

Elderly Perception and Attitude Towards Assistive Robots in Thailand

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Abstract:

Thailand is experiencing a significant demographic transition toward an aging society, creating an increasing demand for innovative approaches to support the well-being, independence, and quality of life of older adults. Assistive robots have emerged as promising technological solutions capable of aiding daily activities, health monitoring, emergency response, and social companionship. However, the successful integration of such technologies into elderly care is highly influenced by users' perceptions and cultural expectations. This study investigates the perception of assistive robots designed to support older adults in Bangkok, Thailand, with particular emphasis on the influence of age and cultural factors on technology acceptance.

A qualitative research methodology was employed through semi-structured interviews with participants representing older adult groups in Bangkok. The interviews explored participants' attitudes toward the use of assistive robots in elderly care, perceived benefits and limitations, concerns regarding implementation, and expectations for culturally appropriate design. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns in the participants' responses.

The findings indicate that participants generally perceived assistive robots as potentially beneficial for enhancing the safety, independence, and access to support services of the elderly. The advantages of these devices include medication reminders, fall detection systems, emergency communication functions, and assistance with routine daily tasks. Nevertheless, concerns related to privacy, technological reliability, affordability, and overreliance on robotic care were frequently expressed. Participants consistently emphasized that assistive robots should complement rather than replace human caregivers and family members. Furthermore, cultural considerations emerged a significant factor in influencing acceptance, with participants highlighting the importance of respectful communication, accommodation of religious practices, and alignment with Thai social values regarding familial responsibility and elder care.

Keywords:

Assistive robots, Older adults, Technology acceptance, Thailand.