

**Friend or foe? Making sense of technology's impact on learning and intellectual development in late adolescence and early adulthood****Peter W. Roux**

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**Statement of the Problem:** Functional Behavior Analysis (FBA) is a tool used to determine what motivates behavior. FBA relies on the premise that individuals use behavior to gain something like to acquire something desirable, or avoid/escape something unpleasant. This hypothesis is reliant on individual's behavior being psychologically motivated. This is an over-generalized interpretation of the purpose of behavior, especially in relation to Autistic individuals.

**Methodology & Theoretical Orientation:** Many professional modalities consider the results of a functional behavior analysis when determining what motivates behavior in clients. The results determine treatment, therapy and behavior intervention. The concept of FBA was established by B F Skinner in 1953 and closely linked with Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) as a treatment for schizophrenia and other psychiatric diagnoses, where patients displayed self-injurious and/or mal-adaptive behaviors.

**Findings:** A 1982 study included children and adolescents with developmental disorders. In a 2004 study authors modified FBA methodology to include ability to assess low-rate behavior. Small control groups of between 3, 9 and 12 individuals were used. Lang et al compared results of FBA conducted in Therapy rooms versus classrooms. Results were ambiguous. Tiger et al (2009) note that Iwata's method requires modification for distinct populations. The standard method of interpretation is visual inspection; this risks subjectivity in interpretation. (Kazdin, 2010). My clinical observations of Autistic children and adults have consistently shown they have a distinctive combination of traits at the core of their condition. These fundamental traits influence all behavior and should be considered when deciding treatment plans. Traits are: Sensory issue, rule oriented, perfectionism, trust issues, and wanting to fit in.

**Conclusion & Significance:** These fundamental cognitive processes of Autistic individuals over-ride the concept of behavior being psychologically motivated. Using the outdated paradigm of Functional Behavior Analysis to decode the behavior of Autistic individuals leads to incorrect assumptions and behavior treatment plans that may be contraindicated. New methodology needs to be investigated.

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**Stigma and mental illnesses****Saeed Wahass**

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Mental illnesses are conditions that affect the way a person thinks, perceives, feels and behaves. Such conditions may affect someone's ability to relate/communicate to others and function as well. All leads to social rejection/exclusion "stigma". Stigma refers to attitudes, beliefs and perceptions that lead people to reject, avoid, or being fearful from patients with mental illnesses. Until recently, such attitudes, beliefs and perceptions towards patients having mental illnesses might had been considering as personal issues in the context of individual preferences/inquisitives. However, the situation ultimately differs; stigma has an effect on clinical outcomes of mental illnesses. Research indicates that stigma is a crucial factor for the progress and maintenance of mental illnesses, as such can be observing on the reoccurrence of symptoms, leading ordinarily to relapses of disorders. Moreover, there is a worldwide trend to close up traditional psychiatric hospitals, alternative is to treat mentally ill patients thru community mental health services in order to normalize/socialize psychotic symptoms, because long stay outcomes of hospitalization influence patients' ability to have social skills and better outcomes on satisfaction, adherence to treatment, quality of life and protecting human rights. Stigma, however is a universal phenomenon, it has a negative impact on all cultures, but may be fluctuated ups-downs cross-culturally. This presentation tries to address stigma cross-culturally and the way it can affect adversely the progress and maintenance of mental illnesses and patients' quality of life, moreover, looking for solutions for increasing the amount of psychological awareness for destigmatizing of mental illnesses.

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