

C24 Ranjit / India / Mechatronics

Interaction partner(s): International students, German lecturer
Moment of enquiry: SS 06
Experience of difference: Functions of project groups

Ranjit, an Indian who is studying for a master's degree in Mechatronics is attending a seminar held in English, which is attended by international students only. In this course, a group project is the requirement in order to obtain the course certificate. At the beginning of the seminar, the lecturer had explained that only those students who regularly show up for and participate in the group meetings would pass the course. Ranjit has joined a project group, but he attends only one of the weekly group meetings, where he does not assume any tasks. Thus the group decides to exclude the Indian student. However, the lecturer would like to give him another chance. In front of the group and other students, Ranjit is asked to provide an explanation for his behaviour. If he can provide good reasons for his absences, his exclusion from the group will be prevented. So Ranjit states that the reason for his behaviour is that no one had assigned him a task. He is hoping that the professor will save him from being excluded from the group. The professor refers to the group's autonomy and says that he cannot help but that the decision was up to the group. The Indian student's reasoning does not convince the group, and after a brief deliberation, they excluded Ranjit, who is sorely disappointed that the professor did not help him.

1. What ideas of group work is the Indian student's behaviour based on?
2. How might the students' behaviour be explained? And what does the professor expect of the group?