

Making Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering a Sure Bet

Cultural Perspectives of Assistive Technology

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ABSTRACT

Although the use of assistive technology (AT) is by an individual, it occurs within a broader socio-cultural environment. Individuals who identify with a particular ethnic group may hold differing viewpoints on the meaning of disability and the value of AT. Understanding how an individual's culturally defined identity is shaped as an AT user, and the meaning that the AT holds to that person and family, may be a key aspect of providing culturally appropriate AT services. AT providers also belong to a culture framed by their professional experiences; ways of addressing ethnocentricity within culturally diverse practice settings are needed. This review reveals that there is a paucity of knowledge about the intersection of AT and culture, and that this intersection requires further research.

KEY WORDS

Culture, social constructionism, disability, literature review, service delivery

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