

Teachers' Feedback: How Do Ibri College Students View it?

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Abstract: Feedback is considered an essential part of the educational process. It is important for bridging and narrowing the gap between giving and receiving information. When utilized in the proper way, feedback reinforces students' motivation and increases their attention to teachers' comments. Thus, a crucial question to be asked in this regard is whether students are benefiting from the feedback they receive from their teachers and to what extent. Bearing this in mind, while attempting to revealing one side of the story- students' perspectives- a questionnaire was distributed among (30) students at Ibri College of Science and Technology (IBRI CAS) in the Sultanate of Oman. The results are positive and show that students do benefit and are grateful to the feedback and comments they receive from their teachers. Explanations, discussion, recommendations will be discussed deeply and in detail throughout this study.

Keywords: barriers, facilitating, feedback, motivation, outcome, reinforce, researchers

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Introduction

Feedback is an important matter in the higher education stage. It equally promotes and governs the academic personality of students and gives them the chance to concentrate well on quality, rather than quantity. All of that happens by sincere and mutual cooperation between students and their experienced teachers whose aim is to guide and assist them. However, a number of students have a say against Feedback and consider it a sort of interference with their work which creates negative effects on their performance. This paper highlights the importance of feedback in higher education.

Literature Review

Importance of Feedback is widely stressed in research. It is often linked to meeting the needs of students, “Feedback is commentary on the student work, individualized to best accommodate for the needs of each student, personally” (Marco Learning, 2019, Para. 12). From this definition, Feedback focusses on the work achieved by students as individuals, though they form a big group in the classroom. Once Feedback is written for each student, that means the teacher dedicates considerable writing comments and feedback. Feedback takes diverse kinds. It could be related to students’ behaviour or conduct, written or oral remarks, bearing in mind that the purpose of Feedback is to promote individuals’ academic level positively, without harsh criticism, reprimanding, or punishment.

“Feedback is any response regarding a student’s performance or behavior. It can be verbal, written or gestural. The purpose of feedback in the assessment and learning process is to improve a student’s performance- not put a damper on it” (Center for Teaching Excellence, (n.d), Para. 1).

when students get feedback from their teachers, it should be utilized in realizing a better performance to achieve a higher level of progress.

Once students have received feedback, the next challenge is interpreting that feedback and using it to spark the next step in the project. Yet students often receive conflicting feedback about their projects. Some of their peers may really like an element of the work while others might not be as crazy about it (Boudreau, 2022, Para.5).

What advantages do students get out of the whole process—Feedback? Well, skillful teachers normally give chances to students for a personal reflection and evaluation of some parts of the lesson that were highlighted by the teacher. Moreover, students can get clear improvements and avoid drawbacks.

As educators, we are often asked to allow for reflection after each lesson, engaging in self-assessment to analyze what aspects worked best, and what may require further attention. Similarly, through effective feedback, students are encouraged to assess their performance and evaluate how and where to make improvements. (Fishtree, 2014, Para. 2).

While Feedback is seen as significant for all students, those who value it are believed to gain its fruit and are more likely to achieve better results, even though they might not be the highest intellectuals. The most interested students with top scores normally get the ultimate feedback. This shows their interest in the material they are studying.

Students who routinely perform at the top of the class, who have the highest GPA, and who earn the highest test scores are often provided with more opportunities than those who underperform. Yet time and time again it is proven that the students who earn those top grades and who perform best on those tests are not necessarily those with the highest level of intellect, but instead are those who are best acclimated to succeed within the framework of the school system itself. (Marco Learning, 2019, Para. 9)

From another perspective, Feedback is double sided; sometimes it deals with positive things and promotes them, while some other times it focusses on negative things. It is a powerful procedure for students provided that it happens immediately after finishing the task, and the way it is performed. “Instant feedback is when information is provided contextually and “on-demand”, in immediate response to a learners’ action and in the flow of learning. It helps a learner deepen their understanding.” (Markovic, (n.d), Para. 4).

Timperley and Hattie further explored the influence of feedback - finding it is one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement, and pointing out that the impact of feedback can be positive or negative depending on the type of feedback, the timing and the way it is given (NSWgovernment, 2022, Para. 4).

Another area of significance that is often linked to providing Feedback is that it bridges the personal gap between teachers and students: healthy relationships, trust and confidence. Once there is mutual respect, students admit that they have gained improvement.

Feedback is also central to teaching in education. The importance of constructive feedback allows for many positive opportunities. Feedback in education provides a foundation for positive student and teacher relationship. When teachers and students share effective feedback, they build a sense of trust amongst each other, they build the trust to tell each other when they see points of improvement. (Singh, 2022, Para. 3)

Moreover, as independent learners, students have to refer to their teachers in case they encounter certain problems in their courses. It is their responsibility to update teachers with their level and should seek their advice. “Being students, it is their responsibility to let the teacher know if they are unable to understand what they are being taught. Students ought to give feedback to their teachers about the teaching process, only then it’ll be worth learning” (Singh, 2022, Para. 9).

Feedback promotes students’ confidence and gives them the status of self-awareness, zeal, and enthusiasm. They become more understanding and independent while tackling the academic

material. “Feedback assists all students in understanding the subject matter and provides clear guidance on how to improve their learning procedure. Feedback can help students gain confidence, self-awareness, and enthusiasm for what they are learning” (Kumar, 2022, Para2).

Nevertheless, not all teachers have the proper skill how to utilize Feedback. Some teachers use harsh comments full of negativity and aggression. “The downside, of course, is that not all feedback is equally effective, and it can even be counterproductive, especially if it’s presented in a solely negative or corrective way” (Stenger, 2014, Para.3). “Indeed, the power of feedback in learning is undeniable; however, this impact can be either positive or negative. The way feedback is facilitated and monitored within classrooms very much determines its effectiveness” (Nguyen, 2021, Para. 7).

A number of students, though small, interpret feedback as a kind of superiority by the teacher and consider it a strict way for showing students the right way of doing some task. Learners may sometimes interpret feedback as an attempt to control them or tell them how they should be doing something rather than guidance on how to improve. (Stenger, 2014, Para.17).

From an academic point of view, Feedback should form a kind of trusted connection between students and their teachers. Sometimes it takes a personal type. Once it is so, that means students can feel secure and accept comments positively. “Feedback should be personalized and directed toward one student or a small group of students” (Holl, (n.d), Para. 4). Sometimes school students have another kind of goals, rather than academic, which is related to sports and social life such as events, evenings, and activities which needs certain comments and feedback from experts on sports and social life. “Most school age students’ goals are more sport or social than academic and most academic goals relate more to completion of work, being on time, and trying harder than on the quality of the academic outcomes.” (Rodriguez, 2022, Para.5).

In addition, utilization of peer feedback is advocated to bring many benefits. Among these is the freely mutual exchange of students’ work. This offers students secured opportunities to express themselves with no fear or embarrassment as their work is seen by their peers.

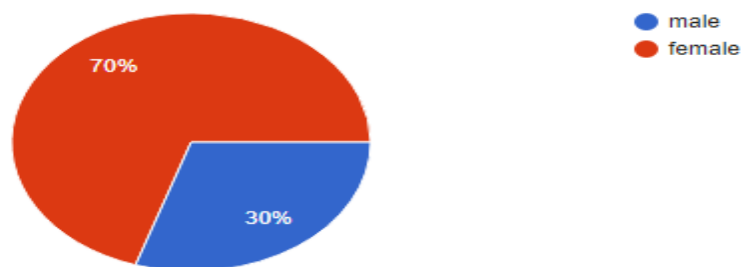
Questions such as “How did feedback from your classmate help you revise your work?” “What did you learn from examining your classmate’s work that will help you in revising your own?” and “How did you revise your work after completing your self-assessment?” all help students see the value of the feedback process. (Lalor, 2022, Para. 11)

Questionnaire Analysis

To get more information about teachers' feedback, the researchers distributed a survey among (30) students at Ibri College –University of Technology and Applied Sciences in the Sultanate of Oman. The study is conducted by means of a questionnaire consisting of (10) questions: (5) Yes/No, (5) Agree/ Disagree.

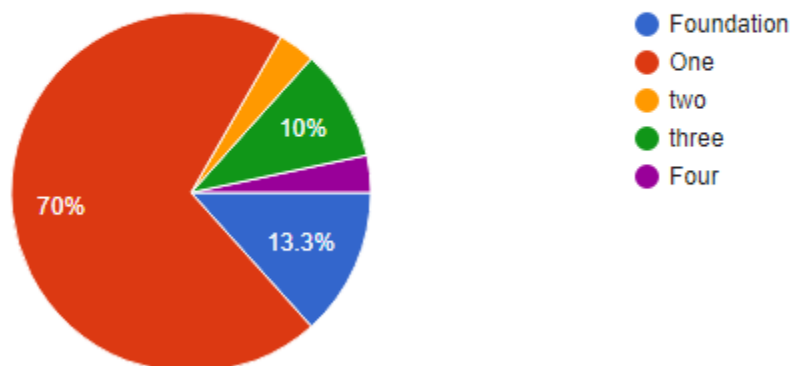
gender

30 responses



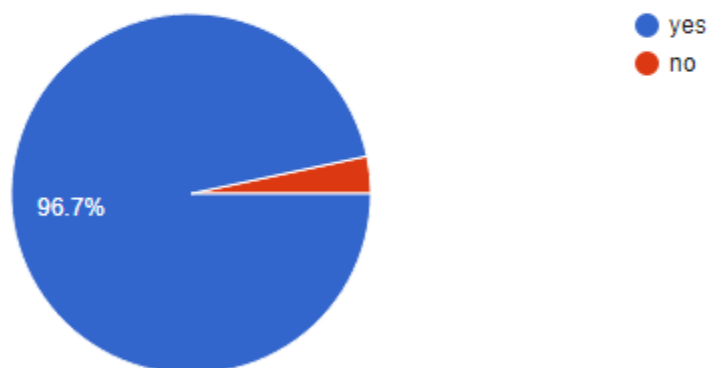
Academic Year

30 responses



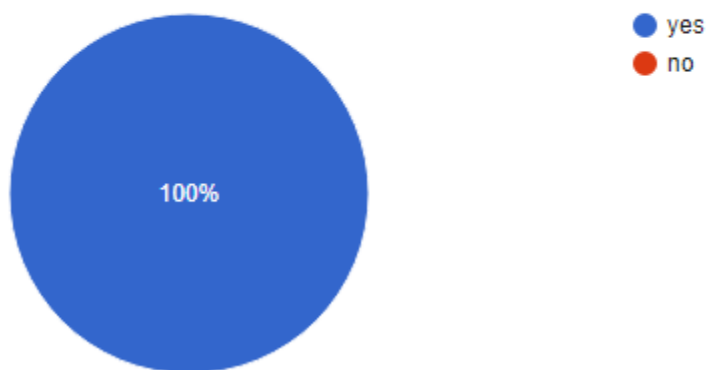
Frankly, teachers' feedback is beneficial and healthy.

30 responses



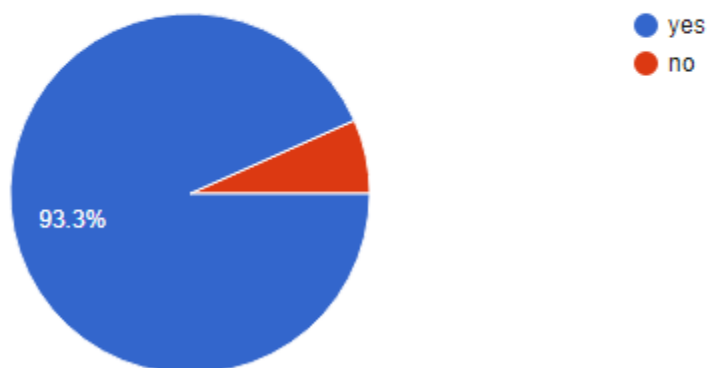
Feedback could be verbal, written, or a gentle gesture.

30 responses



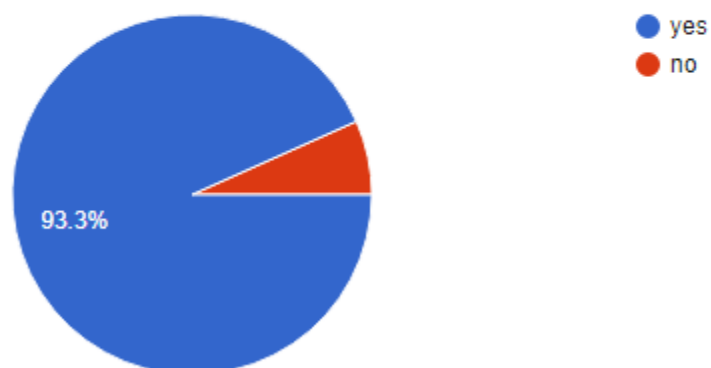
Feedback is better when it is conducted immediately after finishing the task.

30 responses



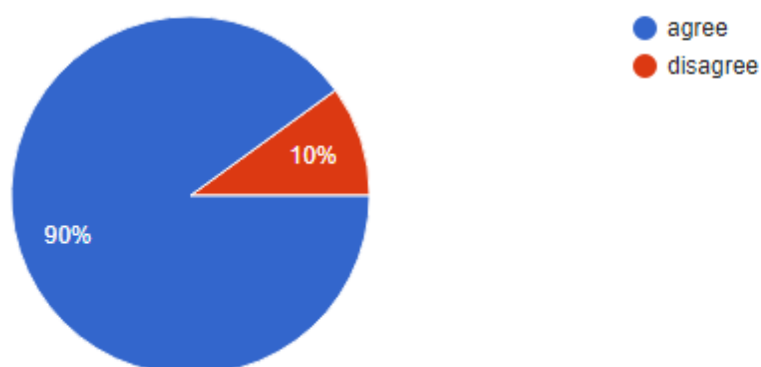
Students have to consider their teachers' feedback and work accordingly.

30 responses



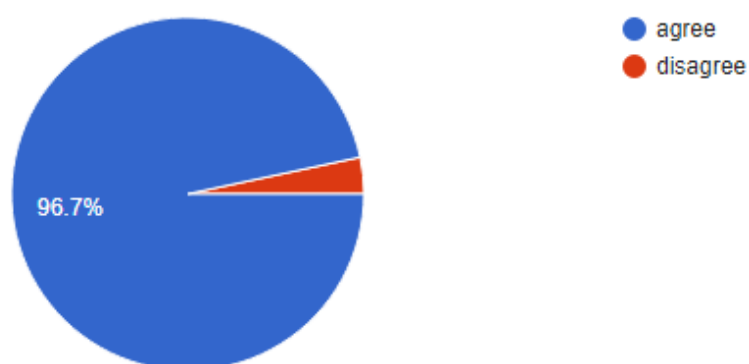
Not all feedback is positive, sometimes there are harsh comments from the teacher that have a negative effect.

30 responses



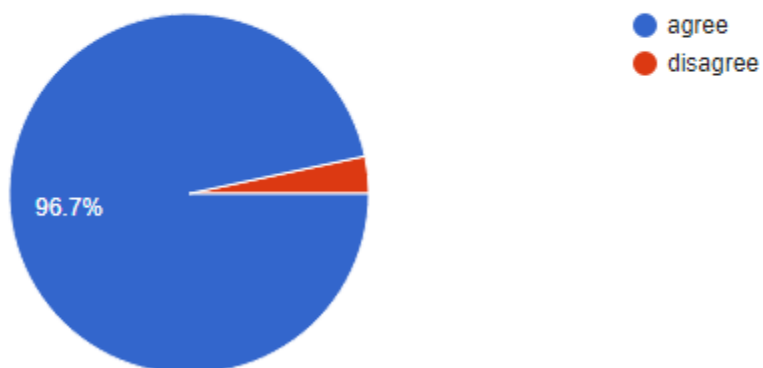
Generally speaking, teachers do pay more attention and care to students with high scores to keep on the same level. These students do welcome teachers' comments and consider them a sort of motivation, guidance, and assistance.

30 responses



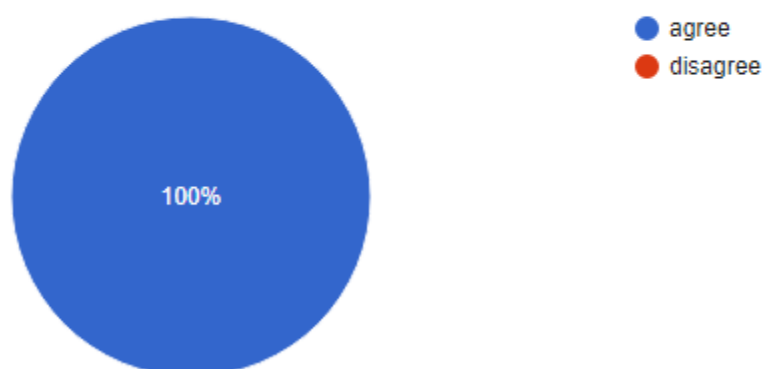
Personally, I welcome teachers' feedback and consider it an advantage.

30 responses



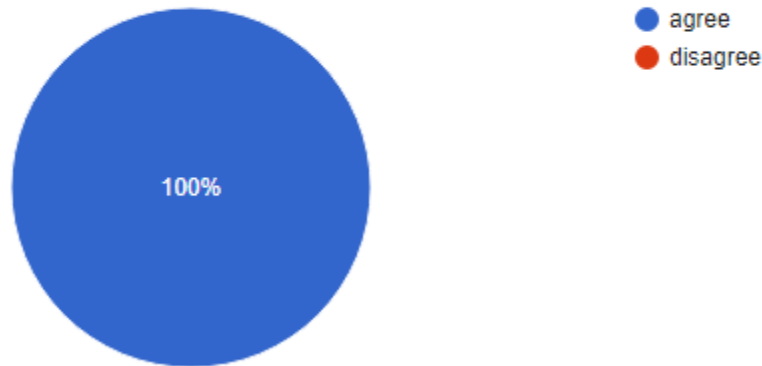
Feedback succeeds fully when there is a mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation between teachers and students.

30 responses



Teachers should consider students' feedback, comments, and evaluation, as well.

30 responses



Recommendations

- teachers should provide students with essential and constructive feedback that promotes their level.
- students' production improves significantly when receiving some encouraging feedback i.e., well done, good job, correct, etc.
- immediate feedback is essential as it connects the feedback with the material just discussed.
- individual needs should be considered by teachers when giving feedback; this is of greater significance in classrooms of diverse abilities or backgrounds learners.
- students need to be assured by teachers that feedback is a means of giving them a hand to promote and progress--not punishment.
- it is essential that teachers ask students to form groups in class to discuss a common feedback that all students need to get clarified.
- Teachers might- and actually preferable- provide whole- class feedback in case a big number of students fail to understand a new skill or task.

Conclusion

This study highlighted the important role that Feedback plays in the teaching and learning process at IBRI CAS. The results are exciting: almost all students welcome teachers' feedback and comments, as they give them the chance to avoid drawbacks on one hand, and promote their progress, on the other hand. Moreover, based on this study results, both teachers and students – male and female- welcome the focus on quality, rather than quantity, in the teaching and learning process, and think that students should accept and highly appreciate feedback given to them by their teachers.

Population of the study

The researchers have referred to a group of Omani students at Ibri College. They are between 19-20. They study Business and come from different parts of the Sultanate of Oman: some come from coastal regions, others come from the capital city –Muscat, while a good number comes from the suburbs of Ibri City.

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About the Researchers

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