EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF FEEDBACK AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY

ZACHARY ROMEO, CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DOUGLAS COLLEGE

DOUGLAS COLLEGE

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current research (Ajjawi & Boud, 2017; Carless, 2006; Pitt & Norton, 2017; To, 2016; Varlander, 2008) shows that instructors provide feedback to assist in learning, and how this feedback is taken up by students may be influenced by the relationship between the teacher and student, and the feedback delivery. Students may have mixed feelings and emotions when receiving and processing feedback, impacting how they engage with the feedback moving forward. Teachers and students do not always perceive the usefulness and effectiveness of feedback similarly, which can lead to miscommunication, frustration, and may impede student learning.

Current research in this area is primarily qualitative. While it is important to understand the feelings and views of students, the aim of this study is to collect data from a larger sample of students across different faculties at Douglas College. The purpose of this is to determine a correlation between perceptions of feedback and the emotional maturity of students.
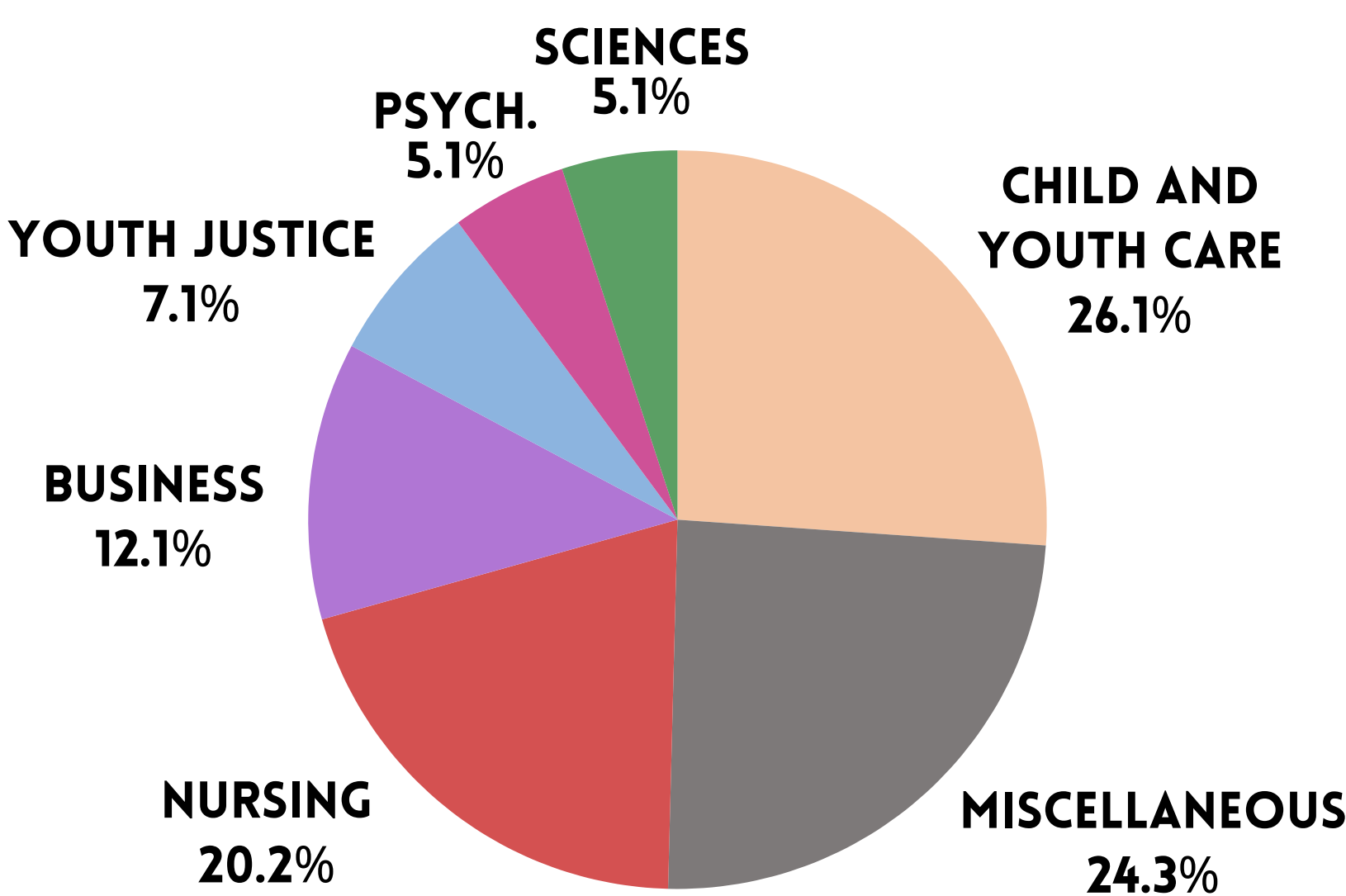
RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there a relationship between students' perceptions of instructor feedback at a post-secondary institution and their levels of emotional maturity?
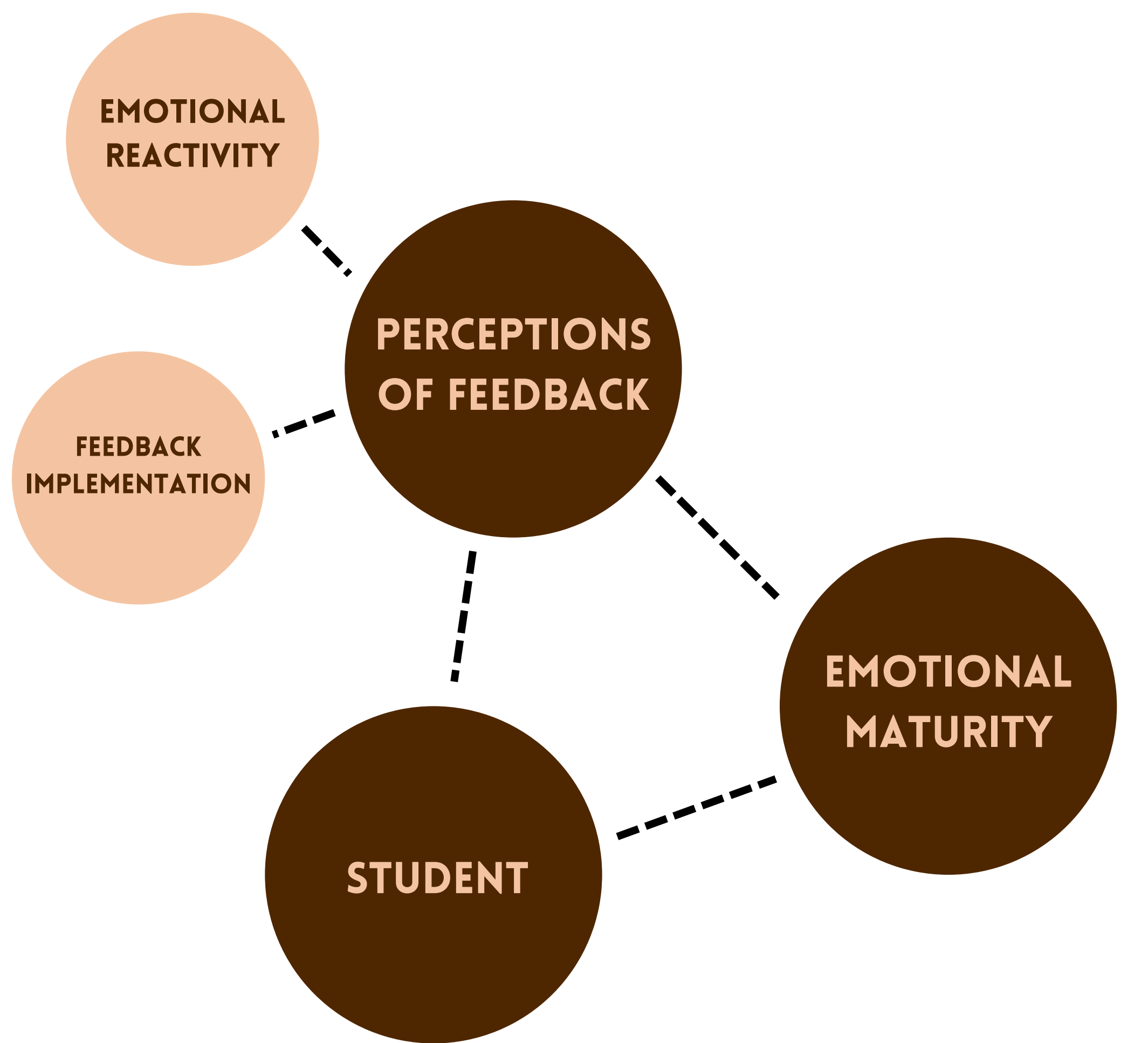
PARTICIPANTS

Of the 78 total respondents, 58 fully completed the questionnaire and were included in analysis.

SCIENCES 5.1%
PSYCH. 5.1%
YOUTH JUSTICE 7.1%
BUSINESS 12.1%
NURSING 20.2%
CHILD AND YOUTH CARE 26.1%
MISCELLANEOUS 24.3%

	AGE	GPA
AVERAGE	27.4 YEARS	3.41
RANGE	33 YEARS	2.26
MIN / MAX	18 / 51 YEARS	1.99 / 4.25

METHODS

A questionnaire was created from seven separate validated surveys: Student Feedback Orientation Scale (King, Schrodt, & Weisler, 2009), Student Conceptions of Feedback v2 (Brown & Harnett, 2014), the Effect of Students' Conceptions (Ali, Fatima, & Saad, 2021), the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (Bar-On, 1996), the ARVC's Scale of Emotional Maturity (Singh & Mallesh, 1990), the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (Schutte et al., 1998), and the Serenity Scale (Kreitzer, Gross, Waleekhachonloet, Reilly-Spong, & Byrd, 2009).

The surveys measured students' perceptions around feedback on assignments given by instructors, how students chose to implement the feedback, and how students perceived their respective levels of emotional maturity. The questionnaire was administered using Qualtrics and used a 5-point scale, ranging from Never to Always. The questionnaire also included demographic information, including participant age, area of study, and current grade point average (GPA).

All students currently enrolled at Douglas College (Winter 2024) were eligible to participate. Participants were recruited indirectly through information shared with department chairs, coordinators, and instructors at Douglas College. Posters with a QR code were also posted on campus.

ANALYSIS

Correlation coefficients were analyzed for relationships between emotional maturity and feedback perceptions (r=.40) and emotional maturity and the two subsets of feedback perceptions: emotional reactivity (r=.31) and feedback implementation (r=.40).
Emotional maturity and feedback perceptions were also correlated with age and GPA; all relationships were insignificant, ranging between -.28 and .17.

Feedback Perceptions
Emotional Reactivity
Feedback Implementation
-1   0   .31 .40   .40   1
EMOTIONAL MATURITY
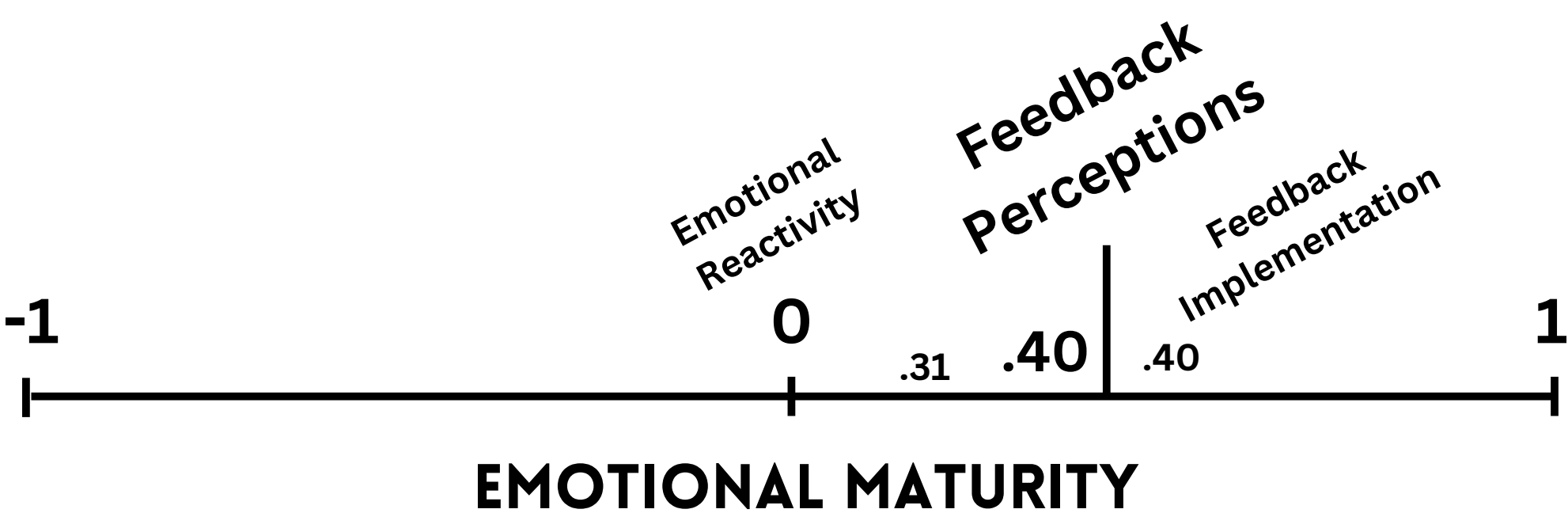
FINDINGS

While the analysis did not produce any strong correlations, the findings suggest that relationships may be present, if there was a larger sample. The findings suggest that as levels of emotional maturity increase so do perceptions of feedback. Students tend to react to feedback and find ways to implement feedback when they are more emotionally mature.

The three questions with the highest average response in the survey showed that students feel relieved when they get positive feedback from the teacher, they actively listen and read comments given by teachers, and they look at feedback to help identify areas of improvement. This demonstrates that students are actively engaged in the feedback process but future research is required to investigate where the disconnect is between instructors providing feedback and students implementing that feedback.

Consistent with existing literature, results also suggest that students' perceptions of the teacher impact how they receive feedback. 41.3% of respondents note that how they engage with feedback 'often' or 'always' depends on how much they like the teacher.

IMPLICATIONS

These findings have two key implications. The first is that generally students look forward to and have high expectations of feedback, and the relationship they have with their teachers may have an impact on the way they engage with the feedback. This suggests that teachers may benefit from considering feedback happens in a social context through the relationships they form with their students rather than a strictly informative process for correction or praise. The importance of a relationship between teacher and student can help inform effective ways to transmit feedback, whether through auditory or visual mediums, considering the needs and learning styles of their students.

The second implication is that students generally believe themselves to be emotionally mature, pointing towards the ability of students to appropriately handle corrective and reinforcing feedback. This should encourage teachers to not hold back constructive comments and understand students believe they are capable of dealing with constructive critique and reinforcement in an emotionally healthy way. As a result of the high value students place on feedback, teachers can benefit from sharing feedback in a precise and clear manner.

REFERENCES

Refer to researcher for references