



Organization Design Preferences and Conflict Management Styles among Graduate Students of Nuevavizcaya State University

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Abstract

Good organizational design helps communications, productivity, and innovation. It creates an environment where people may work effectively. Among those concerns which they may handle with utmost efficiency is conflicts management which in this study is tested for correlation with organizational design preferences among graduate education students of the College of Teacher Education-Bambang Campus. Tools like profile, organization design preference and conflict management practice questionnaires were used to ascertain the relationship of constructs under investigation. After data analysis using descriptive method of research at 0.05 level of significance, the respondents who were generally female, less than five years in service and mostly specialized in general education displayed organizational preferences which regard leaders to possess roles and functions as authority and conflict management styles which surfaced the emotional maturity of the respondents. Further, the preferences and styles of the respondents vary significantly when grouped according to their specialization but did not yield significant differences when grouped according to their gender and years of service. As a final point, the respondents' organization design preferences correlate significantly with their conflict management styles.

Keywords: Organizational Design Preference; Conflict Management Styles; Graduate Students; Nueva Vizcaya State University

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Introduction

Many people equate organization design with an organization's structure. The words "lean" and "flat" are used to describe organization design as well as its structure. In fact, organizational design encompasses much more than simply the structure. Organization design is the process of aligning an organization's structure with its mission. This means looking at the complex relationship between tasks, workflow, responsibility and authority, and making sure these all support the objectives of the business.

An institution can have a great mission, great people and great leadership but still does not perform well because of poor organizational design. Without due planning, an organization's design often takes on a hierarchical structure. This structure is common because managers are often reluctant to relinquish control. However, such structures can lack flexibility, soak up resources and underuse key people and skills. When it comes to good organization design, it's a question of getting the right balance – getting the right controls, the right flexibility, the right incentives; and getting the most from people and other key resources.

More specifically, organization design is a formal, guided process for integrating the people, information and technology of an organization. It is used to match the form of the organization as closely as possible to the purpose(s) the organization seeks to achieve. Through the design process, organizations act to improve the probability that the collective efforts of members will be successful [1].

Organization design begins with the creation of a strategy a set of decision guidelines by which members will choose appropriate actions. The strategy is derived from clear, concise statements of purpose, and vision, and from the organization's basic philosophy. Strategy unifies the intent of the organization and focuses members toward actions designed to accomplish desired outcomes. The strategy encourages actions that support the purpose and discourages those that do not.

The process of organization design matches people, information, and technology to the purpose, vision, and strategy of the organization. Structure is designed to enhance communication and information flow among people. Systems are designed to encourage individual responsibility and decision making.

Technology is used to enhance human capabilities to accomplish meaningful work. The end product is an integrated system of people and resources, tailored to the specific direction of the organization.

On another perspective, everyone needs to feel understood, nurtured, and supported, but the ways in which these needs are met vary widely. Differing needs for feeling comfortable and safe create some of the most severe challenges in personal and professional relationships.

Conflict situations are an important aspect of the workplace. A conflict is a situation when the interests, needs, goals or values of involved parties interfere with one another. A conflict is a common phenomenon in the workplace. Different stakeholders may have different priorities; conflicts may involve team members, departments, projects, organization and client, boss and subordinate, organization needs versus personal needs. Often, a conflict is a result of perception. Often, a conflict presents opportunities for improvement. Therefore, it is important to understand and apply various conflict resolution techniques which define conflict management practices of employees in an organization [2].

Conflict is a normal part of any healthy relationship. Learning how to deal with conflict—rather than avoiding it—is crucial. When conflict is mismanaged, it can cause great harm to a relationship, but when handled in a respectful, positive way, conflict provides an opportunity to strengthen the bond between and among people [3]. By learning skills for conflict management, personal and professional relationships can be kept strong and growing.

It is in this light that the researchers ascertained the correlation between the organization design preferences and conflict management styles involving the graduate students under the College of Teacher Education of Nueva Vizcaya State University-Bambang Campus, Bambang, and NuevaVizcaya in school year 2013-2014.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed at identifying the preferences and styles of the graduate education students of NVSU-Bambang along organization design and conflict management correspondingly. The offshoot of which shall serve as benchmark information pertinent to educational management specifically addressing the needs of faculty members and administrators on how to manage an institution as well as how to handle conflicts that inevitably arise in any organization.

To realize such aim, this study sought to establish answers to the following specific research questions:

1. What is the profile of the graduate education (Master of Arts in Education) students of NVSU-Bambang

Campus in terms of gender, years in service and specialization?

2. What are the organization design preferences of the respondents?

3. What are the conflict management styles of the respondents?

4. Are there significant differences in the organizational design

preferences and conflict management styles of The respondents when grouped according to the profile variables?

5. Do the organizational design preferences of the respondents correlate significantly with their conflict management styles?

Methodology

The descriptive approach was used in this study which mainly determined how selected graduate (MAED) students of the College of Teacher Education of the Nueva Vizcaya State University- Bambang Campus, perceive their organization design preferences and conflict management styles in the school year 2013-2014.

The respondents of the study were 30 graduate students who are administrators or teachers of elementary, secondary and tertiary schools in Nueva Vizcaya and its neighbouring provinces like Quirino, Isabela and Ifugao among others. This number of respondents passes the stipulations of the Central Limit Theorem which assumes normal distribution with at least 30 samples [4].

Assessment of the respondents' organization design preferences and conflict management styles was carried out making use of a personal data sheet and questionnaires. Comparison of responses of the respondents was made possible by testing the hypothesis using the t-test or Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) while relationship of selected variables was unveiled through correlational procedures.

Results and Discussion

After careful handling of the data extracted from the respondents the following answers to the research questions were sought.

Profile of the graduate education students of NVSU-Bambang Campus in terms of gender, years in service and specialization

In order to describe the respondents' profile, frequency and percentage distribution was used. Weighted means were also computed to describe some variables. Tables 1 to 3 show the information for the said variables **Table 1**.

Majority of the respondents are female counting to 23 or a percentage of 76.67% over the male respondents with a frequency of 7 (23.33%). This suggests that the education programs of the graduate school of NVSU Bambang Campus are dominated by female students. Hence, it can also be denoted that the frequency of male-female students for the said graduate school program is 1 male student to 3 female students **Table 2**.

In terms of the respondents' profile on the years in service, majority of the graduate student-respondents have been serving the academe for less than 5 years slating the frequency of 17 (56.67%) while some other respondents have been in the

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents along Gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	7	23.33
Female	23	76.67
Total	30	100.00

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents along Years in Service.

Years in Service	Frequency	Percentage
5 years or above	13	43.33
Less than 5 years	17	56.67
Total	30	100.00
Mean	4.87	

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents along Specialization.

Specialization	Frequency	Percentage
English	4	13.33
Filipino	4	13.33
General Education	8	26.67
Industrial Technology	5	16.67
Mathematics	1	3.33
Science	5	16.67
Social Science	3	10.00
Total	30	100.00

teaching profession for more than 5 years with the frequency of 13 (43.33%).

On the average, the number of years of service for the respondents is computed as 4.87 years. This means that a typical education student of the graduate school in NVSU- Bambang Campus has been serving as a teacher for an average of 5 years **Table 3**.

As to the respondents' specialization, most of them are inclined with General Education counting to 8 respondents or a percentage share of 26.67%; some 5 graduate-student respondents (16.67%) have specialized for each educational stream along Industrial Technology and Science; a total of 4 respondents (13.33%) are majors for each language educational stream in English and Filipino; 3 (10%) of the respondents specialized in Social Science; and the remaining 1 (3.33%) respondent is inclined with Mathematics [5].

The findings in table 3 suggest that those who specialized in General Education are those who are teaching in the elementary level-which necessitates that teachers teach all streams of education courses based on the K-12 basic education program. Hence, other fields may suggest that distribution of teacher's is diverse in terms of specialization.

Organizational design preferences of the respondents

The respondents were asked to assess which specific organizational design they prefer. There were 16 item-indicators to describe organizational styles in a given setting. According to the respondents' perceptual evaluation, the average rate for the indicators of their preferences is computed as 3.49, which is qualitatively described as strongly agree.

This means that the respondents strongly agree to the enumerated conditions that define their preference on organizational design. As such, it may follow that these graduate student-respondents are more into organized and logical organizational structure that follows a well-defined policies and procedures in order to act

considerably as a member of a given group or institution.

Ranking as the first organizational style based on the respondents' point-of-view is that rules and procedures are adhered to equal by everyone, with the mean of 3.77 qualitatively regarded as strongly agree. Following this are item-indicators that were qualified as strongly agree as well which include the following: work methods and procedures are specified (3.73) and people clear things with their boss before going over his or her head (3.67) among others.

Summarizing these responses, the respondents' organization design preference is unveiled in table 4. The preferences are categorized as to mechanistic, mixed or organic designs. In a mechanistic design, employees work separately and specialize in one task; hierarchy of authority is well-defined; decision-making is kept as high as possible; there is extensive use of rules and Standard Operating Procedures; the organization is a network of positions, corresponding to tasks, typically each person corresponds to one task. On the other side, organic design is characterized by employees working together and coordinate tasks; task forces and teams are primary integrating mechanisms; authority to control tasks is delegated; face-to-face contact for coordination is used; work process tends to be unpredictable there is much verbal communication; informal status is based on perceived brilliance; organization is network of persons or teams; and people work in different capacities simultaneously and over time.

Frequencies and percentages were divulged in table 4 to show classification of the respondents' organizational preferences as to foregoing categories **Table 4**.

The table displays that majority of the respondents prefer mixed mechanistic and organic designs (27 or 90.00%). The findings justify that among the respondents, they firmly believe that rules, procedures, and work methods should be clearly and logically defined from the top most management level down to the least authority of the organizational chart as to achieve the main objectives of the group. However, it may also suggest based on the bottom-ranks of the organizational design that those items focusing on their self-regarded strengths are less preferred by the respondents. And yet, those items that the respondents are strongly agreeing can be intensified with the least preferred design of the respondents – which goals and decisions should be from the higher ranks and/or bosses.

Giving strong fundamental bases for the findings shown in table 4, according to Autry (1996) in, an organization design is regarded as formal, a guided process for incorporating the people, information and expertise of an institution. Hence, it is used to go with the structure of the organization as intimately as potential to the purpose(s) the organization plans to accomplish. During the design process, organizations operate to advance the likelihood

Table 4: Summary Table on Respondents' Organization Design Preference.

Design	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Mechanistic Design	1	3.33
Mixed Design	27	90.00
Organic Design	2	6.67
Total	30	100.00

that the communal labours of members will be triumphant.

Conflict management styles of the respondents

Pedagogical practices of the graduate student-respondents in terms of management are described by the computed mean of 3.38 being dubbed as very likely. This means that majority of the conditions considered in this study pertaining to the management practices of the respondents during onset of conflicts are being highly favoured by them. Still, this could only suggest that their emotional maturity is being utilized during conflict situations.

In the indicators of the conflict management questionnaire used in this study, 10 of the 15 items were qualified as very likely with the following as top indicators that describe the respondents' conflict management practices: trying to soothe the other person's feelings and preserve our relationship (3.63); trying not to hurt other's feelings (3.63); being usually firm in pursuing goals (3.53) and trying to be considerate of other person's wishes in negotiations (3.53) among others.

On the other hand, there are 5 items of respondents' conflict management practices that were qualified as likely. These conditions included the following: leaning toward direct discussion of the problem (3.23); attempting to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open (3.23); feeling that differences are not always worth worrying about (3.20); trying to find a position that is immediate between the other persons' and the respondents' (3.13); and giving up some points in exchange to others (3.07).

Table 5 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents along conflict management styles based on their responses to the indicators of the conflict management questionnaire **Table 5**.

Conflict management styles may be categorized into the following. When one person seeks to satisfy his/her own interests regardless of the impact on other parties the conflict, he/she is competing. Collaborating is a style where the parties to conflict each desire to fully satisfy the concerns of all parties through cooperation and search for a mutually beneficial outcome. When each party to the conflict seeks to give up something, sharing occurs which defines compromising style. In avoiding, a person may recognize that a conflict exists and want to withdraw from it or suppress it. When each party to the conflict seeks to appease an opponent, that party may be willing to place the opponent's interests above his/her own interests, the accommodating style is used.

Respondents' styles in terms of conflict management are indeed positively synching with the conditions underlying these practices. Thus, it can be deduced then that the graduate student-

respondents could maintain high sense of emotional and logical maturity during process of resolving conflicts as most of them (20 or 66.67%) display the accommodating style.

Analysis of relationship between the respondents' organization design preferences and conflict management styles

Table 6 discloses if there are significant differences in the respondents' preferences of organizational design when their views are classified along their profile variables. It showed that only in terms of their specialization that there exists significant difference, which denotes rejection of the null hypothesis on this context.

The computed f-value in terms of gender classification is 11.4605, which is lesser than the critical f-value of 2.1861 showing significant difference. This means that respondents' organizational design preferences vary significantly when they are classified in terms of their field of specialization **Table 6**.

However, as stipulated in table 6, respondents' classification along gender and years of service yield no significant differences with their preferences on organizational design. For the respondents' groupings on gender profile, the computed t-value is 1.1165 with the critical t-value of 2.0452 and along with the number of years in service, the computed t-value is 0.0001 and the critical value is 2.0452. Both computed t-values are less than the corresponding critical values. Hence, the null hypotheses are accepted along these domains meaning the respondents' gender and years of service are not significant determinants of their choice of organizational design.

With regard to the procedures employed to elicit the significant difference between profile variables and conflict management practices, table 7 shows that respondents' styles in conflict management are significantly varied when viewed according to their specialization **Table 7**.

As manifested in the computed f-value, respondents' view on conflict management styles along specialization is slated at 3.7875 over the critical f-value of 2.1925. This suggests that respondents' classification along their subject inclination is a significant factor to be considered in determining their conflict management styles.

Table 6: Analysis of Difference in the Respondents' Organization Design Preferences when Grouped according to Profile Variable.

Variable	Computed Value	Critical Value
Gender	1.1165	2.0452
Years of Service	0.0001	2.0452
Specialization	11.4605*	2.1861

*Significant (at 0.05 level of significance)

Table 7: Analysis of Difference in the Respondents' Conflict Management Styles when Grouped according to Profile Variables.

Variable	Computed Value	Critical Value
Gender	1.7679	2.0452
Years of Service	1.4344	2.0452
Specialization	3.7875*	2.1925

*Significant (at 0.05 level of significance)

Table 5: Summary Table on Respondents' Conflict Management Styles.

Styles	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Competing	15	50.00
Collaborating	8	26.67
Compromising	9	30.00
Avoiding	9	30.00
Accommodating	20	66.67

Note: A single respondent may have more than one conflict management style

On the other hand, when respondents' gender and years of service are considered in determining differences in their conflict management styles, the computed t-values 1.7679 and 1.4344 correspondingly are lesser than the critical value of 2.0452. These findings denote that the respondents' groupings in terms of gender and years of service do not show significant variations in their practices in conflict management.

Analysis of relationship between the respondents' organizational design preferences and their conflict management styles

To establish the relationship between the respondents' organizational design preferences with their conflict management styles, Pearson r was employed. Table 8 shows the results of analysis of the relationship of both constructs **Table 8**.

Table 8: Analysis of Relationship between the Respondents' Organization Design Preferences and their Conflict Management Styles

Variables	r-value	p-value
Organizational Design Preferences versus Conflict Management Styles	0.6432	0.0001

*Significant (at 0.05 level of significance)

After computing for the r-value of 0.6432 with the p-value of 0.0001, it showed that respondents' organizational design preferences are significantly correlated with their conflict management styles. This justifies that respondents' preferences on organizational design are much associated with their habitual actions toward handling differences and/or arguments in the organization.

As such, when a certain education program student of the graduate school of the NVSU Bambang campus is talking about preferences for institutional design, he is more likely displaying his conflict management styles which are similar with those who have the same organization design preferences.

It is noted that majority of the respondents prefer an organizational design wherein they recognize their need to have a person who leads them and sets some standards for the organization to survive, thus substantiating their being members of the institution they are in. It is hence descriptive of the respondents that they display emotional maturity in dealing with conflicts in the organization. Both professional constructs seemingly to go together as a result of the analysis of their relationship unveiled in table 8.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After carefully handling the data to seek answers to the research questions posted earlier, the researchers came up with the following conclusions:

1. Majority of the graduate education students of NVSU-Bambang are female and have been in the teaching.
2. Profession for less than five years while most of them specialized in General Education.
3. Majority of the respondents prefer an organization design

which is mixed mechanistic and organic design.

4. Most of the respondents make use of the accommodating style of managing organizational conflicts.
5. There are significant differences in the respondents' organization design preferences and conflict management styles when grouped according to their specialization while no significant differences were observed when they are grouped according to their gender and years in service.
6. The respondents' organization design preferences correlate significantly with their conflict management styles.

In light of the significant findings, the subsequent recommendations are hereby enumerated:

1. The respondents of this study are respective teachers in their own districts in the province of Nueva Vizcaya and nearby provinces. As such, they may use the findings of this study to evaluate their organizational design preferences and conflict management practices. This may give them logical explanation on how they work effectively and efficiently in their own institutions as a vital member of its manpower. Thus, this study may explain the need for them to grow holistically in order to handle differences and conflicts between and among their co-workers and managers. Still, this might help them in creating a healthier and productive workplace.
2. Similarly, faculty and staff of the graduate school of the College of Teacher Education and the whole Nueva Vizcaya State University-Bambang campus may also be benefited in the results of this study. They may use several concepts on organizational design and conflict management practices to intensify the mission-vision goal of the college (CTE) and the university as well. Hence, these concepts may also be used in strengthening existing procedures and practices focusing on organizational management and its specific components.
3. The Department of Education in Nueva Vizcaya District may also take advantage of the worthwhile findings of this study. This may serve as a benchmark in planning and managing priority activities that shall embody both personal and professional growth of all teachers under its umbrella. This may give NV DepEd officials on how to manage conflict situations within their parameters with utmost consideration and rational judgment. Thus, they may acquire some components of organizational design to better serve the stakeholders; to bring quality education to the youth and community; to provide globally standardized skills and competencies for both learners and teachers; and to build a productive and peaceful society.
4. Faculty and students of the graduate school of the CTE-NVSU Bambang Campus may also be benefited with this study. Among the graduate students, this shall give them tenable evidence on how they mingle and perform best in an organization. Thus, they may intensify their academic network as to bring collaborative and participative learning. And for the teachers/professors and faculty of the graduate

school, this study shall give them a bird's eye view on the organizational attitudes and conflict management behaviours of their learners, which may help in designing more innovative and scientific approaches in educational organization and management.

5. Future researchers may consider adopting the same concepts but might want to assess supervisors and administrators point-of-view and should as well consider another setting and wider research scope. Hence, they may also integrate other variables which are not included in the study, which may yield significant findings as well.

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