

The Role Of Feedback And Constructive Criticism In The Context Of Higher Education

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Abstract

Receiving feedback and reflecting upon it is an essential aspect of learning and academic research. However, the type of feedback, as well as the source of it, has a critical influence on its effectiveness. In this study, we review the impact of constructive criticism by peers on the performance of students.

1 Introduction

The importance of feedback in learning is well-established in the literature. Constructive criticism and feedback are important parts of learning and knowledge development. However, it is important to understand what constitutes constructive criticism and influential feedback. This study aims at answering the following questions:

- The role of constructive criticism in learning?
- What kind of feedback is helpful in the learning process of students?

Constructive criticism is a timely and specific feedback that systematically focuses on the learning objectives. It tries to guide the student and does not link poor performance to personal attributes of students [?]. Students expect constructive criticism from their instructors. These feedbacks need to be timely and in a detailed fashion [?, ?].

The influence of constructive feedback is essential in the learning process of students. It focuses on the growth of students rather than just grading them.

Constructive feedback strengthens the self-confidence of students and motivates them to reevaluate their methods. It also helps them in making progress towards desired results. However, traditionally, feedback is provided through evaluative measures such as taking an exam and correcting it by an instructor. Many students cast their concerns regarding the undesirable influence of red pen on paper and its impact on their motivation and confidence [?].

2 Background

The study by [?] emphasizes the importance of receiving written feedback for students. The authors in [?] emphasize on the importance of the method of delivering the feedback as well as its provider.

A study by [?] shows that focusing on negative aspects and providing unclear comments is not helpful in the learning process of students. These feedback methods do not constitute constructive criticism. However, supplying focused comments by paying attention to the scope of learning objectives are considered as helpful [?].

One of the feedback methods, which is influential in the performance of students, is peer feedback. Collaboration among peers and providing feedback among each other helps them to learn deeper and gain perspective on their subjects.

The authors in [?] found that peer assessment is a reliable source of evaluation for students. To ensure the effectiveness of such peer feedback, the peers should have a clear understanding of the learning objectives of the subject [?]. Additionally, positive attitudes and interaction among students is a necessary condition for constructive criticism [?].

The activities involved in this process should encourage the students to engage deeply in the review and feedback process. The peer-review itself is a part of learning. The students gain a more profound knowledge of the subjects by discussing it with fellow students and reviewing the work done by their peers [?, ?].

Research by [?] shows the importance of the type of feedback on its effectiveness. They conclude that students achieve better performance by receiving face-to-face feedback and discussing their tests, tasks, or reports with instructors.

The authors in [?], emphasize on the timeliness of assessment and feedback. The authors in [?] investigate the students' perceptions of written feedback in higher education. Their findings show that feedback is helpful when the instructor and the student take part in two-way communication. Constructive written feedback, along with face-to-face interaction with students, is crucial, accelerates the learning process and engagement of students.

3 Discussion

Providing feedback is important in assisting students to gain knowledge and achieve proficiency in their studies. Providing helpful feedback and constructive criticism is essential in better performance of students.

Based on the research, we can see that the method of delivery of feedback and the role of the person who delivers it are significant for students. Some of the studies show that peer reviews, along with constructive criticism, would assist in increasing the self-confidence of students. They also improve their performance and engagements into their research and study subjects.

It should be mentioned that the peers assigned for providing feedback should have a good understanding of the subject that they are reviewing. This matter is especially important in research in areas where specific technical or scientific knowledge is required. Therefore, apart from having a constructive attitude, group members are also important.

The evaluative feedback, with only the objective of grading students, does not provide the best results. However, formative feedback with the aim of encouragement and engagement is helpful in the progress of students. Two-way communication, as well as face-to-face interaction, helps to provide more useful feedback and get better performance from students. Additionally, the time of delivering feedback is critical, as the students can reflect on their thinking process and performance.

4 Conclusion

In this study, we investigate helpful feedback and constructive criticism. The literature shows that feedback is an important part of the learning process. Constructive criticism provides a foundation

for accelerating the learning process. However, the deliverer of feedback, as well as the method of delivery, are two important factors in its impact. In the following, we conclude the outcome of this study.

Guided peer feedback helps deepen the concepts and create a critical perspective on the subjects that the feedback is provided. However, setting clear guidelines and learning objectives would help achieve fruitful results.

Another helpful method in providing feedback is face-to-face interactive feedback accompanied by written comments. Vague and general comments are not useful in the progress of students. However focused, detailed, and engaging comments encourages students to perform better.

Time is also an influential factor in the effectiveness of feedback. Providing timely comments can assist in communication and influence the performance of students.

This review shows that communicating feedback and its method of delivery significantly influence its impact. Additionally, the time of delivery and the role of the feedback provider also affect the value of feedback.

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