**Statement of Purpose**

**Research Subject**: This is the first study to examine the professional authority of quality engineers in Israel during a state of exception such as occurred in the coronavirus pandemic. Other r in Israel and worldwide,, and food production,also

Such authority is particularly endangered in a state of exception. A head of government can unilaterally decide to take on much more power and authority, even to extremes. Norms, rules, and laws are suspended and even repealed (Agamben 2008). This transfers to a political structure a power that normally resides with the subject matter experts – such as public health experts – who staff regulatory or standards-making agencies. In Israel, laws defining emergency powers provide for such a state of exception. Israel is not the only nation that allows this, although worldwide, the norm is that experts determine the response to an emergency.

In Anker (2022), we defined two main types of organizations for which quality engineers work. The first includes organizations working according to government regulations (for example, pharmaceutical companies, food producers). In this type of organization, the quality manager enjoys high levels of authority. However, the level of the quality engineer’s authority varies from one organizational structure to another. In addition, individual quality engineers are accorded different levels of influence, usually at the discretion of their employing organizations (Anker 2022).

Production, manufacturing, and construction companies fall within the second type of organization: less regulated by government but subject to standards-based certification by ISO and GMP and other standards-making bodies. Here, again, quality engineers should have a high level of authority.

Quality engineers’ authority is likely to diminish drastically, however, when an extreme event results in a state of exception and the political apparatus takes over the decision-making about technically complex procedures.

**Area of Expertise**: Quality

**Methods:** The empirical part of this study combines two research methods: in-depth interviews with quality engineers to explore how they perceive their roles, and a questionnaire to examine the professional authority of the quality engineers.

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