

the food security in the Algerian specialized news websites
- Analytical study on Al Filaha news website-

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Abstract: The media specialized in agriculture are rare in Algeria despite their contribution to the sustainable development. With the technological development and emergence of websites, al Filaha News website emerged as a specialized website that focuses on agriculture and its relevant issues, such as climate change and food security, to target the people interested in agriculture. This study aims at knowing how the website treats the question of food security. In so doing, we used the descriptive method and content analysis through surveying the website publications and analyzing its content of 10 months. Findings show that the website did not explicitly and directly handle the question of food security; rather, it implicitly tackled it in its posts. Besides, it focused on the strategies that must be promoted to achieve food security according to the state orientations, more than focusing on the threats it faces.

Keywords: food security; specialized media; agricultural media; sustainable media; electronic news websites.

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I. Introduction :

The sustainable media are a good partner for the socioeconomic development, as their content helps protect the environment and make control to achieve transparency and support the social responsibility (McQuail, 2010, p. 420). The role of media in development is one of the most discussed topics due to the complexities of the social, economic, and environmental life, such as the spread of epidemics, the climate change, and the food insecurity that affect the whole world.

The problematic of food security is one the preoccupations, mainly in the low-income states. The need to focus on this question increased during and after Covid-19 era, as the food insecurity index increased with 30% between the average and sharp levels (Crises, 2024). Therefore, the topic drew much attention all over the world, and increased interest in the contribution of media to the sustainable development.

The importance of media in handling the food security issues lies within the exact and unbiased coverage. In this context, studies show that the media have a vital role in shaping the consumers' behaviors and perceptions (Modiba & Gujo, 2024), and that handling this question helps disseminate stability and support the environmental development through inciting for facing the different environmental, natural, and agricultural factors that threaten the food sufficiency. The media outlets have a key role in raising the audience awareness provided that they understand the food security issues, mainly those related to agriculture and nutrition, which are technical topics that must be simplified and delivered as news to the audience (Koelebun, 2011).

1. The study problematic:

In the field of food security, Algeria has adopted diverse policies to achieve it. It focused on the agricultural production and reliance on the local production instead of imports based on the National Agricultural Development Plan after 2000. Later in 2022, many projects were executed to support the agricultural sector, the cereals production, the Sahara agriculture, and irrigation and storage (Benkheznadji, 2024). These efforts were accompanied by media coverage through specialized programs and articles in the press, radio, and TV. In this regard, thanks to the technological development, Al Filaha news website (<https://elfilahanews.dz>) was launched in 2020 as the first website specialized in agriculture and its relevant issues. Based on what was said, this study sheds light on the experience of electronic press specialized in agriculture, and on how its treats the food security issues.

- The main question:

How did the specialized website “Al Filaha news” handle the food security issues in Algeria?

Sub-questions:

- What are the formal elements adopted by Al Filaha news website in presenting the food security issues in Algeria?

- What are the editorial templates used by Al Filaha news website in handling the food security issues in Algeria?
- What are the food security topics Al Filaha news website focused on?
- What are the food security strategies Al Filaha news website focused on?

2. The study concepts:

The sustainable media: this concept covers the information that aims at balancing the freedom of expression and the social responsibility to raise awareness about the sustainable development issues (Douglas, 2016, p. 228). The sustainable media focus on the sustainable development questions without bias to spread the truth. However, they consider their responsibility towards the individual and the society. In addition, the concept includes a set of media practices that target the positive change to achieve the sustainable development needs (Scholtz & Steiner, 2015).

The agricultural media: The concept is about the information that aims at raising the farmers' awareness about the new methods of the agricultural work to achieve the rural development and production increase (FAO, agricultural extension and communication, 2014). From a developmental perspective, it is about the specialized media that report agricultural news and the modern methods in agriculture, with focus on increasing the competencies and contribution to the achievement of the food security and sustainable development (FAO, the state of food insecurity in the world, 2006).

The food security: According to FAO, the food security is the individual's access to a secure nutritional food that satisfies his needs. The food must be diverse and suit the desires for a vital healthy life (FAO, 2006).

II- The study method and data collection tools:

1. The method:

We used the descriptive method that aims at qualitatively and quantitatively monitoring a given phenomenon in a given period, or periods, to find out more about the content and reach results and suggestions that help understand and improve the reality (Aliane & Mohamed, 2000, p. 43). It aims at collecting, organizing, classifying, describing, and analyzing the necessary data and information, the causes of the phenomenon, and the factors that control it. In addition, it allows the exact description of the study variables and the diagnosis of reality as it is, since we can collect the sufficient information on food security from the specialized website Al Filaha news. Moreover, it permits the quantitative and qualitative expression of the variables to show the size, dimensions, and correlation of the phenomenon with the others.

2. Data collection tools:

They are tools used by the author in collecting information on his topic, making the study, and achieving the target results. In this regard, the researcher must choose a main tool that suits the methodology of the study (Nachebn 2007, p. 148). To achieve the main goal of the study and collect the necessary information, we relied on content analysis. Claude Krinderf defines content analysis

as one of the research methods used in analyzing the media content to reach correct and consistent conclusions (Taima, 1987, p. 23).

Regarding our study, the content analysis allows us to exactly and objectively describe the media coverage of the food security in Algeria by Al Filaha news through analyzing the different contents and focusing on the main strategies and policies adopted to achieve the goal. This helps understand how the websites in general tackle the food security to find exact and objective conclusions and answer the study problematic.

The analysis units: We relied on the unity of the idea, namely the idea of food security.

Analysis categories:

The form categories: We relied on the category of headlines, images type, and content presentation style.

The content categories: we relied on the categories of the source, the food security topics, the threats, and the food security strategies.

3. The study sample:

The sample is part of the study population from which the field data are collected. It represents a percentage of the population to allow generalizing the results on the whole population (Zerouati, p. 267). In this study, we used the survey to focus on the 11 posts of Al Filaha news from 01/01/2024 to 30/10/2024. This method allows focusing on all the research units and categories, and, thus, answering the study problematic and questions to achieve the target goals.

III- Discussion and analysis of the study results:

Table 01: The types of the titles of the posts that handled the food security on Al Filaha news

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Headlines	98	100
Sebheadline	00	00
Kickers	00	00
Total	98	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the nature of titles of the posts that handle the food security on Al Filaha news. In this regard, the website basically deals with headlines in all its posts due to its scope, i.e., the agricultural sector.

Table 02: The type of images related to the food security on Al Filaha news

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Thematic images	44	44.90
Personal images	54	55.10
Total	98	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the category of images that accompany the posts on food security on Al Filaha news. In this regard, the website basically deals with personal images (55.10%) and thematic ones (44.90%). In presenting news, it uses personal fixed images supported by the information related to the topic. Most of the images are pictures of known figures, such as the Minister of Agriculture, the President of the Republic, and economic partners of the sector. As for the thematic images, the website supports the agriculture news with images that express the content, such as agricultural products, agricultural lands, fruits and vegetables markets, etc.

Table 03: The method of presenting the content on food security on Al Filaha news

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Text	00	00
Image	00	00
Video	00	00
Text+ image	98	100
Text + video	00	00
URL	00	00
Text+ image+ URL	00	00

Text+ video+ URL	00	00
Live broadcast	00	00
Total	98	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the methods of presenting the contents on food security on Al Filaha news. In this context, the website basically and at 100% uses text+ image in all its posts during the study period, with no traces of the other categories despite their importance in allowing the reader to have more information, and in providing the possibility of downloading videos to be watched later.

Table 04: the source of the information that deal with food security posted on Al Filaha news

Category	Frequency	Percentage
The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	62	63.27
Farmers or citizens	01	1.02
Different media outlets	16	16.32
Institutions related to the sector	19	19.39
Total	98	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the sources of the information that deals with food security posts on Al Filaha news. In this context, most of the information (63.27%) come from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 19.39% from the institutions related to the sector, 16.32% from different media outlets, and 1.02% from farmers or citizens. The website basically relies on official sources, namely the Ministry of Agriculture and the related institutions, such as the General Union of the Algerian Farmers; the Committee of Agriculture, Fishing, and Environment Protection; and the National Office for Agricultural Lands. These institutions add credibility to the information and increase their readability. Therefore, the website can be one of the important official websites on agriculture news in the light of the absence of specialized websites, mainly that the website allows its users to share its posts on social media. As for the information from the different media outlets, they are about the important decisions of the President during the periodical meetings with the media outlets.

Table 05: The most handled topics on food security on Al Filaha news

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Topics on the water resources	02	2.04
The production of goods and food products	24	24.49
The agricultural policy	39	39.79
The food industry	33	33.68
Total	100	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the most handled topics on food security on Al Filaha news. In this regard, the highest rate (39.79%) of posts during the study period is about the agricultural policy, 33.68% is on the food industry, 2.49% is on the production of goods and food products, and 2.04% is on the topics of water resources. Algeria aims at achieving food security and considers it one of its main goals because it is primarily related to the economic side. The food security cannot be achieved without ability to provide the necessary needs and adopt given policies. During the study period, Algeria focused on agricultural policies, which pushed the website to shed light on them in the form of reports and news to the readers.

Table 06: The food security topics related to water resources

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
The modern irrigation technologies	02	100
Rationalizing the water consumption	00	00
The availability and access to sufficient water resources	00	00
The news of dams and irrigation systems	00	00
Total	02	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the food security topics related to water resources. In this regard, the website 100% focuses on posting information on the modern irrigation technologies. The water resources are necessary for achieving food security, as they are needed for improving the agricultural quality, the achievement of the sustainable development, and the suitability of the ecosystems. The availability of water reduces many problems that affect the agricultural production, such as drought and desertification. Thus, investment in the water infrastructure is as important as investment in the other vital sectors. In this context, it is necessary to adopt efficient irrigation techniques and foster the use of water in the institutions and by the individuals through providing clean water. These vital measures aim at providing food products and decreasing food imports. The focus of the website was on the technology used in irrigation, in accordance with the state plans to rely on modern technologies, in a time where the irrigation and lack of water issues are neglected.

Table 07: The topics related to the food products posted on Al Filaha news

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
The products' prices	04	16.67
The availability of foreign and local products	14	58.33
The citizen access to products	04	16.67
The safe use of the products	02	8.33
Total	24	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the topics related on the food products posted on Al Filaha news. In this context, 58.33% of the topics covered the availability of foreign and local products, 16.67% covered the products' prices and the citizen access to products, while 8.33% of the topics were about the safe use of the products. The website basically focuses on the availability of food products for the citizen through discussing issues about the rarity of some products, the availability of some others in the local markets, and the state efforts to fight the illegal practices of the traders through imposing sanctions. The permanent availability of food products to the citizens with respect of the diversity, quality, safe use, and purchasing power is one of the basic requirements of food security.

Table 08: The topics related to the agricultural wealth

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
The techniques, methods, and times of agricultural harvest	08	20.51
The modern technology used in the agricultural sector	14	35.90
The national successful agricultural experiences	15	38.47
Agricultural recommendations and advice	02	5.12
Total	39	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the topics related to the agricultural wealth. In this regard, the website devoted 38.47% of its topics to cover the national successful agricultural experiences, **35.90%** to speak about the modern technology used in the agricultural sector, 20.51% to cover the techniques, methods, and times of agricultural harvest, and 5.12% to provide agricultural recommendations and advice for the farmers.

The Agricultural sector is the backbone of the other sectors. Its success reflects the state's ability to achieve self-sufficiency, bridge the food gap, and promote the concept of food security. After independence, Algeria witnessed a big development in agriculture thanks to the adoption of efficient strategies that allowed the farmers and the agricultural companies to develop and innovate through providing the necessary needs. This is covered by the website through its presentation of the successful local experiences and the focus on transforming the Algerian desert into a rich and important agricultural resource. These topics covered by the website encourage and motivate the citizens to invest in agriculture to apply some ideas that benefit the society and help achieve food security. Besides, the website focuses on the modern techniques and technologies used in agriculture to develop it and yield the target results, while reminding the farmers of the suitable harvest times.

Table 09: the topics on the food industry

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
The news of the productive and industrial national companies	14	42.42
The strategies used in the industrial sector	06	18.19
Official decisions	13	39.39
total	33	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the topics on the food industry covered by the website. In this regard, 42.42% of the topics revolve around the news of the productive and industrial national companies, 39.39% are on the official decisions, while 18.19% shed light on the strategies used in the industrial sector. The website basically focused on the news of the productive and industrial national companies. In this context, the Algerian-Qatari partnership got a good share of the topics to discuss the establishment of the milk company; in addition to the main visits and periodical meetings that resulted in official decisions that serve the sector, mainly those issued by the Prime minister, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural development, and the President of the Republic in their meetings with the media outlets.

Table 10: the difficulties faced by Algeria in achieving food security

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Climate change	01	50
Natural threats	01	50
Political threats	00	00
Total	2	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the difficulties faced by Algeria in achieving food security. The website focused half of its topics to the climate change and the other half to the natural threats that

hinder the achievement of food security. However, it did not cover the political threats, unless in one post during the study period that discussed the discourse of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural development in one of the UN Council meetings on 13 February 2024 in New York, where he presented the Algerian experience in facing the challenges of climate change and natural threats that affect the achievement of food security. However, Algeria works to ensure the development and permanence of the food systems and build a sustainable agricultural sector that can face the resulting challenges through the development of the strategic branches, the integration of the renewable energies in the agricultural sector, the valorization of the genetic resources, and the development of the species that resist the climatic changes.

Table 11: The food security strategies covered by Al Filaha news

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
The sustainable agricultural development strategy	36	36.73
Supporting the agricultural investment	36	36.73
The sustainable development of the water resources	02	2.04
The policy of pricing and food production	24	24.49
Total	98	100

Source: Prepared by the researchers

The table shows the food security strategies adopted by Algeria to achieve food security, which were covered by Al Filaha news. In this regard, the website equally focused on the sustainable agricultural development strategy and on supporting the agricultural investment, with a rate of 36.73%. Besides, 24.49% of the posts were on the policy of pricing and food production, while 2.04% were on the sustainable agricultural development strategy. From the posts of the website, we deduce a set of strategies adopted by Algeria to achieve food security, namely:

Regarding the sustainable development of water resources, Algeria work to:

- Develop the irrigation systems that save water.
- Grant license to dig wells.
- Develop and widen the dams.

- Support diggings wells to foster the productive abilities and achieve food security.

As for the strategies of the suitable agricultural development and supporting the agricultural investment, the state used strategies that aim at boosting the state ability to achieve food security, as seen in the posts of the website. They can be stated as follows:

- Widening the surfaces of production.
- Modernizing agriculture and fostering the concept of food security.
- Providing the material and technical support mechanisms to encourage the producers and investors.
- Inciting for the agricultural investment in strategies.
- Encouraging partnership in the agricultural production.
- Supporting investment and exports outside the hydrocarbons.
- Taking advantage of technology to improve the crops of the strategic plantations.
- Spreading the aquaculture through awareness campaigns about investment in the field.
- Focusing on the agricultural general census to know the national abilities and identify the needs to take the correct decisions based on exact scientific data.

As for the pricing and food production policy, the website focused on:

- The use of the prices ceiling system.
- Increasing control through placing the food, agricultural products, and medicines at the top of priorities.
- Reviewing the method of exploiting the import licenses through determining the deadlines according to the goals of the public company in a way that suits the market needs.

V. The study results:

- In posting its news, the website highly relies on official sources, namely the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development, agricultural institutions, and other media outlets. Its focus on linking the news to their real sources adds credibility and increases trust of the readers, mainly that the website is devoted to one field, making it a source of information for the visitors.
- The analytical study shows that the news editor in the website relies on a journalistic writing when dealing with the food security topics. In this regard, he highly relies on the news and reports, and writes headlines to most of the posts. Moreover, he supports the posts with fixed images that show personal photos of known figures, such as the Minister of Agriculture and economic partners, and thematic images that express the news, such as the images of food products, markets, and agricultural lands. In this context, the image may help convey the information, add aestheticism, and push the reader to know more about the topic.
- The website focuses on topics related to the agricultural sector, such as the latest news and decisions, the food prices, the strategies, the problems' solutions, the successful agricultural experiences, etc.

- The analytical study shows that the website did not directly tackle the food security, as the expression appeared only in two posts during the study period. However, 98 posts indirectly handled topics related to the food security dimensions, namely the water resources, the production of food, the agricultural policy, and the industrial policy to confirm the correlation of these dimensions with the achievement of food security in Algeria.
- Despite the importance of the water resources and their relation with the food security, the website did not sufficiently focus on them. In this context, water security influences food security in any state, as the inability to provide water hinders the self-sufficiency, and the existence of a clear policy to manage the water system is a positive step towards food security.
- The website focused on the news of food products, mainly those on the state provision of the local and foreign products, to raise the issues of the scarcity of some products and show the state efforts to fight the illegal practices of the traders and confirm its will to satisfy the food needs respecting the quality and quantity, taking into account the purchasing power.
- The website talked about the strategies adopted by the state to achieve food security and linked them to different dimensions. These strategies include:
 - Supporting and encouraging the farmers and motivating the industrial companies to increase the productivity, diversify the products, focus on the quality, and respect the purchasing power of the individuals.
 - Providing facilitations to lift up the agricultural and industrial sectors through providing the necessary potentials to provide and buy the seeds and modern machinery that helps produce, store, package, and market, mainly the seasonal products.
 - Taking advantage of the agricultural lands and human potentials through investment in the agricultural sector. This manifests in making conventions and partnerships with national and foreign pioneering companies.
 - Reducing the imports and encouraging the local products through paving the way for farmers and agricultural investors to apply their projects with the state full support.
- The climate change increases the threats because the increase of the temperature, change of the weather, and increase of the sea level hinder the agricultural production. Therefore, Algeria aims at providing all the conditions to ensure the sustainability of the food system and build a sustainable agriculture through the strategic development, integration of the renewable energies in agriculture, valorization of the genetic resources, and development of the species that resist the climate change. In addition, the state widens the Green Dam to mitigate desertification, land degradation, storms, and warm gases.

VI. Conclusion:

Our findings show that Al Filaha news website focuses on food security through agriculture topics, as it did not directly speak about it because the question of food security is still raised when talking about the need to rely on the local production, reduce imports, and develop agriculture, instead of discussing the question of food security as a crisis, compared to the African states or the other low-income ones. The website uses the reports and news more than analysis. This justifies its

coverage of the state food security policy without comments and criticism, with reliance on official sources, such as the President of the Republic and the Minister of Agriculture.

The website neglects the threats and problems that face food security, and adopts the motivation style through presenting the successful agricultural experiences more than focusing on the threats and risks that endanger the food security, mainly that Algeria is still out of the crisis. The journalistic coverage of the sustainable development topics must be unbiased, transparent, free, and socially

-responsible. Therefore, the specialized media must focus on the positive and negative aspects of the sustainable development in a balanced way to integrate the citizen in the process of sustainable development.

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