements then in that sequence?

E: They should give license according to the present situation or after 3 years what will be the situation then. I tell you the truth that there is a lot depression, taxi driver and fighting among themselves for customers, taxi drivers are driving taxi as fast as possible to get the customers.

T: Yes, I understand it is also not good for the environment as the system was running well with 2000 taxis in the region and now we have 10000 taxis and the system is almost the same but a lot more environmental pollution.

E: Yes, there should be a checker from authorities who check every taxi without any discrimination. As you know many taxi drivers violate rules and create problems for other taxi drivers.

(opening greetings and closing statements of interview has been removed for privacy reasons)

Appentdix 4: Transcript of Interview with Juha

T: How long have you been driving taxi?

J: I just drove taxi for 6 months. It was a contract.

T: Why did you choose this profession?

J: It was a good contract with good money and I learned a lot by doing that work.

T: Have you ever worked more than 11 year in a single day?

J: Yes, It actually depends. Sometimes the work shift can be of 13 or 14 hours. Or sometimes even for 4 or 6 hours. It just depends how much you want to work

T: So the shift was longer than 11 hours sometimes?

J: Yes, it was just a contract of 6 months so I wanted to work as much as possible.

T: Were you self employed?

J: Yes

T: Have you ever worked more than 40 hours in a single week?

J: Yes many times I have worked 70 hours in one hour.

T: How about your eating habits during the work shift?

J: Usually there were many breaks during the work shift like lunch break can be 2 or 3 hours. And usually after half an hour there was a small break. So I go for coffee.

T: Lunch you used to eat in the restaurants?

J: No, I used to bring lunch with me from home and I keep snacks with me and salad.

T: How often do you exercise or go the the gym?

J: I just do walking and being active but not gym.

T: Is it stressful to work at night or wait in the taxi for few hours if no customer?

J: The work was maximum until 11 pm so not whole night.

T: Have you received any racist circumstances?

J: No

T: How often customers misbehave at night?

J: At least never with me

T: How the new legislation has affected your business which started on 1st July 2018?

J: Yes for me it is ok. I am happy about it but yes there are too many taxis nowadays so government of Finland should think about it because the population of Finland is so small. It is useless to issue too many permits. In fact the situation is getting worse.

T: Do you talk with customers while giving a ride?

J: Not really. If someone talk with me then I talk. Otherwise, not really. But sometimes there are same customer so than I talk with them because I know them.

T: How many hours do you sleep at night?

J: 7 hours.

T: Did you ever face any accidents at work?

J: No

T: What do you do when you are just sitting in the taxi waiting for the customer?

J: I usually go out for a small walk around the taxi or do some stretching exercises.

T: If you work as a worker i.e. employee what do you think your company or employer can do to remove occupational health and safety concerns?

J: It was ok. I do not have any suggestion. I was happy with my company management.

T: Do you have occupational health care doctor?

J: May be. I do not know.

T: What improvements can be made from the government or legislative in the taxi industry?

J: There should be a limit. Government should not issue unlimited permits.

T: What should be the requirements of issuing limited permits?

J: The requirement should be first come and first serve rule.

T: What would you suggest to other taxi drivers?

J: Exercise is very important. Also eat balance diet. I always eat balanced diet and bring usually food with me from home. I always go out for a walk whenever I have break.

(opening greetings and closing statements of interview have been removed for privacy issues)

Appendix 5: Transcript of Interview with Petri

T: How long have you been driving taxi?

P: Around 1 year or more than 1 year but not continuously

T: Why did you choose this profession?

P: I just started it as a part time job while studying.

T: Have you ever worked more than 11 year in a single day?

P: Yes, sometimes when I need more income.

T: Are you self employed?

P: Yes, now I am but in the beginning I was an employee

T: Have you ever worked more than 40 hours in a single week?

P: Yes many times

T: How about your eating habits during the work shift?

P: I do not really remember, or it is very random actually. Sometimes I just do not eat and always wait for my shift to finish and come back home to eat. Sometimes, I eat in any restaurant on break. Sometime just rely on snacks. Sometimes I also bring food with me from home. I do not like my job because of this reason that during work shift of 11 hours, one can not eat properly or healthy.

T: How often do you exercise or go the the gym?

P: It is also random, sometimes I do not exercise for months and sometimes I start on daily basis but nowadays at least few days a week I exercise.

T: Is it stressful to work at night or wait in the taxi for few hours if no customer?

P: Yes it is. That's why I do not like this job.

T: Have you received any racist circumstances?

P: No, I do not remember

T: How often customers misbehave at night?

P: Little bit more than the day time, may be because of alcohol.

T: How the new legislation has affected your business which started on 1st July 2018?

P: I am happy with it because I got the possibility to get license easily without few days but now I am unhappy with it because I am not able to make enough salary. Huge difference between demand and supply.

T: Do you talk with customers while giving a ride?

P: Yes I like to talk but sometimes I am damn tired so

T: How many hours do you sleep at night?

P: Usually 6 hours or sometimes 9 hours.

T: Did you ever face any accidents at work?

P: No

T: What do you do when you are just sitting in the taxi waiting for the customer?

J: I just feel sad and think about the customers hehe I think that time is worse and not productive and completely useful. I do not feel like to do anything else but then I start to use mobile or social media.

T: If you work as a worker i.e. employee what do you think your company or employer can do to remove occupational health and safety concerns?

J: I have no suggestion

T: Do you have occupational health care doctor?

J: No, but earlier I had when I was working for the company.

T: What improvements can be made from the government or legislative in the taxi industry?

J: They should stop issuing more taxi company permits. Secondly, customers should always pay the taxi fare, sometimes customer just try to find excuses so that they do not have to pay any fare.

T: What would you suggest to other taxi drivers?

J: Sleep at least 7 hours continuously and eat balanced diet, talk with customers and try to exercise.

(opening greetings and closing statements of interview)

Appendix 6: Transcript of Interview with Ville

T: How long have you been driving taxi?

V: Several months

T: Why did you choose this profession?

V: Just for some extra money.

T: Do you like your job?

V: Yes, it is ok.

T: Have you ever worked more than 11 year in a single day?

V: May be few times

T: Are you self employed?

V: No, I work for one company but may be soon I will stop because my company is going bankrupt.

T: Have you ever worked more than 40 hours in a single week?

V: Not really because it is just like my part time job.

T: How about your eating habits during the work shift?

V: I just have coffee or tea at work. For my lunch or meal break which last half an hour or 1 hour, I always go home.

T: How often do you exercise or go the the gym?

V: I try to exercise at home but it is very random and no I do not go to gym. I prefer to play sports like badminton.

T: Do you have pain in the neck, shoulders, or back?

V: Yes, often.

T: Is it stressful to work at night or wait in the taxi for few hours if no customer?

V: Yes, night can be more stressful and yes I do not like sitting alone in the taxi waiting for the customers.

T: Have you received any racist circumstances?

V: Sometimes

T: How often customers misbehave at night?

V: I did not work at night a lot so I have no idea.

T: Have you ever faced any fare problem?

V: Yes, sometimes customers do not pay properly or what was agreed and they just make lame excuses.

T: How the new legislation has affected your business which started on 1st July 2018?

V: It is ok because I got the possibility to get license easily.

T: Do you talk with customers while giving a ride?

V: Yes at least small talk.

T: How many hours do you sleep at night?

J: at least 6 hours and usually 7 hours.

T: Did you ever face any accidents at work?

J: No

T: What do you do when you are just sitting in the taxi waiting for the customer?

J: Nothing reading newspaper or using mobile.

T: If you work as a worker i.e. employee what do you think your company or employer can do to remove occupational health and safety concerns?

J: Hmm, I do not get any sick leave payment so I guess company should arrange it so taxi driver can get rest if he is sick. It is good for the safety of driver and passengers too.

T: Do you have occupational health care doctor?

J: I think no, the company never told me but it is a big company so I am sure they have it.

T: What improvements can be made from the government or legislative in the taxi industry?

J: They should issue limited number of driving licenses.

T: What would you suggest to other taxi drivers?

J: In this profession exercise is very important.

(opening greetings and closing statements of interview)

Appendix 7: Quantitative Research results

i	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	
d	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5
q	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1		2	2	2	2	2	2
q	2	2	4	2	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	4	2	4	3	3	4	3		4	2	3	4	4	2
q	3	3	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	4	4		1	3	1	2	2	3
q	2	4	3	4	3	4	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3		4	3	3	3	4	3
q	3	3	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3		3	3	3	4	3	3
q	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		1	2	2	2	2	2
q	1	1	3	4	1	2	2	3	4	2	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	4		1	3	3	1	2	1
q	1	1	1	1	3	0	1	3	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1		2	1	1	0	1	0
q	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4		4	4	4	4	4	4

q 1 0	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	2		3	3	3	1	2	3
q 1 1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1		1	1	1	1	1	1
q 1 2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	1		3	3	3	3	3	3
q 1 3	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1		2	2	2	2	2	2
q 1 4	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	4	3	1	1		1	1	1	3	1	1
q 1 5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	2		2	2	2	2	2	2
q 1 6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1
q 1 7	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		3	3	3	3	3	3
q 1 8	1	1	2	1	3	4	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	1	4	2	1		1	1	1	1	3	1

q 1 9	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3			3	3	3	3	3	3
q 2 0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	2	1	2

i d	p 2 6	p 2 7	p 2 8	p 2 9	p 3 0	p 3 1	p 3 2	p 3 3	p 3 4	p 3 5	p 3 6	p 3 7	p 3 8	p 3 9	p 4 0	p 4 1	p 4 2	p 4 3	p 4 4	p 4 5	p 4 6	p 4 7	p 4 8	p 4 9	p 5 0	
q 1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3
q 2	4	2	3	3	3	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	3	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	4	2
q 3	2	3	2	4	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	4	1	3	2	3	2	2	2
q 4	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	1	1
q 5	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	2
q 6	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
q 7	4	4	2	3	2	4	2	2	3	4	3	2	2	3	3	4	2	2	3	2	4	3	2	4	4	

q 1 7	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
q 1 8	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	4	0	4		
q 1 9	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
q 2 0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

2. Do you like working as a taxi driver?

1. a lot , 0 people

2. yes , 13 people 26 percent

3. may be , 12 people 24 percent.

4. no , 24 people 48 percent.

no reply from 1 people or 2 percent.

2	2	4	2	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	3	3	4	3		4	2	3	4	4	2
4	2	3	3	3	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	3	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	2

11. is taxi job stressful?

1. yes , 44 people , 88 percent

2. little bit , 5 people , 10 percent

3. no

no reply from 1 people, 2 percent.

1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1		1	1	1	1	1	1
1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2

12. do you have occupational health care doctor?

1. yes , 8 people , 16 percent

2. I dot not know 0 people, 0 percent

3. no , 41 people , 82 percent, 1 pepole did not reply so 2 percent

3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	1		3	3	3	3	3	3
1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1

3. How often do you work?

1. few days a week, 6 peopple 12 percent

2. 5 days a week 15 people 30 percent

3. 6 days a week 21 people , 42 percent

4. everyday 7 people 14 percent , no reply from 1 people so 2 percent.

3	3	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	4	4		1	3	1	2	2	3
2	3	2	4	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	4	1	3	2	3	2	2

4. How often have you worked more than 11 hours a day?

1. Never 2 people, 4 percent

2. Once a year 3 people, 6 percent

3. Once a month 30 people, 60 percent.

4 Once a week 14 people, 28 percent, 1 people no reply 2 percent

2	4	3	4	3	4	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3		4	3	3	3	4	3
4	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	1	1

5. How often do you work more than 50 hours per week.

1. Never

2. Once a year 4 people, 8 percent

3. Once a month 32 people, 64 percent

4. Every week. 13 people 26 percent, 1 people no reply 2 percent

3	3	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3		3	3	3	4	3	3
3	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	2

8. How often have you faced racist comments from the customer?

1. once a year or more , 27 people, 54 percent

2. monthly , 5 people, 10 percent

3. weekly 2 people, 4 percent, 16 people no reply or 32 percent.

1	1	1	1	3	0	1	3	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1		2	1	1	0	1	0
0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	0

19. what would you recommend to other people, should they drive taxi

1. highly recommended

2. yes

3. no 49 perople 98 percent

3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		3	3	3	3	3	3
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

12. do you have occupational health care doctor?

1. yes , 8 people , 16 percent

2. I dot not know 0 people, 0 percent

3. no , 41 people , 82 percent, 1 pepole did not reply so 2 percent

3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	1		3	3	3	3	3	3
1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1

13. do you have pain in the neck?

1. no 11 people, 22 percent

2. yes 38 people 76 percent, 1 people no repy 2 percent

2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1		2	2	2	2	2	2
1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1

who do exercise get less pain in the neck, 11 people do and they do not have neck pain at all

7. how often do you exercise

1. never 6 people 12 percent

2. monthly 15 people 30 percent

3. weekly 17 people 34 percent

4. few days a week 11 people 22 percent, 1 no reply 2 percent

1	1	3	4	1	2	2	3	4	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4		1	3	3	1	2	1
4	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	4	4	3	2	2	3	4	4	2	2	3	2	4	3	2	4	4

13. do you have pain in the neck?

1. no 11 people, 22 percent

2. yes 38 people 76 percent, 1 people no reply 2 percent

2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1		2	2	2	2	2	2
1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1

Appendix 8: Transcript of Interview with Timo Toiviainen

TY: Thank you that you agreed to give me an interview. So I have some questions for you. The main reason to take this interview is because I am writing a thesis and it is about occupational health and safety of taxi drivers.

TT: The occupational health and safety of taxi drivers is same as occupational health and safety of other workers in Finland. The same act applies on them.

TY: Alright so I have been interviewing many taxi driver and they have been driving taxi for few years. They have many problems and in order to find solution. I thought it would be wise to interview someone professional in this filed like you. First of all, I will ask that is it okay for you if I write in my thesis your name and details about you ..

TT: Yes, it is okay for me.

TY: So the main question or the most common problem in this field among taxi driver is pain in the neck or shoulders and back. What do you think is the main reason for this problem and what would you like to suggest so that drivers will not have such problems.

TT: The reason for it is bad sitting posture and the solution would be to correct the sitting posture and exercise is really important. Exercise is compulsory as a hobby. Also one should not work too long.

TY: Alright so ..

TT: Yes, exercises will be like walking, running and tennis can be a good hobby too. Aerobics is very useful. Because as a taxi driver we sit for a long time without moving so blood circulation is effected so stretching and moving the body is compulsory.

TY: Many of the taxi drivers operate a small company or they are self employed. Do you think everyone should have occupational health care doctor?

TT: Yes, and as a general rule after 3 years one have to go for the check up but in my opinion it is not enough. At least, I have been asking my employee every year to go to medical health care doctor for complete check up. It is expensive to send worker to private health care as compared to public centers. I insist on worker to go to occupational health care doctor because they can diagnose the problem and would recommend the solution. The can prevent the problems from getting worse. The doctors in private clinics always have more time to use as compared to public health centers. It is also one of the reason why I select private occupational health care doctors. I have very good example of it, that I have one worker and he used to be sick like 10 days a month but I asked him to go to occupational health care doctor. It was expensive for the company to cover the medical costs but later on now he is maximum

sick just few days a month. So overall it saves money. So I would recommend to other taxi companies too that use occupational health care doctors, in the beginning it may sound expensive but on a longer run it will save the sick leave payment of the companies. Sickness leave payment of employees is a lot expensive than occupational health care doctor expenses. Lastly, the employer should always also for a sick leave certificate from the employees and if the reason of sick leave is almost the same than this issue should be solved.

TY: What would you say about the behaviour of taxi driver regarding working hours. Most of them according to my survey often work more than 11 hours continuously in one day?

TT: I would say that if a taxi driver is tired then he should not drive. The limit of 11 hours is fair enough. If you are awake for 24 hours, it means that you are drunk and not able to drive. The limit for alcohol is 0.5 and if you are awake for 24 hours, it means your level is 1.2 which is more than the double.

TY: Is it important to talk with the customer? Does it help drivers to relax and ease ..

TT: It depends on the situation, so you can notice from the customer if he is willing to talk or not. We have phones in the car so we can use it to enjoy, talk with your family or friends or we can keep a book with us but of course it is stressful but sometimes some of the driver do not even feel stress. They do not know about it.

TY: What would you suggest to tackle the racist comments from customers as usually taxi drivers who have foreign background have reported many racist comments in my survey.

TT: I think the solution can be if one driver is good at his profession and Finnish language skills also helps. No one will do anything if you are good at your profession or with Finnish language skills.

TY: What do you think can be a solution for the most biggest problem of i.e. deregulation of taxi industry? As all of the taxi drivers have reported that they are unhappy with it and their health is getting effected by it. They are not able to pay bills. They say that government should stop issuing new taxi permits.

TT: They can not stop. It will be against the law but of course they can change the law. But of course changing the law is not easy anymore now.

TY: Is it possible to set any requirements now?

TT: Of course, like earlier there were certain requirements. The new law has helped in that sense for example earlier we were not having enough cars in certain areas like small cities but now there can be enough taxis in that area.

TY: What would you recommend to other taxi drivers regarding health and safety?

TT: Eat healthy and exercises regularly especially aerobics exercises, about safety, all problems should be addressed before they become a big problem. You have to deal with the possible problems before they rise up to a big problem.

TY: What would be the solution of present situation because of deregulation of taxi law? As all taxi drivers are unhappy and if the law needs to be changed then how?

TT: I am sure that now it is not possible to go back to the earlier situation. The requirements can be raised to get the license in the future. It is not a professional demand to get the test passed by just 33 percent probability.

TT: What about company licenses?

TY: In Sweden, they also noticed that some people just oopen the company and close it declaring bankrupt and they open more companies. insurance companies and vero got effected. so a deposit of 5000 or 10000 shoudlb e despoisted if one is not paying it, etc. it need to be significant.

Appendix 9: Transcript of Interview with Henri Korttila

T: I would like to interview you to ask about occupational health and safety of taxi drivers in Helsinki region. I have been interviewing many taxi driver who have been driving taxi for 1 year or less in Helsinki region. They have discussed their problems with me. I would like to find a solution for these problems. The purpose of this interview is to ask you as you are a professional in this field with years of experience. The main problems with taxi drivers were pain in the neck and back.

H: According to me, there should be balance between work and your life. A taxi driver should have hobbies. They can be sports. The taxi driver must take at least one free day a week. He must take care of himself because in this profession, the work shifts are very long. It is very important to exercises because taxi driver spends almost all of his work time sitting still. A taxi driver should spend free time with friends and I would again say that exercise is really important. In this way, a taxi driver will also enjoy being at work when he will be physically fit. He will enjoy talking with the customer so yes exercise is really important in this profession. Most of the taxi drivers work a lot. Sometimes long shifts are every day but it can not work like that, one has to spend time on good hobbies too.

T: Alright, so my second question is about the new legislation which came into effect on 1st of July 2018. Almost every taxi driver is unhappy about it. They are saying that government should stop issuing new permits to taxi drivers or companies. Taxi drivers said in my survey that this law is making their life miserable and it also effects their work abilities and health.

H: In my opinion, it is not possible now to return back to the earlier situation. Now because of regulation, taxi service provider license are open to everyone. Now it is not possible to return back but one solution can be to have same rules for everyone. The law should be very simple, so clear that it is easy to check them. The law should be same for everyone, that everyone should pay taxes and other social contributions for themselves and their employees. It should be fair. There should be same rules and regulations for everyone and requirement too. The same taxi meter for every taxi which tax administration can check everytime and there should not be any taxi without roof sign. Every taxi should be noticeable. If the taxi is hidden than of course it is not possible to monitor it.

(opening greetings and closing statements of the interview have been removed for privacy concerns)