



Letter to Editor

Aging Ergonomics: A Field with Inadequate Notice

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World population aging is a phenomenon we are confronting with, more than past. This fact has different implications for today's societies. One of these aspects is workforce (1). Some factors have resulted in more tendencies of workers to remain in their works including: Economic, societal, cultural factors, and social trends and laws such as increasing age of retirement in the middle twentieth century, which recently increased more (2).

Productive workforce is one of major assets of each country. So, in one hand we have older adults in our workplaces and in other hand, we are following to retain employee's productivity at first, and then, improve it. Ergonomics as a multidisciplinary science, attempts to make balance between human capabilities and its limitations by fitting the task to the person or fitting the person to the task. In this way, workers' fatigue and errors are minimized and productivity and well-being optimized (3).

In more developed countries like United States, approximately 66.3 percent of adults aged 55-64 years are in the workforce (4). In our country, Iran, 7.3% of populations were more than 60 yrs. in 2006 (5) which indicate our population is aging, though accurate number of those people in work is lacking. Older adults have physical and mental changes as a common result of aging. Physical changes show itself as decline in physical capabilities, and mental changes involved in sensation and perception, cognition, and motor control (6). So, it is essential to acknowledge these changes and adopt suitable strategies and accommodations for job circumstances and living environments when considering older adults.

In general, a few ergonomics studies explored the effect of aging on environmental modifications and job adaptation. To best of my knowledge, also in Iran there are few studies that presented in conferences or published in journals. Therefore, as a closing remark, it is widely needed to pay more attention to aging ergonomics in our studies and society to ensure the safety and effectiveness of older workers. Finally, to

initiate this movement, some kinds of funds or supports from universities, the government and research centers are recommended to shift research plans or students' thesis to topics concerning aging ergonomics.

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