



# Survey of Health and Work Environment in Hairdressers' - Members of Union of Commercial Employees and the Swedish Hairdressers Association

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## Background

- Causes of back and neck pain are multifactorial where various occupational exposure may contribute to such disorders
- Some but limited evidences that
  - Non-neutral physical load and
  - Poor psycho-social work environment increases the risk of disorders in back/neck
- Work limiting disorders in the locomotive system are common and one reason why many hairdressers leave their profession.
  - A Finish study report that female hairdressers leave their profession due to disorders in elbow, wrist, neck or shoulder 2-3 times as often as women engaged in commercial work.



## Aim of This Survey

To, investigate the extent of work limiting disorders in neck/back and/or upper extremities among hairdressers

To analyse work-related and health-related factors that may be associated with such disorders

To identify hairdressers who do not have work limiting disorders, thus may be eligible to be included in a prospective study with the aim to assess the importance of physical strength and mobility for preventing onset of work hindering disorders in the neck/back and/or upper extremities

# Methods

- Collaboration with Union of commercial employees (Handels) and Swedish Hairdressers' Association (SFSAB)
  - Web based questionnaire to hairdressers who are members of Handels or SFSAB were distributed via E-mail on May 4<sup>th</sup> ,2017. Two reminders were sent
  - Questions about
    - Working hours, ergonomic equipment, social work climate, etc.
    - General stress
    - Physical activity, smoking
    - Health problems
    - Work limiting pain



## Methods (cont.)

Our goal was to optimise the responds rate, to make the conclusions from the survey generalizable to the target group

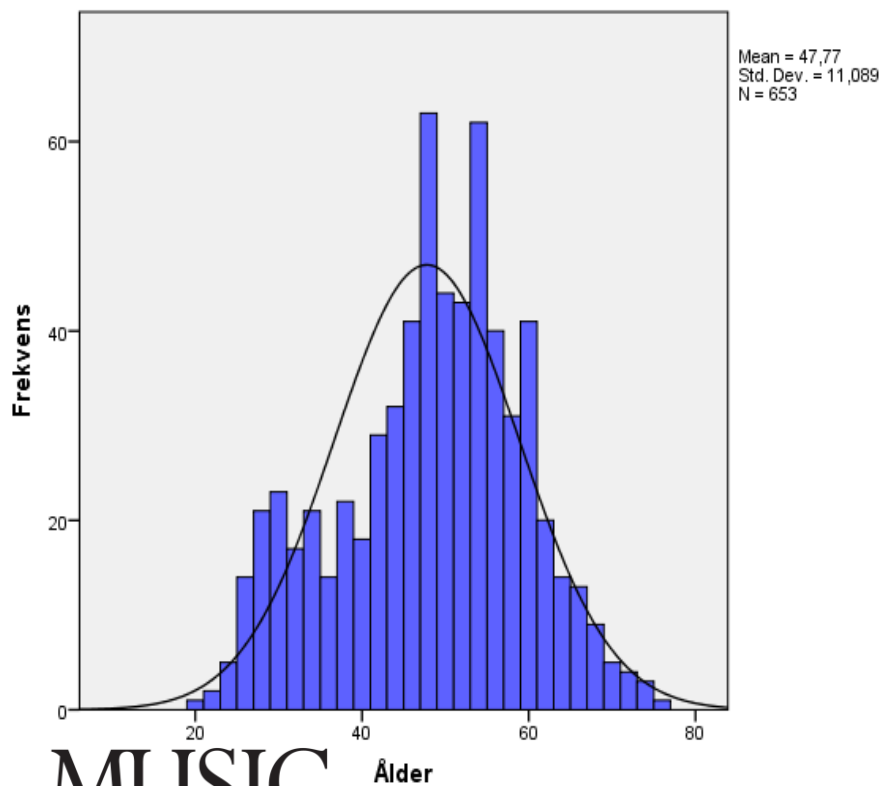
- We announce the study in the member magazines of the two associations where the aim of the project was explained and where the members encouraged to participate in the study
- The questionnaire was relatively short (10-15 minutes to complete) and was tested also to fit mobile phones
- The web page was closed down on May 31<sup>st</sup>
- Re-coding and analysis performed during the summer of 2017

# Results – Description of the Study Population

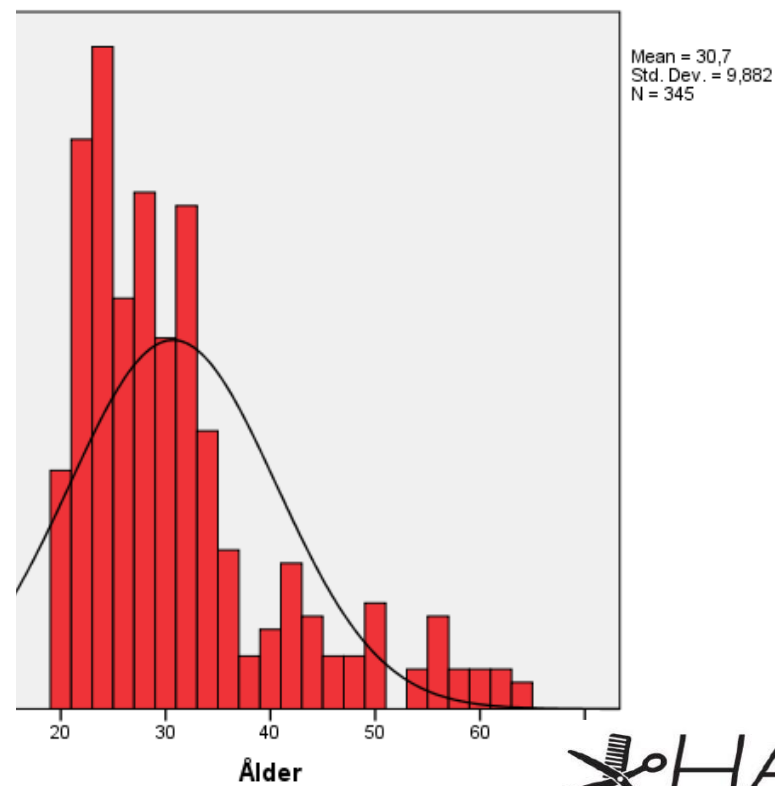
- The questionnaire was distributed to 1.433 of the hairdressers who are members in Handels and to 2.860 of the members of SFSAB
- Response rate 24 % and 23 % respectively (n= 346 and 653; total 999 hairdressers)
  - 94% women
  - Age; median 43 years (28 in Handels and 49 in SFSAB)
  - 71% had a hairdresser profiled high school education (marginal group difference)
  - Working hour/week (customers)
    - < 20 hrs 4%
    - 20-30 hrs 18%
    - 31-40 hrs 58 % (70 % Handels and 51% SFSAB)
    - > 40 hrs 21% (8% Handels and 27% SFSAB)
  - Average number of costumers per week: 30
  - 59% Wellness benefits (71% Handels and 53% SFSAB)

# Results - Age Distribution

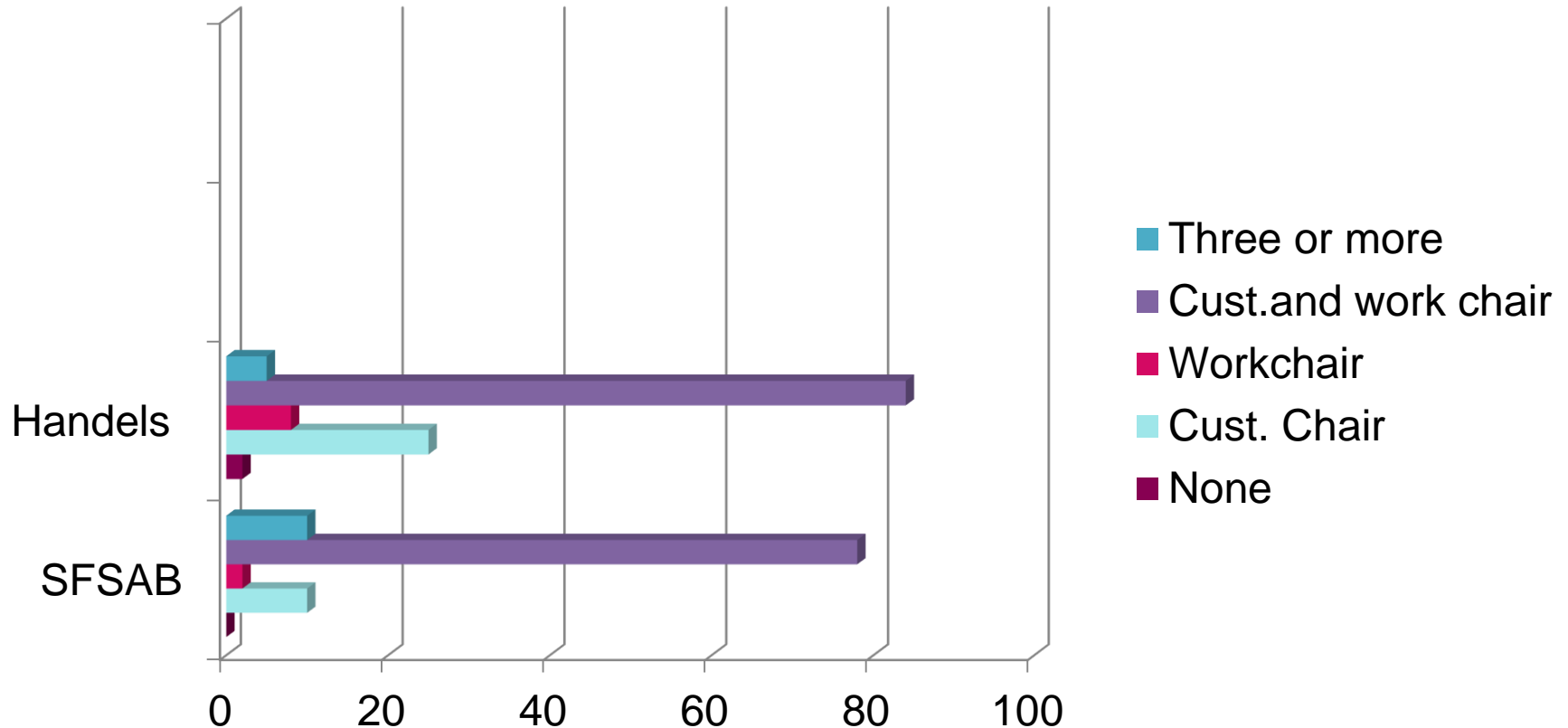
## SFSAB



## Handels



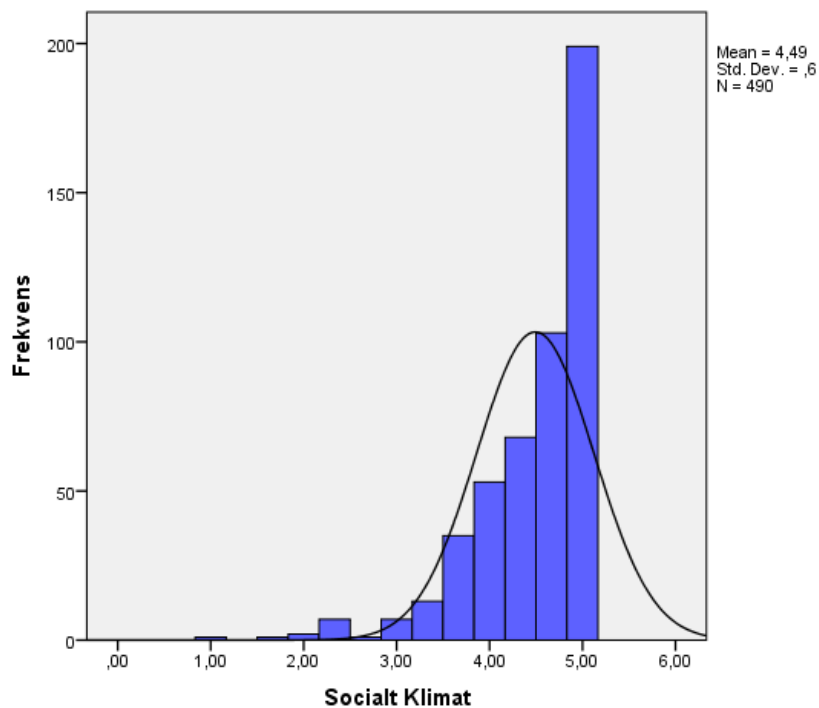
## Results – Ergonomic Equipment



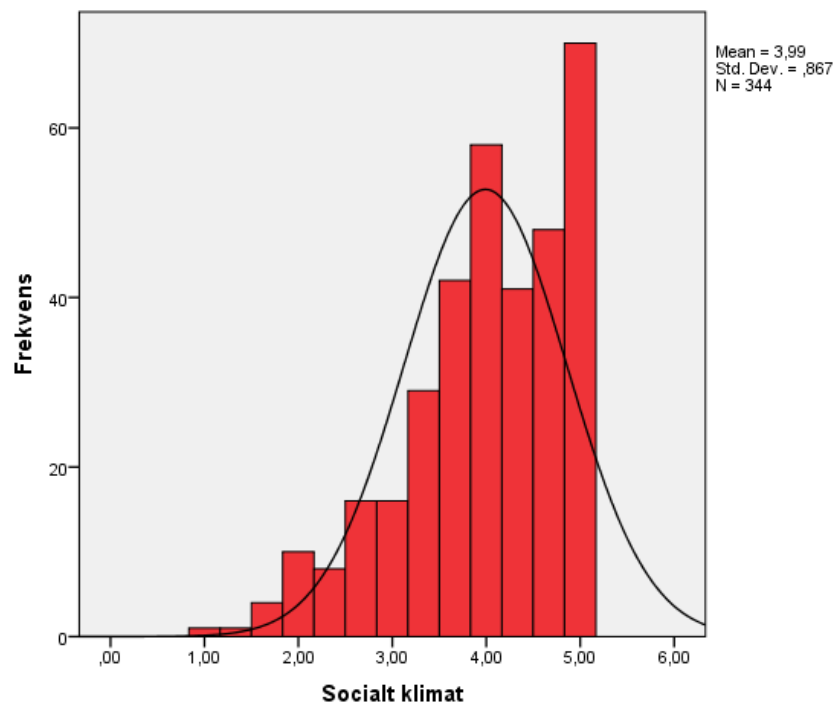


# Results - Social Work Climate (QPS)

## SFSAB



## Handels



# Results – Lifestyle Factors and Mental Health

## ■ BMI

- Normal 61%
- Overweight 29%
- Obesity 10%

## ■ Sleep

- Good sleep 78%
- Sleep disorders without daytime consequences 11%
- Sleep disorders with daytime consequences 11%

## ■ General stress

- Median 16 ( Handels 17, SFSAB 15)

## ■ Depressed mood

- None 85% ( Handels 78%, SFSAB 88 %)
- Moderate 10% ( Handels 13%, SFSAB 7%)
- Risk for depression 5% ( Handels 9%, SFSAB 5%)

## Results – Comorbidity

- 55% Health problems (one or more)
  - Most common; allergies (all types) and mental illness
  - 42% of the hairdressers with health problems experienced that these problems had an impact on their work to some extent or more

## Results – Back pain – Previous Three Months

- 43% have had such pain to any extend
  - Of these, 25% (n=106) experienced that the pain resulted in limitations of the performance at work – to some extend or more
- Number of days with sick absence: 4 (median) (1-90)
  - 27 of the hairdressers had sick absence due to back pain (one day or more)

## Results – Neck pain – Previous Three Months

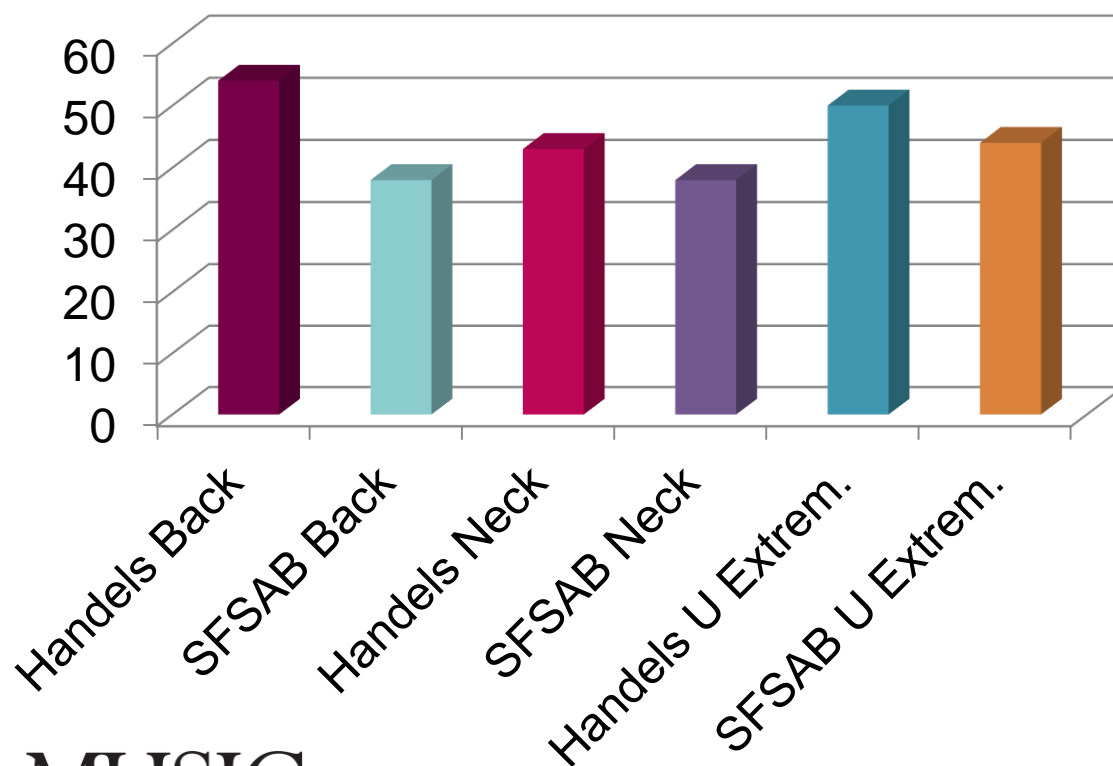
- 40% have had such pain to any extend
  - Of these 30% (n=117) experienced that the pain resulted in limitations of the performance at work – to some extend or more
- Number of days with sick absence: 8 (median) (2-90)
  - 18 of the hairdressers had sick absence due to neck pain (one day or more)

## Results – Upper extremities – Previous Three Months

- 46% have had such pain to any extent
- Of these, 31% experienced that the pain resulted in limitations of the performance at work – to some extent or more (n=141)
- Number of days with sick absence: 14 (median) (2-90)
  - 15 of the hairdressers had sick absence due to pain in upper extremities (one day or more)

# Results – Per Association

## Proportion of Pain/Ache Affecting Work Performance



## Results - Pain/Ache in All Three Body Areas (back/neck and upper extremities)

- 18% have had such pain to any extend
- Of these 60% (n=103) experienced that the pain resulted in limitations of the performance at work – to some extend or more
  - 43 of the hairdressers who reported any sick absence had such widespread disorders



## Results – Age, Pain per Association

Age category	Numbers (%) with pain in the back, neck and/or upper extremities	
	SFSAB	HF
20-29	11 (19)	57 (29)
30-39	19 (21)	27 (30)
40-49	34 (18)	7 (21)
50 and older	61 (20)	6 (24)

## Results - Factors Associated With the Main Outcome (pain in the back/neck a/o upper extremities that limits the work performance to a moderate extend or more )

Factors	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% Confidence interval
<b>Social work climate( 1-5)</b>		
Good > 4 (Ref)	1	
Less good (Lower 25:e percentile 0-4)	1.4	0.9 – 2.0
<b>General Stress (0-40) increase per unit</b>	1.1	1.1 - 1.1
<b>Work hindering comorbidity</b>	2.7	1.9 - 4.0
<b>BMI</b>		
Normal weight < 25 (Ref)	1	
Overweight /obesity = > 25	1.7	1.2 - 2.4
<b>Sleep</b>		
No sleep disorders (Ref)	1	
Sleep disorders without daytime consequences	0.6	0.3 -1.1
Sleep disorders with daytime consequences	0.8	0.4-1.3

## Strengths and Limitations

- Members in the two largest associations for hairdressers in Sweden were approached (covering the target population)  
Valid and frequently used questionnaires

However.....

- Less than 1/4<sup>th</sup> responded to the survey (major limitation of the generalizability)

## Conclusions - The Study Participants in This Survey.....on Group Level

- Somewhat higher general stress compared to a reference population
- In general, good social work climate
- Common with performance limiting pain/ache in back/neck and/or upper extremities
- Higher probability to have such disorders if high general stress, work hindering comorbidity, overweight/obesity and/or less good social work climate
- The results are not generalizable to hairdressers outside the study population due to low participation rate (response rate)

# THANK YOU!

- Union of Commercial Employees – Handels
  - financed the survey, contact information to the eligible hairdressers
- Swedish Hairdressers' Association
  - sending the questionnaire to their members
- The participating hairdressers