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The Employment of the Public Sphere Theory in Algerian Media Studies – An Analytical Study

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Abstract:

The present study examines the ways in which Jürgen Habermas's Public Sphere Theory has been employed in Algerian media studies. It does so by analyzing a sample of academic works that have applied this theory to specific topics within the Algerian media and communication field, using a qualitative meta-analysis methodology to review and critique these studies. The findings highlight the importance of this theory in uncovering various indicators related to the reality of communicative and interactive practices in the digital environment. Furthermore, the study reflects significant aspects concerning the nature of the content produced by users in the virtual sphere.

Keywords: Public Sphere Theory; Qualitative Analysis; Algerian Media Studies; User Practices.

1. Introduction:

The growing criticism directed toward many traditional communication theories—particularly concerning their adaptation and localization to explain the characteristics of media and communication phenomena in their digital dimension, known as "new media" or "digital media"—has led numerous researchers to reconsider the validity of these theories within Arab media and communication studies. Some scholars have even declared the actual obsolescence of certain long-standing theories that had become foundational frameworks frequently and routinely used by researchers, thus fostering a sense of rigidity and repetitiveness in media scholarship.

The reliance on ready-made theoretical templates has often revealed a clear inadequacy in properly interpreting new communicative phenomena, as much of the research has been reduced to predominantly quantitative data that failed to provide convincing explanations or meaningful interpretations

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capable of exploring communication phenomena from within, rather than merely describing them from the outside.

However, this situation does not negate the existence of a renewal trend in media and communication studies—both in Algeria and the Arab world—through the introduction of innovative theoretical approaches, as well as the revival and re-application of some classical theories to meet pressing research needs and respond to evolving social, cultural, and political contexts accompanying the use of digital media technologies. In this new environment, the audience is no longer a passive receiver but an active participant, a producer of content, and an influencer in the communicative process, which has taken on a circular nature characterized by interactivity, instantaneous feedback, and personalized content—among other features of digital communication.

It is within this framework that one significant theory has re-emerged and been increasingly employed in Arab and Algerian media studies: Jürgen Habermas's Public Sphere Theory. As Al-Sadiq Al-Hammami (Al-Hammami, 2013, p. 117) asserts, his proposed approach aims to interrogate the Arab media field within an intellectual project seeking to achieve an epistemological transcendence over the dominant trends in Arab media and communication research—trends that have confined it to examining legal issues, content, and effects. These approaches have produced a conventional mindset that has rendered Arab media research a repetitive, routine practice lacking renewal. Consequently, there is a need to address emerging topics that explore the cultural and social representations of media and new technologies, their social uses and appropriations, and their relationship with socio-cultural dynamics. In a broader sense, the issue of the public sphere offers the greatest potential for uncovering the structure of communication within Arab societies—namely, how we communicate, and what cultural values and mediations shape our forms of social communication.

Accordingly, the present study seeks to investigate how this theory has been applied in selected Algerian media studies—exploring both the temporal and topical trajectories of its use. To achieve this objective, the study adopts the qualitative meta-analysis method, a rigorous scientific approach that conducts a critical review of literature derived from quantitative meta-analysis, providing a synthesis that considers the elements referenced in the selected research and articles in order to extract data in the form of observations and annotations. As (Liaïdi 2020) notes, this method

involves studying previous studies—that is, performing a secondary analysis of a media phenomenon as it appears in earlier research.

In this regard, the researcher analyzed a sample of academic studies available for download through the National Portal of Algerian Journals, given that they are peer-reviewed scholarly works meeting scientific standards. Studies that addressed the topic only theoretically were excluded, while the focus was placed on those that practically applied the theory to specific media phenomena or subjects. Consequently, the research sample consisted of ten academic studies, including one doctoral dissertation obtained and downloaded by the researcher. The temporal scope of the selected sample spans from 2014 to 2021, corresponding to the publication or completion dates of these studies.

1.Theoretical Framework of the Study:

1.1 Overview of the Public Sphere Theory (the Public Domain):

The German philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1989) developed this theory, arguing that the public sphere represents a communicative network composed of various interconnected networks within civil societies, deeply linked to public life and individuals' everyday experiences. The concept of the public sphere is realized when individuals exercise their right to participate in society through communication and engagement in discussions concerning public issues. The theory of the public sphere assumes four main characteristics that distinguish communication: accessibility to the communicative domain, freedom of individuals to communicate within this sphere, the structure of discussion, and the presentation of arguments justified by specific persuasive evidence (Bakhit, 2012 ,p :9).

The interpretation and discussion of judgments in the public arena have come to be known as public opinion. From the same context emerged the term "publicity" (publicité), which originated from a specific intellectual and social background that made it conceptually complex—particularly when translated into Arabic—along with other notions used by Habermas. The term "public sphere" (Sphère publique), according to Habermas's translators, differs from the "private sphere" (Sphère privée), which arose from the interaction between nobles and writers. Reception rooms were originally reserved for nobles to express and embody their identities in theatrical performances; however, with the entry of writers and servants into these salons to attend the nobles' performances, what became known as the

public sphere began to take shape. This access transformed what was once private into public, through the process of publicity, which constituted the cornerstone in the formation of Habermas's concept of the public sphere (Unknown, n.d).

Habermas defines the concept of the public sphere through several perspectives, indicating that the public sphere comes into existence through any dialogue in which individuals gather to form a public body, regardless of the social differences among them. Habermas's objective in employing the concept of the public sphere—which originally derives from the German philosopher Immanuel Kant—was to describe the social realities experienced by certain European societies. As Habermas himself confirms, the roots of the public sphere trace back to various social institutions in European society during the eighteenth century. In England, it appeared in newspapers, magazines, and coffeehouses; in France, it emerged in Parisian salons after the mid-century; and in Germany, it appeared modestly in reading clubs.

The public sphere evolved in the second half of the eighteenth century to include the discussion of political issues—matters that had previously been the exclusive domain of the state. By introducing political issues into the realm of critical debate, the public sphere positioned itself against the state and in confrontation with it. Habermas asserts that the role of the public sphere is to bring societal issues into the heart of the political process (Jumaa, 2014.).

Undoubtedly, the process of communication based on understanding meaning is rooted in a dialogical, ethical, and rational exchange that relies on the power of argument rather than on fanaticism or ideology. It is, therefore, a serious and organized discussion aimed at convincing the other party and reaching a consensus or agreement through the use of arguments that demonstrate the validity of one's claims. This occurs within a space where debates take place and opinions are formed—what Habermas calls the public sphere. These discussions are governed by a set of conditions that Habermas refers to as the "ideal speech situation", whose most important elements include: rationality, truthfulness, equal participation roles, equal opportunities, and freedom to express ideas (Malkawi, 2017.p :236).

Moreover, Habermas focused his attention on the analysis of public opinion, and this analysis led to the affirmation of the appropriation mechanism undertaken by the bourgeoisie throughout its historical

evolution over public opinion. The mass media, particularly the press, upon which Habermas heavily relied, were transformed under the pressure of the market, advertising, and class propaganda, into instruments serving the direct material interests of the dominant class. Nevertheless, political journalism emerged in the form of party newspapers that were not subject to the pressures of propaganda. This transformation marked a shift from critical publicity to common or popular publicity within the bourgeois public sphere , which turned the use of reason as a domain of freedom into a tool subordinated to propaganda and the manipulation of opinion in service of political objectives (Al-Alawi, 2014)

2.1 A Critical Review of Habermas's Concept of the Public Sphere:

This theory has been subject to various critiques, particularly regarding Habermas's use of the concept of the bourgeois public sphere as an ideal model of reference—one that applies only to specific historical periods in European history. This approach, as critics argue, made Habermas's conception of the public sphere too narrow and restrictive. (Bakhit, 2012,p :11)

One of the most prominent critical arguments directed at Habermas is his failure to clearly distinguish between the ideal model of the liberal bourgeois public sphere and its real historical forms as they manifested in European societies. The intellectual abstraction he imposed on this specific model prevented him from recognizing or analyzing alternative, non-liberal, and non-bourgeois forms of public spheres. Indeed, as Nancy Fraser argues, Habermas's neglect of these other forms—and his omission to study and analyze them—ultimately led him to construct a single mental model that embodies only the characteristics of the bourgeois public sphere.

Moreover, since recent debates increasingly focus on plurality, intersection, and competition among multiple public spheres, it is worth shedding light on other possible forms. Among the most commonly cited in the critiques of Habermas is the notion of the "popular" or "plebeian public sphere," which developed in opposition to the bourgeois one. This alternative public sphere was built upon different institutional patterns, such as workers' unions, and was grounded in values of collective solidarity rather than individualistic competition (Abdelmoula, 2015,p :56).

In addition to the popular or plebeian public sphere, Habermas is also criticized for his failure to account for the gender dimension within the

public sphere. Feminist scholarship has extensively addressed this issue, emphasizing the exclusion of women from the bourgeois public sphere and the confinement of their role to the private domain.

The concept of the "counter-public sphere" also appears in the work of Rita Felski, who offers a more complex and nuanced perspective through her discussion of the feminist public sphere, which she considers a form of marginal public space.

A second major axis of critique concerns Habermas's neglect of social movements and their role in shaping public discourse and influencing political life toward democratic change. Social movements are essential for redirecting the agenda of public discourse, emphasizing certain issues, and introducing new ones for debate. Another important contemporary reality to note in this context is the increasingly significant role of the media in modern life, particularly in connecting social movements and facilitating cross-border communication among competing public spheres (Abdelmoula, 2015,p :58).

In the preface to the French translation of Oskar Negt's book "Public Sphere and Experience"—Negt being a former assistant in Habermas's research team and one of his most prominent critics—Alexander Neumann emphasizes that this work "constitutes an alternative theory to the Habermasian concept of the public sphere." What reinforces Negt's argument is, without doubt, the German Revolution and its workers' councils, which in 1918 united nearly all social movements. This raises the question: How can the role of the proletariat in shaping the German public sphere be marginalized? The same applies to the May 1968 movement, which established as major achievements the principles of mandate, election, and representation among the working class and various social groups that supported it. Hence, it is not possible to overlook the roles of social actors in forming the proletarian public sphereas an oppositional sphere, including workers, students, women, and young wage earners. (Al-Alawi, 2014)

Negt argues that the public sphere described by Habermas conceals a sociological shadow zone that lies between the private sphere, the enterprise, and the state-controlled domains. According to him, the notion of the public interest proposed by Habermas remains abstract, as it overlooks the role of citizens' lived experiences in shaping the dynamics of the public sphere and fails to respond to the demands of those it claims to represent. In

the preface to the 2007 French edition, Negt stresses the profound transformations the world is currently undergoing, which prompted him to reopen the debate on pressing global issues, asserting that "the public sphere is not a commodity." He summarizes these transformations under the concept of crisis, noting that the contemporary crisis is not merely an economic one but extends across all dimensions of public life. It is a comprehensive social crisis, encompassing not only the economy but also the reorganization of our value systems—our ways of living, our hopes, the loss of old relationships, and the building of new ones. As Negt explains: "The crisis, as I understand it, involves a profound reorganization of our system of values: our way of conducting life, our hope of living, the loss of old relationships, and the creation of new ties... I am speaking of a crisis of cultural erosion."

This crisis inevitably leads to a state of profound loss of meaning, caused by social conditions, since it affects all aspects of our collective life: values, institutions, society, family, the public sphere, work, and political vision (Al-Alawi, 2017)

Likewise, Nancy Fraser focused her attention on renewing the propositions of Critical Theory by revisiting the views of the first and second generations of the Frankfurt School. Within this framework, she reexamined Habermas's theory of the public sphere, or what she calls the "liberal model of the bourgeois public sphere", in order to clarify its relationship to contemporary critical theory and to analyze its political and philosophical foundations. Her objective was to formulate a new theoretical framework, which she terms the "post-bourgeois public sphere" (l'espace public post-bourgeois).

Fraser contends that the primary issue with the Habermasian concept of the public sphere lies in the relationship between the state and its institutions, on the one hand, and the expressive spaces and citizens' groups, on the other. In the classical model of the state—both socialist and Marxist—the economy is subject to the control of the socialist state, which supervises all citizens. The entanglement and ambiguity that characterize the relationship between state institutions, the public sphere, and civil associations stem from the authoritarian and centralized nature of the socialist state in all these domains, a structure that is neither democratic nor participatory.

The same critique applies to bourgeois democracy, which has constrained the political public sphere within national legal frameworks that

no longer meet the needs of modern citizens. Consequently, both the bourgeois and socialist models have become obsolete for today's forms of collective life in a world that requires a vision of cosmopolitan citizenship—a citizenship that transcends national boundaries. (Al-Alawi, 2017)

1.3 Arab Electronic Journalism and the Formation of the Public Sphere:

This theory can be applied to the study of forms of communication through social networks due to their interactive features, which may lead to further democratization of society through unrestricted access to information and equal participation in discussions via electronic democracy. It also helps to determine the extent to which interactive communication through social media networks supports the idea of discussion arenas and the exchange of opinions and information on various political issues (Bakhit, 2012,p :10).

If the desired model of democracy is the one that grants all citizens the ability to express their orientations, ideas, and culture, as well as the opportunity for mutual understanding, this can only be conceived through public discussions. Consequently, a wide base of people has turned to alternative spaces in the digital sphere. Many advocates of digital democracy link new media to the emergence of the original model of the public sphere, as modern means of communication have enabled a broad audience to communicate, express opinions, and engage in discussion. In fact, activists on social media networks have become event influencers and virtual actors with real power. Thus, the instrumental function of communication media has been transcended toward a communicative function meaning a shift from what is traditional, goal-oriented, and utilitarian to what is higher: the realization of effective communication among various social groups (Shabab, 2019,p :241).

Given that private channels and the Internet are not under state control, they represent a space where the features of a new, horizontal, collective, and non-elitist communicative model emerge particularly through practices related to social expression of opinions and beliefs, and the circulation of discourse within the public sphere. The new status of intimate discourse produced by individuals thus represents an important entry point for understanding the changing forms of social expression (Belkziz, 2013,p :137).

It is undeniable that this form of journalism has played and continues to play an active role in expanding the record of events and incidents, informing a larger number of people about them, and exposing abuses in the management of public affairs, as seen for example in Kuwait, Tunisia, and Algeria. It also pushes social problems to become more visible, which is a fundamental condition for their transformation into public issues, by using new formats for narrating events and experiences in ways that spark the curiosity of audiences/users and draw their attention. Some Arab electronic journalism platforms have contributed to encouraging segments of citizens to express their opinions and have significantly participated in the emergence of a new form of commitment and engagement in political affairs, thereby opening horizons for digital democracy (Laiadi, 2019).

2. Analytical Study:

2.1 Research Issues Raised in Algerian Media Studies Employing the Public Sphere Theory:

The studies concerned with analysis have addressed a set of problems and research issues related to media and communication practices mostly within the field of new media and, to a lesser extent, traditional media. These issues can be summarized as follows:

- The manifestations of the virtual public sphere through interaction within virtual groups on social media platforms (especially Facebook), based on Habermas's conception, and the extent to which these virtual groups contribute to activating public life and shaping an Algerian public sphere that traditional Algerian media have been unable to achieve.
- The nature of the discourses produced by users of social networking sites during their interaction with political events (such as the model of legislative elections).
- The possibility of forming a public sphere in Algeria through audiovisual media, particularly via political talkshows on private and public Algerian television channels, especially in light of audiovisual liberalization and the political context Algeria has experienced in recent years (the popular movement).
- The extent to which Algerian women's Facebook groups are capable of forming marginal public spheres within the virtual space.
- How Algerian academics deal with the opportunities offered by social media networks to discuss public affairs, in addition to attempts to understand the relationship between intellectuals and public opinion within the virtual sphere amid the multiplicity of new media platforms alongside

the growing claims that media technologies have hastened the end or "death" of the public intellectual by weakening their authority in society, as social media has become known as the new refuge of the "dead intellectual" in the public sphere.

- Exploring the symbolic dimensions in visual discourses produced by users, or the symbolism of the Algerian virtual public sphere as reflected through blogs and social media pages during election periods.

2.2 Concepts Used in Algerian Media Studies Employing the Public Sphere Theory:

The research analyzed has employed a set of key concepts directly related to the studied theory as well as to the context in which it was applied. These include:

- The concept of the public sphere / oppositional public sphere / marginal public sphere
- The concept of the virtual public sphere
- The concept of the virtual community
- The concept of social networking sites
- The concept of virtual communication
- The concept of public opinion

2.3 Research Methods and Tools Used in Algerian Media Studies Employing the Public Sphere Theory:

The studies analyzed employed a number of research methods commonly used in media and communication research. The application of the descriptive method varied between quantitative approaches, which utilized techniques such as quantitative content analysis**,** online questionnaires, and electronic interviews**,** followed by the presentation of certain statistical results; and descriptive analytical readings, used by some researchers based on specific indicators derived from the public sphere theory**.**

A clear interest was also noted among researchers in employing the qualitative ethnographic method, particularly netnography or virtual ethnography, which relies primarily on participant observation and requires the researcher's immersion in virtual groups and participation in the discussions taking place within them.

Moreover, attention to qualitative studies was evident through one researcher's use of the discourse analysis method**,** applying the critical discourse analysis approach based on direct observation Another study

applied the semiological (semiotic) analysis method to examine the symbolism of images within the virtual public sphere, while one study adopted a mixed-method approach (quantitative–qualitative)**.**

In addition, some studies employed what is termed the critical reflective approach**,** a qualitative method based on the researcher's scientific observation, relying on available academic and media sources about the studied topic. This approach aims to collect as much data as possible related to the subject, understand the context in which the phenomenon arises, and trace its development. Another study adopted a theoretical research trajectory, which provides a deep and dialectical reading that bridges the intellectual and empirical dimensions of the public sphere.

2.4 Research Findings Reached in Algerian Media Studies Employing the Public Sphere Theory:

Among the most significant findings reached by the analytical studies, we present the following:

There has been a noticeable increase in the focus on public affairs topics within the virtual space, accompanied by a higher rate of interaction and a tendency to showcase the self in these public arenas for discussion, away from censorship. Furthermore, there exists a group of intellectual interlocutors who play an active role through rational debate an encouraging indicator of the formation of an organized public sphere.

In contrast, another study concluded that there is a clear rigidity in discussions within virtual groups, which often turn into verbal battles lacking rational debate based on argumentation, amidst a decline in intellectual integrity and the dominance of egocentrism that contradicts reason and fuels subjectivity and emotionality.

This supports the findings of some studies which confirmed that Arab electronic journalism has shifted from fragmenting its readership to attempting to attract and align them around conflicting viewpoints. In doing so, it has moved toward mobilization, incitement, and exclusion, distancing itself from the path of rational and democratic debate. This stands in contrast to the widely accepted notion that electronic journalism has the potential to create an inclusive public sphere in which all issues and topics can be discussed, and where everyone can access and participate.

The analysis of the dominant discourse in the forums of some electronic newspapers confirms its subjection to a "unity of thought and vision" that excludes any opposing ideas, thereby transforming discussion into a form of self-dialogue. This means that each electronic newspaper creates a closed

sphere limited to its readers who share the same ideas and opinions, reinforcing their belief in the correctness of their views and even pushing them toward greater rigidity in holding them. Thus, it is closer to forming a shared enclave rather than a true public sphere (Laiadi, 2019)

The findings of analytical studies have demonstrated the emergence of a virtual public sphere in which both the official and counter spheres are in conflict, with the latter (the oppositional sphere) lacking rational argumentation and failing to show clear support for the opposing group it represents.

The results concerning the possibility of forming a public sphere in Algeria through public and private media, as well as through political talk shows, have yielded several important indicators, such as the lack of commitment to diversity and plurality in discussing public affairs, the limited treatment of major public issues that require open debate, and the prevalence of trivial and divisive topics. According to another study, this is attributed to a significant lack of professionalism in Algeria's audiovisual sector, which hinders the creation of a participatory and free public sphere. This can only be achieved through a genuine political will to open a participatory democratic space for all actors and by building a socio-media and professional system based on clear legislation and a regulatory authority that ensures the public's right to information while separating *advertising* from *news reporting.*

The virtual public sphere in Algeria can be interpreted as a social text in which visible symbolisms appear through rhetorical forms such as *metonymy*, *metaphor*, and *irony*, which draw upon the symbols of collective memory to transform it into a semiotic spac

2.5 A Critical Evaluative Perspective on Algerian Media Research Employing the Public Sphere Theory:

Through our reading and analysis of a sample of Algerian media studies that have employed the Public Sphere Theory, by applying its foundational concepts to various topics related to the realities of media and communication practices in Algeria whether at the level of the audience/users, the nature of discourses and messages produced, or even at the level of professional practice and its relationship to the formation of a public sphere that responds to contemporary changes and embraces all segments of society by involving them in discussions of public affairs in a way that promotes participatory democracy and drives development and

progress across various fields this analytical review has led to several key indicators concerning the current state of Algerian media research, which can be summarized as follows:

- Many studies have sought to overcome the theoretical and cognitive limitations of traditional theories that have long dominated the field of media and communication research, by reviving and recontextualizing Jürgen Habermas's Public Sphere Theory, These efforts aimed to adapt and localize the theory's premises given its purely Western origin to the Algerian socio-cultural context.
- This has driven such research to break away from the prevailing patterns in media and communication studies, particularly in the field of new media**,** which now requires renewed epistemological and methodological tools capable of exploring its depth and clarifying its increasingly fragmented contours as a result of rapid technological advancement.
- The application of this theory in some media and communication studies has provided a new and dynamic perspective for interpreting communicative phenomena in the context of new media, particularly by prioritizing the study of user-generated content, which reflects diverse and profound representations and perceptions of social, political, and economic realities**,** as well as the nature of communicative practices among individuals and the process of social and cultural interaction between them.
- The results of the analysis confirmed a trend among a number of Algerian researchers toward incorporating newly developed research methods and tools to keep pace with the study of virtual phenomena. Among the most important are: virtual surveys, electronic questionnaires and interviews, the netnographic (or virtual ethnography) method, and electronic discourse analysis. However, some of these methods were employed superficially and without a clear scientific framework, with only the name of the method being apparent. Furthermore, there was a lack of elaboration on key concepts—such as the marginal public sphere and an absence of in-depth analysis of the types of arguments used within the studied virtual spaces. Added to this was the dominance of descriptive and narrative approaches, focusing mainly on commenting on and critiquing content, while excluding quantitative approaches in data analysis and presentation.

The media studies under analysis tended to approach the concept of the virtual public sphere with a somewhat optimistic tone, viewing it as the

only refuge and alternative outlet for individuals to express their social and political repression. However, this concept has been and continues to be subject to significant criticism and scrutiny from several scholars in the field. They argue that the construction of a collective virtual sphere is inherently linked to the creation of a real-world meeting space, since the virtual sphere merely provides individuals with a free space for expression and serves as an arena for discussion and the convergence of ideas and perspectives among active participants. Thus, it facilitates and accelerates possibilities for networking and encounters in real life, but it is not the direct cause of societal uprisings, nor does it necessarily indicate a renewal or growth of political consciousness within society, or a shift toward operating outside traditional institutions such as political parties, associations, and unions.

In fact, the opposite is true: the first Facebook groups were primarily composed of young people already experienced in social and political activism, and those who transitioned from virtual spaces to field action were already motivated by a prior intention to engage in political and social work. Moreover, active political and civil organizations have played a direct role in mobilizing their members, enhancing communication, and strengthening coordination and networking (Belkziz, 2013)

As is clearly evident in most Arab countries, including Algeria, democracy based on media freedom and the use of public spaces is capable of fostering political awareness among members of society.

This, in turn, enables civil society to monitor authority by overseeing elected councils, at least at the local level. Such practices known as participatory democracy, exemplified by neighborhood committees that serve as alternative local councils are measures that can strengthen democratic practice and promote the proper use of deliberative democracy, which is closer to the liberal conception than to the republican one.

Moreover, the ideal models related to media, theatre, and civil society operating within public spaces have proven to be framed by democratic principles.

These models have shaped the Habermasian logic that supports German particularity, especially in the field of rights. Consequently, it becomes necessary to expand the scope of associative movements and encourage public debate within locally designated spaces (such as neighborhood committees and local councils), while also lifting

restrictions on media practice in order to achieve genuine democratic engagement in guiding authority and realizing justice, which has always been the ultimate goal of every philosophical or literary endeavor (Unknown, n.d)

Conclusion:

The scientific studies analyzed in this work have contributed to highlighting numerous aspects surrounding the presence of users in the virtual space through the application of the Public Sphere Theory and its accompanying contemporary critical approaches. This has helped provide a clear picture of communicative and media phenomena in their digital dimension, steering us away from pre-established theoretical assumptions and inherited methodological frameworks.

This leads us to call upon researchers and practitioners in the field to further engage in the activation of new research methods, tools, and theories within this area of knowledge such as focusing on the Analysis of Social Networks (Social Networks Analysis), both as a theory and a method, given its importance in tracing and interpreting the trajectories of online discourses. Likewise, there is a need to reintegrate Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a methodological tool, due to its effectiveness in accessing and uncovering the deep structures of discourse, in order to reach broader interpretations of communicative phenomena in their complex digital dimensions.

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