Neurodiversity In The Digital Workforce And Design

Abstract

Globally, a growing proportion of the population identifies as neurodiverse, including individuals with autism, ADHD, and learning disabilities. These individuals offer unique skills and perspectives that can be transformative for high-tech industries where success thrives on innovative, "out-of-the-box" thinking. My presentation will delve into research that advances our understanding of neurodiversity in both the workforce and digital design. One study highlights how neurodiverse individuals contribute critical talents to high-tech industries, drawing on case studies from leading U.S. and European firms to showcase strategies for effectively integrating this talent into innovation-driven workplaces. Another proposed study explores the systemic challenges faced by individuals with learning disabilities and attention issues (LDAI) in STEM fields, underscoring the need to address barriers in professional and educational settings. This work examines how workplace dynamics influence career outcomes and proposes actionable business-led solutions to support retention and success. Complementing these findings, a third study identifies gaps in accessibility knowledge among student developers, emphasizing the role of education in fostering empathy and equipping future technologists to better meet the needs of neurodiverse users. Together, these studies advocate for changes to harness the potential of neurodiverse individuals across professional and digital domains.