Neurodiverse Perceptions of Inclusivity in the Workplace

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Abstract
The increase in neurodivergent professionals in the workplace has led to a significant need for researchers to examine neurodiversity inclusion in the workplace. Research has portrayed workplace inclusion as the perception that the individual is a valued member of a workgroup through satisfactory experiences of belongingness and uniqueness. Through semi-structured interviews with 20 neurodivergent professionals, this study examined how they view inclusion, exclusion, and cope with exclusion in the workplace. The neurodivergent participants identified six inclusion and six exclusion categories. Results were largely consistent with previous inclusion research, however one novel category, flexible accommodations, suggests the importance of considerate accommodations that are easy to implement, low cost and significantly matter to neurodivergent employees. Participants also identified six coping strategies that provide insight into how they cope with exclusion which vary from masking to educating others on their strengths and needs. These results underscore the importance of neurodiversity awareness, and intentional and informed neurodiversity inclusive practices. This research adds to both the theoretical and practical application of neurodiversity inclusion. Practitioners can utilize this research to progress their culture to improve inclusion of neurodivergent employees, which previous research shows that inclusion practices improve firm performance and provides neurodivergent individuals a pathway to success in their work.

Keywords: neurodiversity, inclusion, exclusion, workplace, autism, ASD, dyslexia, attention-deficit-hyperactivity disorder, ADHD, coping

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