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# Enhancing Feedback and Reducing Stress in Design Studio: Exploring Online Anonymous Peer Critique

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**Abstract:** Critique is widely recognized as a central assessment and feedback method in design education. However, traditional critique methods, like design juries, are often associated with stress and pressure on students due to factors such as fear of embarrassment, public exposure, and hierarchical dynamics. In response, the literature highlights peer feedback as a more constructive and learning-oriented alternative, although it may also cause undesirable social effects, such as tension with peers and favoritism, which need to be addressed. Building on this idea, this exploratory study aims to investigate how migrating peer feedback to an online collaborative platform can enhance the critique experience by providing a digital interface for students to share their work and exchange written feedback anonymously. A pilot anonymous online peer critique session was implemented in the second-year interior design studio using the collaborative platform Padlet. Data on students' evaluations of their experience were collected through post-activity surveys and thematically analyzed. The outcomes of the session were also evaluated along with the tutor's observational notes. Findings indicate that students valued the online collaborative format for its efficiency, ease of use, and supportiveness in gathering more diverse opinions. Additionally, anonymity was found to contribute to a more open, constructive, and less stressful critique experience. The paper argues that integrating anonymous online peer feedback into the design studio as a formative feedback method can support reflective, engaging, and student-centered learning environments and offer a less stressful alternative to conventional critique practices.

**Keywords:** *Interior Design Education, Design Pedagogy, Peer Feedback, Assessment Methods, Anonymity*

## **Introduction**

Design studio learning constitutes a major component of education in design disciplines, and “critique” is widely recognized as a central assessment and feedback method. There are changing forms of critique, often referred to as “crits,” “reviews,” or “juries” but in essence, the process involves students’ presentation of their work and demonstration of their ideas to a reviewing audience, who can be instructors, professionals from the field as external reviewers, or peers, and receive feedback. Regardless of whether the critique process is formative or part of a more formal, summative assessment, ideally, it is expected to foster students’ creativity, enhance their thought processes, and help them improve their projects and methods. Contrastingly, these conventional critique methods (Ceylanlı et al. 2020; Dannels and Martin, 2008; Day 2013; Smith and Lilly, 2016; Turner 2021) present a challenge of causing stress and pressure on students due to public exposure, fear of embarrassment, power dynamics, the hierarchy or subjectivity of comments, and the externally validated nature of the design process. Sometimes critique can make students feel judged rather than guided, preventing criticism from being constructive, helpful, and learning centered. The situation becomes especially challenging for students with learning differences and mental health conditions. In response, encouraging peer feedback emerges as an effective, inclusive, hierarchically balancing strategy to promote active participation among students in the feedback process.

Research in design education pedagogy emphasizes sharing of work with peers, observing peers, and obtaining peer feedback as practical learning-centered approaches to enhancing student improvement and learning (Hill 2016; Ma 2013; Yilmaz and Gelmez, 2023; Yorgancıoğlu and Tunali, 2020). As also posited by Yilmaz and Gelmez (2023) peer critique occurs among hierarchically equivalent, emotionally matched individuals and contains a general appreciation and sensitivity without determinate judgments about the idea, project, or process. These dynamics contribute to peer feedback’s focus on engagement and support rather than on assessment, making it perceived as less stressful and more helpful by students (Turner 2021).

Building on these pedagogical advantages, this study explores how peer feedback in interior design studio education can be facilitated through an online collaborative platform (Padlet) by also introducing anonymity into the process. It is also intended to examine whether anonymity can help reduce pressure and stress and encourage a more open and balanced dialogue among students compared to conventional critical review sessions held in the studio. Additionally, the study aims to understand students’ perceptions of the constructiveness and usefulness of the feedback received through the proposed method in improving their design projects.

## **Literature Review**

### Feedback and Critique Culture in the Design Studio

The structure of most undergraduate-level programs in design and architecture fields follows a progressive sequence of design studio modules at their core. In these modules,

students are typically asked to develop creative solutions to hypothetical design briefs in their own ways, responding to the drawn expectations (Yilmaz and Gelmez, 2023). Interior design programs often follow a similar approach in which students work on projects and design problems become more complex each successive year.

The critique process, during which students present their work in progress or completed projects to receive feedback, is considered as an essential part of design studio pedagogy (Beecher 2006; Fleischmann 2024; Gray 2013; McClean and Hourigan, 2013; Travis 2013). There are definitions of critique in literature that share some common aspects such as questioning, identifying problematic aspects, and setting a constructive dialogue for the enhancement of a project. For example, Ostermann (1998) defines design critique as advice, suggestions, and questions regarding a project, whereas Wong (2011, 222) refers to the term as “a communicative and sociable event,” which aims to transfer design knowledge and help students develop and evaluate technical, aesthetic, verbal, and written skills. The author claims that because critique also includes transmission of evaluative and corrective information about an action, using the word interchangeably with the term “feedback” would be acceptable (Wong 2011, 225). Therefore, as also highlighted in these sources, ideally, critique not only functions as an assessment tool, but it is also recognized as a means of sharing, transferring knowledge to nurture students’ creativity (Fleischmann 2024; Vo and Asojo 2021), to improve their ability to communicate, and to refine processes, methods, and ideas (Turner 2021). Critiques can take various forms depending on the delivery methods they follow and the context in which they are performed. The context and setting include factors such as the number of students involved, the level of privacy in the environment, and whether the feedback is formative (interim) or part of a summative formal assessment. One-to-one desk critiques, group reviews, pin-up sessions, design juries (also referred to as design reviews), and informal interactions are commonly used critique techniques in design education (Gül Günday and Afacan 2018). Although nearly all these methods are used in the studio occasionally, depending on the context and theme of the projects, providing feedback through design juries or critical reviews held at specific stages remains the most prevalent approach.

### Adopting Student-Centered and Learning-Oriented Feedback Mechanisms in the Studio

Recent contributions to pedagogical research in higher education highlight a significant transition from conventional “assessment of learning” methodologies to “learning-oriented” and “student-centered” approaches to the design of assessment and feedback mechanisms (Winstone and Carless 2019; Yorgancıoğlu, Tunalı and Çetinel 2021). This transformation has also been prominent in design education fields and how students are provided with feedback on their work. One of the major consequences has been the growing criticism of the way design juries have been conducted (Dannels and Martin 2008; Day 2013; Turner 2021). The emergence of this type of critique is associated with the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* (Travis 2013; Turner 2021), based on a traditional master–apprentice design pedagogy model (Fleischmann 2024; Turner and Rey-Barreau, 2021) in which the tutor or studio leader shares their knowledge, skills, and expertise with

“apprentices” (students). Accordingly, instructors predominantly take on the role of experts providing feedback and posing questions about the projects, whereas students take the role of novices. The hierarchical structure of this method has the disadvantage of creating dependencies that influence the open dialogue, potentially diminishing the student’s role and subordinating their perspectives to the tutor’s authority or established views (McClellan and Hourigan, 2013).

Research shows that formal versions of critique, particularly design juries, can negatively affect students’ mental health, subjecting them to high levels of stress and pressure (Turner 2021). Jury sessions often become emotionally charged events, and students become vulnerable when their work is publicly presented in front of peers and tutors (Ceylanlı et al. 2020). Especially shy students struggle to express themselves in front of an audience (Blair 2007). Dannels and Martin (2008) also point out the climate of fear, defensiveness, anxiety, and stress that is associated with the feedback that occurs within these critiques. For some students it becomes highly stressful to hear critical or negative comments about their work, and as also underlined by Day (2013) students often perceive feedback on their work as a criticism of their personalities. In some cases, large critique sessions make students defensive, thus reducing learning effectiveness (Blair 2007).

The number of students with concealed conditions, such as mental health issues (Wiley 2024) or learning differences (Brunswick et al. 2024) in higher education is on the rise according to the recent reports. Many universities are informing educators and implementing reasonable adjustments to promote inclusivity. Creative arts and design programs are among the most chosen fields of study by these students (Brunswick et al. 2024), and there is still much to learn about reducing pressure to present in class and minimizing stress during assessments that are unique to the nature of design programs. As also asserted by Ceylanli et al. (2020), design studio performance is also closely related to state of mind; thus, assessments in studio learning can affect students with hidden conditions even more.

To effectively utilize critique as a student-centered tool that prioritizes learning and enhance its quality, as also underlined by Blair (2007), it becomes essential to create an environment where students feel safe and motivated to participate in these sessions as a vital part of their development.

### Peer Feedback as an Engaging and Inclusive Alternative

The need for a transition to a more inclusive and learning-oriented paradigm in design studios has underscored the importance of peer feedback, which provides an alternative opportunity to access diverse perspectives beyond those of studio instructors. The literature highlights several advantages of incorporating peer critique in studio-based learning. Peer critiques are widely acknowledged as significantly beneficial by design students and get positive emotional responses (Fraile et al. 2024; Turner, 2021). Hill (2016) asserts that even though the students appreciate their time with the tutor, they find receiving immediate feedback from their peers, especially during collaborative work, highly valuable and helpful. McClellan and Hourigan (2013) assert that discussions during

peer dialogue and feedback are found to be more engaging for students, and this type of interaction fosters active learning more effectively compared to formal dialogues between students and tutors. The primary factor behind that is that peer feedback helps balance the power dynamics between the individual giving the input and the one receiving it (McClellan and Hourigan, 2013).

Moreover, in addition to its positive outcomes that facilitate learning within educational settings, peer feedback cultivates valuable habits and skills that are beneficial throughout an individual's lifetime. For instance, Yılmaz and Gelmez (2023) argue that compassionate critiques, which occur among hierarchically equivalent and emotionally matched individuals, offer positive outcomes for design student learning processes. These critiques are potentially beneficial for design students' future careers because they are highly related to empathic skills. Travis (2013) also emphasizes the potential of hierarchical balance and the active role given to students as well as the improved interaction obtained by bringing self and peer critique to the forefront of design education, thereby cultivating lifelong learners. Additionally, fostering interaction among interior design students becomes crucial because the discipline inherently relies on interpersonal relationships, collaboration, communication, and empathy (Turner 2021). These skills require both cognitive abilities and engagement of the emotional and affective domain. Peer feedback sessions also have the potential to contribute to the improvement of dialogue among students and to prepare them for the dynamics of actual professional life.

### Introducing Anonymity to Enhance Peer Feedback

Along with its many beneficial outcomes, implementing peer feedback also presents some challenges that need to be addressed because it is a social process with several inherent interpersonal and intrapersonal effects. These might include undesirable social effects such as low trust in the peer as an assessor, tensions with peers, peer pressure, fear of disapproval, or favoritism (Fraile et al. 2024; Raes et al. 2013; Vanderhoven et al. 2015).

To overcome these potential adverse outcomes, offering anonymity to the process can promise a supportive solution (Fraile et al. 2024). By ensuring anonymity for both the work's owner and the commenter, students may feel less reluctant to participate because their identities remain concealed within the group. A study conducted by Vanderhoven et al. (2015) found that secondary education students had a more positive attitude toward anonymous peer assessment. They also experienced less peer pressure and a reduced fear of disapproval when evaluating anonymously. Anonymity is also found to promote providing more efficient and critical peer feedback (Howard et al. 2010). In a similar vein, Fleischmann (2024) points out that anonymity provides students a safer space to share their insights and experiences, leading to more open and honest communication. Fraile et al. (2024) also compared anonymous and non-anonymous peer assessments in their study with university students, and the results showed that most students preferred anonymity, although this preference did not lead to significant differences in how fair they perceived the process to be or in how much peer pressure they felt. Nevertheless,

further research is needed to explore how providing anonymity influences peer critique within design education.

### Utilizing Online Collaborative Platforms for Anonymous Peer Critique

Blending physical design studios with online technologies has been common for some time, but this pedagogical approach has gained significant traction in recent years, particularly following the shift to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The urgent need to transform design studio instruction to an online format accelerated the search for new platforms and teaching methods. The use of online tools for critique has also become more common, and some studies have demonstrated experiences in utilizing platforms that enable collaborative work to facilitate design studio feedback. For instance, Günay and Coskun (2023) experimented with Slack and Miro for asynchronous and synchronous feedback sessions with both peers and tutors. Fleischmann (2024) utilized Blackboard Collaborate Ultra for formal and informal peer feedback sessions.

A primary advantage of using online platforms for feedback beyond simply transferring the critique experience from a physical to a virtual environment is the ease with which anonymity can be provided, as highlighted by several studies (Fleischmann 2024; Raes et al. 2013; Vanderhoven et al. 2015). In case of interior design studio, the nature of learning-by-doing activities, collaborative work, discussions, and discussions on visual outcomes require an interface through which students can showcase their work visually with one another and engage with works of others. Accordingly, Padlet has emerged as a highly functional tool to explore for facilitating feedback through sharing, viewing, and commenting anonymously.

Padlet is a cloud-based web application that provides an interface for “visual collaboration for creative work” as explained by the developers (“Padlet,” n.d.). The application allows an unlimited number of users simultaneously or asynchronously to view, upload, curate, and share content on virtual bulletin boards called “pads” (Arouri et al. 2023). The content includes but is not limited to texts, images, links to other web pages, videos, audio files, and other documents. This means that it is possible to share visual outputs of interior design studio modules such as drawings, renderings, and other forms of 3D representation on the platform.

There are several studies that present experiences with using Padlet in both in-class and online teaching practices. The application has been found to enhance student engagement in learning activities. Fisher (2017) suggests that Padlet offers a more responsive alternative to oral input in the classroom, especially for students who may not feel comfortable contributing verbally (Fisher 2017). Similarly, Fuchs (2014) explains experiences utilizing Padlet to overcome some of the challenges involved in class participation and to encourage whole-class collaboration in writing classes. Fuchs (2014) asserts that using this application acts as an “equalizer” because the students are allowed to type anonymously; even the students who didn’t feel confident in their ideas got more involved in sharing and experimentation in the learning process. Moreover, students were excited by the new technology and eager to participate simply for the opportunity to try it (Fuchs 2014). Another potential benefit of using Padlet is the feedback format,

through which students use written language when commenting on works. Written criticism requires making careful word choices and enables complex arguments articulated and understood more effectively in comparison to the oral criticism that is conventionally done in critique sessions (Beecher 2006). The insights provided by these studies point out potential benefits of integrating Padlet as a peer feedback tool for critique sessions in interior design studio.

The researchers and instructors have increasingly acknowledged the benefits of online collaboration to enhance feedback and engagement in various fields and levels of education. However, the implications of online collaboration within the specific pedagogical framework of the design studio for a less stressful and more engaging critique approach remains underexplored. Examining the effects of conducting the critique process anonymously in an online environment, rather than requiring students to present their work to tutors and peers and receive feedback in the studio, can offer promising insights into helping students participate more effectively in critique sessions. Using the Padlet platform as a digital medium with its anonymity option and functional interface stands out as a practical option for a pilot study in the studio.

## **Methodology**

To explore the effects of moving the peer critique session into Padlet and providing anonymity for sharing and commenting on student works, a pilot session was planned and implemented. The session was conducted during one of the studio sessions with second-year students from a renowned interior design bachelor's degree program in the United Kingdom. The author of the present research was the module tutor for the design studio module and scheduled the feedback session as an alternative formative review component. The students were asked to upload their work anonymously on a designated Padlet wall and then provide comments on their peers' work with the nicknames automatically assigned to them by the collaborative digital platform.

Prior to the session, students were given a step-by-step tutorial explaining the process as well as guidance on using the platform. They were also briefly informed about the requirements of "constructive feedback" and its importance for both academic and professional development. Although Padlet includes an integrated Safety Net AI moderation system that detects inappropriate language, students were reminded to use appropriate language in their written comments. A predetermined Padlet wall interface was made accessible only to those with the access link. To ensure quality and reliability in the peer feedback process, a set of criteria and a list of design considerations were also provided; research indicates that having clear guidelines enhances the quality of peer feedback (Ploegh, Tillema, and Segers 2009). This approach aimed to generate more focused and meaningful comments.

The expected submissions included visual collage works that conveyed concept and mood boards for the semester projects, which students had started preparing in the previous module session and completed at home before coming to class. Out of eighteen students, sixteen shared their work on the digital platform, whereas two students were

unable to prepare their materials for reasons including health issues. However, all students accessed the platform through their laptops during class, allowing them to view and anonymously comment on their peers' work, as demonstrated in Figures 1, 2 and 3. The session lasted for one and a half hours after the works were uploaded.

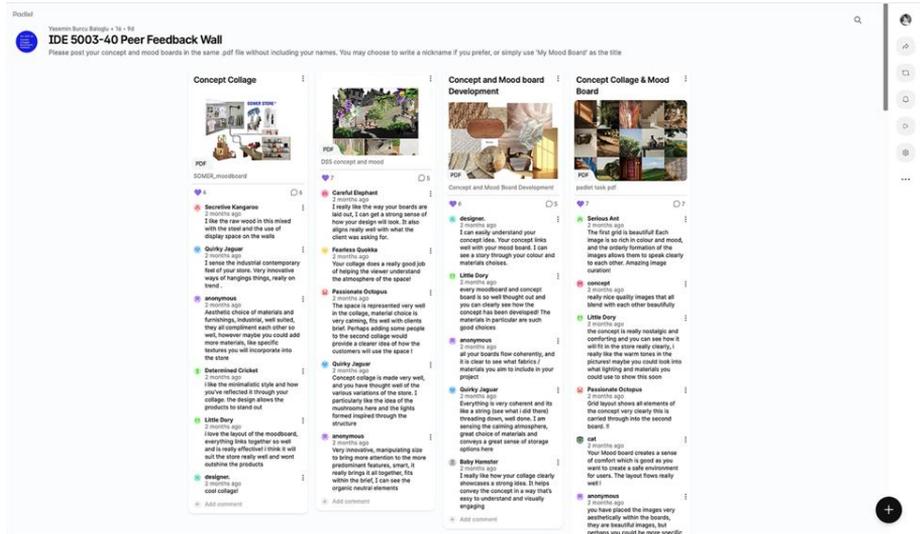


Figure 1: Student view of the Padlet interface used for sharing and commenting on concept and mood boards

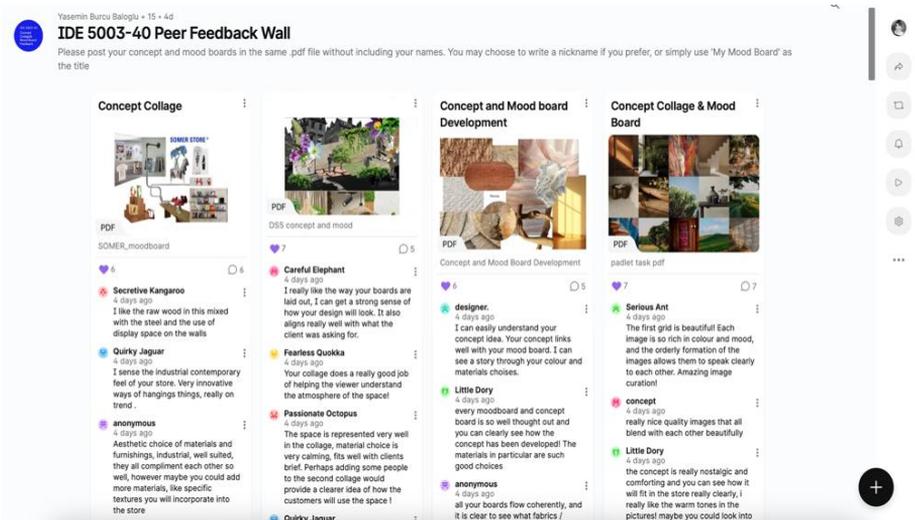


Figure 2: Screenshot of the feedback wall

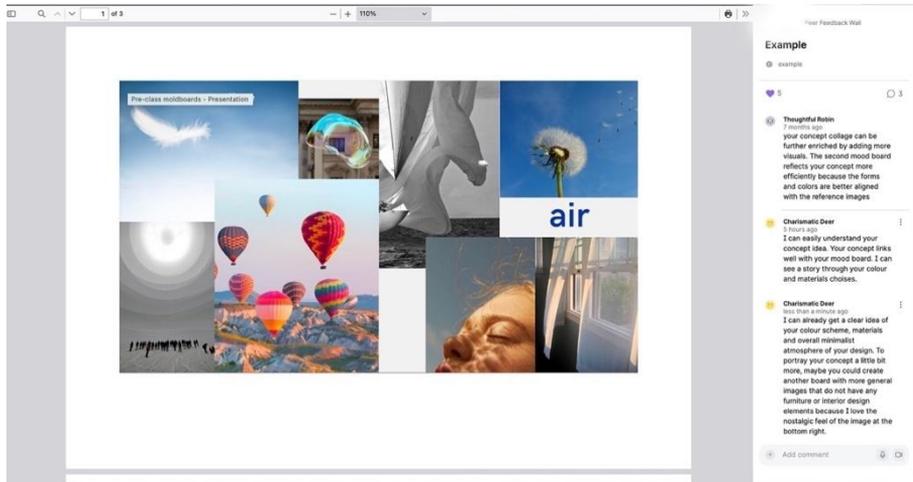


Figure 3: Student view of an individual submission opened in Padlet, with peer comments visible on the right

Following the session, students were asked to complete an online survey on the Mentimeter application that included questions about their experience. The survey aimed to explore how students felt about the session regarding their anxiety compared to a conventional critical review as well as the effectiveness of the feedback they received and the usefulness of the platform for peer feedback. Due to the limited number of students, the questions were designed to be open-ended, allowing for written response. Participation in the survey after the session was voluntary, although the session was integrated into the instructional design of the course. A survey link was provided on the module website for students to initiate participation at their own will, and the voluntary nature of the anonymous survey was emphasized. Questions presented to the students via an online, anonymous survey included the following:

- How did you find written (Padlet) feedback compared to verbal feedback in class?
- How did anonymous feedback affect your experience? Would knowing the author make a difference?
- Did anonymity change how you gave feedback? If yes, did it change? Would your comments differ if your name was visible?
- Compared to in-class critical review sessions, how did you feel during the Padlet feedback activity? (This question also included a multiple-choice subsection requiring participants to compare their anxiety level with a conventional critique session in class. The options were more anxious, less anxious, or the same.)
- Would you prefer more online anonymous peer critiques in the future? Why or why not?
- Did the feedback you received through the anonymous Padlet session feel constructive and useful for improving your design? Why or why not?
- How would you describe your overall experience of this feedback session?

### Thematic Analysis of Findings

To evaluate the outcomes of the proposed peer feedback method through students' responses to the interactive survey, thematic analysis method was chosen, and an inductive approach was followed. Thematic analysis offers a flexible yet rigorous method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Braun and Clarke 2006). Given the open-ended nature of most survey questions and students' written reflections, thematic analysis allowed for an adequate interpretation of participant experiences without being bound to a specific theoretical framework. Moreover, its suitability for small-scale, exploratory studies made it appropriate for the context of this studio-based research. NVivo software was utilized for categorizing the prominent themes and coding.

## **Discussion of the Online Feedback Session Outcomes and Survey Responses**

The primary data sources for evaluating the feedback process included thematic analysis of student responses to the interactive online survey, self-observations by the tutor, and a review of shared comments and work posted by students on Padlet.

### Students' and Instructors' Reflections on Effectiveness of Padlet as a Tool for Facilitating Anonymous Peer Feedback Sessions

The session showed that the Padlet platform was highly effective for this type of formative feedback, where students shared their visual work to receive comments from their peers. More students attended compared to the previous formative reviews in class, and there was a notable increase in active engagement with the feedback process. The feedback session required students to actively observe, critically evaluate, provide written comments, and read the comments that were provided by others, which significantly heightened their engagement.

Thematic analysis of survey responses indicated that time efficiency, quantity of feedback reflecting diverse perspectives, and the ease of platform use were the main emergent themes regarding interactions with the digital interface and online critique experience. Reviewing the projects on their screens enabled students to manage their own time while analyzing each project. The written nature of feedback on the digital interface allowed students to further analyze both their own work and peers' work by providing more time in comparison to immediate oral feedback, which sometimes caused difficulties in framing cohesive critical arguments for the participants, as also mentioned by Beecher (2006).

Both the quantity and content of the comments on the works and survey responses showed that a broader range of feedback and diverse opinions were obtained compared to conventional critical reviews, where only a limited number of students often comment on the presented works. This was apparent in some survey responses, one of which stated, "Anonymous feedback feels faster than verbal or review-based, able to get more input from more people." Students also appreciated the usefulness of the platform for

feedback, defining the process as “enjoying,” “straightforward,” “comfortable,” and “allowed for easier access to input coming from different peers.”

Traditional review sessions have been criticized for relying on immediate oral processes, which can sometimes be challenging to frame, develop, deliver, and interpret as cohesive critical arguments for the students (Beecher 2006). Survey responses in this study indicated that most students found the feedback on Padlet (written) more helpful than the verbal (oral) feedback given during traditional reviews. As stated by one participant, “written feedback made it easier to know what to work on next, or what steps to take to make it clearer what is tried to be conveyed.” The content of the comments were detailed and, in most parts, aligned with the given criteria, highlighting different aspects of the uploaded work that needed improvement. Additionally, the session was a valuable opportunity for students to practice articulating their ideas in words and using proper design terminology, which will be an essential skill in their professional lives.

Another notable point about evaluating session outcomes is that the participants in this study were Gen Z interior design students, most of whom were familiar with digital learning tools due to their experiences during the global pandemic in 2019. As also highlighted by Albadi and Zollinger (2021), these students have been surrounded by technology, and they have never experienced life without the internet, which has created a fundamental difference in how they learn compared to previous generations. Moreover, Gen Z students have proclivity toward social media, which would be expected to help them easily use a digital application that has a similar interface including “comment” and “like” options with many social media applications. Therefore, their comments regarding the ease of access or finding the digital experience enjoyable would have been expected considering their familiarity. The overall positive evaluations of the digital feedback experience point out that using this and similar methods in studio peer critiques can significantly contribute to the learning processes of Gen Z and later generation design students, particularly in terms of design and communication skills.

### Students’ Reflections on Online Anonymous Feedback Session and Its Role on Overcoming Anxiety

A distinguishing research question of this study was whether providing anonymity and moving the entire peer critique process to an online environment would support students overcoming critique anxiety. The thematic analysis of survey responses revealed that offering anonymity encouraged openness, honesty, perceived fairness, and equality, thereby enhancing the constructiveness and efficiency of the critique process. When comparing anxiety levels, most students reported feeling less anxious compared to traditional review sessions, with only two students out of eighteen stating that their anxiety levels remained same.

Many of the students reported that anonymity helped them feel more comfortable expressing their opinions openly and honestly, engaging critically with their peers’ work, which encouraged more open and constructive critique compared to traditional review methods. Some of the survey responses supported this evaluation, as exemplified below:

I think having anonymous peer critiques would be beneficial because it is less stressful and is a more casual / comfortable atmosphere which means more people will participate.

If my name was visible, then I might have not given them truthful methods of improvement.

I can understand why it's easier to comment anonymously, it takes away the fear that your comment might not be well received.

I would have been less honest with my critique if this was not an anonymous feedback session.

It (online anonymous feedback session) changed the way I have feedback, and I was more open and critical of projects.

The process created a twofold sense of ease regarding anonymity. The students not only provided feedback anonymously but also shared their own work without exposing their identities, which allowed them to perceive comments as evaluations of their design outcomes rather than of themselves as individuals. For example, according to the survey one of the students stated, "I really enjoyed the session and liked that it was anonymous, felt a bit more freeing less restrictive. It was easier for me to read the comments not knowing the author." The online anonymous environment served as a safe space particularly for students who were reluctant to present in public and would confront critical ideas or opposing views relatively more easily in a private setting. This can be evaluated as a promising aspect of anonymous online feedback: to overcome reluctance and defensiveness of students caused by stressful critical review settings as described in Day (2013) and Blair (2007). Creating this safe space can also be a supportive and engaging option for students with neurodiverse conditions or mental health conditions and whose academic access plans require special adjustments, such as presenting privately for their feedback needs.

The anonymous online peer feedback session trial also opens another area of discussion: whether, despite all its positive aspects, being in an online environment can replace the learning experience in a physical studio. Even though students reported feeling less anxious during the online feedback session, the survey responses did not contain significant statements directly attributing this less stressful situation to being in an online environment rather than the physical studio. For instance, one of the responses to the survey valued face-to-face interaction, asserting that "I think anonymous feedback is good for people who don't like direct confrontation. I also think giving feedback face-to-face is a valuable skill to learn, regardless of whether you enjoy it or not." The meaning and contributions of the physical studio environment to design education have long been acknowledged. The studio not only provides a physical setting for education but also serves as a place for social interactions and learning from peers through observation and shared activities. For some students, engaging in feedback sessions in person and having a face-to-face dialogue can stand out as a preferable option.

## Limitations and Recommendations for Future Use

Although this was a pilot, exploratory study with a limited number of participants, its findings point to a useful alternative feedback approach in design education. The review of the outcomes of the online peer feedback session showed that providing anonymity has the potential to encourage a more open and constructive critique compared to conventional review methods. A significant finding from the survey indicated that many students expressed a preference for attending anonymous feedback sessions on Padlet in the future. This preference can be interpreted as offering a friendly and anonymous digital platform helped second-year interior design students feel secure and more engaged in the feedback process, supporting their academic progress. The study can be extended by having students complete the online feedback session asynchronously at home and by analyzing their reflections on that process.

The nature of the comments made by students on each other's projects was supportive and compassionate, often expressing feelings about their peers' work. The students' approach could be aligned with the nature of the work they have been reviewing because they have reviewed abstract concept collages and mood boards created for their semester-long interior design project. However, a few survey responses indicated a need for more details on areas of the projects needing improvement rather than comments focusing mainly on the positives. Moreover, the review session was conducted only with interior design students asking them to critique and comment on relatively abstract works representing the concepts and moods of interiors. The usefulness of peer feedback and the content of the comments could have been different for reviewing another type of work, such as a technical representation. The outcomes might also be different for students of other disciplines. These aspects require further consideration for future online peer feedback implementations.

The integration of peer feedback into formal assessments and investigating the online feedback method's usability and supportiveness further for students with neurodiverse or mental health conditions can also constitute another route for future research.

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- The authors declare that generative AI or AI-assisted technologies were not used in any way to prepare, write, or complete this manuscript. The authors confirm that they are the sole authors of this article and take full responsibility for the content therein, as outlined in COPE recommendations.

## **Informed Consent**

- The authors have obtained informed consent from all participants.

## **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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