

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT SESSIONS FOR STUDENTS:

DOES FEEDBACK DIFFER ACCORDING TO TUTOR'S CLINICAL PROFILE?

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Introduction

- **Formative assessment sessions (FAS)** are opportunities for medical students to practice clinical skills with simulated patients during pre-clinical years and to receive feedback (FB) on their history taking, physical exam and communication skills
- FB is given by either generalists or specialist tutors

Aims of the study

- To evaluate whether the content and process of the feedback varies between generalists and specialists
- To assess whether students' perceptions differ from objective analysis of the feedback process

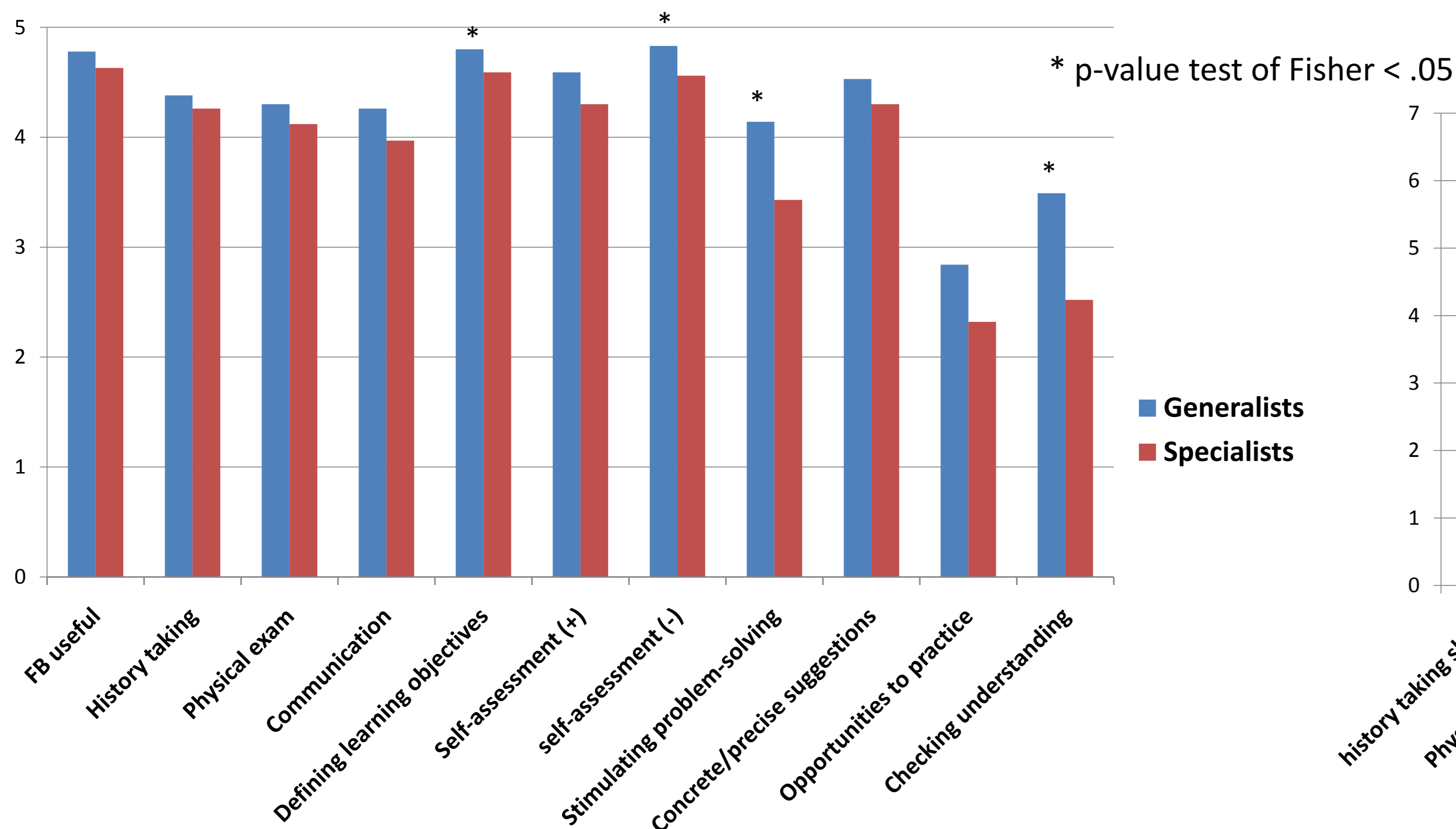
Methods

- Setting: Faculty of Medicine, Geneva, Switzerland
- Participants:
 - 252 medical students (164 2nd and 88 3rd)
 - 38 Tutors involved in three different FAS
 - 22 generalists: general internal medicine, primary care, educationalists
 - 16 specialists: cardiology, gastroenterology, visceral surgery
- Audio-recording of tutors' FB

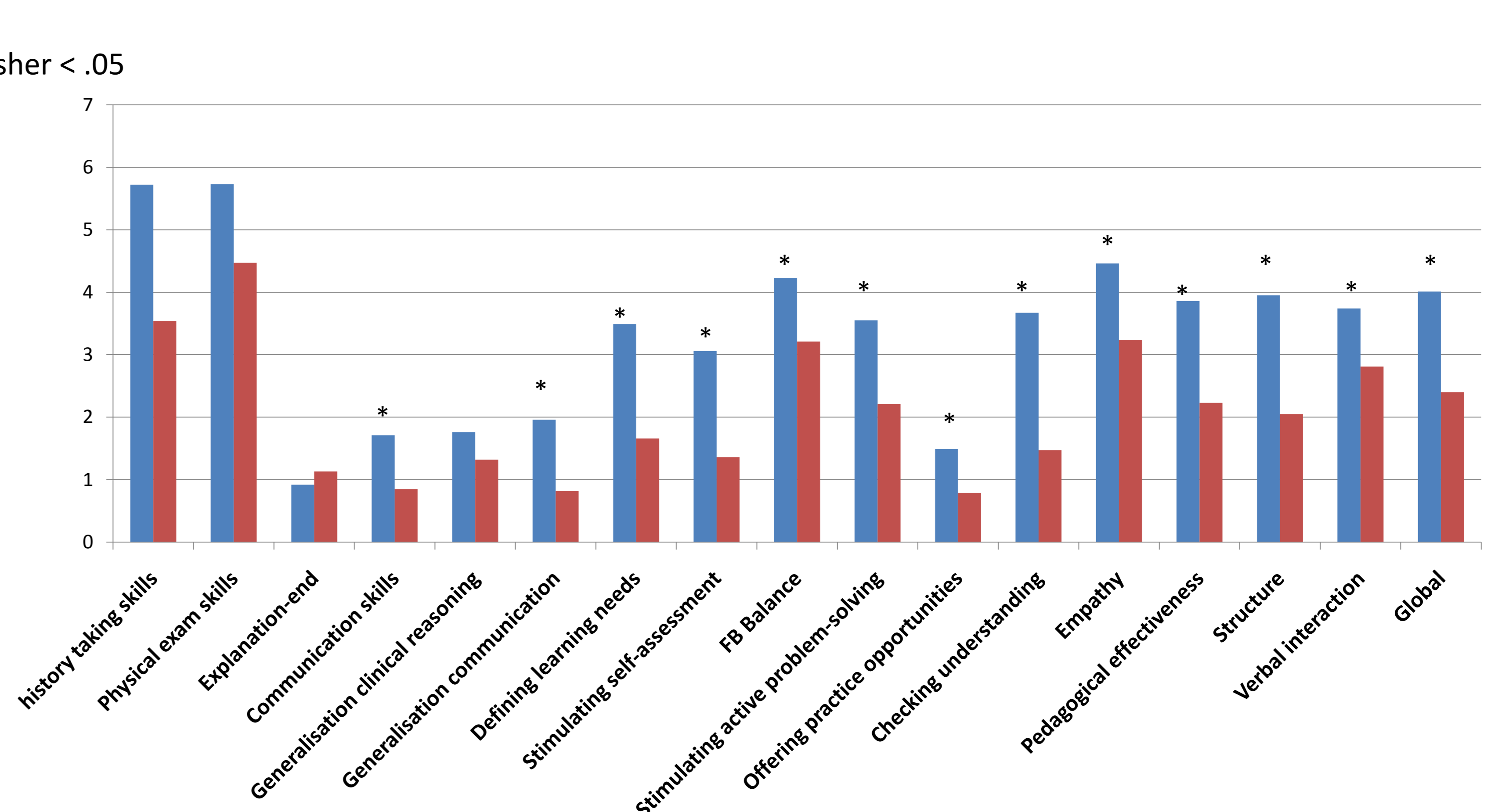
- Outcome measures:
 - Students' perception of the feedback received through a 15 item self-administrated questionnaire
 - Objective analysis of the process/content of the feedback with a 26 item evaluation grid (objective analysis)
- Statistical inference: linear mixed effect models, taking the FAS into account (fixed effect), and the tutor (random effect).

Results

Students' perception of the feedback n=348



Objective analysis: content and quality of the feedback process n=140



Tutors: Socio-demographics and clinical items	Generalists n=22	Specialists n=16	p
Female n (%)	13 (59%)	4 (25%)	0.079
Age (mean±SD)	44 ±9	48 ±5	0.123
Years of clinical experience (mean±SD)	17 ±10	20 ±6	0.341
Mean years of clinical teaching (±SD)	8 ±7	11 ±6	0.133
Mean years of teaching in FAS (±SD)	4.5 ±4	4.0 ±3	0.642
Structured training in feedback n (%)	19 (86%)	9 (56%)	0.062
Teacher in communication skills n (%)	14 (64%)	2 (12%)	0.005

Correlation between students' perceptions and objective analysis of the feedback received

Feedback: perception of the students	Feedback: objective analysis	r	p
FB useful	Pedagogical effectiveness	0.211	0.021
Self-assessment	Self-assessment (+)	0.189	0.044
	Self-assessment (-)	0.265	0.005
Balance (+) – (-)	Balance (+) – (-)	0.259	0.005
Stimulating active problem-solving	Stimulating active problem-solving	0.283	0.002
Offering practice opportunities	Offering practice opportunities	0.410	<.001
Checking understanding	Checking understanding	0.279	0.024

Conclusion

Generalist tutors use more learner-centred feedback skills than specialist tutors when giving feedback skills to medical students during FAS and students perceive such differences, but to a less extent. However, a higher percentage of generalist tutors have been trained in how to give feedback and/or teach communication skills. Further research should explore what factors influence tutors' style and interest in teaching and how they perceive their teaching role in order to explain such teaching differences.