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“The Pedantic 21st Century Freshman Engineering Student”

1. This article is a study of the thoughts and actions of modern engineering students. There were a few very bold points made about the behaviors of those under the engineering umbrella. Such as “The students lack formal verbal and written communication skills” and “The students lack personal mastery”. There were also a few good points made about these students, which is not emphasized enough. This is how each engineering student absolutely knows that there is a better student than them. The article explains how students these days can just find websites which help with certain math/science problems they are given, so students don’t have the push to have a deep understanding of the subject.

2. This article does not seem to follow strict scientific guidelines. They explain in the Discussion and conclusion section that 75% of engineering students would identify with each of these behaviors. This seems to be an arbitrary percentage. They did perform a follow-up one-on-one interview which seems to back up this percentage, but it still is not a strong argument. More data needs to be shown for this to be a good scientific paper.

3. Most of the behaviors listed I can witness in both my peers and myself on a daily basis. For example, I have never been under the false idea that I am the best in my Calculus/Physics/Computer Science classes. There is always someone better. I can also see that so many students are great at doing book work and great at passing tests but when you look at their actual achievements in life, it is lack-luster. This could be due to the fact that during school engineering students simply do not have time to achieve personal goals aside from school. This all plays into the trait listed named “The students lack personal mastery.” The statements I don’t agree with are “They lack an understanding of the meaning of hard work”, and “Copying from the web is not plagiarism”. These are very broad statements. Obviously it is hard to gauge the meaning of hard work to each student. Also with the online plagiarism, it is left unexplained why students think this is okay.

4. I believe that most of the behaviors and traits listed apply to my fellow students including me. I would like for my fellow students to feel more of a sense of purpose than just needing to study for the next calculus exam. I would like for my fellow students to not get caught up in the idea that there is always someone better than they are. But I would also ask the author to reconsider the process of getting data for this article. It seems like the data collected was done so in a non-scientific manor. This subject deserves more time and effort, and it deserves more coverage in the media. Engineering is becoming a very broad and popular field of study, with the addition of computer science into most top universities. The students in these fields will develop into some of the most influential individuals in our future, and they need the attention they deserve. These bad traits need to be addressed soon.