

Adult Autism Research Priorities and Conceptualization in Computing Research: Invitation to Co-Lead with Autistic Adults



About

This study examines how computing research on adult autism aligns with autistic adults' priorities, how autism is conceptualised, and autistic people's involvement in research. It aims to assess whether current research meets real needs and advocates for more inclusive approaches.

Findings

The findings **highlight key issues in how computing research** approaches adult autism, including its focus areas, representation, and the involvement of autistic individuals.

- **Narrow Representation:** Traditionally, studies have focused on young, binary-gendered individuals from Western countries.
- **Misaligned Priorities:** Computing research concentrates on behaviour modification, such as social skills training, while autistic adults advocate for increased focus on research addressing mental health and independent living support.
- **Deficit-Based Approach:** Autism is often framed as a problem, leading to potentially stigmatising technologies.
- **Limited Autistic Involvement:** Past research has been conducted about autistic individuals, not with them.



The study calls for more participatory research, where autistic adults co-lead studies. It also encourages a strengths-based approach to autism and greater diversity in research demographics to ensure inclusive and useful technology development.

