Autism Spectrum inclusivity in Indian workplaces

Disability is something no one has control over

National Health portal gives an estimate that there are almost 18 million Indians who live on the autism spectrum. Diversity and inclusion need to work in tandem for achieving progress in modern workplaces. Often employers give an air of zero discrimination policies but do little to make a way for actual progress.

### Autism in a workplace

Today celebrates World Autism Day and it is usually this time of the year people give much needed attention to people who are differently-abled by this condition. Modern workplaces lack awareness about Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and what people in this spectrum bring to the workplace. Autism is classified as a lifelong neurological developmental condition that makes people differently react to the world and interpersonal relationships.

### Adding Diversity and Value

Classifying people from the spectrum as the other and discriminating based on preconceived prejudices is a common occurrence at any workplace and it is a similar story in Indian workplaces too. To overcome this we need to awareness on two different levels. One is to understand how much value a person from the spectrum brings to the table and the second is about fairness in the workplace.

There is a dearth of recognition that while an individual from the spectrum may lack certain social skills or may find it a tad difficult to carry social interaction they add value by bringing specialized unique skills like specific problem solving or can be punctilious. They are also extremely loyal, dependable, and independent in the workplace.

### Myths propagated with autism

1. ‘An autistic person may not stick to deadlines’, Many times daily workers and even normal employees find it hard to meet deadlines. If they are given the right amount of time and work that suits their skillset an employee in the spectrum will excel at their work and may even outperform their other colleagues.
2. ‘The workplace needs to be tailored to accommodate their needs’, No worker wants to be singled out for special treatment. Statistically, differently-abled individuals go out of their way to prove their worth at work and this is no different for autistic individuals.
3. ‘Significant extra training’, For every job there is a learning and it is the same of them. They do not need additional training but time to understand the task and the workplace decorum.

Inclusivity in the workplace will always be lauded and if possible we all should try to act with fairness and try not to get preconceived biases to enter our hiring process. If an individual who has the qualifications and talent from the spectrum applies we need to give them a fair opportunity as we do others.

#Autism #AutismAwareness #DiversityandInclusion #Diversity #Inclusion #Empowerment #WorkplaceDiversity #hiring #DiversityatWork #Autistic #Autisticatwork #AutismatWork #AutismInclusion #IntegratingAutism #HumanResources #worldautismday