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ScienceDirect

Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 155 (2014) 1 – 3

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

The International Conference on Communication and Media 2014 (i-COME'14), 18-20 October
2014, Langkawi, MALAYSIA

Preface: Communication, Empowerment and Governance: The 21st Century Enigma



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Communication in the 21st century is transforming rapidly through the globalization of organizations and digital technologies. Communication not only shapes organizational governance and empowerment but also influences our way of thinking. Due to these twin forces, the roles of communication must be explored in the context of organizational governance and its impact on media and society.

The economic crisis that hit East Asian countries just before the turn of the 21st century and Europe a decade or so later has proven to be a transformative factor triggering local conflict and change (e.g., leadership transitions and uneven liberalization of global economic policies, among others) and creating new organizing processes forcing disparate countries together in closer interactions. In these closer interactions, pressures for conformity and adherence to institutional norms have become a manifest. But the basic clash between western-based conceptions of liberal economic regionalism and the Asian value of mercantilism has created conflicts making future cooperation more difficult. Situations exemplifying this can be found around the globe in very different contexts, even as it is still somewhat surprising to come across the application of similar methodologies in different scenarios and backgrounds.

In addressing events such as the economic crisis that befell the East Asian countries, this conference discusses the crucial concerns (and their potential solutions) related to the emergence, interconnected elements from various communication contexts, organizational government perspectives and empowerment that influence our way of thinking in the context of the basic clash between Western-based conceptions of liberal economic regionalism and the Asian value of mercantilism.

The conference provides a broad platform for discourse on the emergence and interconnected issues shaped by the meaning of communication, governance and empowerment as understood in the Asia-Pacific region as well as other parts of the world. The 2014 theme “Communication, Empowerment and Governance: The 21st Century Enigma” is aimed toward advancing scholarships in the field of communication which would benefit communities

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that are experiencing change.

This volume comprises papers that were presented at the 4th International Conference on Communication and Media (i-COME'14) which was held in Langkawi Island, from the 18 to 20 October 2014. Organised by the Communication Department, School of Multimedia Technology and Communication, Universiti Utara Malaysia, this conference was attended by 200 participants from 20 countries, including those from Asia, Europe, Africa and Australia.

As guest editors of the conference proceedings, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the members of the scientific committee, reviewers and contributors to this volume for their goodwill, support and patience in revising their papers. We are also grateful to the committee members of the i-COME'14 who have assisted us in bringing this volume to fruition.

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