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THE SOCIAL-PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPT OF MEDIA

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Abstract:

In today's rapidly developing information and communication technologies, modern media are emerging as a powerful mechanism for the development of not only the state's means of disseminating information, but also the economic, social, political and cultural spheres of society. The research paper analyzes the views and theories related to the origin of the media, the tasks of the media in a democratic society, the factors that have a positive and negative impact on the development of the media space, the role and importance of the media in the development of society. Based on the results of the analysis, practical recommendations have been developed to ensure freedom of information in society, ensure the legal and professional immunity of the media and media workers, and increase the media literacy of the population.

The article is recommended for use as a methodological guide by students, teachers, and researchers working in the field of media and journalism.

Keywords: Media, mass media, society, media literacy, media content, internet, television, digitization, e-government, journalist, blogger, newspaper, magazine.



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Introduction

A review of history shows that throughout all periods of human development, information, propaganda, and advocacy have been regarded as essential needs. To achieve their goals, societies and states have utilized various means and strategies. It has been widely acknowledged that no tribe or state could achieve victory in war or establish dominance over territories without reliable information. Even today, such strategies remain relevant and continue to yield effective results.

In the modern world, there is hardly any state that does not rely on media as a tool for building a just democratic society, supporting the population, and ensuring social development. In recent years, countries around the world have paid special attention to the creation, analysis, and dissemination of information. This is because, in an increasingly globalized world, modern media serves not only as a means of information delivery but also as a powerful instrument for shaping public opinion, influencing worldviews, and contributing to the social, economic, political, and cultural development of a country.

This raises important questions: What are the main challenges and opportunities in the development of the media space in Uzbekistan? How does media influence the development of society?

The purpose of this article is to reveal the essence of the socio-philosophical concept of modern media, to analyze the challenges and opportunities of media development in Uzbekistan from a philosophical perspective, and to demonstrate the social significance of media's role and impact on societal development.



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Literature Review

To date, many foreign and local philosophers, scholars, researchers, and academics have conducted studies on the role and significance of media and mass media in society, as well as on the challenges and achievements observed in this field.

In particular, Russian researcher **S.E. Kovaleva**, in her study entitled “The Media Image of the Screen in Modern Society,” discussed the understanding of the screen within socio-cultural reality and examined the media representation of the screen in both real and virtual spaces [1, pp. 13–19]. Among local researchers, **Y.Z. Ro‘ziyev** and **B.S. Abdullayev** analyzed media literacy, information culture, and the role and influence of information in the development of society in their studies [2, pp. 5–52].

Researchers **B.Z. Ergasheva** and **R.A. Qulbulova**, in their work, explored the urgent problems of developing media literacy and information culture in the country, as well as possible solutions to these issues [3, pp. 491–493].

The review of the literature shows that many studies have been conducted on various topics related to media and mass media activities. However, the socio-philosophical concept of media, as well as the positive and negative factors influencing the development of the media space in Uzbekistan, have not been specifically analyzed from a socio-philosophical perspective. As a result, there is a need to continue this topic and carry the research to completion.

Research Methodology

In this study, the following scientific methods of cognition were used: analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction, historical and logical approaches, modeling, retrospective analysis, hermeneutic interpretation, and systems analysis. The research methodology serves to clarify the meaning and content of media and its



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socio-philosophical concepts, as well as to reveal the impact of media on the development of society.

Analysis and Results

On July 7, 1957, a researcher named **James Reston** published an article in The New York Times. The content of the article was as follows: “A report came from the hospital: a mouse that watched a lot of television attacked an adult cat and its owner, a young girl. However, neither the mouse nor the cat was harmed. The reason for presenting this incident is as a reminder that what we observe in the world is changing” [4, p. 5].

From this quotation, it can be concluded that James Reston, through an unusual and seemingly unbelievable event, sought to illustrate the growing influence of media (television, newspapers, and magazines) on society. By metaphorically describing a mouse attacking a cat, he compared it to a disruption of the natural order and highlighted how media can alter behavior in unexpected ways. In simple terms, he suggested that human thinking, perceptions, and habits are changing, and media is accelerating these processes.

Although the statement is metaphorical, from the second half of the 20th century onward, media gradually became integrated into people’s daily lives, influencing their ways of thinking and perception, while also serving as a primary source of information about events and news.

In the late 1920s, a debate emerged between American writer **Walter Lippmann** and philosopher **John Dewey** regarding the role of mass media in a democratic society. Lippmann argued that mass media should function as a tool for conveying complex knowledge understood by experts to the general public, whereas Dewey maintained that media should serve as an open platform where citizens actively communicate and exchange ideas [5, p. 99]. For many years, the



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function of mass media remained a subject of debate among intellectuals and academics.

Subsequently, German philosopher **Jürgen Habermas** proposed the concept of the “public sphere of communication.” According to this concept, mass media in a democratic society should fulfill the following functions:

serve as an open space for public discussion and debate;

independently criticize state authority;

remain transparent and accountable to the public;

operate free from economic interests and governmental pressure [5, p. 99].

Canadian philosopher **Marshall McLuhan** (d. 1980) was among the first to introduce the concept of media through his famous idea “the medium is the message” [4, p. 6]. According to McLuhan, it is not the content of information that has the greatest impact, but rather the medium and technology through which it is delivered. In other words, media is not merely a channel for transmitting information; the technology itself transforms human life and accelerates communication among individuals.

For example, McLuhan emphasized that the specific content of a television program is less important than the television as a medium itself, which shapes human perception. Similarly, in communication via telephone, the content of the conversation is secondary, while the device itself plays a crucial role in accelerating and facilitating human interaction.

German sociologist **Niklas Luhmann** (d. 1998), in his work “Media Communication,” defined society not as a mere association of individuals, but as a system of communications. As a result of globalization, the entire world is gradually transforming into a “world society.” The primary reason for this transformation lies in the exchange of information between systems. In other words, modern society consists of multiple interconnected systems (education,



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media, politics, religion, art, economy, etc.), each possessing its own perspective. The energy that connects these systems is the exchange of information. As Luhmann emphasizes, “communication does not arise by itself; it becomes information only when certain conditions are met: someone must produce it, someone must transmit it, and someone must understand it” [6, p. 7].

The theoretical foundations presented above indicate that media today should be studied as a social institution that shapes human consciousness, governs society, and influences political processes.

Although Article 82 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan states that “obstruction or interference in the activities of mass media shall result in liability in accordance with the law” [7, p. 13], there are no clearly defined administrative or criminal penalties in the relevant legal codes for such violations. Furthermore, cases are observed where journalists and media representatives are prevented from attending open court hearings or are restricted from recording video, audio, or photographic materials.

For example, in September 2024, during a court hearing in the Yunusabad district of Tashkent involving former Minister of Agriculture **Aziz Voitov** and his associates, the trial was officially declared open. However, the judge prohibited media representatives from recording or documenting the proceedings. Such actions can be interpreted as violations of constitutional principles, limiting transparency, public oversight, and media freedom.

According to legislation, official requests submitted to state institutions must be reviewed and answered within 15 days. However, in practice, media representatives often encounter delays, incomplete responses, or generalized information that lacks substance. In some cases, officials redirect journalists to other sources instead of providing direct answers. Additionally, government



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agencies sometimes fail to publish updates on social networks, disclose reports, or provide open access to certain information.

For instance, in April 2023, a journalist from Gazeta.uz conducted an analysis of decisions adopted by local authorities and published on the “E-qaror” platform. The findings revealed that out of 35 decisions signed by the acting mayor of Tashkent, **Shavkat Umurzakov**, half were not publicly accessible, and 4 out of the remaining 14 decisions were not available online at all [13].

The lack of access to information or its delayed publication contradicts the principles of a democratic society. Information that is not delivered in a timely manner loses its relevance and practical value, ultimately becoming ineffective for public use. As emphasized, “only timely information can be beneficial for individuals and society” [8, p. 37].

In recent years, many developed countries have faced cyberattacks targeting their national internet segments, as well as technical failures within media networks. Uzbekistan has also experienced similar challenges. According to data from the Uzbekistan Cybersecurity Center, “more than 3 million cyberattacks were recorded in the national internet segment during the first quarter of 2024” [14].

As a result, disruptions in information exchange, decreased public trust in media platforms, and significant economic damage have been observed. The main causes of these issues include insufficient investment in cybersecurity systems, outdated servers and infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified specialists in the field.

Technical failures in media platforms have also been reported in Uzbekistan. For instance, the news website Kun.uz was unable to operate for more than 24 hours on February 18, 2025, due to technical issues [15]. Such disruptions lead to the emergence of information gaps in society, the spread of misinformation and fake news, and interruptions in online public services.



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Insufficient Media Literacy and Lack of Mechanisms to Counter Disinformation Historically, the Uzbek people have been characterized as sincere, trusting, and open-hearted. However, such traits are sometimes exploited by individuals with malicious intent. Due to insufficient levels of media literacy, many citizens fall victim to misinformation and fake content, which can negatively affect both their health and financial well-being.

For example, during the **COVID-19** pandemic, a significant number of individuals were influenced by false claims suggesting that vaccination could harm their future health or cause infertility. As a result, some people refused to receive vaccines altogether.

Another example is the increasing number of individuals falling victim to online fraud. People with low levels of media and legal literacy are often attracted by promises of quick and easy wealth, leading them to share personal information with unknown individuals. Consequently, they suffer substantial financial and, in some cases, psychological harm.

Media literacy can be defined as a set of skills and competencies that enable individuals to analyze, evaluate, and create messages across various forms of mass media and communication platforms [9, p. 20].

In recent years, the national media landscape has been enriched by the growth of private and non-state media outlets. Examples include news websites such as Kun.uz, Daryo.uz, and Gazeta.uz; television channels such as Milliy TV, Sevimli TV, Zo‘r TV, and My5; and radio stations such as Oriyat Dono, Avtoradio, and Poytaxt FM.

The development of private media contributes to the diversification of the information space, promotes the production of high-quality content through competition, and enables audiences to access a wide range of engaging and entertaining media products.



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Compared to state media, private media possesses several advantages. In particular, it operates based on market principles by quickly responding to audience needs, provides more critical and analytical coverage of social issues, maintains financial independence, collaborates actively with journalists and bloggers, and most importantly, delivers news and events in a timely and flexible manner.

A few years ago, the idea that individuals could make electronic payments, obtain legal and administrative documents online, or order household goods and food without leaving their homes seemed unrealistic. However, the development of the internet has brought significant convenience and new opportunities to people's lives.

The digitalization of public administration has led to the emergence of e-government systems, reducing bureaucratic barriers and ensuring greater transparency and openness. Today, digital transformation is rapidly penetrating economic, social, political, cultural, and educational spheres. By digitalizing various processes, the human factor is minimized, contributing to more efficient societal development.

As a result, cooperation at both national and international levels continues to grow. It is now difficult to imagine daily life without the internet. Its expansion not only in urban centers but also in remote areas has become a key factor in the development of the media industry.

One of the key functions of media is to present the country to the global community. In recent years, Uzbekistan has hosted numerous international festivals, sports events, high-level meetings, and official ceremonies. High-quality media coverage of such events significantly influences the country's international image.



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For example, the 13th International Sharq Taronalari Music Festival held in Samarkand in 2024 was covered by media representatives from over 70 countries. Today, media platforms regularly provide news in Russian and English, promote national values and traditions, organize tourism initiatives, and showcase national cuisine and products.

Currently, more than 9 million citizens in Uzbekistan are aged between 14 and 30 [10, p. 11]. This segment of the population is becoming a driving force in the development of the media industry, actively promoting its opportunities and advantages. As noted, “youth are a social group that maximally utilizes mass media and actively seeks diverse types of information” [11, p. 126].

As a result of ongoing reforms, almost the entire territory of the country has been connected to internet communication networks. Consequently, young people are emerging as the primary producers of media content within the digital space.

Today, activities such as online education conducted by youth, the creation of motivational videos, entertaining and humorous content, and the dissemination of news and information through media platforms are becoming increasingly widespread. In addition to their primary professions, blogging has become a significant area of engagement for young people. If we look back a decade, blogging was perceived as a vague and unclear concept in society, and it was common for people to ask questions such as “Who is a blogger?” and “How do bloggers differ from journalists?”

However, with the development of the media industry, young people have actively entered the field of blogging, contributing to the diversification of information flows. Their active participation in the media sector has contributed to the democratization of media and increased the role of youth in society.

Media has a positive impact on societal development across various sectors. For example, in the economic sphere, media disseminates information about business



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innovations, opportunities for entrepreneurs and citizens, and startup projects. In the social sphere, it highlights long-standing issues faced by citizens in different regions of the country—such as access to drinking water, construction of bridges and roads, electricity supply, and housing—and monitors the implementation of solutions. In the political sphere, media covers political processes, communicates the goals and programs of political parties to the public, provides access to reports and decisions, and informs citizens about current events. In the cultural sphere, media promotes and preserves national values and traditions, showcases cultural and entertainment events, and covers festivals and public celebrations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

During the course of the study, the theoretical foundations of media, as well as various perspectives and principles related to media, were analyzed from a socio-philosophical standpoint. It has once again been confirmed that in an increasingly globalized world, media serves as a powerful force that mobilizes society, shapes a country's international image, and significantly influences people's thinking and perceptions.

The study concludes that the role of media in social life, its positive and negative impact on youth development, and the need for continuous monitoring of factors influencing the development of the media space are among the most pressing issues of our time.

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Develop legislative initiatives to enhance the legal and professional status of media and mass media workers. This will ensure freedom of information and expression in a democratic society, improve the implementation of laws and policies, and increase public trust in media professionals.



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Modernize media infrastructure and strengthen cybersecurity systems.

Upgrading servers and media infrastructure, along with improving protection against cyberattacks, will help prevent data breaches, stabilize information flows, and enhance the efficiency of the national economy.

Establish effective mechanisms for timely access to official information.

When media professionals submit official requests to state institutions and local authorities, a clear system should ensure the provision of complete and timely information. This will improve the quality and effectiveness of media operations, enable comprehensive and timely reporting, and provide citizens with better access to decisions and public programs.

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