



SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

27th Conference

10th -13th July 2022

Venue: Sol Plaatje University, Kimberley, South Africa

‘Sociology and COVID-19 pandemic: Reimagining the present and the future’

A novel coronavirus emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan in 2019 and swiftly spread to other countries across the globe. Given its global scale and unpredictable patterns, the World Health Organization (WHO) subsequently declared it a pandemic. Subsequently, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the unpreparedness of many national governments, revealing gross inefficiencies within global social systems. Many states responded to the rapidly growing threat of the COVID-19 pandemic by devising a number of restrictive and militaristic containment measures such as national lockdowns and socio-physical distancing, among other strategies. The effects of the pandemic on various social groups have been uneven.

Whilst its scale has been global, many of the responses have been discorded and confined within the nation state. Remote working, teaching, and learning became the new normal globally. Similarly, the pandemic has also reconfigured new forms of socialities and relatedness. The pandemic has generated uncertainties, reconfigured every aspect of life in unprecedented ways and reproduced new ways of doing and being. It has swiftly turned into an unparalleled global public health crisis cascading into an economic, political and social crisis. This has presented a moment of rapture affecting our social life, the economy and the politics at the national and global scale. Furthermore, this has created and widened new structures of inequalities at the national and global scale. Medical scientists are frantically working on developing new vaccines to manage the spread of the pandemic and this is steering its own politics and controversies. The first generation of vaccines have been rolled out and their access has exposed various dimensions of inequalities at the national and global scale. Furthermore, in some contexts there has been significant hesitancy in taking up the vaccines for various reasons and values. As the pandemic continues to unfold with new strains of the virus emerging such as the omicron, further uncertainties on the future have been cast, raising a number of questions of interests to sociology, sociologists and society:

1. How - in what ways are individuals, communities, and nations especially in Africa coping with the pandemic?
2. How is sociological imagination or perspective(s) being deployed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. How is the COVID 19 pandemic configuring the theory and practice of sociology?
4. How should we in view of the pandemic perceive or imagine the present and future?
5. What is the role of sociology and sociologists in the era of a global pandemic such as the COVID-19?
6. How can we use sociological imagination in retooling a post-COVID-19 society?
7. How can we rethink/reimagine sociology in the midst of a global pandemic?
8. How can we in future be prepared for similar pandemics?
9. To what extent and in what ways has the pandemic exacerbated vulnerabilities and what lessons can we draw from COVID 19 on how to deal with the problem of inequalities?

10. What can we draw from COVID-19 responses on how we can adopt more inclusive ways and understanding of the needs of citizens and those on the margins?

The SASA Annual Conference provides a forum for academic researchers, practitioners, activists and policy makers to discuss the complexities of the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic. There is a need to interrogate the various forms of responses, policies, trends, debates, discourses, the various actors involved and the future direction and landscape. Such a discussion cannot simply be left in the hands of bureaucrats alone but needs to find resonance with, and be animated by academics, researchers, students, activists and the broader public. We are interested in articles that explore the ways in which people have experienced, interpreted, and the meanings they attach to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resilience of people to adapt to the challenges brought by the pandemic and analysis of the various policies and responses to this pandemic.

The 27th annual Congress of SASA seeks to engage with these questions in the broadest sense. At the same we also invite other papers on 'traditional' non-COVID-19 related sociological issues.

Thematic Areas

- The COVID-19 pandemic and work
- COVID 19 and vaccine politics
- Gender, inequalities and the pandemic
- Politics, economics, development and the pandemic
- Mobilities in the era of a global pandemic
- Education and the COVID 19 pandemic
- Doing Research/Ethnography during lockdown
- Poverty, precarity and social security in a pandemic
- Human rights, policing and the pandemic
- Pandemic, ecology and climate change
- COVID 19 and the informal economy
- Public Sociology/Sociology and the pandemic
- Other 'traditional' non-COVID-19 related sociological issues.

The 27th SASA conference will happen during a period when the global community is still grappling with the new normal. This conference will thus take a hybrid format (a combination of virtual and face to face presentations) in line with the COVID 19 protocols.

Abstract Deadline: 01 April 2022

Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words.

Details on abstract submission and registration to follow shortly and on the SASA website.

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