



MEDIA LITERACY AND INFORMATION CULTURE

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Abstract: *This article analyzes the formation and historical development stages of mass media (MM). It discusses the evolution of information exchange from ancient times to the emergence of print media, radio, television, and the internet. The study also highlights the current state of digital media and the impact of artificial intelligence and technological innovations on journalism. The article emphasizes the role of mass media in shaping society and public consciousness.*

Keywords: *mass media, press, radio, television, internet, digital media, journalism, information technology, artificial intelligence, media culture.*

Introduction.

Mass media (MM) is an integral part of society, playing a vital role in information exchange, shaping public opinion, moral and educational development, and social control. Studying the history of media allows for an analysis of the stages of human thought, culture, and technological progress. Today, mass media not only delivers news but also actively participates in social life.

1. The Earliest Forms of Mass Media The history of mass media can be traced back to ancient times. The earliest forms of information dissemination were carried out through oral speech, writing, inscriptions, and messengers. In ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, government decrees and important news were inscribed on stone or metal tablets and made public. For example, in the 1st century BC, the Roman Empire issued the Acta Diurna (“Daily Events”), considered the first regular news bulletin in human history.



During the Middle Ages, information spread mainly through religious centers and merchant networks. For instance, in mosques, churches, and marketplaces, messengers would convey news verbally. Since written sources were scarce during this period, oral communication remained the primary means of information exchange.

2. The Emergence of Print Media In the 15th century, Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in Europe marked a new era in human history. This invention allowed books, pamphlets, and leaflets to be published on a large scale. The spread of print media contributed to increased literacy and laid the foundation for the development of science and culture. The emergence of the first newspapers in the 17th century ushered in a new stage of information dissemination. In 1605, Germany saw the publication of the first regular newspaper, *Relation*, followed by *Weekly News* in England in 1622. Subsequently, national newspapers were established in France, Russia, and Turkey. The press became a key instrument for reporting political, economic, and cultural changes in society.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT STAGES OF MASS MEDIA

In the territory of Uzbekistan, the first printed mass media appeared at the end of the 19th century. In 1870, the *Newspaper of the Turkistan Region* began publication in both Uzbek and Russian. This newspaper reflected the social life of the time and served to educate the public and keep people informed about current events.

3. The Rise of Radio and Television At the beginning of the 20th century, technological advancements transformed mass media with the emergence of radio broadcasting. From the 1920s, regular radio programs were established in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and

Russia. Radio quickly became a fast, wide-reaching, and affordable medium of information worldwide. During wartime, it played a crucial role in disseminating government policies and frontline news to the public. Television emerged in the



1930s and became a leading form of mass media in the second half of the 20th century. By providing both audio and visual content, television significantly increased the impact of information. In Uzbekistan, the first television broadcasts began in 1956, and the Uzbekistan Television later became the central hub of the national information system.

4. The Era of the Internet and Digital Media At the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, the development of internet technologies marked a major turning point in the history of mass media. Information began to be distributed not only through newspapers, radio, and television but also via online platforms. Websites, social networks, blogs, and podcasts created a new information space. The main advantage of the internet is interactivity, meaning that users are not only consumers of information but can also become its creators. As a result, digital media has become a tool for free exchange of ideas and increased civic engagement in modern democratic societies. In Uzbekistan, digital media has rapidly developed in recent years. Online publications such as Gazeta.uz, Kun.uz, Daryo.uz, and Podrobno.uz, as well as YouTube and Telegram channels, play an important role in shaping public opinion. At the governmental level, this process is legally supported through initiatives like the “Open Data Portal” and the “Law on Informatization.”

5. Current State and Prospects of Mass Media

Today, mass media functions not only as a source of news but also as a tool for analysis, influence, education, and culture. Artificial intelligence, digital editing, media analytics, and automated information systems have introduced new approaches to journalism. At the same time, issues such as fake news, cyber censorship, and information security remain highly relevant. In the future, the development of mass media will be closely linked to technological innovations, artificial intelligence, and platforms like the metaverse. Nevertheless, regardless of technological changes, the primary mission of mass media remains the delivery of accurate, reliable, and useful information.

**Conclusion.**

Mass media has been one of the main drivers of cultural, political, and economic change throughout human history. The journey from ancient inscriptions to today's digital networks demonstrates the significant social power of information. Each stage—print media, radio, television, and the internet—reflects the technological achievements of its time and the development of human thought. Today, mass media is an important indicator of a society's level of development. Therefore, every citizen, journalist, and government is responsible for fostering information literacy. Information is power, and using it wisely is key to the progress of society.

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