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A Critical Study of Organizational Communication and Organizational Communication Theories- A Historical Perspective

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Organizational Communication is the study that looks at human communication within and outside the organization. Conrad and Poole (1998) break the definition of organizational communication in parts, by first defining communication and then analyses the organization. These researchers define communication as "a process through which people, acting together, create, sustain, and manage meanings through the use of verbal and nonverbal signs and symbols within a particular context" (Conrad and Poole, 1998, p. 5). In the context of this book, Kenyans and their leaders are communicating their views and final decision through the ballot box to elect their third president, during which time organizational dynamics emerge.

Conrad and Poole (1998) further state that organizational communication, unlike interpersonal communication, is much more complex in that we communicate with our colleagues at work because we both like them and also because our responsibilities force us to do so. Especially taking into account that organizations have needs such as control and coordination, which must be met. The complexities of the organization are demonstrated when KANU rebels in the Rainbow Alliance crossed over and negotiated with their colleagues in the National Alliance (party) of Kenya (NAK), forming a more formidable party NARC. As a result, NARC ended up having partners who, in the past, did not have anything in common due to issues of control and coordination. The partners in this case are not the very best of friends, but they are now talking because they have a job to do: Win the votes against Moi's Project Uhuru. In addition, the Opposition leaders wanted to win power, a fact they would not have admitted during the 2002 campaign. Organizational communication is therefore a study of the exchange of words and meanings in an organization as the people within and outside these establishments work towards accomplishing organizational objectives.