

An overview of Using Functional Communication Training to Decrease Maladaptive Behaviors for Individuals Diagnosed with Intellectual Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorders at an Extensive Support Needs Residential Program

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Abstract : This paper explores the application of Functional Communication Training (FCT) as an intervention to decrease maladaptive behaviors among individuals diagnosed with Intellectual Disability (ID) and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) within an extensive support needs residential program. Evidence suggests that FCT can be effective in promoting positive behavioral changes and enhancing communication skills in this population. The prevalence of maladaptive behaviors in individuals with ID and ASD is a significant concern for caregivers and professionals in residential programs. These behaviors can include aggression, self-injury, and disruptive activities, which can impede the individual's quality of life. Functional Communication Training (FCT) has been identified as a potential solution to these challenges, providing individuals with the communication skills needed to express their needs and desires effectively. **Method:** A quasi-experimental design was used to investigate the effectiveness of FCT in a residential setting for individuals with ID and ASD. Participants included individuals with varying degrees of ID and ASD who exhibited maladaptive behaviors. A baseline was established for each participant's behavior before introducing FCT as an intervention. The FCT intervention involved teaching the individuals alternative, functionally equivalent communication behaviors to replace maladaptive behaviors. The training was implemented in the participants' natural environment and was incorporated into their daily routines. The intervention period lasted for six months, with follow-ups conducted at three months and six months post-intervention. Results indicated a significant decrease in maladaptive behaviors for individuals who received the FCT intervention. In addition, an enhancement in communication skills was observed, with the majority of participants demonstrating an increased ability to express their needs and desires appropriately. The findings of this study provide support for the effectiveness of FCT in reducing maladaptive behaviors in individuals with ID and ASD in a residential setting. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of incorporating functional communication skills training in the daily routines of these individuals. By providing these individuals with an effective means of communication, FCT not only reduces the occurrence of maladaptive behaviors but also improves the quality of life for these individuals. However, future research should explore the long-term effects of FCT and consider the influence of individual differences on the effectiveness of the intervention.

Keywords : functional communication training, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorders, maladaptive behavior, residential program

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