Autism @ Work: New insights on effective autism employment practices from a world-first global study

FINAL REPORT

Associate Professor Anna Krzeminska

Professor Charmine E.J. Härtel

Justin Carrero

Xochitl Samayoa Herrera

December 2020

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Professor Charmine E.J. Härtel

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Justin Carrero

Monash University

Xochitl Samayoa Herrera

The University of Queensland

Acknowledgements

The Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC)

The Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) is the world's first national, cooperative research effort focused on autism. Taking a whole-of-life approach to autism focusing on diagnosis, education and adult life, Autism CRC researchers are working with end-users to provide evidence-based outcomes which can be translated into practical solutions for governments, service providers, education and health professionals, families and people on the autism spectrum.

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A note on terminology

We recognise that when referring to individuals on the autism spectrum, there is no one term that suits all people. In our published material and other work, when speaking of adults we use the terms 'autistic person', 'person on the autism spectrum' or 'person on the spectrum'. The term 'autistic person' uses identity first language, which reflects the belief that being autistic is a core part of a person's identity.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is diagnostic terminology used by the healthcare sector, and is used in the context of a person being 'diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder'.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this global survey study was to investigate the challenges, learnings and best practices organisations have in sustaining and scaling skilled autism employment. In so doing, we examined the following overarching question:

- What are the challenges, learnings and best practices large organisations have in sustaining and scaling skilled autism employment?

To extend existing knowledge, the first step in the project was conducting a mixed method systematic literature review of the research on autism employment. The findings of this review revealed that most studies in the area are qualitative, underutilise theory on organisations and management, and frame workplace barriers for autistic employees in terms of autism symptomatology. Our study represents the first large scale quantitative study on autism employment. Moreover, we designed the study leveraging research and theory on talent management philosophies and practices that support a healthy, productive, and diverse workforce.

This research project was conducted in accordance with the Human Research Ethics standards outlined in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (the National Statement) issued by the NHMRC in Australia, the EU GDPR, and where applicable, other country locations of participants.

The remainder of the report is structured as follows. Next, we provide a visual snapshot of the study participants and findings to provide readers with a high-level understanding of the study context and key findings. After this, in Section 3, we present our methodology. Then, in Section 4, we present the results. Lastly, in Section 5, we conclude with recommendations for future practice and research in the area, followed by a list of references used in this report.

2. Visual Snapshot of Study

169 Respondents | 33 Organisations | 12 Countries | 5 Continents | 1 Shared Goal

Representation by Country
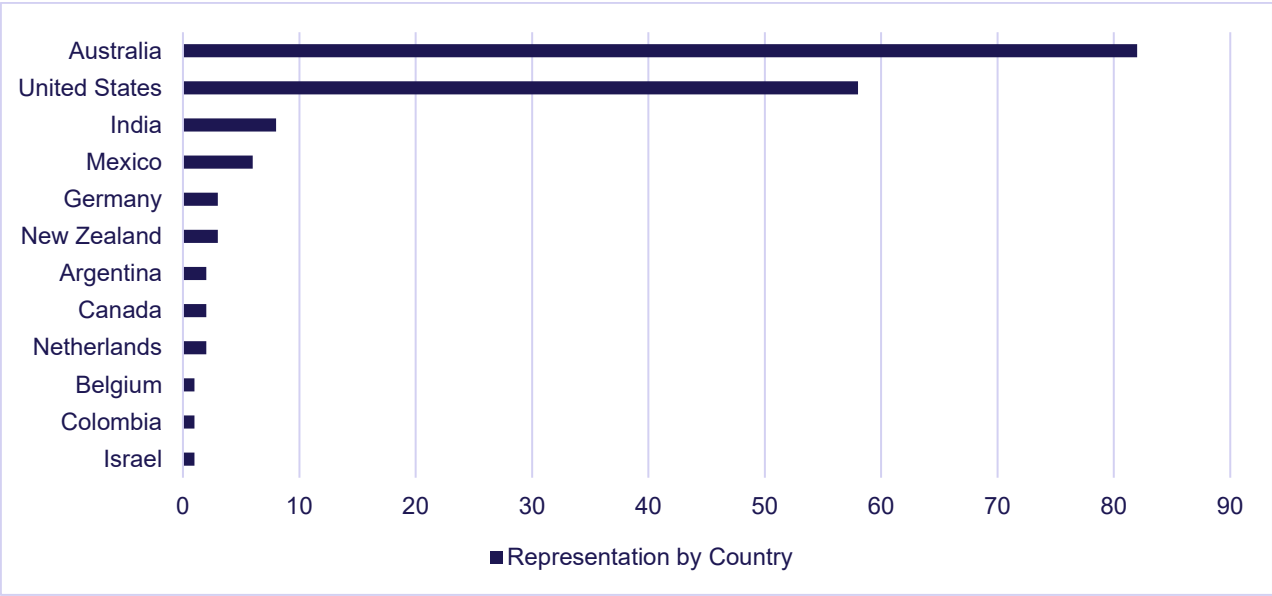
Organisational Practices: What are Most Helpful?
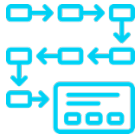
While **most workplace practices** (e.g., recruitment, accommodation, inclusion) included in the survey were considered **important, differences were reported in who receives them in a helpful way**

Top three helpful **recruitment** practices as perceived by autistic workers are: an **individual interview**, a **task instead of a formal interview**, and **communicated** that the **job** you applied for was **designed for autistic employees**, although notable **differences between female and male** autistic employees were reported (section 4.6.3).

Compared with co-workers, **autistic workers reported similar levels of employment-related security** (section 4.5), **requested and received very similar workplace adjustments**, and generally report to be **more satisfied with their relationship with your direct supervisor**, although differences in gender, employment/employer type etc. exist (see below and section 4.6).

Individual and contextual differences matter

Autistic employees report to be **more satisfied** with **work environment** as well as various **organisational practices** and **adjustments** when they are **female** or are **disclosed** or have **no primary care giving responsibilities** or require **less than substantial support.**

Compared to other geographical regions, **autistic employees are least satisfied and secure in their role in ANZ** (Australia, New Zealand; section 4.5 - 4.6).

Autistic employees who are **employed full-time are more secure and satisfied** in their roles compared to part-time employees (section 4.5 – 4.6).

Social enterprises were reported as having the most satisfied and secure employees. This was **followed by private sector businesses**, non-profit, and then government/education sector (section 4.5 - 4.6).

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3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Prior to developing this study, we conducted a thorough analysis of the existing research centred on autism-inclusive employment, including hiring practices, management processes, barriers to equitable and sustainable employment, perceptions of inclusive hiring, and others. While research in this field is in its infancy (Carrero, Krzeminska, & Härtel, 2019; Krzeminska & Hawse, 2020), almost every empirical study we located adopted a qualitative approach (non-numerical data; interviews, in-person observation, etc.). This study represents the first large scale quantitative study in the area and thus an important contribution to the available research evidence in that it provides reproducible and more generalisable data to form evidence-based conclusions as well as identifies areas of opportunity for future research.

Our quantitative study design utilised an electronic survey with text-based (qualitative) response opportunities. To develop a thorough understanding of what organisational practices are most (in)effective to facilitating autism-inclusive employment, we developed five unique surveys for different respondent groups to create a 360°-perspective of the inner workings of organisations that have committed to employing autistic people. To comprehensively address the research focus, we collected data through online surveys from five respondent groups: autistic employees, co-workers, supervisor(s), HR managers, and the program director/executive.

From the findings of our mixed methods systematic literature review, we identified the relevant factors to autism employment and what we needed to understand better to advance research and practice in the field. This led us to focus on how factors such as the physical environment (including accommodations made), workplace design, and organisational processes influenced the experiences of autistic individuals and their workplace peers. To measure these factors, we used existing validated scales where possible and developed new ones where validated scales were not available. The survey language was English.

As part of finalising the survey instrument, we piloted the survey with testers from the various respondent groups. For example, the survey designed for the autistic respondent group was vetted by autistic adults hired for this purpose as well as other respondent groups such as autism employment managers in organisations who provided detailed feedback and suggestions on any confusing or concerning question. We programmed the final survey instrument into Qualtrics and checked to ensure it was compliant with WCAG 2.0 AA and Section 508 accessibility standards.

3.2 Data Collection

Since the research centred on identifying latent challenges, learnings, and the most effective practices for organisations in the scaling and sustainability of competitive employment for autistic individuals irrespective of work type, recruitment of organisations occurred across all industry types, geographical locations, and enterprise types. As the study focus was on enterprises that offer competitive employment to autistic individuals, assisted programs (e.g., supported employment) were respectfully excluded. The overall global population of organisations offering competitive autism employment is quite low, reflected in figures showing that autistic individuals are the most unemployed of any subpopulation (e.g., Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019). Moreover, getting access to data on autism employment in the private sector is especially challenging and thus this dataset is particularly valuable in that it represents the largest and most global of its kind. Against this backdrop, the sample obtained in our study of 33 organisations is a reasonable representation of relevant employers. It is, however, not a random sample although we took every measure to provide the conditions for equal probability of participation for all organisations in our sampling frame.

We identified eligible organisations mainly through specific autism employment focused conferences and research centres including the Autism CRC as well as groups and networks within the autism employment space. We supplemented these sources with publicly accessible sources such as websites and news articles that named companies offering competitive employment to autistic individuals. To illustrate, multi-national corporations (MNCs) such as SAP and IBM administer autism-specific hiring events (Florentine, 2015; Petterson, 2019) whereas Aspiritech, a social enterprise, publicly highlights this through their mission statement (Aspiritech, n.d.). We contacted potentially eligible institutions with an explanatory introduction of the study, its aims, other participating and sponsored organisations involved, and an invitation to participate. Further, we informed organisations that the study had ethical clearance from Macquarie University's Human Research Ethics Committee which was available upon request (See Appendix A for copy of approval).

Prior to completing the survey, respondents received a consent form and explanatory statement of the types of questions they would be asked, how data would be collected and utilised, and informed that they could withdraw from the survey at any time without consequence. We did not collect uniquely identifiable information such as respondents' names or phone number and we coded and aggregated all statistical and background information to ensure anonymity of participants.

Prior to data analysis, the collected data underwent a meticulous cleaning process to ensure no data entry errors or biases were present and to ensure confidence in the results of the analyses

undertaken. This included checking for unrealistic answers, inconsistent responses, nonsensical answers to open-ended questions, straightlining whereby a respondent selects the same response continuously as well as examining respondents' answers to the data validity item included in the survey which asked participants if they were paying attention to select the number 5 as their response.

4. Results

This section provides an overview of the main results from analysing our sample that provide novel insights into the most effective organisational practices for autism employment. We first provide descriptive statistics for survey respondents and countries as well as respondent profiles, we then show main results regarding Workplace Adjustments / Accommodations and Workplace Environment and Organisational practices before we conclude with a discussion and limitations offering opportunities for future results.

4.1 Demographics of 169 Survey Respondents

Figure 1 shows the percentage of each respondent group out of the total survey respondents and Table 1 shows the age distribution, which was rather evenly distributed among the total respondents.

Figure 1: Sample Distribution of Respondent Groups

- Autistic Individual (64%)
- Co-Worker (16%)
- Supervisor (11%)
- HR Manager (1%)
- Executive/Program Director (8%)
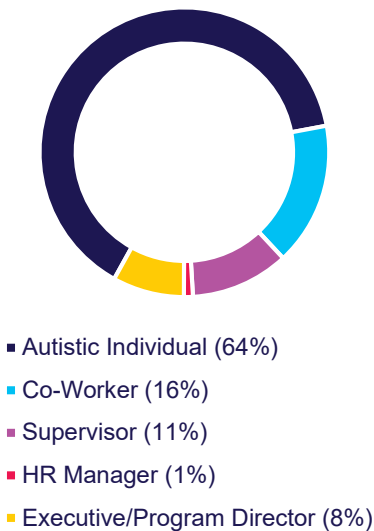
Table 1: Distribution of Age for all Respondent Groups

Age 5 Year Bands	N	%
20-24	12	7.1%
25-29	31	18.3%
30-34	28	16.6%
35-39	15	8.9%
40-44	22	13.0%
45-49	21	12.4%
50-54	15	8.9%
55-59	9	5.3%
60-64	6	3.6%
65-69	5	3.0%

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Table 2 reveals the proportion of individuals in the respondent group on the autism spectrum and other diagnosed conditions. Of the five respondent groups, only autistic workers indicated they were diagnosed with bipolar (2%), Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) (5%), and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) (17% including the autistic supervisor respondent). More autistic individuals compared to co-workers and supervisors were diagnosed with anxiety (15%, 7%, and 10% respectively). All respondent groups contained respondents with diagnosed depression, with the highest being HR Managers (50%), autistic individuals (17%), executives/program directors (15%), supervisors (5%), and co-workers (4%). Likewise, all respondent groups contained respondents with diagnosed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), with the highest incidence reported in the HR and co-worker respondent groups (50%, 40% respectively), moderate levels in the supervisor group (24%), and low incidence in the autism and executives/program directors (5%, 8% respectively). Non-specified diagnosed conditions were indicated by 5% and 7% of autistic and co-worker respondents respectively.

Table 2: Diagnoses Per Respondent Group

Below is a table indicating the proportion of respondents reporting each condition. Because this question allowed for more than one answer, there is some overlap between responses.

Condition	Autistic Individual	Co-Worker	Supervisor	HR Manager	Executive/ Program Director
ADHD	13%	--	5%	--	--
Anxiety	15%	7%	10%	--	--
Autism	N/A	4%	5%	--	--
Bipolar	2%	--	--	--	--
Depression	17%	4%	5%	50%	15%
OCD	5%	--	--	--	--
PTSD	5%	46%	24%	50%	8%
Something Else	5%	7%	--	--	--
No Conditions	3%	25%	52%	--	77%

Reflecting the historical recency of autism being recognised and diagnosed by the medical profession, workers between 20 - 24 years of age were diagnosed as early as 3 years of age but no later than 21 years of age, whereas workers between 25 and 34 years of age were diagnosed as early as 3 years of age but no later than 31 years of age, workers between 35 and 44 years of age were diagnosed as early as 8 years of age but no later than 39 years of age, workers between

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45 and 54 years of age were diagnosed between 30 and 51 years of age, and workers 60 years of age and above received their diagnosis at 51 years of age or above.

Table 3: Age of Autism Diagnosis by Age of Respondent

Age 5 Year Bands	Min	Max	N
20-24	3	21	12
25-29	3	29	31
30-34	4	31	28
35-39	9	35	15
40-44	8	39	22
45-49	39	49	21
50-54	30	51	15
55-59	.	.	9
60-64	51	60	6
65-69	62	62	5

Table 4: Level of Support Required by Autistic Survey Respondents

Level of Support Required	N	%
Requiring support	39	78.0%
Requiring substantial support	11	22.0%

Table 5: Percentage of Autistic Survey Respondents Disclosed to Employer

Disclosed to Employer as Autistic	N	%
Yes	88	87.1%
No	13	12.9%

Table 6: Percentage of Autistic Survey Respondents With Primary Care-Giving Responsibilities

Primary Care-Giver	N	%
Yes	53	31.5%
No	115	68.5%

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4.2 Demographics of 33 Organisations Participating in Study

In total, 33 organisations comprised of for-profit organisations, social enterprises, not-for-profits, and government agencies agreed to participate. Aggregated analysis of participants highlights a diverse, cross-cultural response stemming from geographical regions spread across five continents: Asia (India, Israel), Oceania (Australia, New Zealand), Europe (Germany, Netherlands, Belgium), North America (United States, Canada, Mexico), and South America (Colombia, Argentina). When interpreting the results below, it is important to note the employer types in our sample are not equally distributed across countries.

Table 7: Sample Distribution of Employer Type by Country

	Country (grouped by region)									
	ANZ*		Europe		India		Latin America		USA & Canada	
Employer Type	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
For-profit	10	34.5%	1	3.4%	0	0.0%	8	27.6%	10	34.5%
Government	45	97.8%	1	2.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Non-profit/educational	12	80.0%	0	0.0%	1	6.7%	0	0.0%	2	13.3%
Social Enterprise	1	2.9%	1	2.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	33	94.3%

*Australia, New Zealand

	Country (grouped by sample representation)					
	Australia		USA		Other	
Employer Type	N	%	N	%	N	%
For-profit	8	22.9%	9	25.7%	18	51.4%
Government	45	97.8%	0	0.0%	1	2.2%
Non-profit/educational	12	80.0%	2	13.3%	1	6.7%
Social Enterprise	1	2.9%	32	91.4%	2	5.7%

4.3 Respondent Profiles

4.3.1 Autistic Employee Respondent Profile

Tables 8 and 9 describe the distribution of autistic respondents in our sample by organisation type and country. In Table 8, more respondents are employed in small social enterprises (39%) than in the government and education sector (28%) and large multinationals (24%). Most respondents were from Australia (47%) and North America (43%) with few from Asia (4%), Europe (3%), New Zealand (2%), and South America (1%).

Table 10 also shows that 67% of the autistic respondents hold a Bachelor's degree or above and the bulk have ongoing part-time employment (47%) followed by 24% ongoing full-time employment, 23% fixed term, and 6% seasonal/casual work. This compares with 63% of co-worker respondents holding a Bachelor's degree or higher and the bulk having ongoing full-time employment (59%) followed by 37% fixed term, and 4% ongoing part-time employment (see Table 12). Tables 9 also shows that 64% of autistic respondents identified as male, 32% as female, and 2% as non-binary, genderqueer, or trans. This compares, as shown in Table 12, to 44% of co-workers identifying as male and 56% as female.

Table 8: Autistic Respondents by Organisation Type

Organisation Type	%
Large, Multi-National	24%
Small, Social Enterprise	39%
Government, Education Sector	28%
Other (not specified)	9%

Tables 9, below, provides a profile of autistic individuals who responded to the survey. These individuals were predominantly located in Australia (48.1%) and the USA (41.7%), with the remainder coming, in descending percentage order, from India, Germany, New Zealand, Netherlands,

Of the autistic respondents, 63.9% identified as male, 32.4% as female, and the remaining 3.8% were split evenly between those who preferred not to say, or identified as trans, non-binary or genderqueer. 34.6% were in the 18-20 years of age group, 29.8% in the 30-39 years of age group, 23.1% in the 40-49 years of age group, and 12.5% in the 50 years and above age group.

Table 9: Profile of Autistic Respondents: Country, Gender and Age

Country	N	%
Australia	52	48.1%
Columbia	1	0.9%
Germany	2	1.9%
India	4	3.7%
Mexico	1	0.9%
Netherlands	1	0.9%
New Zealand	2	1.9%
USA	45	41.7%
All	108	100.0%

Gender	N	%
Female	35	32.4%
Male	69	63.9%
Other	2	1.9%
Prefer not to say	2	1.9%
All	108	100.0%

Age Group	N	%
18-29	36	34.6%
30-39	31	29.8%
40-49	24	23.1%
50 & Above	13	12.5%
All	104	100.0%

The highest level of education completed breakdown was: 19.4% completed Year 12 or a TAFE/Vocational School Certificate III or IV, 13% Year 10 or a TAFE/Vocational School Certificate I or II, 44.4% a Bachelor's degree, 6.5% an Honours degree, 13.9% a Master's degree, and 2.8% a Doctorate.

Table 10: Profile of Autistic Respondents: Education

Which option best represents your highest level of completed or formal education?	N	%
Yr 12/TAFE III, IV	21	19.4%
Yr 10/TAFE I, II	14	13.0%
Bachelor's	48	44.4%
Honours	7	6.5%
Master's	15	13.9%
Doctorate	3	2.8%
All	108	100.0%

Thirteen per cent (13%) held full-time fixed term employment, 48.1% held full-time ongoing employment, 10.2% held part-time fixed term employment, 23.1% held part-time ongoing employment, and 5.6% held seasonal/casual employment. Interesting is the distribution of employment type per country with autistic employees being in full-time ongoing employment in North America more often than in other locations. Australia (and New Zealand) show(s) the highest number of fixed-term employment (full-time and part-time) as well as part-time ongoing employment.

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Thirteen per cent (13%) had tenure at their organisation for less than 6 months, 11.1% had tenure between 6 months and 1 year, 20.4% had 1-2 years tenure, 12% had 2-3 years tenure, 11.1% had 3-4 years tenure, 10.2% had 4-5 years tenure, 4.6% had 5-6 years tenure, 3.7% had 6-7 years tenure, 0.9% had 7-8 years tenure, 0.9% had 9-10 years tenure, and 12% had 10 or greater years tenure.

Table 11: Profile of Autistic Respondents: Employment Type per Country

| | Country (grouped by region) | | | | | | | | | |
| | ANZ* | | Europe | | India | | Latin America | | USA & Canada | |
Employment Type	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full-time, fixed term	20	74.1%	2	7.4%	0	0.0%	4	14.8%	1	3.7%
Full-time, ongoing	26	38.8%	1	1.5%	1	1.5%	4	6.0%	35	52.2%
Part-time, fixed term	8	88.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	11.1%
Part-time, ongoing	15	60.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	10	40.0%
Sessional/Seasonal /Casual	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

*Australia, New Zealand

| | Country (grouped by sample representation) | | | | | |
| | Australia | | USA | | Other | |
Employment Type	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full-time, fixed term	19	70.4%	1	3.7%	7	25.9%
Full-time, ongoing	25	34.2%	34	46.6%	14	19.2%
Part-time, fixed term	8	88.9%	1	11.1%	0	0.0%
Part-time, ongoing	15	60.0%	9	36.0%	1	4.0%
Sessional/Seasonal /Casual	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%

| | Country (grouped by region) | | | | | | | | | |
| | ANZ* | | Europe | | India | | Latin America | | USA & Canada | |
Employment Type	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full-time	46	48.9%	3	3.2%	1	1.1%	8	8.5%	36	38.3%
Part-time	24	66.7%	1	2.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	11	30.6%

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| | Country (grouped by sample representation) | | | | | |
| | Australia | | USA | | Other | |
Employment Type	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full-time	44	44.0%	35	35.0%	21	21.0%
Part-time	24	66.7%	10	27.8%	2	5.6%

Tenure at employer	N	%
< 6 months	14	13.0%
6 months – 1 year	12	11.1%
1-2 years	22	20.4%
2-3 years	13	12.0%
3-4 years	12	11.1%
4-5 years	11	10.2%
5-6 years	5	4.6%
6-7 years	4	3.7%
7-10 years	2	1.8%
> 10 years	13	12.0%

4.3.2 Co-worker Respondent Profile

Table 12 summarises descriptive characteristics for co-workers of autistic employees. Autistic respondents' co-workers predominantly were employed in Australia (63%), Mexico (14.8%), and the USA (11.1%), with equal percentages (3.7%) employed in Argentina, Germany, and New Zealand.

The split between male and female respondents was more even, with 44.4% and 55.6% respectively, and no co-workers of autistic individuals surveyed identifying as 'other' or preferring not to say. Age group was fairly evenly distributed with 22.2% being between 18-29 years of age, 25.9% between 30-39 years of age, 29.6% between 40-49 years of age, and 22.2% being 50 years of age or above.

Education levels varied somewhat from the autistic employee sample, with 22.2% having completed high school to TAFE III or IV, 14.8% completing Year 10 to TAFE I, II, and the remaining 59.2% having completed a bachelor's degree or higher.

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Based on the data provided, it appears that co-workers of autistic employees were more likely to be employed on a full-time basis than their autistic colleagues. 7.4% of the co-worker sample were employed part-time, with the remaining 92.6% employed on a full-time basis, either fixed term (33.3%) or ongoing (59.3%). They were also more likely to have been working in their roles for longer, with 4% stating they had been in their role for less than 6 months, 22% for 6 months – 2 years, 18.5% in their role for 2-5 years (vs. 33.3% of autistic workers), 25.9% for 6-10 years (vs. 5.5% of autistic workers), and almost a third (29.6% vs. 12% of autistic workers) being employed in their current role for ten or more years.

Table 12: Profile of Co-Worker Respondents

What country are you employed in?	N	%
Argentina	1	3.7%
Australia	17	63.0%
Germany	1	3.7%
Mexico	4	14.8%
New Zealand	1	3.7%
USA	3	11.1%
All	27	100.0%

Which best describes your gender?	N	%
Female	15	55.6%
Male	12	44.4%
All	27	100.0%

Age Group	N	%
18-29	6	22.2%
30-39	7	25.9%
40-49	8	29.6%
50 & Above	6	22.2%
All	27	100.0%

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Which option best represents your highest level of completed or formal education?	N	%
Yr 12/TAFE III, IV	6	22.2%
Yr 10/TAFE I, II	4	14.8%
Bachelor's	10	37.0%
Honours	3	11.1%
Master's	3	11.1%
Doctorate	1	3.7%
All	27	100.0%

Employment Type	N	%
Full-time, fixed term	9	33.3%
Full-time, ongoing	16	59.3%
Part-time, fixed term	1	3.7%
Part-time, ongoing	1	3.7%
All	27	100.0%

Tenure	N	%
< 6 months	1	3.7%
6 months - 1 year	1	3.7%
> 1 year - 2 years	5	18.5%
> 2 years - 3 years	2	7.4%
> 3 years - 4 years	2	7.4%
> 4 years - 5 years	1	3.7%
> 6 years - 7 years	1	3.7%
> 7 years - 8 years	3	11.1%
> 8 years - 9 years	1	3.7%
> 9 years - 10 years	2	7.4%
> 10 years	8	29.6%

4.3.3 Supervisor Respondent Profile

Table 13, below, describes the respondents in the 'supervisor' sample; those who identified themselves as supervising one or more autistic employees. These respondents came from Australia (47.4%), USA (31.6%), India (15.8%), and Mexico (5.3%) and were predominantly female (57.9%) with 10.5% describing their gender as Other.

The majority of these respondents were aged 40 or over, with 50% being 40-49 years of age, and 27.8% being 50 years of age or above. Of the groups surveyed, they were the most likely to have a Doctorate (15.8%). Master's degrees were also common (31.6%), while Bachelor's and Year 12 or TAFE III/IV were equally as common at 21.1% each. 10.5% of the sample cited Year 1 or TAFE/I/II as their highest level of educational attainment.

Supervisors in the sample were all employed on a full-time basis, with most (68.4%) in an ongoing role. These individuals had been in their current roles for a minimum of 1 year (15.8%), with 5.3% having tenure between 2 – 3 years, 10.5% for 3 – 4 years, 5.3% for 5-6 years, 5.3% for 6-7 years, and the vast majority (57.9%) for more than ten years. The supervisor sample were the most likely of the groups to have remained in their role for in excess of 10 years (57.9%).

Table 13: Profile of Supervisor Respondents

What country are you employed in?	N	%
Australia	9	47.4%
India	3	15.8%
Mexico	1	5.3%
USA	6	31.6%
All	19	100.0%

Which best describes your gender?	N	%
Female	11	57.9%
Male	6	31.6%
Other	2	10.5%
All	19	100.0%

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Age group	N	%
18-29	1	5.6%
30-39	3	16.7%
40-49	9	50.0%
50 & Above	5	27.8%
All	18	100.0%

Which option best represents your highest level of completed or formal education?	N	%
Yr 12/TAFE III, IV	2	10.5%
Yr 10/TAFE I, II	4	21.1%
Bachelor's	4	21.1%
Master's	6	31.6%
Doctorate	3	15.8%

Employment type	N	%
Full-time, fixed term	6	31.6%
Full-time, ongoing	13	68.4%
All	19	100.0%

How long have you been at your organisation?	N	%
> 1 year - 2 years	3	15.8%
> 2 years - 3 years	1	5.3%
> 3 years - 4 years	2	10.5%
> 5 years - 6 years	1	5.3%
> 6 years - 7 years	1	5.3%
> 10 years	11	57.9%

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4.3.4 Executive/Program Directors and HR Manager Respondent Profile

Most of the Executive/Program Directors were employed in Australia (23.1%), the USA (23.1%) and Canada (15.4%) with 7.7% respectively employed in Argentina, Belgium, India, Israel, and the Netherlands. 53.8% of the Executive/Program Directors were female and the majority (69.2%) were 50 years of age or older with the remainder between 30 and 49 years of age. All Executive/Program Directors had attained a university qualification. 31% of those surveyed had received their Bachelor's degree, 23% honours, 38% held a master's degree, and 8% held doctoral qualifications.

The Executive/Program Director sample were predominantly employed on a full-time basis (15.4% full-time fixed term and 69.2% full-time ongoing). 7.7% of the sample were seasonal/casual employees, and a further 7.7% were employed on a part-time, ongoing basis. As with the supervisor sample, these respondents had all been employed in their current role for a minimum of 6 months. 8% had been in the role for 6 months – 2 years, 24% for 2 – 5 years, 31% for 5 – 10 years, and the remaining 38% had been employed in their current role for 10 or more years.

Table 14: Profile of Executive/Program Director Respondents

What country are you employed in?	N	%
Argentina	1	7.7%
Australia	3	23.1%
Belgium	1	7.7%
Canada	2	15.4%
India	1	7.7%
Israel	1	7.7%
Netherlands	1	7.7%
USA	3	23.1%
All	13	100.0%

Which best describes your gender?	N	%
Female	7	53.8%
Male	6	46.2%
All	13	100.0%

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Age group	N	%
30-39	2	15.4%
40-49	2	15.4%
50 & Above	9	69.2%
All	13	100.0%

Which option best represents your highest level of completed or formal education?	N	%
Bachelor's	4	30.8%
Honours	3	23.1%
Master's	5	38.5%
Doctorate	1	7.7%
All	13	100.0%

Employment type	N	%
Full-time, fixed term	2	15.4%
Full-time, ongoing	9	69.2%
Part-time, ongoing	1	7.7%
Sessional/Seasonal/Casual	1	7.7%
All	13	100.0%

How long have you been at your organisation?	N	%
> 1 year - 2 years	1	7.7%
> 2 years - 3 years	3	23.1%
> 5 years - 6 years	1	7.7%
> 7 years - 8 years	1	7.7%
> 8 years - 9 years	1	7.7%
> 9 years - 10 years	1	7.7%
> 10 years	5	38.5%

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Two Human Resources Managers responded to the survey. One was located in Australia and the other in the USA. Both were females aged 50 and above. One had completed Year 12 or TAFE III/IV, the other her bachelor's degree. Both were employed on an ongoing basis, but one was employed part-time, the other full-time. One respondent had been employed in the current role for between 1 and 2 years, while the other had been employed in her role for 9 – 10 years.

Table 15: Profile of HR Manager Respondents

What country are you employed in?	N	%
Australia	1	50.0%
USA	1	50.0%

Which best describes your gender?	N	%
Female	2	100.0%
All	2	100.0%

Age group	N	%
50 & Above	2	100.0%
All	2	100.0%

Which option best represents your highest level of completed or formal education?	N	%
Yr 12/TAFE III, IV	1	50.0%
Bachelor's	1	50.0%
All	2	100%

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Employment type	N	%
Full-time, ongoing	1	50.0%
Part-time, ongoing	1	50.0%
All	2	100%

How long have you been at your organisation?	N	%
1-2 years	1	50.0%
9-10 years	1	50.0%
All	2	100%

4.4 Workplace Adjustments / Accommodations

4.4.1 Requests and Provision of Workplace Adjustments / Accommodations as Reported by Supervisors

Table 16 shows that, with the exception of the workplace adjustment request for a job coach, supervisors reported that the greatest percentage of *requests* irrespective of adjustment type came from both autistic and non-autistic workers rather than by either autistic employee or co-worker only. In other words, adjustment requests for the following generally come from both autistic and non-autistic workers: a customised job design to suit their skills and interests, doing only one task at a time, asking for a great deal of information from their manager and co-workers about their job performance, a workplace free from excessive noise, having only one person to report to, support like a buddy/mentor, and receiving instructions in writing. The only adjustment requested by a greater percentage of autistic workers than non-autistic workers was having a job coach whereas the only adjustment requested by a greater percentage of non-autistic than autistic workers was autonomy to decide how they carry out work.

Table 16: Adjustments Requested by Autistic and Non-Autistic Workers as Reported by Supervisor

Adjustment requested	Only autistic employees request this		Only non-autistic employees request this		Both autistic and non-autistic employees request this	
	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total
Customised job design to suit their skills and interests	6	33.3%	1	5.6%	9	50.0%
Autonomy to schedule when they work	3	16.7%	2	11.1%	11	61.1%
Autonomy to decide how they carry out work	1	5.6%	2	11.1%	12	66.7%
Doing only one task at a time	6	31.6%	1	5.3%	10	52.6%
Asking for a great deal of information from their manager and co-workers about their job performance	5	27.8%	3	16.7%	8	44.4%
Good ergonomics	1	5.3%	2	10.5%	15	78.9%
A workplace free from excessive noise	6	31.6%	1	5.3%	11	57.9%
A comfortable climate at work in terms of temperature and humidity	1	5.3%	0	0.0%	15	78.9%
A job that occurs in a clean environment		5.3%	1	5.3%	14	73.7%
Having only one person to report to	5	26.3%	2	10.5%	6	31.6%
Having a job coach	8	42.1%	1	5.3%	5	26.3%
Support (like a buddy/mentor)	5	27.8%	0	0.0%	11	61.1%
Instructions in writing	3	16.7%	1	5.6%	12	66.7%

Table 17 shows that, according to supervisors, the greatest percentage of each adjustment type was *provided* to both autistic and non-autistic workers with the exception of a job coach. The largest discrepancies between requested and provided adjustments for autistic employees are in customised job design, job coach and autonomy to schedule work. Autonomy to decide how to carry out work and instructions in writing are reported to be provided more often than they are requested by autistic employee.

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Table 17 Adjustments Provided to Only Autistic vs. Only Non-Autistic vs. Both as Reported by Supervisors

Adjustment type	Only autistic employees are provided this		Only non-autistic employees are provided this		Both autistic and non-autistic employees are provided this	
	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total
Customised job design to suit their skills and interests	3	15.8%	0	0.0%	13	68.4%
Autonomy to schedule when they work	1	5.3%	0	0.0%	17	89.5%
Autonomy to decide how they carry out work	3	15.8%	0	0.0%	13	68.4%
Doing only one task at a time	7	36.8%	0	0.0%	7	36.8%
A great deal of information from their manager and co-workers about their job performance	6	31.6%	2	10.5%	11	57.9%
Good ergonomics	1	5.3%	0	0.0%	17	89.5%
A workplace free from excessive noise	5	26.3%	0	0.0%	12	63.2%
A comfortable climate in terms of temperature and humidity	2	10.5%	1	5.3%	15	78.9%
A job that occurs in a clean environment	2	10.5%	0	0.0%	16	84.2%
Having only one person to report to	4	21.1%	0	0.0%	11	57.9%
A job coach	7	36.8%	1	5.3%	5	26.3%
Support (like a buddy/mentor)	2	10.5%	0	0.0%	15	78.9%
Instructions in writing	5	26.3%	1	5.3%	11	57.9%

We did not find any statistically significant differences in perceived helpfulness of the adjustments for autistic workers with those requiring support (level 1 according to the DSM-5) vs. those requiring substantial support (level 2 according to the DSM-5). We did, however, find statistically significant differences in perceived helpfulness of the following adjustments with disclosed autistic workers perceiving them as more helpful compared to undisclosed: Customised job design to suit skills and interests, Autonomy to schedule when I work, Autonomy to decide how I carry out work, A job that requires unique ideas or solutions to problems, Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance, Good ergonomics (e.g., comfortable workstation), A job that has a low risk of accidents, A job that occurs in a clean environment, Support (like a buddy/mentor.

4.4.2 Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpful Workplace Adjustments/Accommodations

Our data revealed statistically significant differences for what autistic people say helps in the workplace. Males **more often** than females reported not having received the below adjustments although they thought they would be helpful if offered.

- Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance
- Support like a buddy/mentor
- Instructions in writing

Employees in Australia **more often** than employees in the USA reported not having received the below adjustments although they thought they would be helpful if offered:

- Customised job design to suit skills and interests
- Autonomy to schedule when I work
- Autonomy to decide how I carry out work
- Tasks that have an obvious beginning and end
- Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance
- A job that requires monitoring a great deal of information
- A job that requires a variety of skills
- A job requiring depth of knowledge and expertise
- Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance
- A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment
- A job coach
- Support like a buddy/mentor
- Instructions in writing

Employees in social enterprises compared to government, non-profit and for-profit organisations reported significantly **less** not having received the below adjustments although they thought they would be helpful if offered:

- Customised job design to suit skills and interests
- Autonomy to schedule when I work
- Autonomy to decide how I carry out work
- A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment

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- Instructions in writing

Employees in social enterprises and for-profits compared to autistic employees in government and non-profits reported significantly **less** not having received the below adjustments although they thought they would be helpful if offered:

- Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance
- The opportunity to develop close friendships at work
- A job that depends on the work of many different people for its completion
- Support like a buddy/mentor

Employees in social enterprises, for-profits and government compared to non-profits reported significantly **less** not having received the below adjustments although they thought they would be helpful if offered:

- Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance
- A job that has a low risk of accidents

Thus, in our sample social enterprises and organisations in the US seem to better meet autistic employees' needs in regard to the above practices than their counterparts.

Full-time employees reported significantly **less** not having received the below adjustments although they thought they would be helpful if offered compared to part-time employees:

- Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance
- A job that requires unique ideas or solutions to problems
- A job that requires a variety of skills
- A job requiring depth of knowledge and expertise
- The opportunity to develop close friendships at work
- A job that has a low risk of accidents
- Support like a buddy/mentor

Autistic employees who reported they were very satisfied with their supervisor reported significantly **less frequently** not having received the below adjustments although they thought they would be helpful if offered compared to those less satisfied with their supervisor:

- Customised job design to suit skills and interests

- Having a job with few tasks or where tasks are similar
- Tasks that have an obvious beginning and end
- Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance
- A job that requires monitoring a great deal of information
- A job that requires unique ideas or solutions to problems
- A job that requires a variety of skills
- A job that depends on the work of many different people for its completion
- Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance
- Good ergonomics (e.g., comfortable workstation)
- A workplace free from excessive noise
- A job that has a low risk of accidents
- A job that occurs in a clean environment
- A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment
- Only one person to report to
- Support (like a buddy/mentor)
- Instructions in writing

Autistic employees less satisfied with their supervisor gave the **following open-ended answers to suggest practices that would help**:

- Adjustments to allow for slower processing speed e.g., time to take notes when being given instructions
- Be less discriminatory
- Be more clear about growth opportunities
- Care for us a lot more instead of being a "them & us" situation. Be there and visit us more often instead of you being in your office all day!
- Check understanding, put boundaries around things being tangential and overinclusive
- Clinical supervision provided by organisation
- Communication
- Fair and equal pay
- Give me more consistent hours and inform me of my current role in the organisation
- Have a low sensory room to mitigate the business of open plan office
- Improve internal job transfer options by providing more information about what jobs there are and what they're like

- Leave me alone and trust me to get work done
- Less noisy environment
- More time to deal with their work and teach me
- Neurodiversity on Board
- Remote work
- Say hello would be a good start
- Speak respectfully
- Support flexible work options without always seeing it as a burden
- To have a registered sign out sheet so that it verifies when I have finished work. This is better than having to chase up a Manager to verbally inform them that I have finished work, every time.
- Verbal feedback

Importantly areas of insight come from areas where discrepancies in autistic and co-workers' perceptions of the usefulness of adjustments arise. These are: having a job with few tasks or where tasks are similar (11.1% autistic workers say have and help vs. 59.3% of co-workers), it would probably help if Tasks that have an obvious beginning and end was offered (29.6% autistic vs. 18.5% of co-workers), it would probably help if Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance was offered (29.6% autistic vs. 14.8% of co-workers), it would probably help if A job requiring doing only one task at a time was offered (25.9% autistic workers vs. 18.5%).

Table 18: Discrepancies in Autistic Workers' and Co-workers' Perceptions of The Usefulness of Adjustments

How helpful was	Autistic Workers	Co-workers
Having a job with few tasks or where tasks are similar	11.1%	59.3%
It would probably help if tasks that have an obvious beginning and end was offered	29.6%	18.5%
It would probably help if work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance was offered	29.6%	14.8%
It would probably help if A job requiring doing only one task at a time was offered	25.9%	18.5%

4.5 Autistic Workers' Levels of Employment-Related Security

We are not aware of any published study that provides information on autistic workers' levels of security. Our study therefore provides new knowledge on how secure autistic workers are regarding ten factors. Responses were indicated using a scale which ranged from 1 to 5, with 1 =

not very secure and 5 = very secure. Autistic workers were most secure about Regular access to basic life needs (88.9%), Access to work that provides the income I require (88.9%), Protection against unfair dismissal from employment (70.3%), Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work (77.7%), Protection against having to work excessive or anti-social, hours (74%). Although still a majority of autistic workers reported feeling secure about the following, the percentage feeling secure indicates these areas may warrant attention: A fair employment contract (66.6%), Having a job I want (59.2%), Control over my work tasks (62.9%), Opportunities to gain, retain and use my skills for work (62.9%), and The ability to bargain and protect myself in the workplace (55.5%). In the tables that follow, we delve deeper into security perceptions.

4.5.1 Statistically Significant Differences in Employment-Related Security of Autistic Workers

The table below reveals that female compared to male autistic workers felt more secure about five employment-related factors: Protection against unfair dismissal from employment, A fair employment contract, Control over my work tasks, Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours, The ability to bargain and protect myself in the workplace (e.g., ability to speak up in the workplace like negotiate your employment terms and conditions; asking for what you want).

Table 19: Statistically Significant Gender Differences in Employment-Related Security of Autistic Workers

Feeling secure about:	Female*	Male*
Protection against unfair dismissal from employment	4.1 (3.8, 4.4)	3.5 (3.1, 3.9)
A fair employment contract	4.3 (4.0, 4.6)	3.8 (3.4, 4.1)
Control over my work tasks	4.0 (3.7, 4.2)	3.4 (3.0, 3.7)
Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours	4.4 (4.1, 4.6)	3.9 (3.6, 4.3)
The ability to bargain and protect myself in the workplace (e.g., ability to speak up in the workplace like negotiate your employment terms and conditions; asking for what you want)	3.9 (3.6, 4.1)	3.3 (2.9, 3.7)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

The table below reveals that full-time compared to part-time autistic workers felt more secure about eight employment-related factors: Access to work that provides the income I require, Protection against unfair dismissal from employment, A fair employment contract, Having a job I want (being able to do work that interests me), Control over my work tasks, Opportunities to gain, retain and use skills for work, Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work, Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours.

Table 20: Statistically Significant Differences in Employment-Related Security of Part-Time vs Full-Time Autistic Workers

Feeling secure about:	Full-time*	Part-time*
Access to work that provides the income I require	4.2 (3.9, 4.5)	3.6 (3.2, 4.0)
Protection against unfair dismissal from employment	4.2 (3.8, 4.5)	3.5 (3.1, 3.9)
A fair employment contract	4.3 (4.1, 4.6)	3.8 (3.4, 4.1)
Having a job I want (being able to do work that interests me)	4.0 (3.7, 4.3)	3.5 (3.1, 3.8)
Control over my work tasks	4.0 (3.8, 4.3)	3.4 (3.1, 3.7)
Opportunities to gain, retain and use skills for work	4.1 (3.8, 4.3)	3.3 (2.9, 3.6)
Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work	4.3 (4.0, 4.6)	3.4 (3.1, 3.8)
Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours	4.4 (4.1, 4.6)	4.0 (3.7, 4.3)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

The table below reveals that where there were statistically significant differences in employment-related security for disclosed and undisclosed autistic survey respondents with autistic workers that were disclosed to their employer feeling more secure.

Table 21 Significant Differences in Employment-Related Security for Disclosed and Undisclosed Autistic Survey Respondents

Feeling secure about:	Not Disclosed to Employer*	Disclosed to Employer*
Protection against unfair dismissal from employment	3.1 (2.4, 3.8)	4.0 (3.7, 4.2)
A fair employment contract	3.4 (2.8, 4.0)	4.2 (4.0, 4.4)
Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours	3.4 (2.8, 4.0)	4.3 (4.1, 4.5)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

The table below presents the statistically significant differences in security levels found for employer type. Results reveal that autistic workers in social enterprises felt more secure than autistic workers in other employer types about six employment-related factors: Protection against unfair dismissal from employment, A fair employment contract, Control over my work tasks, Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work, Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours, The ability to bargain and protect myself in the workplace. After

social enterprise workers, autistic employees felt most secure in the private sector. Autistic workers in the non-profit / educational sector were least secure.

Table 22: Statistically Significant Differences in Employment-Related Security of Autistic Workers by Employer Type

Feeling secure about:	For-profit*	Government*	Non-profit / educational*	Social Enterprise*
Protection against unfair dismissal from employment	4.1 (3.6, 4.6)	3.5 (3.0, 3.9)	3.2 (2.6, 3.8)	4.4 (4.0, 4.8)
A fair employment contract	4.3 (3.9, 4.7)	3.9 (3.5, 4.2)	3.5 (2.9, 4.0)	4.5 (4.1, 4.8)
Control over my work tasks	3.8 (3.4, 4.3)	3.4 (3.0, 3.8)	3.4 (2.9, 3.9)	4.1 (3.8, 4.5)
Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work	4.1 (3.6, 4.5)	3.6 (3.2, 4.1)	3.1 (2.5, 3.7)	4.5 (4.1, 4.9)
Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours	4.2 (3.8, 4.6)	4.0 (3.6, 4.4)	3.5 (3.0, 4.0)	4.7 (4.4, 5.0)
The ability to bargain and protect myself in the workplace (e.g., ability to speak up in the workplace like negotiate your employment terms and conditions; asking for what you want)	3.5 (3.0, 4.0)	3.3 (2.9, 3.8)	3.4 (2.8, 4.0)	4.2 (3.8, 4.6)

* First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

The table below presents the statistically significant differences in security levels found by country. Results revealed statistically significant differences on five employment-related factors: Protection against unfair dismissal from employment, A fair employment contract, Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work, Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours, and The ability to bargain and protect myself in the workplace. Compared to other countries, autistic workers in Europe felt most secure about Protection against unfair dismissal from employment and A fair employment contract. Also, autistic workers in Europe were more secure than their counterparts in Latin American and the USA and Canada who in turn were more secure than their counterparts in Australia and New Zealand about Protection against unfair dismissal from employment and A fair employment contract. In terms of Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work, autistic workers in Latin America were more secure than their counterparts in the USA and Canada who in turn were more secure than autistic workers in Europe who in turn were more secure than their counterparts in Australia and New Zealand. In terms of Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours, autistic workers in the USA, Canada and Latin America were more secure who in turn were more secure than their counterparts in Europe and Australia and New Zealand. In terms of The ability to bargain and protect myself in the

workplace, autistic workers were more secure in the USA, Canada and Europe who in turn were more secure than their counterparts in Latin America and Australia and New Zealand.

Table 23: Statistically Significant Differences in Employment-Related Security of Autistic Workers by Country

Feeling secure about:	ANZ*	Europe*	Latin America*	USA & Canada*
Protection against unfair dismissal from employment	3.4 (3.1, 3.7)	5.0 (3.6, 6.4)	4.5 (2.8, 6.2)	4.3 (4.0, 4.7)
A fair employment contract	3.7 (3.5, 4.0)	5.0 (3.8, 6.2)	4.5 (3.0, 6.0)	4.4 (4.1, 4.8)
Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work	3.5 (3.2, 3.8)	4.0 (2.7, 5.3)	5.0 (3.4, 6.6)	4.5 (4.1, 4.8)
Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours	3.9 (3.6, 4.2)	4.0 (2.8, 5.2)	4.5 (3.1, 5.9)	4.6 (4.3, 4.9)
The ability to bargain and protect myself in the workplace (e.g., ability to speak up in the workplace like negotiate your employment terms and conditions; asking for what you want)	3.3 (3.0, 3.6)	4.0 (2.7, 5.3)	3.0 (1.4, 4.6)	4.1 (3.7, 4.4)

* First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

4.5.2 Employment-Related Security of Autistic Workers Compared to Their Co-workers

The table below shows that autistic workers felt similarly secure on various employment-related matters.

Table 24: Statistical Tests of Differences in Employment-Related Security of Autistic Workers vs. Their Co-Workers

Feeling secure about:	Autistic Worker*	Co-worker of Autistic Worker/s*	Prob > F
Regular access to basic life needs (e.g., food, healthcare, education)	4.2 (4.0, 4.4)	4.5 (4.1, 4.8)	0.227137
Access to work that provides the income I require	4.0 (3.7, 4.2)	4.4 (4.0, 4.9)	0.052861
Protection against unfair dismissal from employment	3.9 (3.7, 4.1)	3.8 (3.3, 4.3)	0.759478
A fair employment contract	4.1 (3.9, 4.3)	3.9 (3.5, 4.3)	0.319387
Having a job I want (being able to do work that interests me)	3.8 (3.5, 4.0)	3.7 (3.3, 4.2)	0.889631

Feeling secure about:	Autistic Worker*	Co-worker of Autistic Worker/s*	Prob > F
Control over my work tasks	3.8 (3.6, 4.0)	3.8 (3.4, 4.2)	0.873452
Opportunities to gain, retain and use skills for work	3.8 (3.5, 4.0)	3.8 (3.3, 4.2)	0.942155
Protection against accidents and ill-health linked to work	4.0 (3.7, 4.2)	4.1 (3.7, 4.6)	0.471874
Protection against having to work excessive or "anti-social" hours	4.2 (4.0, 4.4)	4.1 (3.7, 4.5)	0.604162
The ability to bargain and protect myself in the workplace (e.g., ability to speak up in the workplace like negotiate your employment terms and conditions; asking for what you want)	3.7 (3.4, 3.9)	3.5 (3.0, 3.9)	0.484806

* First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

4.6 Work Environment Feature and Organisational Practices

4.6.1 Autistic Workers' Satisfaction with Work Environment Features and Organisational Practices

Interestingly, as the table below reveals, autistic workers' satisfaction with their work environment feature is lower for employees with longer tenure, with 44.4% of those with tenure > 5 years expressing satisfaction, whereas 86% and 87.9% of autistic employees with ≤2 years and 2-5 years tenure, respectively, expressing satisfaction. This pattern warrants future research as it may indicate organisation's give more attention to environmental factors when they first hire autistic individuals becoming more lax over time or differences in the circumstances of autistic employees diagnoses and subsequent recruitment (e.g., those with longer tenure may be older and/or have received their diagnoses later and/or not been recruited via an autism employment program).

Table 25: Significant Differences in Autistic Workers' Satisfaction Levels for Work Environment Features and Organisational Practices by Tenure

Satisfaction with work environment feature	Dissatisfied		Satisfied		All	
Tenure Collapsed	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
≤2 years	6	14.0%	37	86.0%	43	100.0%
>2 - 5 years	4	12.1%	29	87.9%	33	100.0%
>5 - 10 years	5	55.6%	4	44.4%	9	100.0%
>10 years	5	55.6%	4	44.4%	9	100.0%
All	20	21.3%	74	78.7%	94	100.0%

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The table below shows that where there were statistically significant gender differences in autistic workers' satisfaction levels for work environment features and organisational practices, female autistic workers reported higher satisfaction levels than male autistic workers.

Table 26: Gender Significant Differences in Autistic Workers' Satisfaction Levels for Work Environment Feature and Organisational Practices

Work environment feature / Organisational Practice	Female*	Male*
Workplace environment generally (e.g., lights, noise, smell, clutter, colours, patterns, etc.)	4.1 (CI: 3.9, 4.4)	3.1 (2.8, 3.5)
Job security	4.2 (3.9, 4.4)	3.5 (3.1, 3.8)
Work team's acceptance and understanding of you	4.4 (4.2, 4.7)	3.8 (3.4, 4.1)
Workplace including you in most activities (the extent to which you feel included)	4.3 (4.0, 4.5)	3.7 (3.3, 4.0)
Workplace's accommodation of your needs	4.2 (4.0, 4.5)	3.6 (3.2, 4.0)
Organisation's commitment to your professional development	4.3 (4.0, 4.5)	3.7 (3.3, 4.1)
Ability to be yourself at work	4.2 (3.9, 4.5)	3.7 (3.3, 4.1)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means.

The table below shows that full-time autistic workers were more satisfied with their work environment feature and organisational practices than part-time autistic workers. The features presented in the table are those where the differences were significant.

Table 27: Statistically Significant Differences in Full-Time vs Part-Time Autistic Workers' Satisfaction with Work Environment Feature and Organisational Practices

Work environment feature / Organisational practice	Full-time*	Part-time*
Autistic employee's satisfaction with job security	4.2 (3.9, 4.4)	3.6 (3.3, 3.9)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with organisation's commitment to your professional development	4.2 (3.9, 4.4)	3.7 (3.3, 4.0)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace environment generally (e.g., lights, noise, smell, clutter, colours, patterns, etc.)	4.1 (3.8, 4.3)	3.3 (2.9, 3.6)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace including you in most activities (the extent to which you feel included)	4.3 (4.1, 4.6)	3.6 (3.3, 4.0)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with career advancement opportunities	3.7 (3.5, 4.0)	2.9 (2.6, 3.3)

Work environment feature / Organisational practice	Full-time*	Part-time*
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace's accommodation of your needs	4.2 (3.9, 4.5)	3.6 (3.2, 4.0)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with relationship with your co-workers (generally)	4.3 (4.1, 4.5)	3.9 (3.7, 4.2)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with work team's acceptance and understanding of you	4.4 (4.1, 4.6)	3.8 (3.4, 4.1)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with ability to be yourself at work	4.2 (3.9, 4.5)	3.6 (3.2, 3.9)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with number of average weekly hours worked	4.4 (4.1, 4.6)	3.8 (3.5, 4.2)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

The table below reveals that where there were statistically significant differences between autistic workers with and without primary care-giving responsibilities, primary care-givers were significantly less satisfied than their counterparts on four work environment features and organisational practices: Autistic Employee's Satisfaction with work environment generally, Autistic Employee's Satisfaction with Workplace's accommodation of your needs, Autistic Employee's Satisfaction with Work team's acceptance and understanding of you, and Autistic Employee's Satisfaction with Ability to be yourself at work.

Table 28 Statistically Significant Differences in Workplace Satisfaction of Autistic Workers with Primary Care-Giving Responsibilities vs. Autistic Workers Without

Work environment feature / Organisational practice	No Primary Care-Giving Responsibilities	Primary Care-Giving Responsibilities
Autistic employee's satisfaction with Workplace environment generally (e.g., lights, noise, smell, clutter, colours, patterns, etc.)	4.0 (3.7, 4.2)	3.2 (2.7, 3.6)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace's accommodation of your needs	4.2 (3.9, 4.4)	3.4 (2.9, 3.9)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with work team's acceptance and understanding of you	4.3 (4.0, 4.5)	3.6 (3.2, 4.0)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with ability to be yourself at work	4.2 (3.9, 4.4)	3.3 (2.9, 3.7)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

The table below reveals that where there were statistically significant differences between autistic workers who were disclosed or undisclosed to their employers, those whose autism was disclosed to their employer were significantly more satisfied than their counterparts on nine work

environment features and organisational practices: autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace's accommodation of your needs, autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's performance rating of you, autistic employee's satisfaction with relationship with your direct supervisor, autistic employee's satisfaction with communication between you and your direct supervisor, autistic employee's satisfaction with work team's acceptance and understanding of you, autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's acceptance and understanding of you, autistic employee's satisfaction with ability to be yourself at work, autistic employee's satisfaction with work hours, and autistic employee's satisfaction with number of average weekly hours worked.

Table 29 Statistically Significant Differences in Workplace Satisfaction of Disclosed and Undisclosed Autistic Workers

Work environment feature / Organisational practice	Not Disclosed to Employer*	Disclosed to Employer*
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace's accommodation of your needs	3.1 (2.4, 3.8)	4.1 (3.8, 4.3)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's performance rating of you (the fairness to which it's assessed)	3.5 (2.9, 4.1)	4.4 (4.2, 4.6)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with relationship with your direct supervisor	3.7 (3.2, 4.1)	4.4 (4.2, 4.6)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with communication between you and your direct supervisor	3.3 (2.7, 3.8)	4.2 (4.0, 4.4)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with work team's acceptance and understanding of you	3.4 (2.7, 4.0)	4.2 (4.0, 4.5)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's acceptance and understanding of you	3.5 (2.9, 4.2)	4.4 (4.1, 4.6)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with ability to be yourself at work	3.3 (2.6, 3.9)	4.0 (3.8, 4.3)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with work hours (time of day / night)	3.5 (3.0, 4.1)	4.3 (4.1, 4.5)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with number of average weekly hours worked	3.5 (2.8, 4.1)	4.2 (4.0, 4.5)

* First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

The table below reveals that where there were statistically significant differences between autistic workers Requiring Support (Level 1 according to the DSM-5) vs. Substantial Support (Level 2 according to the DSM-5), those requiring substantial support were significantly less satisfied than their counterparts on four work environment features and organisational practices: autistic employee's satisfaction with compensation / pay, autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace's accommodation of your needs, autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's

performance rating of you, and autistic employee's satisfaction with relationship with your direct supervisor.

Table 30 Statistically Significant Differences in Workplace Satisfaction of Autistic Workers Requiring Support vs Substantial Support

Work environment feature / Organisational practice	Requires substantial support*	Requires support*
Autistic employee's satisfaction with compensation / pay	3.5 (3.0, 4.1)	4.3 (4.0, 4.6)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace's accommodation of your needs	3.0 (2.3, 3.7)	4.0 (3.6, 4.4)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's performance rating of you (the fairness to which it's assessed)	3.5 (2.8, 4.2)	4.4 (4.1, 4.8)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with relationship with your direct supervisor	3.8 (3.3, 4.4)	4.5 (4.2, 4.8)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

Autistic employees in social enterprises had the highest mean satisfaction with their work environment feature and organisational practices.

Table 31: Statistically Significant Differences in Autistic Workers' Satisfaction with Work Environment Feature and Organisational Practices by Employer Type

Environment feature / Organisational practice	For-profit*	Government*	Non-profit / educational*	Social Enterprise*
Autistic employee's satisfaction with job security	3.9 (3.4, 4.3)	3.4 (3.0, 3.8)	4.0 (3.4, 4.6)	4.4 (4.0, 4.7)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace environment generally (e.g., lights, noise, smell, clutter, colours, patterns, etc.)	4.0 (3.6, 4.4)	3.2 (2.8, 3.6)	3.4 (2.8, 4.0)	4.3 (3.9, 4.6)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace including you in most activities (the extent to which you feel included)	4.3 (3.8, 4.7)	3.7 (3.3, 4.1)	3.6 (3.1, 4.1)	4.3 (4.0, 4.7)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with career advancement opportunities	3.7 (3.2, 4.2)	3.0 (2.5, 3.4)	3.1 (2.5, 3.7)	3.8 (3.4, 4.2)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace's accommodation of your needs	4.2 (3.8, 4.7)	3.4 (3.0, 3.8)	3.4 (2.8, 4.0)	4.6 (4.2, 4.9)

Environment feature / Organisational practice	For-profit*	Government*	Non-profit / educational*	Social Enterprise*
Autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's performance rating of you (the fairness to which it's assessed)	4.3 (3.9, 4.7)	4.1 (3.7, 4.4)	4.1 (3.6, 4.5)	4.7 (4.4, 5.0)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with work team's acceptance and understanding of you	4.3 (3.8, 4.7)	3.6 (3.2, 4.0)	3.7 (3.1, 4.2)	4.6 (4.3, 4.9)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's acceptance and understanding of you	4.4 (4.0, 4.8)	3.8 (3.4, 4.2)	4.1 (3.6, 4.6)	4.7 (4.4, 5.0)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with ability to be yourself at work	4.0 (3.5, 4.5)	3.6 (3.2, 4.1)	3.5 (3.0, 4.1)	4.5 (4.1, 4.8)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

Autistic employees in Australia and New Zealand had the lowest mean satisfaction with their work environment feature and organisational practices compared to other countries.

Table 32: Statistically Significant Differences in Autistic Workers' Satisfaction with Work Environment Feature and Organisational Practices by Country

Environment feature / Organisational practice	ANZ*	Europe*	Latin America*	USA & Canada*
Autistic employee's satisfaction with job security	3.5 (3.2, 3.8)	5.0 (3.8, 6.2)	4.5 (3.0, 6.0)	4.3 (4.0, 4.6)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace environment generally (e.g., lights, noise, smell, clutter, colours, patterns, etc.)	3.2 (2.9, 3.5)	3.7 (2.5, 4.8)	4.5 (3.1, 5.9)	4.4 (4.1, 4.7)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with career advancement opportunities	3.0 (2.7, 3.3)	3.5 (1.9, 5.1)	4.5 (2.9, 6.1)	3.8 (3.5, 4.2)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with workplace's accommodation of your needs	3.4 (3.1, 3.7)	5.0 (3.8, 6.2)	4.5 (3.0, 6.0)	4.5 (4.2, 4.9)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's performance rating of you (the fairness to which it's assessed)	4.0 (3.8, 4.2)	5.0 (3.8, 6.2)	4.0 (2.8, 5.2)	4.7 (4.4, 5.0)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with work team's acceptance and understanding of you	3.7 (3.5, 4.0)	4.7 (3.5, 5.8)	4.0 (2.0, 6.0)	4.5 (4.2, 4.8)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with direct supervisor's acceptance and understanding of you	3.9 (3.7, 4.2)	4.7 (3.6, 5.8)	5.0 (3.6, 6.4)	4.7 (4.4, 5.0)
Autistic employee's satisfaction with ability to be yourself at work	3.5 (3.2, 3.8)	5.0 (3.8, 6.2)	5.0 (2.9, 7.1)	4.4 (4.1, 4.7)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

The table below reveals that autistic workers had similar satisfaction levels to their co-workers with their work environment feature and organisation's practices, with the only statistically significant difference being that autistic workers were more satisfied than their co-workers with their relationship with their direct supervisor.

Table 33: Statistical Significance Tests of Workplace Satisfaction of Autistic Workers vs. Their Co-Workers

Work environment feature and organisational practices	Mean Satisfaction of Autistic Employees*	Mean Satisfaction of Co-workers*	Prob > F
Compensation / pay	4.0 (3.8, 4.2)	4.2 (3.8, 4.6)	0.364993
Job security	3.9 (3.7, 4.2)	3.9 (3.4, 4.3)	0.739882
Organisation's commitment to your professional development	4.0 (3.7, 4.2)	3.6 (3.1, 4.0)	0.10726
Work itself (suited to your interests, skills, and abilities)	4.0 (3.8, 4.2)	3.9 (3.5, 4.3)	0.592937
Workplace environment generally (e.g., lights, noise, smell, clutter, colours, patterns, etc.)	3.8 (3.6, 4.0)	4.1 (3.6, 4.5)	0.206229
Workplace including you in most activities (the extent to which you feel included)	4.1 (3.8, 4.3)	3.8 (3.4, 4.2)	0.30859
Career advancement opportunities	3.4 (3.2, 3.7)	3.3 (2.8, 3.7)	0.543057
Workplace's accommodation of your needs	4.0 (3.7, 4.2)	3.8 (3.4, 4.3)	0.522924
Direct supervisor's performance rating of you (the fairness to which it's assessed)	4.3 (4.1, 4.6)	4.0 (3.6, 4.4)	0.100767
Relationship with your direct supervisor	**4.3 (4.2, 4.5)**	**3.9 (3.5, 4.3)**	**0.036349**
Communication between you and your direct supervisor	4.1 (3.9, 4.3)	3.9 (3.5, 4.3)	0.281307
Relationship with your co-workers (generally)	4.1 (4.0, 4.3)	4.2 (3.9, 4.5)	0.647705
Communication between you and your co-workers (generally)	4.0 (3.8, 4.2)	4.3 (3.9, 4.6)	0.160646
Work team's acceptance and understanding of you	4.1 (3.9, 4.3)	4.1 (3.8, 4.5)	0.92197
Direct supervisor's acceptance and understanding of you	4.3 (4.1, 4.5)	3.9 (3.5, 4.3)	0.079822
Ability to be yourself at work	4.0 (3.7, 4.2)	4.0 (3.6, 4.4)	0.874524
Work hours (time of day / night)	4.3 (4.1, 4.5)	4.1 (3.8, 4.5)	0.402069
Number of average weekly hours worked	4.2 (4.0, 4.4)	4.1 (3.8, 4.5)	0.984892

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

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4.6.2 Significant Differences in Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpful Organisational Practices

The table below presents statistically significant gender differences in perceptions of helpfulness of workplace adjustments reported by autistic workers. A greater proportion of female compared to male autistic workers reported the following were helpful: Customised job design to suit skills and interests, Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance, Support like a buddy/mentor, and Instructions in writing. This is important as it shows that providing a specific organisational practice was not perceived as equally helpful across genders thus organisations must not only implement relevant practices but also adjust those to the specific needs of female vs male autistic workers.

Table 34: Statistically Significant Gender Differences in What Autistic Workers Say Helps Them in The Workplace

What autistic workers say helps them in the workplace	N Female	N Male	Percent of Females Saying This is Helpful	Percent of Males Saying This Is Helpful
Customised job design to suit skills and interests	90	58	62%	45%
Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance	56	35	79%	57%
Support (like a buddy/mentor)	53	31	74%	39%
Instructions in writing	57	31	81%	42%

The table below presents statistically significant employment type differences in the helpfulness of workplace adjustments reported by autistic workers. A greater proportion of full-time compared to part-time autistic workers reported the following were helpful: Customised job design to suit skills and interests, Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance, A job that requires unique ideas or solutions to problems, A job that requires a variety of skills, A job requiring depth of knowledge and expertise, The opportunity to develop close friendships at work, A job that has a low risk of accidents, and Support like a buddy/mentor.

Table 35: Statistically Significant Employment Type Differences in What Autistic Workers Say Helps Them in the Workplace

What autistic workers say helps them in the workplace	N Full-time	N Part-time	Percentage of Full-time workers that say helpful	Percentage of Part-time workers that say helpful
Customised job design to suit skills and interests	88	62	61%	45%
Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance	57	38	82%	55%
A job that requires unique ideas or solutions to problems	48	30	83%	57%
A job that requires a variety of skills	50	34	90%	65%
A job requiring depth of knowledge and expertise	55	31	84%	65%
The opportunity to develop close friendships at work	47	25	81%	52%
A job that has a low risk of accidents	57	36	95%	75%
Support like a buddy/mentor	52	34	69%	44%

The table below presents statistically significant employer type differences in the helpfulness of workplace adjustments reported by autistic workers. A greater proportion of social enterprise workers compared to workers in other employer types reported the following were helpful: Customised job design to suit skills and interests, Autonomy to schedule when I work, Autonomy to decide how I carry out work, Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance, The opportunity to develop close friendships at work, A job that depends on the work of many different people for its completion, Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance, A job that has a low risk of accidents, A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment, Support like a buddy/mentor, and Instructions in writing. Private sector and government employees found a job requiring a lot of physical effort helpful to be much more helpful than did social enterprise employees who, in turn, reported it to be much more helpful than did non-profit employees. In all cases save two (Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance, Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance), a greater proportion of private employer workers compared to workers in government and non-profit reported the following were helpful: Customised job design to suit skills and interests, Autonomy to schedule when I work, Autonomy to decide how I carry out work, The opportunity to develop close friendships at work, A job that depends on the work of many different people for its completion, A job requiring a lot of physical effort, A job that

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has a low risk of accidents, A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment, Support like a buddy/mentor, and Instructions in writing.

Table 36: Statistically Significant Employer Type Differences in what Autistic Workers Say Helps Them in the Workplace

What autistic workers say helps them in the workplace	N For-profit	N Govern-ment	N Non-profit / education-al	N Social Enterprise	Percent in For-profits saying helpful	Percent in Govern-ment saying helpful	Percent in Non-profit / education saying helpful	Percent in Social Enterprise saying helpful
Customised job design to suit skills and interests	28	42	24	52	57%	33%	50%	77%
Autonomy to schedule when I work	21	24	15	32	81%	63%	67%	97%
Autonomy to decide how I carry out work	18	23	14	27	89%	70%	50%	100%
Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance	22	26	12	30	59%	69%	42%	97%
The opportunity to develop close friendships at work	17	16	9	25	76%	50%	44%	88%
A job that depends on the work of many different people for its completion	10	8	8	23	80%	50%	63%	96%
Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance	20	19	9	28	65%	68%	33%	86%
A job requiring a lot of physical effort	5	4	4	5	100%	75%	25%	40%
A job that has a low risk of accidents	23	22	11	33	91%	91%	55%	94%
A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment	13	10	6	27	85%	70%	67%	100%
Support like a buddy/mentor	19	22	12	32	68%	32%	42%	81%
Instructions in writing	21	21	13	31	62%	52%	46%	87%

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The table below presents statistically significant country differences in the helpfulness of workplace adjustments reported by autistic workers. In all cases save three where they were second lowest (Customised job design to suit skills and interests, Tasks that have an obvious beginning and end, Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance), a lower proportion of ANZ workers compared to autistic workers in any other country reported the following as helpful: Autonomy to decide how I carry out work, A job that requires a variety of skills, A job requiring depth of knowledge and expertise, Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance, A workplace free from excessive noise, A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment, A job coach (someone external to the organisation to help me out when things get tough between my employer and I), Support like a buddy/mentor, and Instructions in writing. Compared to other countries, a greater proportion of Autistic workers in Europe and the USA and Canada reported the following as helpful: Customised job design to suit skills and interests, A job that requires a variety of skills, A job requiring depth of knowledge and expertise, Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance, and A workplace free from excessive noise. Latin American workers led or were equal first in reporting the following as helpful: Autonomy to decide how I carry out work, Tasks that have an obvious beginning and end, Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance, A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment, A job coach (someone external to the organisation to help me out when things get tough between my employer and I), Support like a buddy/mentor, and Instructions in writing.

Table 37: Statistically Significant Country Differences in What Autistic Workers Say Helps Them in the Workplace

What autistic workers say helps them in the workplace	N ANZ	N Europe	N Latin America	N USA & Canada	Percent in ANZ saying helpful	Percent in Europe saying helpful	Percent in Latin America saying helpful	Percent in USA & Canada saying helpful
Customised job design to suit skills and interests	78	2	2	64	38%	100%	0%	72%
Autonomy to decide how I carry out work	45	3	1	33	67%	100%	100%	94%
Tasks that have an obvious beginning and end	42	3	2	33	69%	33%	100%	94%
Work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance	49	3	2	38	57%	33%	100%	89%
A job that requires a variety of skills	45	1		34	67%	100%		94%

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What autistic workers say helps them in the workplace	N ANZ	N Europe	N Latin America	N USA & Canada	Percent in ANZ saying helpful	Percent in Europe saying helpful	Percent in Latin America saying helpful	Percent in USA & Canada saying helpful
A job requiring depth of knowledge and expertise	46	2	1	34	67%	100%	0%	88%
Receiving a great deal of information from my manager and co-workers about my job performance	36	2	2	36	44%	100%	50%	83%
A workplace free from excessive noise	50	3	1	37	42%	100%	0%	59%
A job involving the use of a variety of different equipment	23		1	30	65%		100%	100%
A job coach (someone external to the organisation to help me out when things get tough between my employer and I)	39		2	23	36%		100%	65%
Support like a buddy/mentor	42	2	1	37	38%	50%	100%	78%
Instructions in writing	46	1	2	39	48%	0%	50%	85%

4.6.3 Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpfulness of Various Organisational Recruitment Practices

The table below reveals that the top three helpful recruitment practices as perceived by autistic workers are: an individual interview (e.g., panel of people and just you - and maybe a support person), a task instead of a formal interview (e.g., code a program, make/design something), and communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees.

Table 38: Analysis of Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpfulness of Various Organisational Recruitment Practices

How helpful was	Not Very Helpful	Somewhat Not Helpful	Neutral	Somewhat Helpful	Very Helpful	N/A
Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply	11%	2%	7%	12%	34%	33%
Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people	12%	1%	6%	11%	32%	37%

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How helpful was	Not Very Helpful	Somewhat Not Helpful	Neutral	Somewhat Helpful	Very Helpful	N/A
Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees	13%	2%	6%	9%	**40%**	31%
Did not require formal qualifications	6%	3%	10%	18%	32%	31%
Included you in a group interview	9%	3%	6%	6%	19%	57%
Gave you an individual interview (e.g., panel of people and just you - and maybe a support person)	5%	4%	9%	13%	**53%**	17%
Asked you to do a task instead of a formal interview (e.g., code a program, make/design something)	13%	2%	6%	9%	**40%**	31%
Offered a trial so you could work in the job to see if it was suitable	6%	3%	10%	18%	32%	31%
Modified (that you are aware of) the physical environment you had your interview or where the selection process took place	9%	3%	6%	6%	19%	57%

The table below shows that female autistic employees reporting the following recruitment practices as more helpful than male autistic employees: Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply, Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people, Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees, Gave you an individual interview (e.g., panel of people and just you - and maybe a support person), Asked you to do a task instead of a formal interview (e.g., code a program, make/design something), Offered a trial so you could work in the job to see if it was suitable. Thus, what may have created previously help assumptions about the ineffectiveness of interviews as recruitment practice for autistic workers may have been a focus on autistic males whose preferences seem to differ from autistic females.

Table 39: Statistically Significant Differences by Gender in Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpfulness of Various Recruitment Practices, mean values and confidence interval

Recruitment practice	Female	Male
Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply	4.2 (3.8, 4.6)	3.2 (2.6, 3.8)
Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people	4.2 (3.8, 4.6)	3.1 (2.4, 3.7)
Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees	4.2 (3.8, 4.6)	3.1 (2.4, 3.7)
Gave you an individual interview (e.g., panel of people and just you - and maybe a support person)	4.4 (4.1, 4.7)	3.9 (3.4, 4.3)
Asked you to do a task instead of a formal interview (e.g., code a program, make/design something)	4.3 (3.9, 4.7)	3.1 (2.6, 3.7)
Offered a trial so you could work in the job to see if it was suitable	4.3 (3.9, 4.8)	3.5 (2.9, 4.1)

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The table below shows further statistically significant differences by employment type in Autistic Workers' perceptions of Helpfulness of various recruitment practices. Full-time autistic employees compared to part-time autistic employees found the following recruitment practices more helpful: Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply, Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people, Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees, and Did not require formal qualifications.

Table 40: Statistically Significant Differences by Employment Type in Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpfulness of Various Recruitment Practices

Recruitment practice	Full-Time	Part-Time
Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply	4.2 (3.8, 4.6)	3.1 (2.5, 3.7)
Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people	4.2 (3.7, 4.6)	3.0 (2.3, 3.6)
Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees	4.3 (3.9, 4.7)	3.0 (2.4, 3.6)
Did not require formal qualifications	4.0 (3.6, 4.4)	3.9 (3.4, 4.4)

The table below shows that, of those helpful recruitment practices that were statistically significant different between autistic workers who were disclosed and undisclosed to their employer, disclosed workers compared to undisclosed workers reported five practices as more helpful: Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply, Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people, Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees, Did not require formal qualifications, Offered a trial so you could work in the job to see if it was suitable.

Table 41 Statistically Significant Differences Between Disclosed and Undisclosed Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpfulness of Various Organisational Recruitment Practices

Recruitment practice	Undisclosed as autistic*	Disclosed as autistic*
Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply	1.5 (0.5, 2.5)	4.1 (3.8, 4.5)
Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people	1.7 (0.6, 2.8)	4.1 (3.7, 4.5)
Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees	1.5 (0.4, 2.6)	4.1 (3.8, 4.5)
Did not require formal qualifications	3.0 (2.2, 3.8)	4.1 (3.8, 4.5)
Offered a trial so you could work in the job to see if it was suitable	2.9 (1.9, 3.8)	4.3 (3.9, 4.6)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means

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The table below shows there were statistically significant differences by employer type in in Autistic Workers' perceptions of Helpfulness of various recruitment practices. Autistic employees in social enterprises found the following recruitment practices more helpful than autistic employees of government, for profits and non-profits: Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply, Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people, Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees. Autistic employees of For-profits reported being offered a group and individual interview as more helpful than did autistic employees of other types of organisations.

Table 42: Statistically Significant Differences by Employer Type in Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpfulness of Various Recruitment Practices

Recruitment practice	For-profit	Government	Non-profit / educational	Social Enterprise
Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply	3.9 (3.3, 4.5)	3.1 (2.4, 3.7)	2.4 (1.5, 3.4)	4.6 (4.2, 5.1)
Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people	3.7 (3.1, 4.3)	3.2 (2.5, 3.9)	1.8 (0.7, 2.9)	4.7 (4.2, 5.1)
Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees	3.8 (3.2, 4.5)	3.3 (2.6, 4.0)	2.0 (0.9, 3.1)	4.6 (4.2, 5.0)
Included you in a group interview	4.4 (3.7, 5.2)	2.1 (1.2, 3.0)	4.1 (3.2, 5.1)	3.5 (2.6, 4.3)
Gave you an individual interview (e.g., panel of people and just you - and maybe a support person)	4.6 (4.1, 5.1)	3.7 (3.2, 4.2)	3.9 (3.3, 4.5)	4.5 (4.1, 4.9)

The table below reveals that, where there were statistically significant differences by country in autistic workers' perceptions of the helpfulness of various recruitment practices, autistic workers in Australia and New Zealand perceived significantly less helpful than their counterparts five recruitment practices: Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply, Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people, Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees, Did not require formal qualifications, and Offered a trial so you could work in the job to see if it was suitable.

Table 43: Statistically Significant Differences by Country in Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Helpfulness of Various Recruitment Practices

Recruitment practice	ANZ	Europe	Latin America	USA & Canada
Advertised roles encouraging autistic people to apply	2.8 (2.3, 3.2)	5.0 (2.5, 7.5)	5.0 (3.2, 6.8)	4.5 (4.1, 4.9)
Advertised jobs exclusively for autistic people	2.8 (2.3, 3.3)	5.0 (2.3, 7.7)	4.5 (2.6, 6.4)	4.5 (4.1, 5.0)

Recruitment practice	ANZ	Europe	Latin America	USA & Canada
Communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees	2.8 (2.3, 3.3)	5.0 (2.3, 7.7)	4.5 (2.6, 6.4)	4.5 (4.1, 5.0)
Did not require formal qualifications	3.5 (3.1, 4.0)	No responses	5.0 (3.3, 6.7)	4.3 (3.8, 4.7)
Offered a trial so you could work in the job to see if it was suitable	3.6 (3.1, 4.0)	5.0 (3.0, 7.0)	5.0 (2.2, 7.8)	4.5 (4.0, 5.0)

4.7 Statistically Significant Differences in Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Inclusive Co-Worker Behaviours

The table below presents statistically significant gender differences in perceived inclusive co-worker behaviours. Namely, more female than male autistic workers reported the following behaviours as something they consider inclusive: Make social chit-chat and Let me know when I've done or said something that was socially not ok or could be taken the wrong way.

Table 44: Statistically Significant Gender Differences in Autistic Workers' Perceived Inclusive Co-worker Behaviours

Concerning your co-workers, please indicate what makes you feel included	N Female	N Male	% Female Saying Inclusive Behaviour	% Male Saying Inclusive Behaviour
Make social chit chat	42	22	95%	68%
Let me know when I've done or said something that was socially not ok or could be taken the wrong way.	37	20	81%	40%

The table below reveals statistically significant differences in perceived inclusive behaviours for part-time and full-time autistic workers. Namely, a greater percentage of full-time workers compared to part-time workers perceived the following co-worker behaviours as inclusive: Make social chit-chat, Let me know when I've done or said something that was socially not ok or could be taken the wrong way, Understand that I sometimes say the 'wrong' thing, Can see when I'm getting stressed and let me know, Show me they (want to) understand how autism impacts me.

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Table 45: Statistically Significant Differences in Part-Time and Full-Time Autistic Workers Perceptions of Inclusive Co-worker Behaviours

Concerning your co-workers, please indicate what makes you feel included	N Full-Time	N Part-Time	Percent Full-Time Saying Inclusive Behaviour	Percent Part-Time Saying Inclusive Behaviour
Make social chit-chat	45	21	93%	71%
Let me know when I've done or said something that was socially not ok or could be taken the wrong way	34	25	85%	36%
Understand that I sometimes say the 'wrong' thing	40	25	80%	52%
Can see when I'm getting stressed and let me know	48	25	73%	40%
Show me they (want to) understand how autism impacts me.	45	28	69%	43%

The table below presents statistically significant differences in perceived inclusive behaviours for autistic individuals working for different employer types. Workers in social enterprises followed by workers in private enterprises perceived the following co-worker behaviours as inclusive compared to workers in non-profit and government organisations: Stick to talking about the work we're doing, Understand that I sometimes say the 'wrong' thing, Show me they (want to) understand how autism impacts me.

Table 46: Statistically Significant Differences in Autistic Workers' Perceptions of Inclusive Co-worker Behaviours by Employer Type

Concerning your co-workers, please indicate what makes you feel included	Percent For-profit Saying Inclusive Behaviour	Percent Government Saying Inclusive Behaviour	Percent Non-profit / educational Saying Inclusive Behaviour	Percent Social Enterprise Saying Inclusive Behaviour
Stick to talking about the work we're doing	83%	44%	67%	100%
Understand that I sometimes say the 'wrong' thing	63%	55%	50%	95%
Show me they (want to) understand how autism impacts me	58%	38%	44%	90%

The table below shows a statistically significant difference between what autistic workers in Australia and New Zealand say are inclusive behaviours compared to autistic workers in other countries. Autistic individuals working in Australia and New Zealand reported a much lower perception of the following co-worker behaviours as inclusive than did their counterparts in Europe, Latin America, and the USA and Canada: Let me know when I've done or said something that was

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socially not ok or could be taken the wrong way, Understand that I sometimes say the wrong thing, and Show me they (want to) understand how autism impacts me.

Table 47: Statistically Significant Differences in Autistic Workers Perceived Inclusive Co-worker Behaviours by Country of Employment

Concerning your co-workers, please indicate what makes you feel most included	N ANZ	N Europe	N Latin America	N USA & Canada
Let me know when I've done or said something that was socially not ok or could be taken the wrong way	32	3	1	20
Understand that I sometimes say the wrong thing	36	3	1	22
Show me they (want to) understand how autism impacts me	41	1	1	27
Let me know when I've done or said something that was socially not ok or could be taken the wrong way	47%	100%	100%	80%
Understand that I sometimes say the wrong thing	53%	100%	0%	91%
Show me they (want to) understand how autism impacts me	44%	100%	0%	78%

4.8 Statistically Significant Differences in Autistic Workers' Reported Experiences of Workplace Inclusion

The table below reveals statistically significant differences based on gender. Namely, female autistic employees reported more positive experiences of workplace inclusion.

Table 48: Statistically Significant Gender Differences in Autistic Worker's Reported Experiences of Workplace Inclusion

Workplace Inclusion Feature	Male mean Agreement*	Female mean Agreement*
The organisation promotes a climate of respect among its members	3.7 (3.3, 4.0)	4.5 (4.3, 4.7)
This organisation actively recruits a diverse workforce	3.4 (3.1, 3.8)	4.2 (4.0, 4.5)
There are opportunities for me to provide feedback on how inclusiveness and diversity are handled	2.9 (2.5, 3.4)	3.9 (3.6, 4.2)
The organisation is committed to creating a work environment that values inclusiveness	3.6 (3.2, 3.9)	4.4 (4.2, 4.7)

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Workplace Inclusion Feature	Male mean Agreement*	Female mean Agreement*
This organisation reflects my vision of a diverse workplace	2.9 (2.5, 3.3)	3.8 (3.5, 4.1)
The organisation is able to retain a diverse workforce	3.2 (2.8, 3.6)	4.0 (3.7, 4.3)
My department provides adequate support for employees from underrepresented communities to ensure a diverse workforce	2.9 (2.5, 3.3)	3.7 (3.4, 4.0)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means.

The table below reveals that autistic workers in full-time employment report more positive experiences of workplace inclusion than autistic workers in part-time employment and these differences are statistically significant.

Table 49: Statistically Significant Differences Between Employment Type and Autistic Worker's Reported Experiences of Workplace Inclusion

Workplace inclusion feature	Full-time Mean Agreement*	Part-time Mean Agreement*
The organisation promotes a climate of respect among its members	4.4 (4.1, 4.6)	3.9 (3.6, 4.2)
This organisation is welcoming to all members of diverse groups	4.3 (4.1, 4.6)	3.8 (3.5, 4.1)
This organisation actively recruits a diverse workforce	4.2 (3.9, 4.5)	3.5 (3.2, 3.9)
There are opportunities for me to provide feedback on how inclusiveness and diversity are handled	3.9 (3.6, 4.2)	3.0 (2.7, 3.4)
This organisation is committed to increasing diversity in the workplace	4.3 (4.0, 4.5)	3.6 (3.3, 3.9)
The organisation is committed to creating a work environment that values inclusiveness	4.3 (4.0, 4.6)	3.8 (3.5, 4.1)
This organisation reflects my vision of a diverse workplace	3.8 (3.5, 4.1)	3.0 (2.6, 3.3)
The organisation is able to retain a diverse workforce	4.0 (3.8, 4.3)	3.2 (2.9, 3.6)
My department reviews recruitment and retention data to ensure a diverse workforce	3.4 (3.2, 3.7)	3.0 (2.6, 3.3)
My department provides adequate support for employees from underrepresented communities to ensure a diverse workforce (10)	3.7 (3.3, 4.0)	3.1 (2.7, 3.5)
I feel that this organisation is welcoming to members of all groups (11)	4.2 (4.0, 4.5)	3.6 (3.3, 4.0)

First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means.

The table below reveals statistically significant differences based on employer type, with autistic workers in for-profit companies and social enterprises reporting more positive experiences of workplace inclusion than autistic workers in government and non-profits.

Table 50: Statistically Significant Differences Between Employer Type and Autistic Worker's Reported Experiences of Workplace Inclusion

Workplace inclusion feature	For-profit Mean Agreement	Government Mean Agreement	Non-profit / educational Mean Agreement	Social Enterprise Mean Agreement
The organisation promotes a climate of respect among its members	4.4 (4.0, 4.8)	3.9 (3.5, 4.3)	3.5 (2.9, 4.0)	4.6 (4.2, 4.9)
This organisation is welcoming to all members of diverse groups	4.4 (3.9, 4.8)	3.7 (3.3, 4.1)	3.5 (2.9, 4.0)	4.6 (4.2, 4.9)
This organisation actively recruits a diverse workforce	4.1 (3.7, 4.6)	3.8 (3.3, 4.2)	3.3 (2.7, 3.9)	4.3 (3.9, 4.7)
There are opportunities for me to provide feedback on how inclusiveness and diversity are handled	3.8 (3.3, 4.3)	3.4 (3.0, 3.9)	2.6 (1.9, 3.3)	4.1 (3.7, 4.5)
The organisation is committed to creating a work environment that values inclusiveness	4.2 (3.8, 4.7)	3.6 (3.2, 4.0)	3.6 (3.1, 4.1)	4.7 (4.3, 5.0)
This organisation reflects my vision of a diverse workplace	3.6 (3.1, 4.1)	3.2 (2.7, 3.7)	2.7 (2.0, 3.3)	4.0 (3.6, 4.4)
The organisation is able to retain a diverse workforce	4.0 (3.5, 4.5)	3.4 (2.9, 3.8)	3.1 (2.5, 3.7)	4.2 (3.8, 4.6)
My department provides adequate support for employees from underrepresented communities to ensure a diverse workforce	3.9 (3.4, 4.4)	3.0 (2.5, 3.4)	3.0 (2.4, 3.6)	3.7 (3.3, 4.1)
I feel that this organisation is welcoming to members of all groups	4.3 (3.9, 4.7)	3.5 (3.1, 3.9)	3.5 (3.0, 4.1)	4.5 (4.1, 4.8)

* First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means.

The table below reveals statistically significant differences based on country, with autistic workers in the USA, Canada, Europe, and Latin America reporting more positive experiences of workplace inclusion than autistic workers in Australia.

Table 51: Statistically Significant Differences Between Country of Employment and Autistic Worker's Reported Experiences of Workplace Inclusion

Workplace inclusion feature	ANZ Mean Agreement*	Europe Mean Agreement*	Latin America Mean Agreement*	USA & Canada Mean Agreement*
The organisation promotes a climate of respect among its members	3.8 (3.5, 4.1)	4.7 (3.5, 5.9)	5.0 (3.5, 6.5)	4.6 (4.2, 4.9)
This organisation is welcoming to all members of diverse groups	3.6 (3.4, 3.9)	4.7 (3.5, 5.8)	5.0 (3.6, 6.4)	4.6 (4.3, 4.9)
This organisation actively recruits a diverse workforce	3.5 (3.2, 3.8)	4.7 (3.4, 6.0)	5.0 (3.4, 6.6)	4.2 (3.9, 4.6)
There are opportunities for me to provide feedback on how inclusiveness and diversity are handled	3.1 (2.7, 3.4)	4.7 (3.2, 6.1)	4.5 (2.7, 6.3)	4.0 (3.7, 4.4)

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Workplace inclusion feature	ANZ Mean Agreement*	Europe Mean Agreement*	Latin America Mean Agreement*	USA & Canada Mean Agreement*
This organisation is committed to increasing diversity in the workplace	3.6 (3.4, 3.9)	5.0 (3.8, 6.2)	5.0 (3.6, 6.4)	4.3 (4.0, 4.6)
The organisation is committed to creating a work environment that values inclusiveness	3.7 (3.4, 4.0)	4.7 (3.5, 5.8)	5.0 (3.6, 6.4)	4.6 (4.3, 4.9)
This organisation reflects my vision of a diverse workplace	2.9 (2.6, 3.3)	4.3 (3.0, 5.7)	4.0 (2.3, 5.7)	3.9 (3.6, 4.3)
The organisation is able to retain a diverse workforce	3.2 (2.9, 3.5)	4.3 (3.1, 5.6)	4.0 (2.4, 5.6)	4.2 (3.8, 4.5)
My department provides adequate support for employees from underrepresented communities to ensure a diverse workforce	3.0 (2.7, 3.3)	4.7 (3.3, 6.0)	4.0 (2.3, 5.7)	3.7 (3.4, 4.1)
I feel that this organisation is welcoming to members of all groups	3.5 (3.2, 3.8)	4.7 (3.5, 5.9)	5.0 (3.5, 6.5)	4.4 (4.1, 4.7)

* First number in table is mean and numbers in parentheses are the values for the 95% confidence interval for means.

Qualitative analysis of statements provided by autistic individuals sheds deeper insight on what makes autistic individuals feel excluded at work, namely, dismissive of their condition (including previous, personal experiences), being condescending, or displaying an unwillingness to understand autism. Moreover, close to 30% of responses indicated that while they may not always accept the invite, not being offered to participate in work (casual chats, coffee breaks) and non-work (social gatherings outside of work hours) outings made them feel excluded as it was perceived as being unwelcome.

5. Concluding Summary and Future Research Recommendations

A plethora of novel insights on autism employment emerged from our global study. We summarise these next including highlighting some of their important implications for new avenues of research.

5.1 New Insights Revealed by Global Survey and Their Research Implications

Before discussing the variety of novel and important findings of our global study, we would like to note that employment and employer type are not equally distributed per country in our sample. Whether this reflects a general pattern of autism employment or a characteristic of our sample remains a question for future research. In our sample autistic employees work in full-time ongoing

employment in North America more often than in other locations. Australia (and New Zealand) show(s) the highest number of fixed-term employment (full-time and part-time) as well as part-time ongoing employment. When interpreting this finding it is important to note that this distribution in our sample might produce a confounding effect on other results such as employer type. As we found several significant differences between employees in those countries and employer types future research is needed to further unpack those findings.

5.2.1 Comparing autistic employees to non-autistic workers

When comparing autistic employees to their colleagues our first interesting finding is that, while autistic employee showed more and a larger variety of co-occurring diagnosed conditions, non-autistic respondents such as co-workers, supervisors and HR managers reported relatively higher proportions of conditions such as depression and PTSD than autistic respondents. This finding highlights the need for future research to unpack the complexities of employees with various conditions working together in organisations. In particular, it will be important to better understand how (co-occurring) conditions affect the workplace accommodations and relationships between autistic employee and their buddies/mentor and their direct supervisor. Confirming existing practices is our finding that a buddy or mentor is useful to both disclosed and undisclosed autistic workers. Importantly, our findings indicate that having a buddy or mentor is even more important for autistic workers who are undisclosed to their employer, suggesting all organisations should have in place this practice and make it available to all workers who wish it. Furthermore, our findings suggest that adjustment requests and provisions mostly come from both autistic and non-autistic workers, not just autistic workers. The largest discrepancies between requested and provided adjustments for autistic employees were in customised job design, job coach and autonomy to schedule work. The only adjustment requested by a greater percentage of autistic workers than non-autistic workers was having a job coach whereas the only adjustment requested by a greater percentage of non-autistic than autistic workers was autonomy to decide how they carry out work. Autonomy to decide how to carry out work and instructions in writing were reported to be provided more often than autistic employees request them. Thus, in designing an effective buddy system as well as other workplace adjustments, a better understanding of the role diagnosed conditions of all employees in workplace and on workplace relationships will be important.

Encouragingly, autistic workers had similar satisfaction levels to their co-workers with their work environment feature and organisation's practices, with the only statistically significant difference being that autistic workers were more satisfied than their co-workers with their relationship with their direct supervisor. Connecting to the above issue of co-occurring diagnoses, a better

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understanding of how co-occurring conditions of autistic employees and conditions of their direct supervisor affect their work relationship, Autistic workers also felt similarly secure on various employment-related matters. Future research is needed to corroborate this finding.

Encouragingly, co-worker responses' as to what they perceive catered to inclusion and exclusion of autistic employees had a high degree of overlap with the results from autistic individuals. For example, both groups reported social engagement (talk to me like would with anyone else, make social chit chat) and aiding when feeling overwhelmed (help when getting stressed, showing an interest to understand autism) as contributing to inclusion. Previous research indicates that the cohort most influential in making workers feel included or excluded is not supervisors/managers but rather colleagues (Fujimoto et al., 2014; Krzeminska et al., 2019; Ochs et al., 2002). This is because workplace colleagues generally tend to more frequently communicate and interact with workers than do their managers and/or executives. Whether, and under what (diagnosed) conditions, this is also the case for autistic workers is an important question for future research.

5.2.2 Individual and contextual factors matter

Our global survey also revealed several individual (gender, disclosed/non-disclosed, level of diagnosis), as well as contextual (employment and employer type, country) factors that were related to autistic workers' perceived helpfulness of adjustments and organisational practices, workplace satisfaction, employment-related security, and inclusion. Without repeating the nuanced and complex findings which all point towards interesting future research needs, it seems that by and large autistic employees reported higher levels of satisfaction when they are female or are disclosed or have no primary care giving responsibilities or work full time or the less support they require or work in a social enterprise or for-profit organisation and not in Australia/New Zealand. In the light of this, we would like to discuss two pressing issues that result from this study. First, a particularly pressing issue for our local context is the result that autistic employees in Australia and New Zealand had the lowest mean satisfaction with their work environment feature and organisational practices compared to other countries. Urgent research is needed to unpack whether these findings are related to the employment (government and non-profit) and/or employer type (fixed-term) that is represented proportionally higher in the Australian part of our sample or is due to other factors.

Second, future autism employment research must account for intersectionality including gender, and other factors which were outside of the scope of this study but have been shown to be important for previous inclusion research such as ethnicity (Hartel, Sultana, & Hartel, 2013) if we are serious about advancing our knowledge in this space. For example, our global survey revealed

that the top three helpful recruitment practices as perceived by autistic workers are: an individual interview (e.g., panel of people and just you - and maybe a support person), a task instead of a formal interview (e.g., code a program, make/design something), and communicated that the job you applied for was designed for autistic employees. This first finding is interesting in light of widely held assumptions that interviews are an unsuitable recruitment practice for autistic individuals. A possible explanation for our findings can be found in gender differences. Among other recruitment practices, female autistic employees reported having an individual interview as more helpful than male autistic employees: Thus, what may have created previously help assumptions about the ineffectiveness of interviews as recruitment practice for autistic workers may have been a focus on autistic males whose preferences seem to differ from autistic females. Adding further nuance to the question regarding helpfulness of interviews, our findings show that autistic employees in social enterprises rated individual interviews among other recruitment practices as more helpful than employees on other types of organisation. Group interviews, however, seem to be perceived as more helpful by autistic employees in for-profit organisations. A possible explanation is that some for-profit organisations such as large MNCs have developed sophisticated recruitment procedures tailored to autistic job candidates that involve group interviews. Given our results, however, the preference of those over individual interviews for female job candidates may be unwarranted. Thus, to design effective workplace practices, employers need to understand the most effective practice for different subgroups of autistic job candidates (e.g., female vs male) and their organisation type.

5.2.3 Other new insights and implications for future research

A new insight from our global survey was the helpfulness to autistic individuals of working in a clean environment. Historically, the focus of the physical environment in the context of work and education typically centred on ergonomic design for comfort, auditory (e.g., sounds, music) and visual components (e.g., lights). Moreover, future research is needed to understand how a clean environment helps autistic individuals. For example, is it because an organised environment establishes a degree of familiarity as to where items are located and of the overall workplace itself. Another intriguing finding warranting further investigation is that autistic workers' satisfaction with work environment features (e.g., lights, noise, smell, clutter, colours, patterns, etc.) decreases as their job tenure increases.

Our global survey also revealed that autistic workers' satisfaction with their work environment feature is lower for employees with longer tenure, with 44.4% of those with tenure > 5 years expressing satisfaction, whereas 86% and 87.9% of autistic employees with ≤2 years and 2-5 years tenure, respectively, expressing satisfaction. This pattern warrants future research as it may

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indicate organisation's give more attention to environmental factors when they first hire autistic individuals becoming laxer over time.

Reflecting the historical recency of autism being recognised and diagnosed by the medical profession, younger workers in our sample were diagnosed much earlier in their life that older workers. Thus, another potential explanation for the lower satisfaction for employees with longer tenure is that those may be older employees who may have entered the workforce either without a diagnosis or with having received a diagnosis later in life and thus may face different workplace conditions than their younger colleagues who have entered into workplace situation with higher levels of awareness about autism employment issues. What we need to know is whether and if so what are different organisational practices warranted for autistic workers diagnosed as children versus as adults?

Another important area of insight come from areas where discrepancies in autistic and co-workers' perceptions of the usefulness of adjustments arise. In contrast to existing assumptions, fewer autistic compared to non-autistic workers reported as helpful having a job with few tasks or where tasks are similar. Significantly more helpful to autistic than non-autistic workers were tasks that have an obvious beginning and end, work activities that have direct and clear information about their performance was offered, a job requiring doing only one task at a time. More research into the different job designs preferred by different subgroups of autistic employees as well as into how to best create awareness about those without confusing co-workers and supervisors is needed.

5.2 Conclusion

In closing, we wish to point out that due to the willingness of our participating organisations and respondents to openly share their experiences, practices, and perceptions, which also represented a significant time commitment on their part, we were able to successfully gather a robust and remarkable global dataset from which emerged numerous significant new insights about autism employment. Our point is first to show our gratitude for our participants' generosity and, second, to highlight that, as for as many doors that graciously opened to grant us the data access required to significantly advance knowledge and practice in the area, just as many employing organisations and colleagues and managers of autistic workers chose to keep their doors shut. The extreme difficulty in obtaining data on autism employment practices and experiences stands in the way of progress toward solving the grand challenge of autism unemployment. Thus, we urge policymakers to look at ways to incentivise employers to participate in autism employment research and call for research to better understand why those employers of autistic workers that decline to contribute to research efforts in the area do so. Notwithstanding this important issue, the findings that emerged from our global study provide immediately useful new knowledge on effective autism employment practices and lay the foundation for multiple lines of new research inquiry.

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Our values

Inclusion

Working together with those with the lived experience of autism in all we do

Innovation

New solutions for long term challenges

Independence

Guided by evidence based research, integrity and peer review

Cooperation

Bringing benefits to our partners; capturing opportunities they cannot capture alone

Australian Government

Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources

Business
Cooperative Research
Centres Program