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DEANS' PERCEPTIONS OF UPWARD DISSENT MESSAGES FROM THEIR UNDERLINGS

Gökhan Özaslan

Necmettin Erbakan University

Abstract

Organizational dissent, especially its overt, upward (namely articulated) form, is believed to hold positive potential in any organization. Universities, in turn, are widely expected to be the cradle of fundamental human rights, namely, freedom of speech and by that logic, it is plausible to think that, by their nature, universities are the scenes of articulated dissent. Considering these widely held perceptions, the aim of this phenomenological study is to understand the meaning of articulated dissent for those who have deanship experience. The participants consisted of 10 professors who were either serving or have served as deans of Turkish universities. The results from in-depth interviews were presented under the broad categories of: (a) reasons leading to dissent, (b) strategies, (c) dissenters' characteristics, (d) feelings aroused by dissent expressions, (e) potential benefits, (f) proper conditions for the expression of dissent, and (g) how dissent should be. Implications for future research and application are also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

If “The clash of ideas brings forth the spark of truth”, then the employees should be allowed to emit those sparks in their workplaces. This statement could be read as the main theme of research that dwells on dissent messages in daily work life. So, what does dissent stand for precisely? Kassing (1997) conceptualized dissent as “the expression of disagreements and contradictory opinions that result from the experience of feeling apart from one’s organization.” (p.311). In this definition, he used the phrase “feeling apart” intentionally, because, as he further explained, the Latin root of the word “dissent” stands for “feeling apart” and it does not necessarily come to mean conflicting.

In order to elucidate the reasons of those sparks, Kassing and Armstong (2002, as cited in Kassing, 2006). suggested that upward dissent triggering factors can be summarized under three headings: a) other focused issues (e.g. performance evaluation of coworkers), b) functional issues (such as decision making processes and workplace inefficiencies), and c) protective issues (for the good of coworkers and/or customers).

In his seminal study on organizational dissent, Kassing (1997) proposed three strategies for the expression of dissent, namely: articulated, antagonistic and displaced. Articulated dissent is directed to the organizational members who have power to influence the adjustments needed. Antagonistic dissent (replaced later by latent dissent) stands for dissenting about personal-advantage issues. In addition to this, it involves a reliance on some form of organizational leverage, so antagonistic dissenters can confront their organization directly. Then comes displaced dissent, which is directed to non-members of the organization, like families or non-work friends, because the dissenter refrains from expressing dissent openly in fear of retaliation. In Kassing’s later work (2000a), we see the absence of antagonistic dissent and the existence of latent dissent, which is expressing dissent to ineffectual organizational members, such as coworkers, as a result of the fear of retaliation from status owners in the organization.

Yüksel and Tosun (2013) revealed a typical form of displaced dissent in Turkey. In their study, they examined police officers’ anonymous postings on a web site. The officers’ criticisms focused on particular themes like organizational problems, legal regulations and managers’ approaches. Avtgis, Thomas-Maddox, Taylor and Patterson (2007), noted that this form of dissent functions as a “catharsis” for unsatisfied employees, and it is not intended for organizational improvement. In light of this, it seems logical to characterize the police officers’ postings as “an extension of displaced dissent” (Yüksel and Tosun, 2013, p. 274), because they have limited opportunities to express their dissent in their strictly hierarchical organization.

Kassing (1997) proposed a four dimensional model of organizational dissent. The first dimension is the triggering agent, which is an incident exceeding the limits of employees’ tolerance. Strategy selection influences is the second dimension in which the employees pick their dissent strategy under the influence of a range of factors: individual (e.g. values and predispositions), organizational (relation to and perception of the organization) and relational (e.g. quality of relationships with superiors and co-workers). In the strategy selection dimension, employees pick one of the strategies of articulated, antagonistic (replaced by “latent” in later studies), or displaced strategies. The last dimension is expressed dissent, in which the employees express their dissent in an aggressive or passive fashion and apply particular tactics.

When employees choose to openly express dissent, they come to the phase of picking one of the upward dissent strategies. Kassing (2005) revealed that employees perceive some strategies as being more helpful than others. According to this study, “solution presentation” ranks first and is followed by “direct-factual appeal”, which means using facts to support one’s

claim. Repetition (repeatedly drawing attention to the issue) and circumvention (by-passing the immediate supervisor and talking to a higher supervisor) are seemingly less popular and “threatening resignation” is viewed as the least effective strategy in the eyes of the employees.

Researchers also dwelled on the influence of employee characteristics on the selection of upward dissent strategies. For example, Kassing and Avtgis (2001) addressed the question in terms of the theory of locus of control. Their study revealed that articulated dissent is chosen by employees with internal control orientation, while latent dissent is the choice of external control-oriented employees. In a study from Turkey, responsibility and tidiness appeared to be the predictors of both constructive and questioning articulated dissent. In addition to this, extraversion was found to be related with constructive articulated dissent as well (for particulars about the authors’ own terminology and other findings on the effect of employee characteristics, please see Ötken and Cençi, 2013). Kassing and DiCioccio, (2004) revealed that: a) displaced dissent decreases with an accumulation of age and total years of work, and b) non-management employees used more displaced dissent than managers do. This latter finding reminds us of the results of a previous study (Kassing and Armstrong, 2001), which showed that those with management status are prone to articulated dissent rather than latent dissent. This result also parallels the result of a previous study (Krone, 1994), which indicated that both job autonomy and being able to participate in decision making affect subordinates’ attitudes in using upward influence. Lastly, another interesting study (Kassing and McDowell, 2008) also emphasized the importance of status in regard to dissent expression. This study showed that when the organization is perceived fair in terms of organizational justice, the managers tend to express more upward dissent and less displaced dissent. The non-managers, in turn, curb their latent and displaced dissent expressions.

In examining the studies that focus on organizational dissent, a question arises: “Is organizational dissent beneficial to organizations?” Another series of studies showing the relation between desired organizational qualities and the types of dissent expressions give a satisfying answer to this question. In their study, Gorden & Infante (1991) revealed that a lack of freedom of speech in the organization lessens the degree of commitment and satisfaction on the part of employees. Later, Kassing (2000b) showed that if organizations give due importance to freedom of speech, then the employees possess a higher level of identification and tend to gravitate toward articulated dissent rather than latent dissent. In another study of Kassing’s (2000a), results suggest that employees who have high-quality relationships with their supervisors articulated dissent than those with low-quality relationships. Payne (2007) revealed that employees with high levels of “organization-based self-esteem” (OBSE) prefer articulated dissent more than those with low and moderate OBSE. Kassing and DiCioccio (2004) concluded that if employees choose to express their dissent to external audiences, rather than their superiors, the organization will lack the potential corrective benefits of employee dissent messages. However, Bisel and Arterburn (2012) warned that employees may still prefer silence as a result of “(a) predicting harm to themselves, (b) constructing the supervisor as responsible, (c) questioning their own expertise, (d) predicting supervisors’ deafness, and (e) constructing timing as inopportune” (p.220).

As can be seen above, dissent expression is of vital importance in the healthy functioning of organizations. In view of the importance that is widely attached to the freedom of expression in universities, understanding the original meaning of articulated dissent in the eyes of those who have deanship experience could hold the potential in providing a contribution to our understandings of dissent expression in a particular type of organization; one that is known as the

cradle of human dignity and fundamental freedoms. When we review the literature, there are a number of recent studies from Turkey focusing on dissent expression in organizational context (Ötken & Cenkçi, 2013; Özdemir, 2013; Yıldız, 2013; Yüksel & Tosun, 2013; Özdemir, 2011). Nevertheless, around the world, there is an apparent dearth of research on the perceptions of educational administrators about articulated dissent expression in academic settings. Consequently, the aim of this phenomenological study is to develop an understanding of the problem area by answering two questions:

- 1) What is the meaning of articulated dissent for deans?
- 2) Is there a common thread to the meanings that deans attribute to dissent?

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study focused on determining the meaning of articulated dissent from the perspective of college deans, and determining whether there is a common thread to the meanings that deans attribute to this kind of dissent. Phenomenology was chosen as the research method for this study. As Smith (2011) discussed, phenomenology is concerned with studying structures of consciousness from the first-person point of view. Patton (2002) explained phenomenology in terms of focusing “on exploring how human beings make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness, both individually and as shared meaning” (Patton, 2002, p. 104). Since the study aimed to reveal the shared meaning of the phenomena through the perspectives of college deans, the phenomenological approach was suitable for this study.

Data Collection

This study involved ten participants, with nine being male and one female. The participants were from three different universities located in a central Anatolian city of Turkey. While eight participants were deans of faculties at the time of study, two participants were former deans with considerable experience in this role. All of the participants took place in another study involving the researcher (Özaslan, 2013), which turned out to be advantageous, since having the same participants in two different studies provided the researcher with a relatively deeper insight into the participants. Key criterion for the selection of study participants was that they would be serving or have served as college deans for a considerable amount of time. In the phase of initial field contact, the first ten prospective participants agreed to be interviewed. The interview process was completed in February 2013. Before the beginning of each interview, the intended participants were given a written consent form, which was based on Creswell’s (2003) suggestions.

In the interview process, two open-ended questions were posed for the purpose of drawing out participants’ perceptions: 1) Could you please describe how an academic ‘dissents’ to his or her dean? 2) How does this dissent expression make you feel? 8 of 10 interviews were digitally recorded and detailed notes were taken for the interviews of those who refused tape recording. The duration of the interviews varied from 30 to 40 minutes.

Analysis of Data

The purpose of this study was to examine and answer the research questions “What is the meaning of articulated dissent for deans, and is there a common thread to the meanings they attribute to this kind of dissenting?” In order to gain an insight into the phenomenon, firstly the content of the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim using Dikte (a Turkish speech recognition product for transcription). The interviews were in Turkish. The researcher conducted the transcription, coding, and translation. The coding (significant statements) and formulated meanings were reviewed by another researcher before the results were sent to the participants for validation.

In order to analyze the study’s data, Colaizzi’s (1978) method was used. Riemen (1998) utilized the framework in a particular manner, which served as the data analysis steps for this study: (a) transcriptions were read twice in order to acquire a feeling for them, (b) significant statements were determined and the statements that repeated meanings were eliminated, (c) meanings were formulated based on the significant statements and they were presented in list form, together with the significant statements, (d) clusters of themes (common to all participants) were defined and listed in table form, (e) the exhaustive description of the phenomenon was written down and presented in table form, and (f) the peer reviewed exhaustive description of the phenomena was sent to participants’ e-mail addresses and alterations based on their feedback were made in the final form. In Riemen’s study (1998) significant statements and formulated meanings were presented in separate tables. In order to make it easy for readers to follow the formulation of meanings, this study featured an alteration to Riemen’s process, in reporting the results and presenting both significant statements and formulated meanings together in one list.

RESULTS

Significant statements extracted from the transcriptions and formulated meanings based on the significant statements (as indented items below the significant statements) are presented in List 1.

List 1. Participants’ significant statements followed by formulated meanings:

- If they think something really wrong is going on.
- If they have a better grasp of written regulations.
- In order to do me a favor. If he hates me, he doesn’t utter a word.
 - Existence of an unacceptable situation leads academians to express their dissent.
 - Academians feel the necessity to step in when they feel the problem falls within their area of expertise.
 - In order to save the faculty and dean from future problems, academians may express their dissent about the issues that fall within their area of expertise.
- Those who feel they aren’t included in the decision making process.
- Need of appreciation, attracting attention.

- If it's about their personal benefits, they come and say it to your face.
 - When the reason of the opposition is based on personal interests, attention-seeking or the hatred at being excluded from decision making process, the academicians can say it directly to the dean's face.
- If they're opposed to the provost, they side against you too.
- When they feel they're backed by higher administrators, their opposition becomes harsh.
- ...ideology based, rather than personality traits.
 - When the dissent is about organizational politics or ideological tendencies, academicians tend to emphasize the existence of the problem rather than solving the problem for the common good.
- They have spent all their careers in the same place.
- They say "We used to do so in America", but they don't know the conditions here.
 - Being unaware of the alternative practices as a result of spending all work life in one work environment, or being ignorant of the local conditions of one's own country can lead to dissent.
- If they think the administration has ulterior motives.
- Those who dissent about everything have paranoia. They think everybody is against them.
- Lack of effective information and communication processes.
- If the dean is younger, the aged academicians regard him as a child.
 - Administration's falling short of informing academicians properly about administrative practices leads them to think that they are mistreated by their administrators.
 - Some aged academicians incorrectly regard young deans as inexperienced and insufficient to lead a faculty.
- As a request for help, rather than a difference of opinion.
- Mentioning some other solutions.
- Even the professors voice their dissent saying "they say so".
- Depends on the personality of the dean. They learn it after trial and error.
- They don't come up with a solution offer; they come to say "Why it was done that way".
 - Strategies directed to solve organizational problems include presenting thoughts as a request for help, providing alternative solutions, or expressing their own opposing view as if it was a common idea among the faculty.

- Academians decide on their dissent strategy based on the attitudes of their deans.
- When the aim is to emphasize the existence of a problem rather than solving it, dissent is expressed after the decision was implemented.
- It's not about gender, it's all about personality.
- Women are not willing to exhibit their difference.
- Because they (*women*) are few in number, I can't say anything.
 - The perceptions on the effect of gender are inconsistent.
 - Because women academians are in the minority in faculty administrative boards (in the setting of this study), it is hard to understand the effect of gender on the inclination to dissent.
- Mostly professors. They are relaxed because they have nothing to lose.
- Those with lower status can't speak their minds.
- Those who know me for a long time, since my assistantship, feel much more at ease.
 - Old friendship with dean makes academians feel at ease in expressing their dissent.
 - While low status poses an obstacle on the way to dissent, the title of professorship makes it easy for those who do not have familiarity with the dean.
- Aged academians know better that it's beyond the power of the dean.
- Aged academians dissent more often, because they have more experience, more things to say.
- The younger ones are wishful to distinguish themselves.
 - The perceptions on the effect of agedness are inconsistent. Some participants perceive that aged academians have a lot to dissent due to their vast experience while some other participants feel that aged academians understand the limited authority their deans have to solve the problems, and choose not to dissent.
 - Some younger academians express dissent in order to make their presence known.
- Maybe it's a bit irritating at first blush.
- When they dissent just in order to go counter you, they become harsh and hurt your feelings.
- When they say "There is another solution too, can we check over this?" you find it more favorable.
 - If it is not presented as a suggestion for other solutions, even the problem solving oriented dissent expressions may sound disturbing at first.

- When the dissent is oriented to conflict rather than to solve organizational problems, it is much more hurtful on the part of dean.
- Conflict of views makes humanity progress forward.
- A rational opposition keeps the administrator safe from future dangers.
- The greatest asset to the organization.
- If people feel that their dissent is taken into consideration, they tend to comply with the resolutions.
 - In broad terms, dissent is a mechanism which advances humanity and add richness to organizations.
 - In practical terms, it serves to protect deans from making wrong decisions and it produces academicians who obey the decisions if they see that their deans will take their views into consideration.
- If the administrator exhibits a democratic attitude, people feel safe.
- So the administrator should hold the door open to them.
- I'm not a superhuman. I can't make decisions single-handedly.
- If everyone feels irreplaceable.
- Here is academy, where can it be said if it's not said here.
- In their childhood, they didn't see democracy in their homes.
- People shouldn't be indebted to their teachers.
 - The faculty administrations can benefit from the constructive dissent of academicians if they develop a democratic and reassuring attitude, and help academicians to develop a sense of belonging to their faculty.
 - The notion that university is the cradle of freedom of speech makes it natural to express dissent.
 - Raising children in a democratic atmosphere yields a generation who value the opinions of others.
 - If the academicians are employed according to objective criteria, instead of a process in which senior academicians are determinative, they could more readily express their dissent.
- Without going so far as to insult people.
- If it's a joint decision, then I expect them to comply with it too.

- I'd prefer people say it to my face rather than talk behind my back.
- Right on time. Before it's too late.
- Style and culture of expression is very important.
 - Academians should express their dissent without getting impolite.
 - If the dissent is to serve a purpose, it should be expressed directly to deans without wasting time.
 - Academians should express their dissent but remain respectful to joint decisions.

Clusters of Common Themes

Clusters of common themes based on the participants' descriptions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Clusters of Common Themes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons leading to dissent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solving organizational level problems ○ Satisfying personal needs ○ Organizational politics ○ The reasons originating from the dissenter's lack of experience ○ The reasons originating from misunderstandings • Strategies • Dissenters' characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gender ○ Status ○ Age • Feelings aroused by dissent expressions • Potential benefits • Proper conditions for the expression of dissent • How dissenting should be
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Exhaustive Description

Exhaustive description of the phenomena based on the participants' joint perceptions of the upward dissent from their underlings is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Description of the Phenomena: Deans' Perceptions of Upward Dissent

The reasons behind upward dissent can be categorized under five headings: (1) organizational level problem solving, (2) satisfying personal needs, (3) organizational politics, (4) originations stemming from the dissenter's lack of experience, and (5) misunderstandings.

Upward dissent is aimed at two targets: (1) solving an existing problem, and (2) voicing negative feelings that are aroused by the problem.

The strategy of dissent is usually based on the attitude of the dean. Academicians much more readily express their dissent to deans with democratic attitudes and they are more direct and open in doing so. Upward dissenters vary in characteristics. It is hard to make generalizations about the effect of gender due to the limited number of women academicians in faculty administrative boards. The reason for younger academicians' expression of dissent is that they are not familiar with the structure and functioning of the academy or that they are in need of making an appearance. On the other hand, older academicians' dissent is based on their vast academic experience. Their decision to hold back their dissent is based on their knowledge that deans cannot solve certain problems, due to their limited authority. Having the title of professor or having friendship ties with deans make it easier to dissent upward. Those who do not have close familiarity with their deans choose to express their dissent as either a request for help, a way to provide alternative solutions, or an expression of their own opposing views, as if the ideas were common among the faculty.

Although they may sound disturbing at first, the upward dissent with an intention to solve organizational problems is considered to add richness to the academy, and to save deans from making wrong decisions. Another practical advantage is that if deans can show that they value dissent messages, this serves to convince academicians to obey administrative decisions. In addition, the participants consider the university as the most appropriate place to express opinions in society.

As a consequence, dissent messages should be expressed directly to deans in a polite way and without wasting time. In order to receive such rewarding dissent messages, deans should strengthen the feelings of belonging within their faculty and should show encouragement by exhibiting democratic, reassuring attitudes and remaining approachable to

them. Participants regard the conflict oriented dissent messages as useless for the academy because their only aim is to articulate the feelings related to existing problems and also they are too late to contribute to problem solving. Although academics should be free to criticize and dissent about everything, they should also remain respectful to joint decisions.

DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS

This study sheds light on the deans' perceptions of articulated dissent expressions of academicians. In this part of the study, three considerations are made: (a) the similarities between the results of this study and those of previous studies, (b) the results specific to the participants of this study, and (c) the results pointing to the problems of Turkey's higher education system.

Firstly, the literature provides support of the perceptions of study participants in some regard. Regarding the atmosphere essential for articulated dissent expressions, the study participants mentioned certain conditions in parallel to the dissent literature, which reports that employees tend to articulate dissent, if (a) they have high-quality communication with their administrators (Kassing, 2000a), (b) their administrators support workplace freedom of speech (Kassing, 2000b), (c) if they have job autonomy and are given the opportunity to participate in decision-making (Krone, 1994), and consequently, (d) if they have high self-esteem, as a member of their faculty (Payne, 2007). In addition, the literature suggests that employees could prefer to communicate their dissent messages as a solution presentation (Garner, 2009; Kassing, 2005), and react less if they are given the opportunity to voice their thoughts during the decision-making process (Olison & Roloff, 2012).

The perceptions about age and the amount of experience are partially congruent with previous studies. The study's participants felt that young academicians would choose not to dissent for a variety of reasons. Similarly, previous studies show that if employees have more total work experience across relatively fewer employers, they will more readily express upward dissent about functional workplace problems (Kassing, 2006). The younger workers and those with the least work experience remain indirect in denying an unethical request (Ploeger, Kelley, & Bisel, 2011). On the other hand, participant perceptions correlate with the existing literature in suggesting that young academicians may show dissent for a range of reasons, such as, not being familiar with the structure and functioning of the academy or being in need of making their presence known.

Secondly, this study provides some original insights into the phenomenon of articulated dissent in Turkish universities. Findings of this study indicate that when the participants discuss their perceptions about dissent messages, they tend to make a dichotomy like useful/well-intentioned and useless/ill-intentioned dissent behaviors and they are not disposed to welcoming the latter, which is concerned with late and negative feelings. This evaluation was apparent in one of the participants' statements: "Some academicians aim to beat the grape grower instead of aiming to eat grape." However, as noted above, Avtgis, Thomas-Maddox, Taylor and Patterson (2007) described the function of displaced dissent as a means to catharsis. That is, untimely and angry dissent messages may provide a catharsis effect on the part of dissenters and, by doing so, can be of help to organizations. In connection with this, another implication of the study is that a polite way of addressing and using the strategy of solution presentation helps to make deans

form a positive attitude towards dissent messages and dissenters. On the other hand, late dissenting may be misinterpreted as oriented to “beat the grape grower.”

Thirdly, the participant statements revealed the fact that some experienced academicians know their deans possess limited authority, and therefore, choose not to dissent. Such statements are indicative of the restrictive effect of the administrative structure of the Turkish higher education system. The Turkish higher education system has two central upper bodies, namely: “The Council of Higher Education”, which is responsible for planning, coordination, governance and supervision of the system; and “The Inter-university Council”, which functions as an academic advisory and decision making body (Özcan, 2011). As a result, this system is known for its highly centralized and mandated structure (Mızıkacı, 2003). The findings of the study imply that, in a system in which immediate administrators are deprived of the authority they need, dissent loses its meaning and becomes futile.

Lastly, findings of this study suggest yet another organizational level problem. Considering the statements that reveal the fact that even some professors choose to express their dissent in an indirect way, there should be an organizational culture related problem. Previous studies pointed to research assistants’ deprivation of the right to participate in decision making processes (Kurul Tural, 2007; Özaslan & Gürsel, 2011). The budding scientists’ deprivation of overt articulated dissent seems to take its toll in later years, as a habit of pursuing indirect ways to express oneself is developed.

Consequently, the findings of this study, which were drawn from the participants in Turkey, goes beyond supporting certain global findings on the dissent phenomenon, and shed light on the perceptions regarding articulated dissent behaviors in a higher education system that is strictly centralized and restrictive on speech rights of low status employees.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This study has two limitations. Firstly, although the participants were from three different universities and various fields of study, they all work in the same city. Therefore, the research findings do not cover the geographical diversity of Turkey. For example, Ankara and İstanbul host some of the most successful Turkish universities and the deans from these universities may have different perspectives. This limitation may be the starting point of new studies regarding the same phenomena in other universities. Moreover, future research should not be limited to the universities of Turkey. The Hofstede Center Country Comparison table (2014) shows that Turkey differs from other countries, for example from the United States in the dimensions of power, distance, and pragmatism. Data such as this signal that comparative studies may provide a universal-level contribution to administrative sciences.

Secondly, there was an apparent difference between the researcher and participants in terms of hierarchical status and age. As a result, we cannot be sure that the participants would have said the same to someone who has the same position and/or professional experience as them. There are a number of administration scientists with deanship experience in Turkey, and their future research could provide exceptional contributions, in adding to the existing literature.

CONCLUSION

In view of the findings of this study, we can see that in Turkey’s higher education system, it is hard to discuss dissent behaviors separately from other related topics. Turkey’s strictly

centralized higher education system and the universities' restrictive organizational culture, in relation to the freedom of expression of academicians, provide a foundation for dissent related problems. It should not be suggested that a simple solution for such a complicated and deeply rooted problem exists. Focusing on the formal training of higher education administrators and academicians may be the first step in finding a solution. Although the importance of administrative training for school management is clearly expressed in the 1963 report of The Central Government Organization Research Project (Balci, 2008), there is not an administrative training requirement for educational administrators in Turkish universities. Making sense of some basic subject matters of administration, including dissent messages, is left to the common sense of deans and rectors in universities. This is a problem to be addressed in Turkish academe.

The participants' criticisms of their underlings' dissent practices suggest the need for another level of training in academia; this being, the training on academic culture, including professional communication in academic settings. It is not fair to expect an academician to know the best way to communicate professionally without providing an opportunity or incentive to learn about it. This lack of training may be a great loss, since constructive dissent messages have the potential to boost the quality of universities in Turkey.

In conclusion, the phenomenon of dissent is something that occurs without training or prior consideration. There is not an established way to express it or to receive it. Nevertheless, this study clearly shows that participants who are on the receiving end of dissent messages understand its importance. The results of this study point to the need to consider dissent while appreciating its power.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Gökhan Özaslan graduated from the Department of English Language and Literature at Selçuk University in 2000. He has served as an English teacher in various districts of Turkey. He earned his MA in 2006 and PhD in 2010 from the Division of Educational Administration, Supervision, Planning and Economics at Selçuk University. Dr. Özaslan has been a research assistant in the same division since 2005, and has served as a temporary lecturer of teacher training at Necmettin Erbakan University.

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