

Original Article

Thriving Beyond Barriers: A Case Study on Workplace Dynamics of a Person with High-Functioning Autism

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Abstract

Persons with disabilities are subject to discrimination. Using a qualitative case study design, I explored the challenges, coping mechanisms, and insights of a person with high-functioning autism in the workplace. I purposely selected and interviewed one subject and two others who are living in Tagum City, Davao del Norte, and supported their claims with facts. The results showed that environmental, attitudinal, and structural challenges manifested as disruptive workplace noise, overstimulating work environments, negative or insensitive attitudes, and interpersonal conflict among colleagues. The findings on coping mechanisms used to overcome challenges revealed reliance on structured work routines, maintaining self-control, adapting through self-adjustment, and upholding professional conduct. The insights gained after surmounting the challenges were reflected in the need for inclusive workplaces to provide predictability and in support systems that enable participation. This study recommends that employers and organizational leaders establish workplace policies and practices that promote inclusivity for individuals with autism by providing structured routines, clear and explicit communication, predictable work expectations, and reasonable accommodations tailored to individual needs.

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1. Introduction

High-functioning autism in the workplace is a significant global concern, as individuals on the spectrum continue to face persistent challenges in employment participation and inclusion. Studies showed that autistic adults experience higher rates of unemployment and underemployment than non-autistic individuals, indicating a gap in equitable workforce integration (Nishith, 2025).

Across countries, the problem of neurodivergent employees is similarly evident, though it manifests in varying contexts. In the United Kingdom, autistic individuals face significant employment disparities, including lower rates of full-time employment and limited access to stable job roles (Buckland, 2024). In the United States, reports indicated that a large proportion of autistic adults remain unemployed or underemployed, emphasizing ongoing barriers to workforce participation (Key Autism Services, 2025). Meanwhile, in Iran, empirical research revealed that only a minority of autistic adults are engaged in employment, demonstrating limited inclusion even in structured vocational settings (Salmiah et al., 2026).

In the Philippine context, the situation reflects similar concerns regarding the inclusion of individuals with high-functioning autism in employment settings. Although there is increasing recognition of inclusive practices, existing literature suggests that workplace systems and structures remain insufficiently responsive to the needs of autistic individuals, resulting in limited representation in the workforce (Wen et al., 2024). Studies on neurodivergent employment further highlighted that workplace environments often lack the necessary accommodations and inclusive frameworks required to support sustained participation of autistic employees (Heinze, 2025). These findings showed that in the Philippines, high-functioning autism in the workplace remains under-addressed, especially in the practical implementation of inclusive employment strategies.

The consequences of this problematic situation are substantial and multifaceted. Limited access to inclusive employment opportunities contributes to reduced economic independence, restricted career development, and decreased overall well-being among individuals with high-functioning autism (Failla, 2025). Additionally, persistent employment disparities may lead to social exclusion and underutilization of the skills and potential of autistic individuals in the workforce (Nishith, 2025). These outcomes highlight the urgency of addressing the gaps in workplace inclusion, as failure to do so not only affects individuals with high-functioning autism but also limits organizational diversity and societal progress.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

In this study, I employed a single-case design. Yin (2018) defined a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-

life setting, while Crowe et al. (2011) emphasized its capacity to generate a holistic understanding of a single unit of analysis. I considered this design suitable for my research because it allowed me to gain a rich and detailed understanding of the challenges encountered by a person with high-functioning autism in the workplace. Moreover, the case study approach offers several advantages, including the ability to provide contextualized insights, capture nuanced experiences, use multiple data sources, and produce in-depth findings that can inform practice and future research.

2.2. Sample and Sampling

Table 1. Participants of the study.

Participant Code	Role in the Study	Relationship to Primary Participant	Relevant Characteristics
Christian	Primary Participant	Individual with high-functioning autism	Formally diagnosed with high-functioning autism; currently employed or has prior work experience
Joy	Key Informant	Coworker	Had direct and sustained workplace interaction with the primary participant and was knowledgeable about his workplace experiences
Dean	Key Informant	Employer/Supervisor	Directly supervised or managed the primary participant and possessed substantial knowledge of his workplace performance, interactions, and experiences

The participant of this study was one person with high-functioning autism referred to under the pseudonym of Christian. The primary participant of the study was formally diagnosed with autism and was currently employed or had prior work experience in the field. Alongside the primary participant, I included key informants, including a coworker, referred to as Joy, and an employer or supervisor, to supplement and validate the data. The key informants had direct, sustained interaction with the primary participant in either personal or professional settings, and both the primary participant and the key informants possessed sufficient knowledge of the participant's workplace experiences.

Participants in this study were selected through purposive sampling. This sampling technique, as defined by Palinkas et al. (2013), is a nonprobability sampling method in which participants are intentionally selected based on their specific characteristics and relevance to the research problem. I considered this sampling method appropriate for the study because it enabled me to focus on an individual whose workplace experiences directly reflected the challenges under investigation.

2.3. Data Gathering Techniques

I collected the information through semi-structured interviews. I considered this approach appropriate for the study because it allowed me to explore the challenges the

participant faced while providing the flexibility to probe deeper into sensitive and complex experiences that might not emerge with more structured methods (Lim, 2024). To strengthen the credibility of the findings, I employed triangulation by incorporating multiple sources of data, such as participant narratives, supporting informants, and contextual observations, which enabled cross-validation of information and enhanced the trustworthiness of the study (Denzin, 1978).

2.4. Data Analysis

I employed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis to systematically analyze the data. I began by familiarizing myself with the data through repeated readings of the interview transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' accounts. Next, I generated initial codes by carefully highlighting significant statements and labeling them with descriptive tags that captured their essence. I then collated these codes into potential themes, actively grouping related patterns to identify broader meanings underlying the workplace challenges. After this, I reviewed and refined the themes by revisiting both the coded extracts and the entire dataset to ensure coherence and accuracy. I then defined and named the themes by providing clear descriptions that reflected their relevance to the study. Finally, I produced the report by weaving the themes into a coherent narrative that directly linked to the study's objectives and was supported by illustrative quotes drawn from the data.

When combined with triangulation (i.e., comparing data from the case owner and key informants), thematic analysis enabled me to verify and enrich emerging themes through cross-validation of perspectives, thereby enhancing credibility and rigor (Palmar-Santos et al., 2023). In conducting triangulation, I applied coding and theme development separately for the case owner and other sources (e.g., colleagues and family), then compared patterns, resolved inconsistencies, integrated convergent themes, and examined divergent ones through iterative cycles of analysis.

2.5. Ethical Considerations

In line with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness criteria, this study adhered to strict ethical principles to protect participants' rights and welfare. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were ensured through informed consent, transparent documentation, thick description, and researcher reflexivity. Confidentiality was maintained through the use of pseudonyms and secure, password-protected data storage. Collectively, these measures ensured the ethical rigor and trustworthiness of the study results. Furthermore, the Society of Moral Integrity and Legal Ethics (SMILE) of Holy Cross of Davao College, Inc. reviewed and approved the research proposal, ensuring compliance with ethical, legal, and moral research standards.

3. Results

3.1 Environmental, Attitudinal, and Structural Challenges

3.1.1 Disruptive Workplace Noise

The narratives revealed that workplace environmental conditions played a significant role in shaping Christian's ability to concentrate and perform tasks effectively. Across the accounts of Christian, his Dean, and his coworker, sensitivity to excessive noise, sudden schedule changes, unclear instructions, and high-pressure situations emerged as recurring experiences that disrupted his focus and emotional regulation. The descriptions suggested that noisy, busy environments made it harder to maintain attention, while unexpected changes and rushed demands often led to feelings of confusion, irritation, and disorientation. These experiences reflected the heightened impact of external stimuli on Christian's workplace functioning, highlighting how environmental unpredictability and sensory overload can influence concentration, task performance, and overall workplace adjustment for individuals with high-functioning autism.

"I mean, the noise rather, the noise from other people." [Page 1 Line 5] Christian

Listening closely to Christian's words, I felt both his determination and the subtle challenge that noise introduces into his work. His Dean's observations strengthen this understanding. The Dean explained:

"So based on my observation as his Head or Dean, Sir Christian sometimes experiences difficulty when tasks are given simultaneously or when there are sudden schedule changes, and a noisy or busy environment may also affect his concentration, sometimes." [Page 1, L15-17].

The Dean further shared:

"From my observation Ma'am as his Head or Dean si Sir Christian may become distracted when there are sudden changes for example sa schedule dali ra jud siya makoratan ana ma'am and then mga instructions nga kana bitaw unclear specially kung naay kanang mga excessive noise dali rajud siya ma irita ana kanang kusog kaau basta kanang excessive noise ma'am,ana." (From my observation, Ma'am, as his Head/Dean, Sir Christian may become distracted when there are sudden changes, for example, in the schedule; he easily gets startled by that. Also, when instructions are unclear,

especially when there is excessive noise, he easily becomes irritated, particularly when the noise is too loud or overwhelming, Ma'am.) [Page 2 L70-74]

Joy, who is a coworker of Christian, similarly noticed how environmental pressure affects him and shared:

“As per observation po kay Sir Christian dali lang jud siya maapektuhan iyahang kuan Maam mura ganig madisequaliberated dayon siya pag naa sa pressure na mga moment labi na ug dali dali-dalion nimo siya.” (As per observation, Sir Christian is easily affected; it seems that he quickly becomes disoriented during pressured moments, especially when he is rushed.) [Page 1 L22-24].

3.1.2 Overstimulating Workplace Environment

The accounts conveyed how an overstimulating, demanding work environment can affect Christian's ability to maintain focus and manage workplace responsibilities effectively. The narratives highlighted that frequent announcements, multitasking demands, excessive workplace activity, and pressured situations often competed for his attention, making sustained concentration more difficult. The experiences described by Christian, corroborated by his Dean and coworkers' observations, suggested that environments characterized by constant interruptions and urgency may contribute to feelings of overwhelm and disorientation. These accounts further emphasized the importance of structure, organization, and manageable workplace demands, as a well-ordered environment appeared to support Christian's concentration, emotional stability, and overall work performance.

"For me, sometimes it is the announcements... especially when I am doing multitasking." Christian [Page 1 L5-12]

The Deans' and Joy's observations further illustrated how an overstimulating environment influences Christian's experience at work. The Dean explained:

"A noisy or busy environment may also affect his concentration sometimes." [Page 1 L16-17]

This observation highlighted how environments filled with constant activity can interfere with sustained focus. Similarly, Joy described how pressure and hurried situations may intensify the effect of stimulation, stating:

“Pag naa sa pressure nga mga moment labi na ug dali-dalion nimo siya... mura dayon siya ma disequibrated... kinahanglan jud nga

han-ay ang tanang butang para dili siya ma overwhelm.” (During moments of pressure, especially when he is rushed, he seems to become disoriented; everything needs to be well-organized so he does not feel overwhelmed.) [Page 1 L23-30]

3.1.3 Negative or Insensitive Attitudes

The narratives highlighted how interpersonal interactions and workplace expectations can influence the experiences of individuals with high-functioning autism in professional settings. The accounts suggested that challenges may arise when communication is unclear, expectations are not explicitly conveyed, or colleagues and supervisors interpret behaviors and responses differently. Participants emphasized the importance of maintaining professionalism, self-awareness, and appropriate workplace conduct, recognizing that attitudes and interpersonal behaviors shape how individuals are perceived within the organization. The reflections further revealed that patience, understanding, and supportive communication from colleagues and supervisors play a significant role in fostering positive workplace relationships and minimizing barriers arising from misunderstandings or differences in social communication styles.

"However, they need to keep an eye on their attitude because there are times their attitudes are like mataray daw, okay. However, it is a constant reminder that we need to watch our attitude, because it will sometimes reflect not just in teaching performance. However, it will reflect your professionalism as a teacher." (However, they need to keep an eye on their attitude because there are times when it may come across as harsh. It is a constant reminder that we need to be mindful of our attitude, as it reflects not only teaching performance but also professionalism as a teacher.) Christian [Page 8 L331-334]

The reflections of the Dean and Joy deepen this understanding of how attitudes can influence workplace experiences. The Dean shared his observation:

Barriers may arise when expectations are misunderstood or communicated in vague or indirect ways. A lack of patience or insufficient support from colleagues may also create challenges for individuals with autism, I do believe." [Page 8 L340-342]

This perspective highlighted how unclear communication and limited understanding. Similarly, Joy described how misunderstandings can occur when colleagues do not yet fully understand Christian's situation. She shared:

“Some, dili man jud na siya malikayan mam no, some colleagues kanang kung dili pa kasabot sa iyahang sitwasyon labi na ka kadtong pulmero pa naa jud koy na observe nga ga colleagues nga kanang dili nila masabtan si Sir Christian na ingnon ana.” (Some, Ma'am, it really cannot be avoided; some colleagues do not understand his situation, especially before they get to know him. I have observed some colleagues who seem unable to understand Sir Christian.) [Page 8 L345-347]

3.1.4 Interpersonal Conflict among Colleagues

The accounts illustrated how unclear expectations, indirect communication, and differing interpretations of information may contribute to interpersonal tensions and conflicts among colleagues. These experiences highlighted the complexity of navigating workplace communication, particularly when messages are not conveyed explicitly or are interpreted differently by those involved. The reflections further suggested that clear, direct, and transparent communication is essential in preventing misunderstandings, fostering positive professional relationships, and maintaining a collaborative work environment. Such accounts underscore the importance of establishing shared understanding and clarity in workplace interactions to minimize conflict and support effective communication among employees.

“For example, in 2023, there are two female faculty members who have a word war because of miscommunication about the schedule of their exam. I read their word war in our official group chat of our department teachers, and then I do not want to step in because it might make the fight worse.” Christian [Page 7 L294-298]

The Dean's perspective helped illuminate how such conflicts often stem from misunderstandings in communication. The Dean explained:

“Barriers may arise when there is a misunderstanding about expectations or when expectations are communicated in a vague manner or indirect ways.” [Page 8 L340-341].

3.2 Coping Mechanisms Help Overcome Challenges

3.2.1 Reliance on Structured Work Routines

The accounts revealed deliberate efforts to manage responsibilities by carefully monitoring deadlines, identifying priorities, and completing tasks systematically. These experiences were reinforced by observations that productivity was enhanced when work expectations were clearly organized, schedules were predictable, and

instructions were presented in a structured format. The descriptions further suggested that access to organized task lists, adequate processing time, and opportunities to focus on one responsibility at a time contributed to greater efficiency and task completion. Collectively, the accounts underscored how structured routines and organized work processes serve as valuable supports for maintaining productivity and managing workplace demands effectively.

"I always double-check the deadline and at the same time know what comes first and do not make the non-priority task do the work first."
Christian [Page 4 L150-151]

The Dean's observations further illustrated how structured routines support Christian's productivity in the workplace. The Dean explained:

"Based on my observation, Sir Christian works more productively when he follows a structured routine and when tasks are scheduled clearly, written instructions are organized in a task list, and sufficient time to process information helps him perform well. Allowing him to focus on one task at a time also supports his productivity." (Based on my observation, Sir Christian works more productively when he follows a structured routine and when tasks are clearly scheduled. Written instructions, organized task lists, and sufficient time to process information help him perform well. Allowing him to focus on one task at a time also supports his productivity.) [Page 5 L193-196]

3.2.2 Maintaining Self-Control

Amid the daily demands of his workplace responsibilities, Christian demonstrates self-regulation that enables him to navigate challenges and maintain stability in his professional role. This ability emerges as a steadying influence that helps him manage demanding, unpredictable, or emotionally taxing situations. Within a workplace environment where expectations, interactions, and responsibilities can change rapidly, his responses reflect a reliance on personal discipline, self-awareness, and an acceptance of professional responsibilities. These qualities appear to support his ability to remain focused, composed, and engaged despite the complexities and pressures encountered in the workplace. He said:

"I do not complain, why? Because it is part of my responsibility as a teacher." Christian [Page 3 L127]

Joy's and the Dean's observations provided additional insight into how Christian practices this form of self-regulation in his workplace interactions. Joy noted:

“Siya jud ang unang mo approach sa imuha.” (He is usually the one who approaches you first.) [Page 4 L167]

This remark reflects how Christian often initiates interaction with colleagues, showing openness rather than withdrawal. Joy also described how he engages in personal activities that help him relax and maintain balance. She shared:

“Hilig na siya maninaw ug kang music or di kaya cartoon mo tan-aw na siya or mag drawing drawing.” (He tends to listen to music, or sometimes watch cartoons, or engage in drawing.) [Page 5 L204-205]

These activities appear to serve as quiet spaces where he can regain composure and restore focus. The Dean also highlighted the importance of the surrounding environment in supporting this regulation. The Dean shared:

“A supportive environment allows him to perform his duties effectively.” [Page 6 L 236-237]

3.2.3 Adapting Through Self-Adjustment

As reflected in Christian’s experiences, personal adjustment and professionalism emerged as important resources for navigating challenging workplace situations. The narratives suggested a conscious effort to manage reactions when faced with misunderstandings, interpersonal tensions, or uncomfortable interactions. Rather than responding impulsively to difficult circumstances, the accounts revealed a tendency toward restraint, reflection, and maintaining professional conduct. Professionalism appeared to serve as a guiding principle, shaping responses to workplace uncertainties and enabling challenges to be approached with composure and responsibility. These experiences highlight how self-regulation and adherence to professional values can support positive workplace interactions and foster constructive engagement despite interpersonal difficulties.

“Because in my case, I have several encounters with that, but I have already fixed it. Ako mismo nag ayos niyan, okay. It is not that I have to adjust them, but I am the one who needs to be adjusted, but still, I am giving reminders to them that your attitude really matters”Christian [Page 8 L335-337]

The perspectives of the Dean and Joy further illuminated how Christian’s personal adjustments influence his interactions within the workplace. The Dean observed:

"When colleagues demonstrate patience, understanding, and respect, Sir Christian tends to feel more comfortable participating in discussions and collaborative tasks. Supportive instructions encourage Him to express his ideas and contribute to the team more confidently." [Page 7 L313-315]

This observation reflects how the presence of patience and understanding from colleagues creates an environment where Christian's professionalism can flourish. Joy also described how this process of adjustment unfolded over time. Joy explained:

"along the way na okay raman pud tong, nawala raman pud tong siya, nakasabay raman pud, naka adjust ra." (Along the way, things became okay; he was able to keep up and gradually adjust.) [Page 8 L352-353]

3.2.4 Upholding Professional Conduct

Maintaining professionalism emerged as a significant way through which Christian managed challenging workplace situations. The accounts suggested that professional conduct provided a sense of direction when navigating disagreements, misunderstandings, and moments of pressure within the work environment. Adherence to workplace expectations, respect for others, and a commitment to professional responsibilities appeared to guide interactions even in uncertain circumstances. These experiences demonstrated how professionalism can serve as a stabilizing influence, supporting constructive responses to challenges and fostering positive relationships and accountability in the workplace. Christian shared:

"We have to behave because the character of the teacher will reflect the teacher themselves."Christian [Page 7 L302-303]

The observations of the Dean and Joy further highlight how professional conduct is supported within the workplace. The Dean explained:

"Support from colleagues and from me as his Dean plays a big role in helping Sir Christian navigate workplace expectations. Providing clear communication and a supportive environment allows him to perform his duties effectively." [Page 6 L233-237]

This perspective revealed how leadership and colleagues' guidance reinforce Christian's professionalism when misunderstandings occur. Similarly, Joy described Christian's persistence in completing his work despite pressure, as she shared:

“Despite sa iyahang status nga naay autism... bisan pa ug na pressured na siya sa trabaho iya lang gihapon buhaton iyahang task. Makita jud namo nga iya jud gihapon himoon iyahang trabaho bisan ug naglisod na siya.” (Despite his condition of having autism, even when he feels pressured at work, he continues to do his tasks. We can clearly see that he remains committed to completing his work, even when he is already struggling.) [Page 3 L133-140]

3.3 Insights Gained after Surmounting the Challenges

3.3.1 Inclusive Workplaces Need Predictability

The experiences shared in this study highlighted the importance of workplace predictability in fostering a sense of security, belonging, and meaningful participation. The narratives suggested that predictability extends beyond organizational structures and procedures, encompassing the creation of an environment where individuals feel respected, understood, and supported in carrying out their responsibilities. Consistent expectations, clear communication, and stable routines appeared to provide a foundation that enabled individuals to navigate workplace demands with greater confidence and ease. Within such environments, predictability emerged as a source of stability that supports workplace adjustment, reduces uncertainty, and encourages individuals to contribute effectively to their professional roles.

*“Every workplace should be inclusive, of course. At the same time, we as faculty, not just employees, but faculty. We need to treat them as people. Moreover, we treat them as your fellow workers. No one should be left behind”*Christian [Page 6 L266-268]

The insights shared by the Dean and Joy further emphasized the role of predictability and supportive structures in fostering inclusion in the workplace. The Dean observed:

“So, one important insight, siguro, from like observing Sir Christian, clear communication is really important, and also, a structured work system, support system from his colleagues or from the faculty.” [Page 6 L274-276]

This perspective highlights how clear communication and organized systems provide the stability that helps Christian perform his responsibilities effectively. Similarly, Joy explained the importance of allowing individuals the time and space to carry out their work. She said:

“Isa na siya nga hatagan jud sila ug ilahang kanang for time jud nila nga mo perform sila sa ilahang mo perform sa ilahang task hatagan siya ug space.” (One of the ways is to give them enough time to perform their tasks and provide them with space to work.) [Page 7 L284-286]

3.3.2 Support Systems Enable Participation

The narratives underscored the significance of workplace relationships in shaping Christian’s experiences within the professional environment. Daily interactions with colleagues, participation in meetings, and collaboration on shared responsibilities emerged as meaningful aspects of workplace life that influenced his sense of inclusion and engagement. The accounts suggested that supportive and respectful interactions fostered a positive work atmosphere where communication, cooperation, and mutual understanding could flourish. These experiences highlighted how collegial relationships serve as an important source of social and professional support, helping individuals navigate workplace demands while strengthening their connection to the broader organizational community.

*“You need to also; you need to introduce yourself or introduce your colleague to another, and then you have to learn as well how not just to mingle but also to assist your fellow faculty if they need help”*Christian [Page 8 L359-361]

The insights shared by the Dean and Joy further illuminated how supportive interaction encourages Christian’s engagement in the workplace. The Dean explained:

“When colleagues demonstrate patience, understanding, and respect, Sir Christian tends to feel more comfortable participating in discussions and collaborative tasks. Supportive instructions encourage Him to express his ideas and contribute to the team more confidently.” [Page 7 L313-315]

This observation reflects how colleagues' patience and understanding create space for Christian to share ideas and participate more actively in collaborative work. Similarly, Joy highlighted the influence of encouragement and recognition. She shared:

“kapag I praise namo siya hatagan namo siya time nga kanang mo perform, makaya pud baya niya mam.” (When we praise him, we also give him time to perform his tasks, and he is actually capable of doing them well, Ma’am.) [Page 7 L316-317]

4. Discussion

4.1 Environmental, Attitudinal, and Structural Challenges

The findings of this study revealed that individuals with high-functioning autism may encounter a range of environmental, attitudinal, and structural challenges within the workplace. Environmental factors such as disruptive workplace noise, overstimulating surroundings, and pressure associated with performance-oriented work cultures appeared to interfere with concentration and task engagement (Sun et al., 2025). The accounts suggested that workplace sounds, ongoing activity, and organizational demands can significantly influence the ability to sustain focus throughout the workday. This observation resonates with the work of Balasco et al. (2020), who explained that individuals on the autism spectrum often experience heightened sensory sensitivity, particularly to noise and other environmental stimuli, which may contribute to cognitive overload and difficulties maintaining attention in busy settings. Beyond environmental concerns, attitudinal challenges also emerged through negative or insensitive attitudes and interpersonal conflicts among colleagues, which appeared to affect workplace participation, communication, and inclusion (Kamal Bahrain et al., 2023).

The findings further suggested that misunderstandings and limited awareness of autism may unintentionally create barriers that hinder collaboration and workplace inclusion, supporting the observations of Turnock et al. (2022). In addition, structural challenges were reflected in ambiguous task instructions, limited support systems, and overlapping work demands, which sometimes led to uncertainty in fulfilling responsibilities. This aligns with Gauche et al. (2017), who emphasized that unclear role expectations can increase workplace stress. Similarly, Eisner (2025) noted that unclear communication and poorly defined job expectations remain among the most common barriers experienced by autistic employees. Taken together, the findings illustrate how environmental stimuli, interpersonal dynamics, and organizational structures interact to shape individuals with autism's workplace experiences.

4.2 Coping Mechanisms Help Overcome Challenges

The findings of this study revealed that, despite workplace challenges, Christian employed several coping mechanisms that helped him manage professional responsibilities effectively. The accounts highlighted the use of structured work routines, task prioritization, and adherence to clear instructions as strategies that promoted organization, consistency, and stability in completing work-related tasks (Maag Merki et al., 2023). These practices appeared to provide a dependable framework that enabled workplace demands to be approached with greater clarity and direction. This observation is consistent with Nishith et al. (2025), who emphasized that predictable routines and structured work systems are particularly beneficial for

autistic employees because they help reduce anxiety and enhance workplace productivity.

Beyond organizational strategies, the findings also reflected the use of self-regulation, personal adjustment, and professional conduct when responding to interpersonal and attitudinal challenges. These behaviors suggested emotional regulation and resilience, enabling workplace responsibilities to be fulfilled even under demanding circumstances (Tomczak & Ziemiański, 2023). The accounts further highlighted the value of collaborative support from colleagues and supervisors in navigating workplace expectations and responsibilities (Obodozie & Nwabufu, 2025). Supportive interactions appeared to provide reassurance, guidance, and encouragement, thereby strengthening confidence in completing tasks and participating in the workplace. This finding aligns with Park et al. (2025), who noted that supportive workplace relationships and reasonable accommodations contribute significantly to improved job satisfaction, well-being, and retention among autistic employees.

4.3 Insights Gained after Surmounting the Challenges

The insights generated from this study highlighted several important considerations for fostering inclusive workplaces for individuals with autism. The experiences shared by Christian, together with his colleagues' and supervisor's perspectives, underscore the value of predictable workplace structures, supportive social interactions, respectful attitudes, and clear communication systems in creating environments that accommodate neurodiversity (Doyle, 2020). The accounts suggested that when workplaces provide consistency, transparency, and understanding, individuals with autism are better positioned to participate confidently, manage workplace demands, and perform their professional roles effectively. These findings are supported by Failla et al. (2025), who found that inclusive workplaces characterized by structured routines, explicit communication, and supportive organizational practices enable autistic employees to function more effectively and develop a stronger sense of belonging within their professional environments.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that structured self-regulation, supportive workplace interactions, and adaptive personal regulation collectively contribute to improved workplace functioning among individuals with high-functioning autism. Clear routines, explicit guidance, continuous support from supervisors, and understanding from coworkers create an environment that promotes clarity and inclusion, while self-management strategies help individuals regulate stress and maintain focus. These coordinated efforts contribute to better concentration, enhanced emotional regulation, increased productivity, and stronger workplace relationships.

6. Recommendation

Based on the study's findings, employers and organizational leaders may establish workplace policies and practices that promote inclusivity for individuals with autism by providing structured routines, clear and explicit communication, predictable work expectations, and reasonable accommodations tailored to individual needs. Supervisors and colleagues may also participate in awareness and sensitivity programs that foster understanding, respect, and acceptance of neurodiversity, thereby strengthening supportive workplace relationships. In addition, organizations may create environments that minimize unnecessary sensory distractions and provide adequate guidance and feedback to support task completion and workplace adjustment. Such initiatives may improve job performance, workplace satisfaction, and a stronger sense of belonging among employees with autism. Future researchers may further explore inclusive workplace practices across different industries and organizational settings to expand understanding of effective supports for autistic employees.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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