

Abstract Title:-

Strategies for Parents of Children with ASD and Depression

Keynote Speaker – Dr. Massrat Shaikh– Educational Psychologist



Abstract:

Psychologists working in neurodevelopmental and inclusive educational settings are increasingly faced with complex, overlapping presentations that challenge traditional diagnostic models. Standardized test scores alone often fail to capture the functional realities of children navigating mainstream classrooms, therapeutic environments, and family systems. This practice-based presentation focuses on how psychologists can move beyond score-driven assessment toward clinically meaningful diagnostic decisions.

Drawing on real-world case work from school and clinic settings, this session demonstrates how to integrate cognitive testing, behavioral data, classroom observation, developmental history, and stakeholder reports into a coherent diagnostic formulation. Particular attention is given to frequent assessment dilemmas, including differentiating attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder from learning disorders, identifying masked autism in verbally able children, and distinguishing emotional dysregulation from primary neurodevelopmental conditions.

Participants will gain practical assessment frameworks, decision-making pathways, and diagnostic “red flags” that support greater clarity while remaining sensitive to cultural context and the goals of inclusive education. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that assessment outcomes translate into actionable recommendations for educators, therapists, and families—so that diagnosis leads directly to meaningful intervention, support planning, and improved learner outcomes..

Keywords:

Neurodevelopmental assessment • Psychological diagnosis • Inclusive education • Differential diagnosis • Functional assessment

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize the limitations of score-driven assessment models when evaluating children with complex and overlapping neurodevelopmental presentations.

- Integrate multiple assessment sources (cognitive testing, behavioral data, classroom observation, developmental history, stakeholder reports) into a coherent diagnostic formulation.
- Differentiate overlapping presentations including ADHD, learning disorders, masked autism, and emotional dysregulation using practical diagnostic indicators.
- Apply structured frameworks and red flags to strengthen diagnostic clarity within inclusive education settings.
- Translate assessment findings into actionable recommendations that support effective intervention, inclusion, and interdisciplinary collaboration..

Short Professional Biography:

Dr. Massrat Shaikh is an Educational Psychologist with over a decade of experience supporting children and adolescents with neurodevelopmental, learning, and emotional needs across school and clinical settings. Based in the Middle East, her work focuses on psychological assessment, diagnostic clarity, and translating evaluation findings into inclusive and functional educational support. She collaborates extensively with schools, multidisciplinary teams, and families across culturally diverse environments. Dr. Shaikh is the Founder of Kawakib Solutions, providing psychoeducational evaluations, educational intervention, and professional training, with clinical interests in differential diagnosis, psychoeducational assessment, and inclusive education practices