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***The Criteria of ethics and deontology during the coverage of the
legislative elections by the Algerian TV channels.
Comparative analytical study of the media coverage of the referendum to
amend the Algerian Constitution 2020.***

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Abstract:

This study intended as a research on the aspects of ethics and deontology through which can demonstrate the role of information on the political scene as an essential vector of the Algerian popular movement known as (HIRAK). Which demanded a change radical in several areas including information; or on the contrary increase control over information by implementing criteria for regulating information activity. This led us to deal with this issue on the Algerian political scene; who is experiencing a movement and a situation that seem conjectural in the image of what is happening in the Arab world; Or should it be considered as saving in the process of natural political changes that nations are experiencing today.

Keywords: *Ethics, Deontology, News coverage, TV Channels, Elections*

I. INTRODUCTION

Television remains the most dominant and influential news medium according to facts, especially during major events which indicates that television media is still important during wars, disasters, revolutions, coups, and elections in particular, despite modern technological development and a large number of social network users in normal times.

Television remains the most dominant and influential news medium according to facts, especially during major events which indicates that television media is still important during wars, disasters, revolutions, coups, and elections in particular, despite modern technological development and a large number of social network users in normal times.

On another level, analysis of media content considered as one of the most used research methods in media studies, and its importance comes from the importance of the media message itself because it is the main media product in the communication process, through which the communicator aims to make the desired impact. Media studies have increased recently in analyzing the content of communications and media messages such as newspapers, magazines, books, leaflets, radio and television programs, and cinema, to measure the role of the sender and the message in bringing changes, knowing its effectiveness regarding the fact that content analysis are one way of measuring public opinion. Content analysis use to determine the content of the media's messages to determine the importance of different issues and topics by knowing the quantity and type of media coverage.

Media discourse or the content of mass media constitutes one of the most important sources in the formation of political, economic, social, and cultural frameworks for the public by briefing them on events in society. Mass media plays a role in providing information on national and international issues and events, according to its professional and ethical standards, which helps the public to understand the course of main events and form opinions and trends, which make decisions that control its behavior.

Within this framework, the referendum on the amendment to the Algerian Constitution held on November/01/2020 constitutes a major event in the successive political events that have taken place in Algeria since the beginning of 2019. If we look at the impact of referendum, it may be constitutive that would create a new constitution for the country; but if we look at the referendum in terms of the obligation, it may be a mandatory referendum, meaning that the State is obliged to hold a general referendum regarding the subject of the amendment or optional referendum between amending the Constitution through Parliament or hold a public referendum. However, these types of referendums will not succeed unless they meet several conditions, which the most important are:

1. Providing the right atmosphere for holding the referendum, implies that the referendum should be held in a democratic environment with a high degree of transparency, impartiality, and neutrality apart from means that might affect the credibility of the referendum results.
2. Providing a good quality of political culture among the population that allows a shared public opinion to avoid methods that might lead to disrespecting public interests, which is primarily the role of various media constituting a fundamental space of expression.

The most important strengths of the referendum method are that it is a clear picture of direct democracy, which results to:

1. Engaging citizens in the country's political process, thus instilling a high sense of responsibility and concern for obedience, as a matter of priority, to the laws which they

have contributed to its establishment.

2. The referendum enshrines the principle of people's sovereignty by invoking the people and taking their opinion on a particular subject.
3. The referendum develops a citizen's legal culture because involvement in the legislative process requires learning about the legal principles that enable the right expression of opinion.

The positive outcomes of the referendum prompt us to say that the "New Algeria", which is intended to be a democracy, must adopt the method of the referendum in several situations. The most important of which is to amend the Constitution. If we entrust the Constitution to the people, it would be preferable to amend the Constitution in the same manner as the referendum; there is no better system than taking into account the public opinion since they have inherent jurisdiction in amending the Constitution, as well as an important safeguard against amending the Constitution according to individual wishes or certain external or internal influences that are not in the people's interest.

The forthcoming Constitution "1st November Constitution" represents a symbol of following through with the glorious principles of the Algerian Revolution, after the technical and administrative preparation phase on the national level and with the final version of the new draft constitution, which underwent amendments in response to proposals by political parties, civil society, national and academic personalities putting an end to several points that have sparked controversy during the public reading of the first draft, the current phase of marketing and explaining the new Constitution (through the media) comes as a bet to restore public trust by adopting a long-term Constitution and reckoning with past constitutional errors and gaps, also not to link this Constitution to persons but to the Algerian State and its people.

Analysis Mechanism :

Our analytic approach to monitoring Algerian television channels during the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum, depends on a comparative qualitative analysis of different types of audio-visual materials for public and private channels, over the promotion period of the referendum on the draft amendment of the 2020 Constitution, from October 9th, 2020, in which the analysis included the following channels: (Canal Algérie, terrestrial channel, A3 channel, Ennahar TV, El Djazairia One, Echorouk TV, Beur TV, El Hayat TV).

Journalistic Type of audio-visual:

The information material on which we have relied since the beginning of the promotion period was based on certain audiovisual types and evolved mainly around:

1- **Direct Speech:** These are interventions by political figures and civil society groups received in the studio or through various recordings.

2- **Television Report:** It includes all reports prepared and presented during fixed hour newsletters or special television programs about the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum.

3- **Television Programs:** All fixed or special programs that are concerned with discussing the subject of the amendment of the Constitution by hosting different political and national figures and all spheres of civil society.

Categories of analysis:

In our analytical approach, we relied on several categories and indicators to assess the television media coverage of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum, which was based on the following categories:

- 1- **Ethical Standards:** Respecting people's reputation, avoiding insult and slander, respecting State symbols, and respecting fundamental national values;

- 2- **Professional Standards:** Respecting the standards of recording and broadcasting, and the neutrality of journalistic commentaries.
- 3- **Guests Variety:** The diversity of guests is necessary to present views on the constitutional amendment and to consolidate the principle of freedom of opinion and expression and the democracy of the media represented by television channels.
- 4- **The Use of National Languages:** The use of national languages is an indication of respect for national values and a reflection of the media's respect. Linguistic diversity also ensures that the media message of different social groups is broadened in every possible national language.
- 5- **Opinion Polls & Audience Measurement:** Referendum importance requires that television coverage be accompanied by opinion polls and audiences measurement of channels to monitor electoral participation, evaluate coverage, and activate their performances.
- 6- **Time Balance:** Time balance among guests is the basis for establishing the principle of equality and freedom of opinion and expression.

In addition to these categories, we have relied, in our analytical approach, on a comparison among television channels that covered the constitutional amendment referendum that we have reviewed, both between public and private channels and between private channels themselves.

Applying this analytical comparative approach based on a comprehensive survey of the total number of television programs that were concerned with media coverage of the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum allows us to achieve the following objectives:

- Extent to which Algerian channels were committed to professional standards in the coverage of the referendum's promotional campaign.
- The extent to which Algerian channels were committed to ethical standards in the coverage of the referendum's promotional campaign.
- Identify the nature of the guests hosted by these channels to explain and interpret the articles of the Constitution.
- The extent to which channels respect national values.
- The extent to which channels respect national symbols.
- The extent to which channels respect people's reputation.
- Channels' commitment to neutrality in journalistic commentaries.
- The extent to which channels rely on opinion polls given its importance on such occasions (elections, referendum).
- Comparison of media coverage among Algerian channels.

Finally, this comparative analytical approach enables us to assess the television follow-up of Algerian channels to the Constitution Amendment Referendum 2020, to see the strengths and weaknesses of this coverage and highlight the deficiencies to improve subsequently and focus on the scientific and strategic aspects of media coverage so that it can reach its objectives.

Table 1: Television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on Oct/09/2020

Ch annel	(ES)				(PS)		GV)	se NL	P/ M	T ime Balance
Ca										+

nal Algérie										
ter restrial channel										+
A3 channel										+
En nahar TV										x
El Djazairia One										x
Ech orouk TV										x
Be ur TV										x
El Hayat TV										x
El bilad										x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ethical Standards (ES): 1/Respecting people's reputation 2/avoiding insult and slander 3/respecting State symbols respecting 4/fundamental national values. ➤ Professional Standards (PS): 1/Respecting the standards of recording and broadcasting 2/neutrality of journalistic commentaries ➤ Guests Variety (GV) ➤ The Use of National Languages (Use NL) ➤ Opinion Polls & Audience Measurement (OP/AM) ➤ Time Balance (TB) 										

From the above table regarding Television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on 10/09/2020, it appears that the three public channels (terrestrial, A3, and Canal Algérie), are the most interested and committed to following up and giving the event the utmost importance in media coverage, it is the principle of public service to which these channels adhere. The public service¹ is manifested through various media programs and content broadcast by media institutions in different forms and templates, through which they seek to serve their audiences and meet their needs, as a service for the whole society and public benefit, researchers have developed a set of basic standards, considering them as fundamental principles of public service (continuity, gratuitously, equality, inclusiveness, and effectiveness...) as the noblest functions and services provided by media organizations, they are the essence of media practice, based on which they are professional, and through which audience trust is built.

From another perspective, public channels respected the required ethical and professional standards, and have ensured diversity in guests from political and academic

¹ . Karen DONDERS, Public service media in Europe, law, theory and practice, 1st edition, published by Routledge, June 2021.

personalities and various members of civil society, while ensuring a time balance between guests to express their views and positions and explain the different articles of the Constitution to the public. However, what is noted for public channels is that they do not rely fully on opinion polls despite their importance during these occasions.

As for private channels, Numedia News did not provide any coverage or follow-up to the promotional campaign for the 2020 referendum, while the six channels (Ennahar TV, El Djazairia One, Echorouk TV, Beur TV, El Bilad TV, and El Hayat TV) provided coverage distinguished by respect for national values and neutrality of journalistic commentaries, and Sunrise Channel distinguished by respect for people's reputation and respect for national symbols compared to the country's channels, Algeria and life TV which did not commit to it, we also recorded the accreditation of four channels (El Djazairia One, El Bilad TV, Echorouk TV, and El Hayat TV) to probe views on TV follow-up which is very important for the event and the citizen. We must emphasize the importance of opinion polls and their ability to influence public opinion and to know its political, cultural, and social tendencies and choices, on the one hand, and provide them with data of utmost importance on the other. To contribute to the identification of the directions of the reform and development compass, opinion polls have been transformed into an essential mechanism for the harmonization of policy indicators and trends in democratic countries and others and have become a serious interaction between the country's authority and political actors through opportunities to discuss crucial issues and formulate policies in various areas of political, economic, social and cultural life in a transparent and democratic framework. This is what Algeria needs not only through television channels but also through specialized centers for probing views and opinion polls².

Regarding the type of audio-visual material adopted by different channels in their television monitoring of the 2020 amendment referendum, it was noted that all channels did not dedicate a television program to the referendum follow-up on 10/09/2020, while Numedia News did not provide any coverage for the follow-up to the referendum, moreover (Ennahar TV, El Djazairia One, Echorouk TV, Beur TV, El Hayat TV, and El Bilad TV), were limited by including only a news report in news bulletins over different periods, while the three public channels provided live television interventions to members of different political associations, organizations, and personalities, which are crucial in providing clarifications and explanations of the amended Constitution articles from different perspectives.

Table 2: Television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on Oct/10/2020

Ch annel	(ES)				(PS)		GV)	se NL	P/ M	T ime Balance
Ca nal Algérie										x
ter restrial channel										x

² . Jelke BETHLEHEM, Understanding public opinion Polls, 1st edition, published by Chapman and Hall/CRC, September 2017.

A3 channel											x
En nahar TV											
El Djazairia One											x
Ech orouk TV											x
Be ur TV											x
El Hayat TV											x
El bilad											x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ethical Standards (ES): 1/Respecting people's reputation 2/avoiding insult and slander 3/respecting State symbols respecting 4/fundamental national values. ➤ Professional Standards (PS): 1/Respecting the standards of recording and broadcasting 2/neutrality of journalistic commentaries ➤ Guests Variety (GV) ➤ The Use of National Languages (Use NL) ➤ Opinion Polls & Audience Measurement (OP/AM) ➤ Time Balance (TB) 											

The table above is about the television follow-up of Algerian channels to the Constitution Amendment Referendum 2020 on 10/10/2020, where it is shown that the three channels (Ennahar TV, Numidia News, and El Hayat TV) did not provide any coverage of the constitutional amendment referendum, which is a failure of the duty to inform the citizen regarding the importance of the event itself as it falls within the public service linked to the citizen's right to information.

The three public channels, Canal Algérie, terrestrial channel, and A3, continued for the second day its comprehensive coverage of the event given its importance; with respect to ethical and professional standards of media coverage and respect for national languages, However, we have also recorded the non-inclusion of opinion polls, despite the importance it has on citizens' conviction regarding constitutional amendment or not, and identify ambiguities that need to be focused on and clarified for groups of people by hosting guests and presenting special programs.

We must mention here the importance of raising awareness by covering events, achieving dialogues and live audiovisual reporting; and paying attention to many aspects of the media debate on the referendum of the Constitution, the debate highlights directly three key actors within the scope of their legal roles; firstly, public and private media institutions, and secondly, Independent National Electoral Authority, then thirdly, Audiovisual Control Authority. Media coverage of the popular referendum is based on four axes: explanation, simplification, awareness, the conduct of the referendum, and feedback.

Canal Algérie and Echorouk News, for their part, emulated the public channels in their

follow-up to the referendum of the 2020 Constitution amendment respecting ethical and professional standards as well as presenting distinguished opinion polls from other public and private channels. This is the case for El Bilad TV, but it did not provide any opinion polls, while Beur TV relied on coverage that focused on respecting the national values and impartial press commentaries, which is the common denominator of all channels. It can be said that the objective aim was never to direct or deceive public opinion; it is to strive for balance and honesty in the transmission of information and credibility in its presentation, which is the opposite of media misinformation and manipulation of the public. The abandonment of impartiality in the period of the referendum awareness does not mean engaging in political propaganda and contaminating the media message by directing the public opinion and inciting it in particular, freedom of information cannot exist outside the framework and system of the State and cannot proceed outside the Constitution and its bodies.

The monitoring of Algerian television channels to the 2020 referendum of the Constitutional amendment on 10/10/2020 was marked by the fact that the channels did not rely on television quotas despite their importance; three of nine channels did not provide any coverage, Numidia TV, Ennahar TV, and El Hayat TV, while El Djazairia One, El Bilad TV and Beur TV presented only news bulletins in their referendum follow-up, while the three public channels and Echorouk TV News relied on news bulletins and direct interventions following the event.

Table 3: Television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on Oct/11/2020

Ch annel	(ES)				(PS)		GV)	se NL	P/ M	T ime Balance
Ca nal Algérie										x
ter restrial channel										x
A3 channel										x
En nahar TV										x
El Djazairia One										
Ech orouk TV										x
Be ur TV										x
El Hayat TV										x

El bilad										x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ethical Standards (ES): 1/Respecting people's reputation 2/avoiding insult and slander 3/respecting State symbols respecting 4/fundamental national values. ➤ Professional Standards (PS): 1/Respecting the standards of recording and broadcasting 2/neutrality of journalistic commentaries ➤ Guests Variety (GV) ➤ The Use of National Languages (Use NL) ➤ Opinion Polls & Audience Measurement (OP/AM) ➤ Time Balance (TB) 										

According to the table on television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 Constitution referendum amendment on 10/11/2020, it is clear that Canal Algérie did not provide any coverage of the event despite its importance and the considerable debate about its articles, which is considered as a failure to keep pace and shirking duties of public service. We have recorded also, that opinion polls are not presented on all channels, which hinders effective monitoring and evaluation of the media coverage they provide according to the results of opinion polls; these channels are far from the right scientific standards in pursuing a referendum coverage strategy, which stands in the way of achieving goals.

With the referendum approaching and regarding its nature, television channels and other forms of media, whether public or private, must intensify the debate around the referendum in all its aspects to enlighten public opinion, especially as it constitutes an essential input to the changes awaited within the framework of democracy, legitimacy and local, regional and international circumstances.

On the other hand, we noted that all public and private channels (terrestrial channel, Canal Algérie, A3, Ennahar TV, El Bilad TV, El Hayat TV, Beur TV) respected ethical and professional standards during its coverage except Echorouk TV, which was not neutral in their journalistic commentaries, reflecting its lack of professionalism, since impartiality is the basis for the required objectivity in the media, and we have also noted Canal Algérie failure to balance timing in its programs among guests of various levels, and disciplines, directing Dialogue is the responsibility of the host, director and the whole staff to distribute time equally among individuals to balance and to give the same opportunities to express ideas and opinions to the public without discrimination or bias that affects the program's functioning and its perception by the public.

We have noted that Canal Algérie respected recording and broadcasting standards for direct interventions the same as other public channels in hosting personalities such as academics and politicians to talk about the articles of the proposed constitutional amendment referendum.

Regarding audio-visual materials used in the television monitoring of Algerian channels to the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on October 11, 2020, Canal Algérie did not use any material as it did not provide any coverage on this day while all other channels provided coverage of the subject during various news bulletins by using press reports. Five out of nine channels have relied on television programs in their media monitoring: Echorouk TV News, Ennahar TV, Ennahar TV, A3, and Canal Algérie; as for direct interventions, the three public channels were the only ones monitoring the constitutional amendment

referendum.

The diversity of guests selected to participate in direct interventions through public channels is important because guest specialty constitutes an angle from which he can provide a different view on his reading of the proposed amendments, which contributes to helping viewers to form their convictions about those amendments and thus deciding whether or not to participate and the nature of the participation by accepting or rejecting, In this regard, the diversity of interventions among representatives of active organizations from different sectors (associations, professional unions, national organizations...).

Table 4: Television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on Oct/12/2020

Ch annel	(ES)				(PS)		GV)	se NL	P/ M	T ime Balance
Ca nal Algérie										x
ter restrial channel										x
A3 channel										+
En nahar TV										+
El Djazairia One										x
Ech orouk TV										x
Be ur TV										x
El Hayat TV										+
El bilad										x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ethical Standards (ES): 1/Respecting people's reputation 2/avoiding insult and slander 3/respecting State symbols respecting 4/fundamental national values. ➤ Professional Standards (PS): 1/Respecting the standards of recording and broadcasting 2/neutrality of journalistic commentaries ➤ Guests Variety (GV) ➤ The Use of National Languages (Use NL) ➤ Opinion Polls & Audience Measurement (OP/AM) 										

➤ Time Balance (TB)

In an evaluation of the above table regarding the television monitoring of Algerian channels to the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on 10/12/2020, we have noticed that all public and private channels have provided coverage and monitoring of the event following the required ethical and professional standards, However, it did not provide any opinion polls during its coverage on that day. Echorouk TV did not respect the guests' diversity as a criterion for achieving diversity of opinions, ideas, and arguments objectivity, while A3, El Hayat TV and Ennahar TV respected it.

Regarding ethical standards that control journalists' behavior and the media organization, they are almost identical around the world and we can say that they generally include the following:

- Accuracy in transmitting information in news and opinion, direct language, and clear image.
- Credibility in committing to all professional principles, accuracy, and objectivity in confronting the other with facts and requiring him to reveal the truth.
- Neutrality and impartiality of bias or the influence of preconceived ideas.
- Integrity, respect, independence and impartiality in providing information without favoritism or fear.
- Objectivity, commitment to the topic, proper assessment of evidence, facts and equal opportunities for Parties.
- Considering non-discrimination permanently because the human being should remain the central focus regardless of his religion, color, language, race, sex, political, or non-political opinions or social origin.
- Presentation balance of content to ensure the right of opinion, and dissenting opinion.

It is noted that Algeria's public and private television channels have ensured that ethical standards and media monitoring of the constitutional amendment referendum are respected in its general framework, primarily by respecting people's reputation, respecting the symbols of the State and national values, which is required to show the professionalism of channels and media organizations that seek to promote political dialogue away from one-upmanship, insults and slander.

The overall objective of media coverage during the referendum in democracies is to report, inform and disseminate impartially and neutrally. This can be achieved through specific actions such as the mere allocation of television broadcasting shows to political and academic figures and civil society groups and the preparation of impartial news programs, and news reports from the outset, it is very important to ensure the right of everyone involved to communicate with media, especially television, as most citizens receive their political news through the media. This means that no journalist has the right to influence public opinion through special treatment of one of the guests at the expense of others.

Table 5: Television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on Oct/13/2020

	(ES)					T
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Ch annel					PS)		GV)	se NL	P/ M	ime Balance
Ca nal Algérie										x
ter restrial channel										x
A3 channel										x
En nahar TV										x
El Djazairia One										x
Ech orouk TV										x
Be ur TV										x
El Hayat TV										+
El bilad										x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ethical Standards (ES): 1/Respecting people's reputation 2/avoiding insult and slander 3/respecting State symbols respecting 4/fundamental national values. ➤ Professional Standards (PS): 1/Respecting the standards of recording and broadcasting 2/neutrality of journalistic commentaries ➤ Guests Variety (GV) ➤ The Use of National Languages (Use NL) ➤ Opinion Polls & Audience Measurement (OP/AM) ➤ Time Balance (TB) 										

As for the television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 Constitution amendment referendum on 10/13/2020, three channels, the El Bilad TV, and Beur TV did not provide any media coverage of any kind, and regarding the importance of the referendum in the Algerian context, the three public channels continued to keep pace with the event by covering the most accurate details associated with it while respecting different ethical and professional standards. A3 was the only one respecting guest diversity, the use of national languages and time balance in presenting reports and guest interventions, plus no record for opinion polls in the three public channels.

As for other private channels (Echorouk TV News, Ennahar TV, El Hayat TV), during this day, they also provided special coverage of the event while respecting ethical and professional standards. However, El Hayat TV was distinguished by respect for guest diversity, the use of

national languages, and time balance, while Echorouk TV was the only one to present an opinion poll.

Our review of this irregularity in coverage for Algerian television channels leads us to conclude that there is no strategic planning content of media in those channels in general and in special coverage in particular of the 2020 referendum, even though it is considered a genuine foundation for the advancement of Algeria's television media work, and a firm foundation for its continuity and success, planning and implementation is the guarantee of achievement and a fundamental indicator of awareness to control media work in television, plus authentic basics of a methodology, vision and strategy still largely lacking in Algerian culture and practical applications in Algerian media institutions.

Strategic planning of the media channels content is to link the channel content to its strategic objectives emanating from its mission and vision and commitment to the channel's general and editorial policies, linked to its budget, statutes, regulations, and professional quality standards and is committed to schedules, and therefore the process of transforming the channel's message and vision into television programs cannot be achieved without integrated strategic planning based on clear methodological bases and norms that constitute the benchmarks against which the Channel's success in reaching its goals and achieving its objectives is measured to review and evaluate those plans, which appears to be absent in most Algerian public and private channels.

Three channels (El Bilad TV, Canal Algérie, and Beur TV) did not provide any coverage of the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on 10/13/2020, nor any direct interventions of politicians, academics, and civil society figures, while only three channels presented television programs dedicated to the event (El Hayat TV, Echorouk TV and Ennahar TV), while five channels provided special news reports about the event in their news bulletins (Echorouk TV News, Ennahar TV, Channel A3, terrestrial channel, and Canal Algérie).

Table 6: Television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on Oct/14/2020

Ch annel	(ES)				(PS)		GV)	se NL	P/ M	T ime Balance
Ca nal Algérie										x
ter restrial channel										x
A3 channel										x
En nahar TV										x
El										x

Djazairia One										
Echorouk TV										x
Beur TV										x
El Hayat TV										x
El bilad										x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ethical Standards (ES): 1/Respecting people's reputation 2/avoiding insult and slander 3/respecting State symbols respecting 4/fundamental national values. ➤ Professional Standards (PS): 1/Respecting the standards of recording and broadcasting 2/neutrality of journalistic commentaries ➤ Guests Variety (GV) ➤ The Use of National Languages (Use NL) ➤ Opinion Polls & Audience Measurement (OP/AM) ➤ Time Balance (TB) 										

The table above highlights the television monitoring of Algerian channels to the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum of October 14. According to the table, all channels provided coverage of the event respecting ethical and professional standards, except for Ennahar TV, which did not respect people's reputations and State symbols. However, A3, Beur TV, Ennahar TV presented opinion polls of the event reflecting the channels' interest in measuring public opinion on the subjects associated with the referendum. Regarding television programs, A3 respected guests' diversity, while Echorouk TV and El Hayat TV have not, which can affect the programs' credibility since a single guest cannot represent the plurality of views and ideas required in the objective and impartial media debate. The three public channels respected the use of national languages in direct interventions.

Commitment to ethical standards is the fundamental guarantee of credibility among the public in an era of communications transformations that have thrown the global and local systems into a chaotic transition. For media workers and anyone seeking reliable and secure media, the defense and promotion of ethical standards are more necessary than ever.

The foundations of democracy are threatened by fake news, black propaganda, online violations, the absence of political conscience, and the commercialization of the new telecommunications landscape to destabilize and undermine the mass media system, highlighting the need to recognize the role of the press, which is constrained by the framework of ethical standards. as a need to gain public trust, and such fundamental values as accuracy, independence and responsible treatment of news remain values, even in an era dominated by digitization and open space.

It, therefore, underscores the importance of permanent commitment to ethical standards in the media monitoring of Algerian channels during events in general under legal regulations and legislation to ensure impartial and objective information amid all the media chaos and false news surrounding the public.

Public channels are the only ones that rely on direct interventions, although nothing

prevents private channels from presenting them. All channels also presented news bulletins in their coverage of the event, as for television programs, only three channels relied on for monitoring (A3, Echorouk TV, El Hayat TV).

Table 7: Television monitoring of Algerian channels for the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on Oct/15/2020

Ch annel	(ES)				(PS)		GV)	se NL	P/ M	T ime Balance
Ca nal Algérie										x
ter restrial channel										x
A3 channel										+
En nahar TV										x
El Djazairia One										
Ech orouk TV										x
Be ur TV										+
El Hayat TV										x
El bilad										x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ethical Standards (ES): 1/Respecting people's reputation 2/avoiding insult and slander 3/respecting State symbols respecting 4/fundamental national values. ➤ Professional Standards (PS): 1/Respecting the standards of recording and broadcasting 2/neutrality of journalistic commentaries ➤ Guests Variety (GV) ➤ The Use of National Languages (Use NL) ➤ Opinion Polls & Audience Measurement (OP/AM) ➤ Time Balance (TB) 										

The table above shows the television monitoring of Algerian channels to the 2020 constitutional amendment referendum on 10/15/2020, El Djazairia One is the only channel that has not provided any coverage of the event despite its importance, The other channels

covered according to the required ethical and professional standards, we have also recorded no opinion polls by all channels, A3 and Beur TV relied on the guests' diversity on the opposite Echorouk TV did not, which affects the channel's credibility regarding the absence of diversity in opinions and arguments, public channels used national languages in their direct interventions.

The 2020 Constitutional Amendment Referendum is a real test for television channels. In light of the need to devote considerable space to the media's programs and content to explain what is contained in the Constitutional Amendment Referendum. This has not been adopted by the majority of channels within the framework of a clearly defined strategy, but rather is done in irregular timing. This could prejudice the duty of media organizations to explain the contents of the constitutional amendment to citizens through all means, with the participation of experts specialized in constitutional law, and to open their platforms for civil society and professionals to reveal and clarify the content of the Constitution by meaningful discussion and exposing all aspects relating to the broad explanation of the Constitution, in anticipation of the popular referendum.

It should be noted that only public channels presented direct interventions to clarify and explain the articles of the constitutional amendment referendum, while the private channels have not relied on it since the beginning of the monitoring, the table also shows that El Djazairia One has not provided any monitoring to the event during this day. Six out of nine channels relied on television programs for monitoring, ensuring that public debate concerning constitutional amendment was supported and the same number of channels included television monitoring of the event via news bulletins.

Conclusion

The 2020 constitutional amendment was considered as the largest amendment to the 1996 constitution, as the preliminary draft included six axes related to basic rights and public freedoms, separation of powers, the judiciary, the constitutional court as an alternative to the constitutional council, transparency, prevention and combating corruption, and the independent national authority for elections. The six axes of amending the constitution attached to 13 additional points, related to the inclusion of the February 22 movement in its preamble, in addition to combating hate speech and discrimination, environmental protection, as well as the constitutional of Algeria's participation in peacekeeping operations. National and official language.

The constitutional amendment, also reconsidered old institutions with modern names as: the Constitutional Court replaced the Constitutional Council, the Independent National Authority for Elections replaced the Independent Supreme Authority for Election Monitoring, the Supreme Authority for Transparency and Prevention and Combating Corruption, replaced the National Authority for the Prevention and Combating of Corruption, and the National Economic, Social and Environmental Council replaced the National Economic and Social Council. He also emphasized institutions that were included in the last amendment, such as the Accountability Council, the Supreme Islamic Council, the Supreme Council for Security, the Supreme Council for Youth, the National Council for Scientific Research and Technologies, and the National Council for Human Rights. Perhaps the only added institutional value is the creation of the Algerian Academy of Sciences and Technologies.

The referendum took place in stable epidemiological conditions, due to the decline in infections with the emerging of coronavirus (Covid-19) to lower levels, and an almost complete return to public life, but with the decline in the chances of the popular movement returning to

the streets, amid fears of the spread of a new wave of the pandemic. A wide variety of political parties and blocs carried out the electoral campaign in favor of President Abdelmadjid TEBBOUNE's project. On the one hand, the project was widely supported by the National Liberation Front and the National Democratic Rally, which worked to mobilize their activists to vote in favor, on the other hand the government relied on a broad political bloc, the "National Forces Initiative for Reform", which included a wide range of political parties and civil society organizations that supported President Abdelmadjid TEBBOUNE, such as the National Building Movement, the Future Front, the New Dawn, the Good Governance, and the Free Patriots Party; In addition to forces under establishment, such as popular sovereignty and the National Alliance for Change; As well as the associations of judges, employers and artisans.

Talking about the media and elections in Algeria gains its importance from the fact that the government controls the largest sector of the visual, audio and print media. The media are also subject to legal and financial constraints that prevent the growth of a free and pluralistic media. This reality undoubtedly undermines the chances of competing political forces with the ruling parties to access the media, and to communicate their programs and ideas to the voters. The new political reality in the Arab region in general since 2011, from the increasing growth of pressures for reform, had its reflection on the performance of the media in the recent Arab elections in terms of the margin of government tolerance with newspapers and private television channels, as is the case in Algeria.

Attempts to legalize the role of the state-owned media in the elections, to secure opportunities for candidates to present their programs, despite the fact that the specificity of the referendum pushes the media to open a discussion between the various spectra and currents to discuss and enrich all the articles of the amended constitution in order to enlighten public opinion and voters, and mainly focus on the feasibility of the electoral process in general, and the referendum to amend the constitution in particular.

It is not possible in any way to read the election numbers quickly, as this will put us in the trap of a fragmented view of the events, and fall into adopting quick conclusions that are not consistent with the methodological data on the one hand, and are not consistent with the magnitude of the vibrations that may occur that are not only related to internal affairs, but rather transcend it to the surroundings. regional and global; It is well known that the movement in Algeria was a strong shock to academic theorists, political practitioners, and the media in Algeria.

Elections are a multi-party process that requires integration and balance, with each party doing its duty, and any deviation in this harmony will disturb the good conduct of the entire electoral process, which reflects negatively on the legitimacy and the ability of the official to address public affairs with confidence and competence. The amendment of the constitution is a strange case compared to many and many electoral stations, as this election recorded the lowest participation rate of 23.7% since the era of partisan pluralism.

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