

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS IN
APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS¹

ALAN E. KAZDIN²

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Characteristics and trends in applied behavior analysis were examined by evaluating the contents of the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* (JABA) from 1968 to 1974. Investigations were categorized according to the settings, populations, target behaviors, and research methodology employed. The analyses, completed separately for each dimension, revealed a relatively high proportion of investigations conducted in classrooms, with children and adolescents, and for problematic-disruptive behaviors. Although research in each of these areas did not constitute the majority of JABA investigations, only two categories across each content dimension were required to constitute the majority. The majority of JABA research has been conducted in classrooms and institutional settings, with children and adolescents and retardates of all ages, and for problematic-disruptive and academic behaviors. Despite the relatively restricted focus, the proportion of investigations conducted in naturalistic or open-field settings (*e.g.*, movie theaters, parks, zoos, busses) and, to a lesser extent, day-care facilities has increased in recent years. Also, the focus upon academic responses, training individuals to employ behavior modification, and community relevant behaviors (*e.g.*, employment, littering) has increased. As expected, examination of research design and evaluation techniques revealed extensive reliance upon intrasubject replication designs. Indeed, the majority of investigations have employed reversal (ABAB) designs. Interestingly, the use of multiple-baseline and between-group designs has increased in recent years. Finally, the use of statistical tests, not at all a rarity in JABA investigations, has not systematically increased since the inception of JABA.

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²Department of Psychology, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania 16802.