

## Original Paper

# Covid-19 and Precarity in South Africa's Minibus Taxi Industry

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### Abstract

*This article considers covid-19 and precarity in South Africa's minibus taxi industry. Covid-19 and the resulting national lockdown interrupted the operations of the industry (like other businesses) in South Africa. During the lockdown (from level 5 to level 1), some taxi operators complained that the lockdown resulted in them losing profit. Taxi drivers also complained that they are making less money through taxi fares (noting that each day they give collected fares to taxi owners and keep some of the money for petrol). The labour inspectors of the Department of Employment and Labour (DOEL) continue to find it difficult to exercise their role of inspecting working conditions in the industry. Despite the fact that the DOEL issued a Sectoral Determination for the taxi industry (Basic Condition of Employment Act 95 of 1997, Sectoral Determination 11: Taxi Sector 2005), which specifies basic employment conditions, the industry is still predominantly informal and employees have no job protection. Taxi drivers remain exempt from job-related benefits such as the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), which makes it impossible for them to benefit during difficult times such as Covid-19 and unemployment. Therefore, the virus and the lockdown revealed further the precariousness of taxi drivers and the concerns around making profit by taxi owners.*

### Keywords

*Minibus taxi industry, precarity, precariousness, lockdown, Covid-19, Coronavirus*

## 1. Introduction

In people's daily lives all around the world, public transportation plays a vital role in promoting social mobility (Atiullah Saif et al., 2018). Its influence is most visible in its impact on people's access to jobs, education, healthcare, and general economic development. Within the public transportation sector, the minibus taxi industry accounts for 68% of work trips, followed by buses and railways (Mmadi, 2012).

Privately-owned minibus taxis are the preferred mode of public transport for most people. Public transportation in South Africa is divided into three categories. The subsidized and unsubsidized commuter bus industry, which includes the two-bus rapid (BRT) system in Johannesburg and Cape Town, as well as a growing 16-seater minibus taxi industry; and the traditional commuter rail system and the modern Gautrain high-speed rail between Johannesburg, Tshwane (Pretoria), and the Oliver Tambo International Airport; and the subsidized and unsubsidized commuter rail system between Johannesburg, Tshwane (Pretoria), and the Oliver (Arope, 2017). In Gauteng, there are around 50 000 minibus taxis organized into 185 associations. Similarly, around 3000 buses are used for bus services, which are owned by a mix of private, parastatal, and municipal institutions. In South Africa, around 16 million people rely on minibus taxis to get to work or to attend health or leisure activities (Competition Commission, 2018). Despite accounting for a higher share of work travel than established buses and trains, the industry remains unsubsidized by the government. Approximately R90 billion in money is earned annually from the fares it collects across the country (Competition Commission, 2018). There are around 123 000 individual taxi operators in South Africa who are organized into taxi associations. Fuel costs the industry around R39 billion a year. In addition, the Competition Commission estimates that the industry spends R2 billion on insurance (Competition Commission, 2018). While the industry generates R90 billion from revenue, it only pays R5 million in taxes (IOL Reporter, 2021). The Minister of Finance, Tito Mboweni, revealed that only R5 million in tax is collected from the entire minibus taxi industry. R5 million includes tax collected from the industry's employment income. The challenge remains that the industry does not correctly disclose income from taxi business on their Corporate Income Tax (CIT).

It appears while that the industry contributes significantly to the economy of the country (even though it does not receive operational subsidies from government), only a small portion of taxi owners disclose income. The position of the industry cannot be understood without putting it in the larger sense of South Africa's political economy's evolution and transformation (Competition Commission, 2018). The industry operates in the context where the South African economy continues to face joblessness, hunger and inequality problems (South African Institute of Race Relations, 2019). Furthermore, there is a large rise in casual and insecure jobs around the world, including in South Africa (Kenny, 2009). Consequently, since the minibus taxi industry is based in this context, it is important to mention that such a context is negatively affected by the Covid-19. Recent analyses of the South African economy though speak of deepening inequality and entrenched poverty (Competition Commission, 2018).

This article uses the precariat theory (Clarke, 2006; Standing, 2011) to define the existence of precarious conditions of work in the industry prior Covid-19. The pandemic and the subsequent national lockdowns led to the disruptions of operations in the industry. Such disruptions led to further precariousness. In addition, this article discusses government's efforts to formalise the minibus taxi industry. The concept of a precariat has become prominent in recent years (Munck, 2013). According to Standing (2011), the precariat are people lacking seven forms of labour security. These people do not

have decent income and no protection against arbitrary dismissal. The seven forms of labour security are the following: “labour market security; employment security; job security; work security; skill reproduction security; income security and representation security” (Wright, 2016, p. 4). In addition to this, the precariat do not have defined job descriptions and tend to work long hours. This is the case for the taxi drivers and taxi marshals. The DOEL finds it difficult to enforce labour regulations for these employees. It has historically, at least since 1994, been complicated for the DOEL to enforce labour regulations because of the nature of the industry, and thus giving rise to precarious labour conditions. Non-compliance with labour regulations has always characterized the industry, which has historically struggled to be recognized since the apartheid years (Matebesi, 2018).

Before discussing the precariat and Covid-19, the article starts with a background of the industry. The following section contextualises the industry prior the Covid-19. It is clear that the industry has historically played an important role in the economy of South Africa. Covid-19 comes at the time when the industry is already characterized by the precarious existence of taxi drivers and taxi marshals.

## 2. Background

The industry continues to be situated within the wider patterns of precarity in South Africa, especially during the post-apartheid period. For example, Hlatshwayo found that Community Health Workers (CHW) are subjected to low pay and no benefits (2018). Also, Clarke revealed that forms of work in the service sectors “are generally insecure, low paying and poorly protected by labour legislation, social welfare and collective bargaining” (2006, p. 39). While precarious work was associated only with the retail and hospitality industries in the 1980s, and considered an atypical type of work (Hlatshwayo, 2018), it continues to be the norm in the minibus taxi industry. Part-time, contract, and seasonal jobs have all become more common in recent decades. The precarious labour status—compromised job security and stability—faced by many categories of employees, particularly in the global South, is a common feature of changing employment conditions.

The industry was founded by the black community and primarily continues to serve this community but under precarious working conditions (Baloyi, 2012). The sector expanded due to the deregulation policy of the apartheid government, which was introduced in 1987. However, the industry existed as far back as the early 1930s, in Natalspruit (now Katlehong), for example, where taxis were permitted to accommodate a maximum of four passengers (Godsell, 2016). At the time, taxis were mostly used for journeys within black townships. The urban black population was prohibited from entering the industry in large numbers under policies of segregation and due to inadequate financial resources. It was hard for a black person to operate a taxi. This was due to the introduction of the so-called ‘One-Bantu-One-Business’ scheme, which had very severe repercussions for black people’s involvement in the industry (Barrett, 2003). This suggests that black people were only allowed to be active in one organization before 1977.

Since apartheid's imposition of segregation rules, black people have been compelled to live on the fringes of cities (Baloyi, 2012). Therefore, travelling distances were long and costly, inhibiting the ability to access jobs and urban services. The results of this are still being felt in the South African landscape. According to Simpson et al (2012, p. 14), "South African cities inherited residential areas that are poorly connected in terms of transport, with those least able to pay having to travel the furthest". The effects of this poor urban planning continues to affect urban infrastructure today. Sociologically speaking, it has resulted in huge inequalities in accessing transportation and a lack of connection between townships and central business districts. The minibus taxi industry is critical in strengthening this connection (Baloyi, 2012).

While the minibus taxi industry plays an important role in strengthening the connection between townships and the central business district (and thus contributing to the overall economic growth), it remains unsubsidised—does not receive operational subsidies—by government and is characterized by precariousness. Pre-Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent national lockdown, the industry operated (and continues to) in informal and unregulated context (Mahlangu, 2002). Historically, taxi drivers and taxi marshals have faced exploitation of labour where taxi owners are only concerned about the maximization of profit (Mahlangu, 2002). Taxi drivers continue to be subjected to such exploitation (precariousness of labour) where they have to drive (and pick up more commuters) as much as possible in order to generate profit whilst being underpaid. Therefore, the industry is defined by the existence of the precariat—the exploited taxi drivers who drive long hours for less wages. Taxi drivers are not protected against unfair dismissal.

The 1977-1987 period was largely marked by the struggle of the taxi industry to be accepted as a public transport operator (Barret, 2003). In 1987, a wave of deregulation followed, combined with taxi violence that became part of the minibus taxi industry's everyday operations. Demand for a minibus taxi industry, however was increasing and drivers worked mostly without permits (illegally) (Fourie, 2003). Taxi operators were subject to fines and sometimes to the confiscation of their vehicles during this time, with compliance mostly coming from the South African Railway Police Force (Barrett, 2003:6). In order to study the industry, the Welgemoed Commission was formed in 1983 and proposed that minibus taxis should be made illegal by not issuing more permits (Ingle, 2009). However, there was the idea of issuing a limited number of permits, which was eventually adopted in 1989. In 1986, a 16-seater minibus taxi was legalised for use (Fourie, 2003).

The minibus taxi industry became a form of black capital accumulation. In other words, an activity in which profits were reinvested, new taxi fleets were purchased, and thus the total amount of capital increased. Nevertheless, the industry continued to face competition over routes, for example in Soweto, Alexandra and Katlehong (Ingle, 2009), the taxi wars were still waged. Violence began increasing in the industry. Consequently, "after the 1994 general election, taxi violence began, and even intensified" (Fourie, 2003, p. 37). Essentially, before 1994 the taxi wars were less in number. Violence in the post-apartheid era became more common, decentralised and criminal in nature, as the industry was

deregulated after an era of strict regulations that limited the industry to ferrying few passengers. Public attempts to tackle the minibus taxi industry were non-existent between 1987 and 1994 (Barret, 2003). The government became part of the problem instead of the solution when violence erupted in the industry. Barret (2003) states that this occurred because of negligent police behaviour in the post-apartheid era, with police using their positions to promote fights between taxi associations. An increasing number of people were dying on the road in taxi accidents, leading to concerns over road safety. However, Barret's claim that violence happened as a result of police negligence is reductionist and therefore misleading. Taxi violence is a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that is embedded in the history of our country and cannot legitimately be reduced to a single cause.

Efforts to put the industry under some form of control and regulation informed the post-apartheid era. As such, in 1999, the Taxi Recapitalisation Programme (TRP) was formed to formalize the industry (Mahlangu, 2002). The aim of the TRP was to regulate the industry, as it envisaged the development of a new taxi industry consisting of larger diesel-powered 18 and 35-seater vehicles, to be regulated from the outset (Fourie, 2003). This came in the wake of continued taxi violence, despite post-1994 attempts by the newly elected government to stabilise the industry. In 1995, the Government formed the National Taxi Task Team (NTTT) in an effort to improve the performance of the taxi industry and improve road safety, increase financial margins and end conflicts (Fourie, 2003). The NTTT recommended the need to control and formalize the industry. The government, however, continues to struggle to transform the industry, regardless of these recommendations. The project to transform the industry continues to be held back by a lack of political will, with some political leaders accused of being taxi owners themselves (Competition Commission, 2018). Some taxi operators are of the view that the lack of political will to transform the industry continues to be a problem (Browning, 2018). Taxi operators with different interests also complicate transformation of the industry. The lack of political will from the state and different interests from the taxi operators result in what the author calls, "precariousness from above". The lack of political will is precariousness from above resulting in the marginality, neglect and social exclusion of the precariat in the industry. In this context, it appears that the precariat is trapped (Standing, 2011) in precarious working conditions. This results in neglected taxi drivers and taxi marshals: to use Fanon's phrase, the "wretched" of the minibus taxi industry. Therefore, the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent national lockdown affected the industry amidst this context of being neglected which results to precariousness.

### **3. Minibus Taxi Industry's Operations Amidst Covid-19**

Research shows that in the minibus taxi industry, business operations and activities can be defined as largely informal and unregulated, being a fabric of economic relationships between taxi owners, taxi drivers, taxi users, government, vehicle manufacturers, and other companies related to transport (Selekane, 2014). The operations of the industry (like other businesses) were disrupted by the Covid-19 and the subsequent national lockdown (from level 5 to 1). During the lockdown, some taxi operators

complained that this resulted in them losing profit. Taxi drivers also complained that they were now generating less money through taxi fares (noting that each day they give collected fares to taxi owners and keep some of the money for petrol). In March 2020, when South Africa entered a strict, military-patrolled lockdown, the effect was dramatic. The government limited the amount of hours a minibus taxi could take and limited the number of passengers it was able to transport. During tough times such as Covid-19 and unemployment, taxi drivers remain exempt from employment-related benefits such as the UIF. This reveals further their precarious employment conditions as taxi drivers and taxi marshals do not have benefits because the minibus taxi industry remains neglected.

During the lockdown, some taxi operators are unable to repay their taxis to the banks and, as such face a possibility of a repossession of their taxis. While government allocated R1.135 billion relief package in the form of a once-off *ex gratia* payment to taxi operators (Nomjana, 2020), the South African National Taxi Council (SANTACO) urged government to increase the relief money to avoid shutdown. This is understandable given a long history of the lack of government financial support to the industry. The industry has been neglected for too long (Mhlangu, 2002) and this has led to precariousness. The belated relief fund amounted to R5 000 per taxi and this was doomed to fail due to how little it was and unwillingness from the industry to accept it. On June 28, 2020, SANTACO called on its representatives to openly defy the Covid-19 regulations of the government that limited the number of passengers to 70 percent of a full load. During the height of the lockdown, the importance of the minibus taxi industry to the local economy and the livelihoods of ordinary South Africans was stressed. During the Level 5 process, taxis were permitted to transport “essential” employees to and from work on a regular basis, even though no other public transportation was allowed to operate.

The possibility of government subsidizing the industry depends on the successful formalization process (a process that has been met with several challenges). In my assessment, the industry leaders should consider the benefits of the formalization process (which includes among others, subsidization of the industry). Despite several commitments by the government, taxi operators have only ever been provided with capital subsidies to fix and upgrade old cars, starting in 1999 with the TRP (Mahlangu, 2002). There are no operational subsidies for the industry – a situation which continues to be difficult for government to change due to the informality of the industry.

#### **4. Covid-19 and Precarity in Minibus Taxis**

The labour conditions of the minibus taxi industry place its drivers in a position of precarity. This means that taxi drivers are subject to poor working conditions that do not comply with the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Mmadi, 2012). This can be seen in the quota system (where it still exists), for instance. A quota system implies that a taxi owner sets a deadline for a taxi driver to be met by the evening, and taxi drivers desperately attempt to meet the quota or target at risk of dismissal if the target is not achieved (Mmadi, 2012). This leads to overworked taxi drivers putting at risk their own lives, the lives of passengers and the lives of fellow road users. Precarity as the loss of labour market

security in various forms exists in the industry. According to Suliman and Weber, “precarity is deployed to denote a specific condition of insecurity that emerges from the spatial and temporal restructuring of the relationship between production, politics, and life” (2019, p. 528). The following types of insecurity characterize the precarious working conditions for the precariat in the minibus taxi industry: insecure jobs due to either a lack of job or a lack of work; insecure living conditions due to low incomes; and insecure representation due to the absence of union participation (Paret, 2013). The precarious meaning of work is much evident for the South African black workers with no employment security. Employment security is regarded as a form of security that is mostly suited to a flexible labour market and is often used as an alternative for job security. While job security is understood as the security of staying in the same job with the same employer, employment security refers to the possibility of easily finding a job at every stage of life. Sanchez et al., while studying the quality of life and work ability of taxi drivers from Brazil, argue that “urban transport drivers, specifically taxi and motorcycle taxi drivers, are exposed to particular environmental, societal, and health situations related to their occupation” (2019, p. 1). In the same way, minibus taxi drivers in South Africa are vulnerable to the precarious conditions of work found at taxi ranks.

Taxi drivers, taxi marshals and informal traders experience precarity in the taxi ranks, a sense that is deeply embedded in South Africa’s history of marginalization and inequality. Like Deshingkar (2018, p. 5), who examined the conditions of precarity among migrant workers, this paper considers precarity as created by workplace dynamics in the taxi ranks. The precarious conditions in the taxi ranks make working there risky and uncertain. These conditions are what Giddens (1991) called “ontological insecurity”, with taxi drivers and taxi marshals defined by a precarious existence or insecure work relationships. Working conditions for the precariat are mostly associated with irregular working schedules and varying working hours (Eichhorst & Tobsch, 2017). For example, the work of taxi drivers is characterized by both these issues and is also dependent on the availability of passengers for a trip. The risk of precariousness tends to increase for most workers who do not possess a contract (for example, taxi drivers), including temporary or flexible workers. Uncertainty about the duration of contracts is also a characteristic feature of precarious work. The potential risk of precariousness is considered very high in working conditions where workers are subjected to low pay, job insecurity, stress and ill health, lack of career development and training, and low levels of collective rights. This means that precarious work is mostly evident in the following four conditions: 1) low pay; 2) poor protection from termination of employment; 3) lack of benefits and; 4) lack or limited access of workers to exercise their rights (for example, union membership) (Bhorat et al., 2016).

It is also important to remember that in terms of operating hours, the minibus taxi industry varies from other sectors in the public transport sector. The essence of the sector, for instance, defines the amount of hours employed by taxi drivers. It is a fact that the taxi industry is dominated by commuters and hence, taxis must operate as long as there are commuters to be picked up. Therefore, the industry is considered profitable when it is full of commuters (Browning, 2018). In this context it is worth noting

that in most cases after 6pm, there are few commuters, and therefore, most taxis stop picking commuters. The long working hours in the industry are tied to particular payment systems. This also ensures that the quota system dictates the work against the daily target of the driver's income, and that they pocket the remainder when drivers meet the target. The percentage method places the salary of the driver as a portion of their daily take—between 20 percent and 30 percent is the standard practice. Taxi drivers today are paid on a “earn as you work basis” for days worked (Imaniranzi, 2015). This causes taxi drivers to work on a regular basis. Taxi drivers and taxi marshals are expected to work consecutively for more than eight days.

While the minibus taxi industry makes a good contribution to South Africa's economy, it face challenges which were made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown. The virus and the lockdown disrupted economic activities in many industries, including among others, the minibus taxi industry. During the lockdown, some taxi operators complained that the lockdown would result in them losing profit. Taxi drivers also complained that they were not generating enough money through taxi fares as they used to. The pandemic revealed that taxi drivers and taxi marshals continue to face precarious working conditions. These conditions are not new. Historically, South Africa's minibus taxi industry has been characterised by exploitative labour arrangements between taxi owners and taxi drivers, which apparently enhanced profit at all costs. The lack of formalised work contracts was one of the primary factors leading to this (Mahlangu, 2002). The informal way of doing business was maintained by lowering labour costs and disregarding safety in general.

### **5. Government's Efforts to Formalize the Minibus Taxi Industry**

The state's failure persists to this day in enforcing the NTTT guidelines, arising from the lack of strategic state involvement in the industry. There is also a sense of unwillingness on the part of some taxi operators/owners to take part in the formalization process. This, in turn, will have a negative impact on the role of the industry to compete effectively and efficiently with other modes of public transport and contribute to the economy of the country. Therefore, it can be stated that failed formalization of the industry starts with poor regulation by the state and unwillingness of taxi owners to abide by labour regulations.

Since 1999, in order to resolve the problems and shortcomings of the regulatory process, the Government shifted its attention to reforming the minibus taxi industry in the form of the recapitalization programme (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2006). The aim of this was to regulate the taxi industry, as it envisaged the development of a new taxi industry consisting of larger diesel-powered 18 and 35-seater vehicles, to be regulated from the outset. The introduction of the TRP was intended to formalize and control the minibus taxi industry, substituting 18 to 35-seater TRP taxi vehicles for the 9 to 16-seater fleet of taxis. In order to reduce the number of vehicles and road accidents and boost the public transport service, the phasing out of old taxis with new ones was planned. Taxis were scrapped at the value of R50 000, or combis, as they were called at the time, to be formalized. The goal was to



turn combis into a functioning minibus taxi industry that could comply with the rules of the land. Taxi owners had to buy taxis that were TRP-compliant. In 2019, to determine its effect, the TRP was reviewed and is now named the Revised Taxi Recapitalization Program (RTRP) (South African Government News Agency, 2019). While the government reviewed the TRP, state intervention will continue to be minimal given the state's lack of capability and resistance from the industry. Therefore, there needs to be an engagement between government and the industry to find ways in which the industry could be formalized and benefit from government subsidies. The former Minister of Transport, Blade Nzimande, announced in his announcement of the RTRP that as part of the State's commitment to help the taxi industry, the Government agreed to raise the taxi scrapping allowance from R91 100 to R124 000 per old taxi scrapped (South African Government News Agency, 2019). However, the transformation of the minibus taxi industry through the scrapping allowance is moving very slowly with a total of seventy-two thousand six hundred and ninety (72,690) old taxi vehicles (OTVs) scrapped by the end of September 2018, since 2006. The TRP had a target of scrapping 100,000 (One hundred thousand) OTVs and this was later adjusted to 135,894 (one hundred thirty-five thousand, eight-hundred and ninety-four) in 2007. Therefore, there is a balance of 63,241 (sixty-three thousand two hundred and forty-one) OTVs still to be scrapped (Browning, 2018).

In an effort to formalize the minibus taxi industry, the Department of Transport (DoT) held a National Taxi Lekgotla with key stakeholders, during the 2020 October Transport Month, to discuss ways in which the state of the industry could be improved. The Lekgotla (held between 29 October and 31 October 2020) was long-awaited, as violence and strife triggered by turf wars and leadership struggles continue unabated and unity in the industry remains a challenge. Associations remain uncontrolled and operators are not held liable by successful law enforcement for their actions. In attendance in the Lekgotla were the officials from government departments including President Cyril Ramaphosa; representatives from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), South African National Taxi Council (SANTACO), South African Local Government Association (SALGA), and National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC). However, worth noting was that the National Taxi Alliance (NTA) was not in attendance as it withdrew from participating in the Lekgotla. Their withdrawal was because they considered the government as acting in bad faith. This is because, they say, the Minister of Transport prefers SANTACO and, therefore, the Lekgotla was for the benefit of SANTACO. Indeed, the Lekgotla continued despite the absence of NTA. While the Lekgotla continued despite the overall industry participation, it is unlikely that it served its intended purpose—it was a non-starter. NTA did not only refuse to participate in the National Lekgotla, it also did not participate in the Provincial Makgotlas. In its media statement on 23 October 2020, the NTA noted that “Minister Mbalula and his department have made it abundantly clear that the purpose of the National Taxi Lekgotla in to entrench Santaco as the apex leadership of the taxi industry and to give Santaco statutory powers to regulate the taxi industry. This is tantamount to inviting us to interfere in the affairs of another organization we do not belong to” (Malele, 2020).

Since the 1990s, government has been making efforts to change the industry (Khosa, 1994). The NTTT drove the industry's transformation in 1995. Such a change depended on the ensuing recommendations as embraced in 1996: formalizing the minibus taxi industry; regulating and controlling the industry; capacity building and training; conditions for economic sustainability are made where the industry is able to sustain itself (Fourie, 2003). Twenty-six years since the NTTT's recommendations, government hosted the National Taxi Lekgotla to discuss the following key issues: unity and leadership of the taxi industry; taxi industry empowerment model; taxi industry regulation; and taxi industry professionalization and customer care. More needs to be done for unity to be realised in the industry. The NTA should have participated in the Lekgotla and table their issues for discussions. The involvement of two mother-bodies, each claiming to represent and acting on behalf of the taxi industry, greatly complicates the government's efforts to consult and enter into binding agreements with the industry. Therefore, government and industry need to explore ways in which the two can work together. Workers such as taxi drivers, rank marshals, and others should be included in any economic empowerment plans for the industry.

## 6. Conclusion

Therefore, the formalization process of the minibus taxi industry remains unrealized with a lack of state strategic intervention in the industry. The industry continues to be characterized by recurrent precarious working conditions making it difficult to service in trying times such as the Covid-19 pandemic. It is during this pandemic that taxi drivers and taxi marshals are excluded from employment-linked benefits such as Unemployment Insurance Fund. Therefore, the pandemic continues to show the deep exclusion of the minibus taxi industry from the government public transport plans. There is also a case of unwillingness from the industry's side to accept the formalization process. It appears that what is needed to successfully transform the industry is willingness from the industry and state strategic intervention. South Africa needs a well-developed public transport system. The integration of the industry into a larger public transport network, with the provision of subsidised public transport services, may offer new opportunities. Certainly, the possibility of the industry getting subsidies from government depends on the industry changing its business model. While the industry is currently not subsidised, what is required to implement subsidies within the industry is an accounting system, though this is not possible in the informal industry in which minibus taxis operate. Perhaps the establishment of cooperatives is what the industry requires to address its current issues, such as a lack of government subsidies. Everyone in the cooperatives would work for their own advantage and be owners of the profits created. These co-ops would be formal-sector businesses. These businesses would assist in addressing the industry's precariousness. Co-operatives would allow owners to pool their resources, form a legally recognized firm, and agree on how to operate it. Taxi owners in cooperatives would agree to implement the best practices in terms of quality and customer service.

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## Notes on contributor

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