



The Arab Media and Communication Network

And

**University of Manouba / The Institute of Journalism and Communication
Sciences (IPSI)**

Organise

**The First Arab Doctoral Forum in Media and Communication
Sciences.**

Tunis : 2-4 January 2019

Call for Participation

Introduction :

In an attempt to establish a network of researchers and exchange knowledge and expertise in media and communication across the Arab world and beyond, the Arab Media and Communication Network (AMCN) along with the Institute of Journalism and Communication Sciences (IPSI) in Tunisia will be organising the first doctoral forum in Arab media and communication research between 2-4 January 2019.

This event aims at providing a common ground for research and academic exchange between doctoral students and established academics in the field from Arab and western universities. This occasion will provide a platform for researchers to discuss their works with peers and senior academics.

This symposium takes place at a time when Arab countries are undergoing geo-political transformations starting from the end of the cold war era, the explosion of satellite technologies and the internet. Then the 11 September 2001 attacks and the invasion of Iraq (2003) which

culminated with the Arab Spring revolutions and its aftermath. All of these transformations have affected the relationship between the public and the rulers as well as the media organisations.

Most of the social and political changes in the Arab world have been challenging to assess. This is partly due to the lack of strategic thinking by think-tanks and extensive relevant research works. Also it is because of the unhealthy relationship between the state and the media in the Arab world in which the media are in many cases employed as propaganda tools coupled with censorship of free speech.

This has impacted negatively on the relationship between academic institutions and the study of the media and has widened the knowledge gap in this area. To the extent that academic research has become unable to catch up with the speedy technological developments especially in satellite TV, internet and social media and public relations in various institutions. Most of the knowledge production in this area are newspaper articles and reports mainly speculative and far from being scientifically grounded in comprehensive empirical studies.

Why this symposium ?

The Arab Spring came to proclaim the demise of the post-independence state, which has always provided security and publicity in the making of public opinion rather than the freedom of citizens to form a private opinion through follow-up without coercion of the media. Everyone seem unable to understand, study and interpret what is happening.

Few blamed technology for driving this change. While others went to accuse journalists, as irresponsible and manipulative of freespeech. The journalism schools, colleges and faculty members who teach their students media techniques and freedom of the press are also blamed for the lack of responsibility and for their patriotism.

The fingerprints of the state that did not know the way to adapt to the new political and media environments and became locked in the mechanisms of the media in the post-independence state in particular. Others saw in the public opinion a new accuser who believes everything that is published, which begins the blocking in the name of avoiding exposing public opinion to deception. It is an explicit call for guardianship of what people think. While others suggested introducing education on the media to a people who did not understand what pluralism was and did not live the experience of democracy. The result then is an unprecedented state of confusion, everyone accuses everyone and no one knows how freedom of expression and freedom of the media can become a gateway to development, modernization and democracy. In the absence of the latter, there was a lack of opportunities for development and civilizational progress. Simply put, in order for the media to play an effective role, the relationship between the

media in a society undergoing profound transformations away from any political or ideological engagement must be examined.

In the context of this thesis, and to search for a solution, few turned to the hypothesis of scientific research and to study the complex relationship between the media and society, which requires scientific explanation, not resort to conspiracy theories.

Objectives of the Forum:

In this context, the first Arab forum for doctoral students in media and communication sciences is an opportunity to engage Arab researchers into this growing field of research and to provide an opportunity for their interaction with their colleagues directly and with those who are more experienced in academia. This forum is also an opportunity to introduce doctoral students to the prevailing research trends as well as emerging Arab and international ones. The objectives of this event can be summarized in the following axes :

- Developing scientific exchange among Arab researchers in the field of information and communication sciences.
- Reducing research gaps between those working in the field of information and communication sciences in different Arab countries.
- Unveil emerging research themes in the information and communication sciences, both Arab and international, by presenting the research problems that the doctoral students are working on.
- Develop intersections of various research approaches, especially those related to emerging issues in the Arab media environment after the Arab Spring events.

How to participate :

PhD students in the field of media and communication sciences in the Arab world or students in the same specialization in other international universities may submit a proposal to present the doctoral project they are working on and their progress in taking up the various methodological, epistemological, theoretical and bibliographic issues of the subject. Proposals should include the following:

- First page should include a title not exceeding 25 words, then the name of the researcher and the institutional affiliation and e-mail address.
- Summary of the research of no more than 1000 words which includes references and sources and a presentation of the problem, i.e. the theoretical framework and

the research questions, then the methodology adopted and finally the stages of development of the research and the presentation of the preliminary results, if any.

- All proposals will be refereed. The evaluation criteria will be as follows:

1 - Importance of the subject of the doctoral thesis.

2- Research problem and questions.

3 - Clarity of the methodology followed and compatibility with the hypothesis of research.

4. Quality of the proposal.

B- Participation is not limited to the submission of doctoral projects, but doctoral students can participate in seminars and workshops and attend presentations to discuss the projects of their colleagues.

Programme themes :

The event's programme will include the following sessions :

- Presentations by doctoral students whose proposals were accepted by the jury.
- Discussions on the current doctoral research in the Arab world: reality and prospects.
- Workshops in research methodology and preparation of doctoral dissertations.
- Talks on the problems of intellectual and epistemological challenges in media and communication sciences today.

Forum Language:

- Doctoral projects submitted to the conference committee are accepted in Arabic, French and English.

- The methodology workshops should be offered in Arabic, French and English, with at least 10 students enrolled.

2. Participation fees of US \$50 (or equivalent in Tunisian Dinars) should be paid in cash at the registration desk on the day.

- A certificate of participation will be issued for all participants of the forum.
- Organizers are not responsible for hotel accommodation and travel expenses.

- Organizers will propose a preferred hotel for accommodation at reduced rates in the center of Tunis. Participants will have to make their own bookings in person.

Important Dates :

- **Deadline for abstracts submission: November 20, 2018.**
- **Confirmation of abstracts acceptance: November 30, 2018.**
- **Confirmation of participations: December 15, 2018.**
- **Hotel booking: From 1st to 15th of December 2018.**

- Please Submit your abstract to: Forumarabesic@gmail.com
- For any information, please call Ms **Elhem jouini** on **0021628542650** or Mr. **Chokri Ben Younes** on **0021628760074**

Scientific Committee :

- Pr. Mohamed Hamdane
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