RESPONDING TO DISCRIMINATORY FEEDBACK: THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER AND DOMAIN

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Contemporary forms of discrimination occur when people get different feedback for the same level or work. Via questionnaire, we compared undergraduates’ descriptions of two situations from their own lives: when they received less positive feedback (suffered) and when they received more positive feedback (benefited) than someone else for similar work. We looked at whether individuals did or said anything in response as a function of gender and situational domain. Females were more likely to respond when they benefited rather than suffered from differential feedback, whereas males showed the reverse pattern. In situations where individuals suffered from the feedback, males (50%) were more likely than females (26%) to report responding in the school domain, but the reverse occurred in the work domain (52% of female v. 25% of males). In contrast, in situations where people benefited from the feedback, females were more likely to respond than males in both the school domain (49% of females v. 43% of males) and the work domain (68% of females v. 47% of males). Overall, people were differentially likely to do or say something in response to discriminatory feedback, depending on domain, gender and whether they benefited or were hurt by the discrimination.