

European Autism Congress

March 14-15, 2019 | Zagreb, Croatia

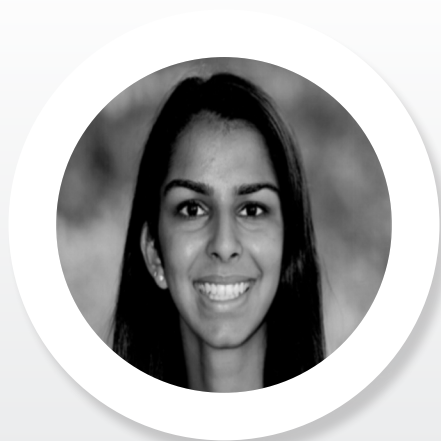
Comparison of autism awareness levels in the US and India

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is commonly diagnosed in children and affects communication and behavior. Studies have indicated lower autism rates in developing countries; 1 out of 45 children (ages 3-17) in the US versus only 23 out of 10,000 children in India are diagnosed with autism. To understand this discrepancy, a survey was conducted to assess autism awareness in India and the US. The survey was translated into local languages and more than 500 valid survey responses were collected and analyzed. The survey results depict a stark difference in autism awareness levels between the US and India: 100% of survey participants in the US had heard of ASD compared to only 12.6% of participants in India. The survey results also highlight a strong correlation between overall education level and autism awareness. The answers to detailed questions regarding ASD symptoms and potential causes indicate that the Indian respondents who had heard about ASD were equally knowledgeable about the disorder as their US counterparts. Additionally, the survey suggests autism is not actually less prevalent in India; after explaining autism symptoms to the participants, the majority of both US and Indian participants estimated that between 1-5% of the people in their respective communities exhibit autistic characteristics. Finally, the participants identified elementary teachers, OB/GYN and pediatricians as focal points to effectively raise autism awareness in India. Overall, the survey results suggest that lower reported cases of autism in India are likely due to lack of awareness rather than lower prevalence.

Biography

Anjali K Kapoor is the Founder of Puzzle Ribbons, a charity dedicated to helping autistic children and their families in developing countries. She has written several blogs related to autism spectrum disorder.

akapoor2020@pingry.org



Anjali K Kapoor

The Pingry School, USA

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