



ergonomics
SOCIETY OF
SOUTH AFRICA

CALL FOR PAPERS

SPECIAL ISSUE OF ERGONOMICS SA

'On Intersectionality in the context of work'

As countries around the globe continue to try to contain the spread of the SARS-COV-2 virus, it has become evident that previously disadvantaged people have been disproportionately more affected by the disease, both as direct casualties of the illness and as indirect casualties of the consequences of preventing the spread of the disease. In America, the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) has attributed this to previously disadvantaged people having higher rates of comorbidities, such as obesity, hypertension, and diabetes. While anyone with these comorbidities is vulnerable to the virus, the intersection between issues of race, food, class, and other social and health disparities/inequalities have come into focus because of the effects of the pandemic. On the 25th of May 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year old African American man was killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota by a white police officer after kneeling on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes. Floyd's death sparked protests in major cities around the United States of America that initially focused on police brutality towards African American men, but brought to light the historic and continued systemic racism in the USA, captured through the #Blacklivesmatter and #blackintheivory movements, amongst others.

In support of these movements in the United States, many other countries have also marched against issues of systemic racism and other forms of social injustice. South Africa is no exception. The deaths of South Africans such as Collins Khosa (amongst others) during the national lockdown as well as the hardships that have been felt by the majority of South Africa's populace has, like in the USA, highlighted the gross inequalities within this country, which are still largely divided along lines of race and class. There is also evidence that during the lockdown women carried a heavier social burden than men in relation to domestic duties, placing their job security in jeopardy. Moreover, there have and continue to be examples of subtle and explicit racism, sexism, xenophobia, classism, neo-culturalism and discrimination and violence against women and children in South Africa. This intersectionality (defined as the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage) has historically affected (and continues to affect) the health and wellbeing of many South Africans, but in particular, Black South Africans.

Human Factors and Ergonomics (HFE) is a systems discipline that focuses on understanding how the interactions between people and the systems in which they live or work can be enhanced to ensure that people remain productive, while also ensuring their wellbeing and safety. While HFE has, and continues to focus on how the design of tasks, tools and technologies, and physical and social environments affect human wellbeing and performance, there has been little to no research and literature published on how intersectionality might influence the health and wellbeing of people in the contexts of work and activities of daily living. Given that intersectionality is an emergent characteristic of the historic and current design of society and some of its workplaces, it is pertinent for ergonomists and other cognate disciplines to interrogate how issues of racism, classism, sexism,

and other forms of prejudice have and continue to affect the lives of previously disadvantaged groups in society. Furthermore, it is important to bring to light ways in which the design of work systems (both formal and informal) can be made more sensitive to, and inclusive of, previously disadvantaged groups and contribute to broad, effective transformation.

To this end, the journal of the Ergonomics Society of South Africa invites researchers and practitioners to submit manuscripts towards this special issue of Ergonomics SA entitled '**On Intersectionality in the context of work**'. Authors are invited to share their views and experiences around this theme in relation to:

- How intersectionality affects the health and wellbeing of workers;
- Examples of policies, projects and interventions that have addressed issues of exclusion and social injustice in the workplace to make workplaces more inclusive and transformed;
- How Human Factors and Ergonomics (HFE) and other allied professions can and should address intersectionality;
- The role that the Ergonomics Society of South Africa and other national and international societies can play in assisting workplaces around issues associated with intersectionality.

We welcome, in particular, previously 'unheard voices' to make a contribution to this special issue.

Submissions can be in the following categories:

- **Original opinion pieces:** 1000 to 2000 words, excluding the reference list
- **Case studies or Field observations:** 4000 words, excluding the reference list
- **Empirical research:** 2000 to 4000 words, excluding the reference list
- **Review articles:** 4000 to 6000 words, excluding the reference list

All papers will undergo the standard peer-review procedures of the journal. Potential authors are requested to submit their paper or a summary of it for consideration to Dr Jonathan Davy (jonathan.davy@ru.ac.za) prior to final submission to verify that the scope and quality is aligned to this special issue.

Submission of final manuscript for peer review: 1st of October 2020.