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Meeting Abstract

Influence of the personality factors rigidity and uncertainty tolerance on peer-feedback


✉ Bianca Raski - HHU Düsseldorf, Medicine, Düsseldorf, Germany

■ Mateja Böhm - HHU Düsseldorf, Mathematische und Kognitive Psychologie, Düsseldorf, Germany

■ Matthias Schneider - HHU Düsseldorf, Medicine, Düsseldorf, Germany

■ Thomas Rotthoff - HHU Düsseldorf, Medicine, Düsseldorf, Germany

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Text

Introduction: The way feedback is provided and the relationship between the provider and perceiver are proved to shape feedback. The impact of the perceivers' personality, its behavioral structures and their influence on feedback has been hardly considered so far. This study explores the influence of the two personality factors "behavioral rigidity" and "uncertainty tolerance" on students' feedback.

Objectives: Both factors were regarded as disturbance factors for the perception and acceptance of feedback.

Material & methods: A total of 111 students participated voluntarily in a peer-feedback initiative. First, all filled in an electronic questionnaire on behavioral rigidity [1] as well as on uncertainty tolerance [2]. Subsequently students conducted a self-assessment about their personal and professional development and were assessed regarding the same topics by a group of peers they were working with in the process of the semester. Finally, the results of the groups' assessment were provided anonymously to each student. Besides this, 11 students out of the total group participated in semi-structured interviews on the subject of acceptance of feedback.

Results: A significant negative correlation between behavioral rigidity of students and their perception by peers in regard of "acceptance of failure" ($r=-0.13$; $p=0.042$) emerged. There was also an evident correlation between behavioral rigidity and the external perception of the effort for "preparation for class" ($r=0.38$; $p=0.012$). Based on the interviews more rigid students seem to be less likely to accept negative peer feedback. Participants with a less distinct uncertainty tolerance tended to be assessed by their peers significantly as less professional ($r=0.34$; $p=0.007$), as with inferior communication skills towards patients ($r=0.344$; $p=0.006$) and with less capability of empathy ($r=0.263$; $p=0.039$). The more positive students assessed themselves, the significant more negative they were perceived by their

peers ($r=-0.344$; $p=0.018$). The exemplary interview statements of the participants support these results.

Conclusion: Personality factors of a feedback perceiver seem to have influence on the acceptance of feedback and on the feedback providers' assessment of this person as well. Personality factors should be more considered when implementing feedback initiatives as for instance persons with a more rigid behavior need apparently rather well-structured feedback situations and persons with uncertainty intolerance do need manageable situations to reduce stress.

References

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