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## **Comparative Study of Organizational Communication Theories Perspectives (Classical, Humanistic, Integration, and Contemporary Perspectives)**

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### **Abstract**

*Organizational communication is used to achieve common goals in an organization. Organizational communication is the transmission of information so as to form information flows that give rise to information networks. In understanding communication in an organization there are several perspectives that can be used, namely: Classical, Humanistic, Integration and Contemporary. Perspective is a point of view in interpreting a problem. In this study, researchers discuss comparative studies from the perspectives of organizational communication theory. Where researchers compare the advantages and weaknesses of each perspective with qualitative approaches and comparative methods. In comparative studies, each of the above perspectives has different advantages and disadvantages, and is selected according to the needs of the organization and the specific situation. However, in general, the four perspectives can be used as a guide to understanding how communication can be used to achieve organizational goals. It is important to understand that each perspective has its own advantages and disadvantages, so there is no one theory that can be used to solve all problems in organizations. Although the four perspectives of organizational communication theory have different focuses and goals, they are interrelated and can contribute to a more holistic understanding of communication in organizations.*

**Keywords:** *Comparative; Perspective; Organizational Communication.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Robbins stated that an organization is a systematic form of cooperation to achieve predetermined goals, which involves connections, relationships, interactions, and communication to fulfill agreed-upon objectives (both ideal and concrete) (Saepullah et al., 2022). Communication is crucial in an organization as it integrates management functions (Hasmawati, 2018).

In an organization, various types of individuals with different thoughts and characteristics are usually present to realize a progressive and growing organization, and their interactions are referred to as the communication process (Hermana et al., 2004). Organizational communication, according to Redding and Sanborn as mentioned in Arni Muhammad's book,

refers to the transmission and reception of information within a complex organization (Oktaviani et al., 2016).

The communication process can determine the decisions individuals or groups will make regarding future steps. Communication serves as a guideline in determining the implemented cooperation. Communication is constructed as a self-adjustment mechanism to help individuals recognize and respond to threats to their existence and how to overcome them (Nellitawati et al., 2005).

Effective and clear understanding of people's needs within the organization is essential for communication in the organization to function efficiently and effectively (Hermana et al., 2004). Communication is used to foster attitudes of acceptance, empathy, and honesty within the organization (Hermana et al., 2004). Organizational communication encompasses several perspectives, namely classical, humanistic, integration, and contemporary (Sitepu, 2011). These perspectives represent the philosophy that occurs in the organizational communication process. They are interconnected and complementary depending on the conditions and situations.

The above communication provides a particular viewpoint of the organization, how communication is positioned in the perspective of organizational theory and organizational communication. According to Littlejohn, a perspective is "a way of looking" (Utari, 2011). The development of research within the perspective of organizational communication will contribute significantly to organizational development.

These traditions of thought reinforce the study of how organizational communication evolves, develops, and is implemented in the organizational context broadly. By comparing these perspectives, the strengths and weaknesses of organizational communication theories can be analyzed. These perspectives will aid in understanding organizational communication theoretically at their respective levels and in comprehending the functions and roles of communication within the organization.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The research method used by the researchers is a comparative study method with a qualitative approach. According to Aswarni in Arikunto, a comparative study will identify similarities and differences regarding objects, work procedures, ideas, individuals, or groups related to a particular idea or work procedure (Farial et al., 2020). The comparative study in this research involves comparing the perspectives of organizational communication theories, namely classical, humanistic, integration, and contemporary perspectives. The primary data source for

this research is textual readings about these perspectives. The data collection technique used is the documentation method from relevant books or journals. This method involves searching for data related to variables in the form of transcripts, books, notes, etc. (Farial et al., 2020). The data is then reduced, presented, and verified as the analysis technique.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Comparative study of the perspectives of classical, humanistic, integration, and contemporary communication theories can provide a deeper understanding of the differences and similarities between different management theories. Here is a general overview of each theory:

### **1. Classical Perspective:**

The classical perspective proposes that management should be viewed as an objective and measurable science. This approach tends to emphasize efficiency and productivity and sees organizations as systems consisting of separate parts that can be managed more effectively. The classical perspective consists of two main approaches: scientific management and general administration (Widyanti, 2019).

### **2. Humanistic Perspective:**

The humanistic perspective focuses on the needs of individuals within the organization (Wijaya, 2017). This approach recognizes that employees are not just machines that can be controlled to produce desired outputs but individuals who need motivation, recognition, and rewards. The humanistic perspective suggests that effective management is one that considers the needs of employees and creates a conducive work environment for their personal development.

### **3. Integration Perspective:**

The integration perspective emphasizes the importance of creating an integrated management system, where all parts of the organization are interconnected and support each other (Yunus, 2016). This approach views the organization as a complex system and emphasizes synergy between organizational parts and between the organization and its external environment. The integration perspective proposes that effective management is one that can coordinate all parts of the organization to achieve common goals.

### **4. Contemporary Perspective:**

The contemporary perspective acknowledges that the rapidly changing business environment demands flexible and adaptive management (Yunus, 2016). This approach emphasizes the importance of innovation, quick and accurate decision-making, and effective

risk management. The contemporary perspective suggests that effective management is one that can adapt quickly to environmental changes.

In conducting a comparative study of these four perspectives, it can be observed that the classical and humanistic perspectives have significant differences in their views of employees within the organization. The classical perspective focuses more on efficiency and productivity, while the humanistic perspective emphasizes the needs of individual employees. On the other hand, the integration and contemporary perspectives emphasize the importance of viewing organizations as complex systems and considering the interactions between organizational parts and the external environment.

Overall, the comparative study of the classical, humanistic, integration, and contemporary perspectives can provide valuable insights into different approaches to management and help understand how management has evolved over time.

### **1. Classical Perspective**

The classical perspective of organizational communication refers to the approach developed in the early 20th century by experts such as Chester Barnard, Max Weber, and Henri Fayol (Wulandari, 2019). This perspective emphasizes formal structure, hierarchy, and the flow of communication within the organization. Here are some key points in the classical perspective of organizational communication (Wati Evelina & Angeline, 2014):

1. **Communication as information flow:** In this perspective, communication is seen as the flow of information from top to bottom in the organizational hierarchy. Communication is used to provide instructions, directions, and policies to members of the organization. Communication at this level is more formal and structured.
2. **Vertical communication:** Vertical communication is the communication that occurs between different levels of management in the organization, such as between managers and subordinates. This communication is used to convey information, monitor performance, and provide feedback.
3. **Horizontal communication:** Horizontal communication refers to communication between members at the same level in the organizational structure. It is usually used for sharing information, coordination, and collaboration between departments or teams.
4. **Diagonal communication:** Diagonal communication is the communication that occurs between members at different levels but not on the same hierarchical level. This communication can cross departmental or organizational unit boundaries and is used for coordination or reporting purposes.

5. **Formal communication:** Formal communication is communication that occurs through official and structured channels within the organization. This includes written communication, formal meetings, and official directives from management. Formal communication tends to follow established hierarchical paths in the organization.
6. **Informal communication:** Informal communication involves unofficial interactions between members of the organization. It can happen through daily conversations, social gatherings, or through non-hierarchical communication channels like discussion groups or internal social media. Informal communication often plays a crucial role in disseminating information and building social relationships within the organization.
7. **One-way communication:** In the classical perspective, communication is often viewed as one-way flow, where information is sent from sender to receiver without significant feedback. One-way communication is commonly used to convey policies, instructions, or reports.

While the classical perspective of organizational communication provides an initial understanding of the importance of communication in the organizational context, it is also important to remember that this perspective has limitations, and many more complex aspects of organizational communication are not covered within it.

## **2. Humanism Perspective**

The humanism perspective in organizational communication emphasizes the importance of valuing and treating individuals as human beings with unique needs, desires, and potential. In the context of organizational communication, this approach emphasizes the relationship between management and employees and the importance of treating employees as valuable partners in achieving shared goals. Here are some key principles of the humanism perspective in organizational communication (Mahadi, 2017):

1. **Respecting Human Dignity:** The humanism perspective acknowledges that every individual in the organization has dignity and value as a human being. In organizational communication, this means avoiding inhumane or demeaning treatment of employees. Management should respect human rights, appreciate individual differences, and treat each employee with respect and integrity.
2. **Open and Transparent Communication:** The humanism perspective encourages open and transparent organizational communication. This involves sharing relevant and important information with employees clearly and honestly. Open communication

allows employees to feel valued and trusted, creating a more inclusive and collaborative work environment.

3. **Listening with Empathy:** The humanism perspective emphasizes the importance of listening with empathy to employees. Management should be able to understand the perspectives, needs, and challenges faced by employees as individuals. By listening empathetically, management can build better relationships with employees, gain a deeper understanding of the challenges they face, and work towards mutually beneficial solutions.
4. **Empowerment of Employees:** The humanism perspective encourages the empowerment of employees in organizational communication. This means providing employees with opportunities to participate in decision-making, express ideas, and contribute to planning and task implementation. By empowering employees, management recognizes their importance in achieving organizational goals and strengthens their sense of ownership and commitment to their work.
5. **Building Strong Relationships:** The humanism perspective emphasizes the development of strong relationships between management and employees. This includes building effective communication channels, promoting teamwork, and creating a positive and inclusive work climate. In strong relationships, employees feel supported and valued by management, which in turn enhances job satisfaction, motivation, and employee engagement.

In the humanism perspective of organizational communication, the goal is to create a work climate that focuses on humanity, mutual understanding, and employee empowerment. This approach can enhance job satisfaction, motivation, engagement, and overall organizational performance..

### **3. Integration Perspective:**

The integration perspective of organizational communication refers to an approach that combines and aligns all aspects of communication within an organization. The main goal of organizational communication integration is to create alignment, consistency, and clarity in the messages conveyed to employees, customers, business partners, and other stakeholders.

Organizational communication integration involves disseminating consistent messages through various communication channels, such as internal communication, external communication, marketing communication, and public communication. In this perspective, communication is seen as a strategic tool that can be used to build and maintain the

organization's image and identity, strengthen relationships with stakeholders, and enhance credibility and trust. Some important principles in the integration perspective of organizational communication include (Karyaningsih, 2018):

1. **Message Alignment:** The messages conveyed by the organization must be consistent across all communication channels, whether through social media, websites, print materials, or direct communication with employees and customers. Messages should be in line with the organization's values, goals, and identity.
2. **Communication Coordination:** It is important to have good coordination between various functions and departments within the organization. The internal and external communication teams should work together to align messages and ensure that the communicated information is not conflicting or confusing.
3. **Effective Use of Communication Channels:** In the current digital era, organizations need to utilize various relevant and effective communication channels, including social media, email, corporate intranets, and face-to-face meetings. It is essential to choose the right channels to deliver messages to the intended stakeholders.
4. **Employee Engagement:** Employee engagement is a key element in organizational communication integration. Employees should have a clear understanding of the organization's messages and goals, and be given the opportunity to provide feedback and contribute to organizational communication.
5. **Evaluation and Monitoring:** It is important to regularly evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of organizational communication. By gathering feedback from employees, customers, and other stakeholders, organizations can improve and refine their communication strategies.

Organizational communication integration helps create continuity in the messages conveyed by an organization. By having an integrated and consistent approach to communication, organizations can build better relationships with stakeholders and effectively achieve their goals.

#### **4. Contemporary Perspective:**

In the contemporary perspective, organizational communication is viewed as a complex and dynamic phenomenon that evolves with social, technological, and business environment

changes. Here are some relevant aspects in the contemporary perspective of organizational communication (Hermana et al., 2004):

1. **Open and Transparent Communication:** Modern organizations tend to encourage open and transparent communication between leaders and members. Two-way communication becomes essential, where members are given opportunities to share ideas, input, and feedback. Information transparency is also emphasized to build trust and engagement among members.
2. **Communication Technology:** Technological advancements have brought significant changes to organizational communication. The development of social media, collaboration platforms, and other digital communication tools facilitates rapid and global information exchange. Organizations leverage these technologies to communicate with members, customers, and other stakeholders more efficiently.
3. **Strong Internal Communication:** Strong internal communication becomes a primary focus in the contemporary perspective. Organizations realize the importance of sharing vision, goals, and information clearly with their members. Effective internal communication can strengthen the organizational culture, enhance employee satisfaction and engagement, and improve operational efficiency.
4. **Crisis Communication:** Organizations must be prepared to face crisis situations that can impact their reputation and business continuity. Effective crisis communication involves quick, honest, and proactive communication with stakeholders. Organizations should respond promptly and provide accurate information to manage crises effectively.
5. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Contemporary organizational communication recognizes the importance of respecting and promoting diversity within the organization. Inclusive organizations create an environment where all members feel heard and valued. Effective communication should be able to address cultural, gender, racial, and other background differences to foster strong collaboration and innovation.
6. **External Communication:** Communication with external stakeholders, such as customers, business partners, and the broader community, also becomes a critical focus. Organizations need to communicate clearly and consistently about their values, goals, products, and services. Effective marketing communication and efforts to build good relationships with external stakeholders are key to achieving business success.

The contemporary perspective of organizational communication emphasizes open, transparent, and inclusive communication. Organizations need to effectively utilize evolving communication technologies and integrate effective communication strategies to achieve their goals and build strong relationships with stakeholders.

The contemporary perspective of organizational communication encompasses various approaches and theories used to understand and analyze communication within the organizational context. Some relevant contemporary perspectives in the current study of organizational communication include (Tampubolon, 2020):

1. **Complex Systems Approach:** This perspective views organizations as complex systems, where communication is at the core of interactions and relationships among elements within the system. Communication is seen as a process that involves not only the transfer of information but also influences patterns of behavior, shared understanding, and meaning creation within the organization.
2. **Identity-Based Approach:** This perspective emphasizes the role of individual and group identities in organizational communication. The identity of organizational members can influence how they communicate, as well as how they build relationships and interpret received messages.
3. **Reputation-Based Approach:** This perspective sees communication as a critical factor in building and maintaining the reputation of an organization. Effective communication can help the organization gain trust and recognition from stakeholders, while poor or inaccurate communication can damage the organization's reputation.
4. **Justice-Based Approach:** This perspective considers communication as a tool to achieve justice within the organization. Transparent, open, and inclusive communication is considered essential to create a fair workplace, where every organizational member has equal access to information and opportunities to participate.
5. **Technology-Based Approach:** This perspective examines the influence of information and communication technology on organizational communication. Communication through digital media and online platforms has changed the way organizations interact and communicate with employees, customers, and other stakeholders. This approach analyzes these changes and their impact on organizational communication.
6. **Sustainability-Based Approach:** This perspective highlights the importance of socially and environmentally responsible organizational communication. Communication about responsible business practices and their impact on society and the environment

becomes a primary focus, with the goal of building better relationships with stakeholders and driving positive change within the organization and society at large.

These perspectives provide different frameworks for understanding and analyzing organizational communication, taking into account the complex dynamics and changes occurring in the current communication context.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are four commonly known perspectives of organizational communication theory, namely:

**Classic Perspective:** The classic perspective views organizations as systems that need to be structured and regulated properly to achieve their goals. In this perspective, communication is used to control the behavior and performance of employees. Communication is seen as an effective tool to convey messages from managers to employees and ensure that organizational tasks and objectives are achieved effectively.

**Human Perspective:** The human perspective views organizations as social systems influenced by the individuals involved in them. In this perspective, communication is seen as a tool to strengthen the relationship between employees and the organization. Communication is considered essential for building trust, support, and motivation among employees to work effectively and productively.

**Integration Perspective:** The integration perspective combines elements from the classic and human perspectives. In this perspective, communication is seen as a tool to control the behavior and performance of employees and to build the relationship between employees and the organization. Communication is considered a way to ensure that organizational tasks and objectives are achieved effectively and to strengthen the relationship between employees and the organization.

**Contemporary Perspective:** The contemporary perspective recognizes the significant role of technology and the global environment in shaping modern organizations. In this perspective, communication is seen as a tool to facilitate collaboration among employees and to promote learning and innovation. Communication is considered a way to develop the capabilities of individuals and organizations to cope with rapid environmental and technological changes.

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