



**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION
END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION
BAC 1208: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNICATION**

DATE: 19th March 2026

TIME: 11:00 – 13:00

Instructions

1. This examination consists of **FOUR** questions
2. Answer **Question ONE (COMPULSORY)** and any other **TWO** questions.

Question 1

(30 marks)

A Kenyan tech startup, “TechConnect,” is trying to build strong relationships with its early adopters via social media. Despite posting regularly and interacting with users, engagement is low: users “like” posts but rarely give personal feedback. Management notices that users respond differently across platforms, and cultural differences seem to influence the type of content shared. Internally, the team has disagreements about messaging priorities, and there is no clear framework for evaluating campaign impact.

- a) Using Social Penetration Theory and Message Design Theories, analyse why users might be reluctant to share deeper feedback. Consider cultural, psychological, and contextual factors. (15 Marks)
- b) Recommend strategies, informed by relevant Interpersonal and Organizational Communication Theories to deepen audience relationships while maintaining trust and improving team collaboration. (15 marks)

Question 2**(15 marks)**

During a nationwide public health vaccination campaign, conflicting messages lead to resistance in some Kenyan communities. Some individuals continue to reject vaccination despite clear scientific evidence.

- a) Explain this behaviour using Cognitive Dissonance Theory. (7 marks)
- b) Propose communication strategies, drawing on Inoculation Theory and Message Design Theories, to reduce dissonance and encourage compliance. (8 marks)

Question 3**(15 marks)**

A Kenyan NGO's project team is making decisions on campaign messaging. Dominant members push ideas without proper discussion, and less assertive members remain silent, leading to poor campaign outcomes.

- a) Analyse this situation using Groupthink Theory and Organizational Communication concepts (Organizational Culture, Network Theory). (9 marks)
- b) Suggest interventions to prevent groupthink and improve decision-making. (6 marks)

Question 4**(15 marks)**

Discuss how Symbolic Interactionism and Uses and Gratifications Theory can jointly inform content strategy for a youth-focused social media campaign. Include examples.

Question 5**(15 marks)**

Marshall McLuhan argued that "the medium is the message." Critically analyse this statement in the context of contemporary digital and interpersonal communication in Kenya.