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**MECHANISMS FOR IMPROVING MORAL PROMOTION
THROUGH THE MEDIA: A DIALOGICAL-
AXIOLOGICAL APPROACH****Turayev Kamoliddin Samadovich**

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Abstract. *The article examines the philosophical foundations for improving moral promotion through media outside a rigid IMRAD framework, following the logic of problem–thesis–antithesis–synthesis. The central problem is the risk that persuasion turns into manipulation while moral values are disseminated. The article argues that the genuine effectiveness of moral promotion should be measured not by an audience’s compliance with a predetermined conclusion, but by the strengthening of its capacity for autonomous moral judgment, choice, and responsibility. Uzbek axiological approaches are compared with contemporary theories of persuasion ethics, platform governance, and algorithmic mediation. The author defines “legitimate effectiveness of moral promotion” and develops a “dialogical-axiological spiral” model consisting of value legitimization, epistemic grounding, semantic translation, dialogical participation, algorithmic proportionality, and reflexive accountability. The model can be applied by editorial offices, educational institutions, and digital platforms in designing and evaluating value-oriented media content.*

Keywords: *moral promotion, media, value, persuasion, manipulation, moral agency, algorithmic mediation, dialogical communication, legitimate effectiveness, media ethics.*

Аннотация. В статье философские основания совершенствования нравственной пропаганды посредством медиа исследуются вне жесткой схемы IMRAD — в логике проблема–тезис–антитезис–синтез. Основная проблема связана с риском превращения убеждения в манипуляцию в процессе распространения нравственных ценностей. Согласно центральному тезису автора, подлинная эффективность нравственной пропаганды должна измеряться не подчинением аудитории готовому выводу, а усилением ее способности к самостоятельному нравственному суждению, выбору и ответственности. Национальные аксиологические подходы сопоставляются с современными теориями этики убеждения, управления платформами и алгоритмического посредничества. Дано авторское определение понятия «легитимная эффективность нравственной пропаганды» и предложена модель «диалогико-аксиологической спирали», включающая легитимацию ценностей, эпистемическое обоснование, смысловой перевод, диалогическое участие, алгоритмическую соразмерность и рефлексивную подотчетность. Модель может применяться редакциями, духовно-просветительскими организациями и цифровыми платформами.

Ключевые слова: нравственная пропаганда, медиа, ценность, убеждение, манипуляция, нравственная субъектность, алгоритмическое посредничество, диалогическая коммуникация, легитимная эффективность, медиаэтика.

FRAMING THE PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM: THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN THE MORAL GOAL AND THE MEANS OF INFLUENCE

The media have the capacity to popularise moral values, strengthen social solidarity and support the spiritual development of the individual. Yet it is precisely this capacity that gives rise to a morally complex paradox: if the

powerful psychological, visual or algorithmic influence used to promote a good cause weakens a person's free choice, the promoted value itself begins to lose its moral legitimacy. Hence, the issue lies not only in which values are being promoted, but also in the communicative relationship through which these values are conveyed.

Abdulla Sher interprets morality as a spiritual phenomenon in which social demands and needs manifest themselves in the form of relationships and which requires the rational limitation of a person's freedom of choice through inner will. This approach provides an important methodological criterion for moral promotion: external informational influence should not take the place of inner will but, on the contrary, should help it to form consciously. Morality is not the imposition of ready-made behaviour from outside; it is the individual's capacity to govern his or her own actions by the criteria of meaning and responsibility.¹

Qiyom Nazarov does not identify value with the thing or phenomenon itself; value is an axiological category expressing the significance of a particular object, idea or spiritual phenomenon for a social subject. Valuing, in turn, is broader than mere evaluation, as it unites a person's spiritual attitude, feelings and understanding. It follows that the task of moral promotion is not to repeat the names of values, but to turn their vital significance for the audience into meaning that can be understood and discussed.²

B. Husanov and V. Gulomov present the culture of communication not as the external etiquette of interpersonal contact, but as a force pertaining to spiritual processes: courtesy, respect and nobility have a positive effect on another person's inner world. Since media communication is itself an extended form of social interaction, the quality of moral promotion manifests itself not

1Sher A. *Axloqshunoslik [Ethics]*. – Tashkent: O'zbekiston faylasuflari milliy jamiyati nashriyoti, 2010. – P. 10.

2Nazarov Q. *Qadriyatlar falsafasi (Aksiologiya) [Philosophy of Values (Axiology)]*. – Tashkent: O'zbekiston faylasuflari milliy jamiyati nashriyoti, 2004. – P. 19–21, 28.

only in the content of the message, but also in the tone of address, respect for the audience, the attitude towards opposing views and the possibility of responding.³

M. Imomnazarov emphasises that, in bringing spirituality to public consciousness, it is wrong either to make it abstract through pseudo-scientific complexity or to reduce it to trite propaganda. This idea is particularly relevant for today's media: moral content is often reduced to grandiloquent slogans, ready-made verdicts and repetitive appeals. As a result, instead of becoming an object of understanding and inner conviction, value turns into an element of informational background noise. The main philosophical question of the article is therefore formulated as follows: how can moral promotion through the media be turned into a system that is influential yet non-manipulative, value-oriented yet not suppressive of diversity of opinion, and mass-oriented yet protective of the individual's moral autonomy?⁴

THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE CATEGORIES OF MORAL PROMOTION, PERSUASION AND MANIPULATION

The concept of "promotion" (Uzb. targ'ibot) is commonly used in the sense of disseminating a positive value widely; in media theory, however, it comes close to propaganda, advertising, political marketing and behaviour-management technologies. For this reason, the phrase "moral promotion" does not in itself denote a moral activity. Its moral status is determined by the unity of goal, content, method, power relations and the audience's opportunity to choose.

Robin McKenna regards persuasion not simply as a change of attitudes, but as a problem of rational change grounded in evidence and reasons. He shows that pressure on autonomy may arise even in rational persuasion, and

³Husanov B., G'ulomov V. Muomala madaniyati [Culture of Communication]. – Tashkent: Ta'lim nashriyoti; Iqtisod-moliya, 2009. – P. 4–5.

⁴Imomnazarov M. Milliy ma'naviyatimiz asoslari [Foundations of Our National Spirituality]. – Tashkent: O'zbekiston faylasuflari milliy jamiyati nashriyoti, 2006. – P. 35.

that presenting a “correct” argument at the wrong time, within an unequal power relation or in a one-sided context restricts a person’s epistemic agency. Consequently, the truthfulness of moral promotion is not equivalent to the accuracy of information alone: even true information can be used manipulatively through selective choice, repeated pressure and the concealment of alternative reasons.⁵

Amelia Godber and Gloria Origgi distinguish legitimate persuasion from propaganda by means of two criteria: whether a communicative strategy sufficiently engages the audience’s capacity for deliberation, and whether it runs counter to the audience’s epistemic interests. This approach is highly important for the evaluation of moral promotion. If a media message merely shows people what to think, but does not allow them to examine why they should think so, it approaches epistemic paternalism even when it promotes moral content.⁶

On this basis, the article proposes the following author’s definition: moral promotion is a media activity aimed at conveying the content of moral values significant for the individual and society by means of truthful argument, dialogical communication and open communicative tools, and at strengthening the audience’s independent moral reasoning and responsible choice. The definition places at its centre not “changing behaviour”, but “strengthening moral reasoning and choice”.

Manipulation, by contrast, is distinguished by the fact that, while influencing the addressee’s decision, it conceals the true purpose, source or mechanism of influence and exploits human vulnerabilities and automatic reactions in order to bypass conscious deliberation. At this point, the boundary between moral promotion and manipulation lies not in the “good” or “bad”

5McKenna R. The Ethics and Epistemology of Persuasion // Canadian Journal of Philosophy. – 2025. – Vol. 54, No. 4. – P. 314–328. DOI: 10.1017/can.2025.10005.

6Godber A., Origgi G. Telling Propaganda from Legitimate Political Persuasion // Episteme. – 2023. – Vol. 20, No. 3. – P. 778–797. DOI: 10.1017/epi.2023.10.

content of the material, but in whether the audience is treated as a subject or as an instrument.

THESIS: THE CRITERION OF MORAL PROMOTION IS THE STRENGTHENING OF MORAL AGENCY

The central thesis of the article is that the genuine effectiveness of moral promotion through the media should be measured not by the audience's acceptance of a ready-made conclusion, repetition of an appeal or short-term behavioural adaptation, but by the strengthening of its moral agency. Moral agency is understood as the individual's ability to evaluate a situation independently from the standpoint of values, to distinguish arguments from motives, to listen to alternative views, to foresee the consequences of a decision and to accept responsibility for his or her choice.

The first argument for this thesis stems from the inner nature of morality. A moral act acquires moral value not merely because it conforms to an external requirement, but because the person accepts it as his or her own conviction, matter of conscience and responsible choice. Behaviour achieved through fear, shaming, group pressure or algorithmic repetition may look acceptable from the outside, yet its inner moral foundation may be weak.

The second argument concerns the nature of the communicative relationship. Moral promotion is not one-way transmission but a process of meaning-making. The audience is not a ready-made "receiver"; it reinterprets the message through its own experience, social position, cultural memory and prior beliefs. Effective moral communication therefore requires listening before passing judgement, finding a shared field of meaning and accepting objections as part of moral conversation.

The third argument derives from the systemic nature of media technologies. Clifford Christians argues that media ethics in the digital age cannot be explained solely through the individual decisions of journalists, and that technological systems, institutions and issues of global justice must be

considered together. Accordingly, apart from the author's intention, the quality of moral promotion also depends on headline design, recommendation algorithms, the advertising model, moderation policy and the architecture of feedback.⁷

This thesis calls for the introduction of the criterion of "legitimate effectiveness" in moral promotion. The legitimate effectiveness of moral promotion is the degree to which a communicative result is achieved while preserving the audience's intellectual and moral autonomy, without violating truthfulness and transparency, and while leaving open the possibility of alternative opinions and reconsideration. Here the result and the method are inseparable: a moral goal pursued by morally unacceptable means does not become a legitimate outcome.

ANTITHESIS: THE LOGIC OF RESULTS-ORIENTATION, EMOTIONAL INTENSITY AND ALGORITHMIC GOVERNANCE

A utilitarian antithesis may be advanced against the central thesis: if the promoted value is beneficial to society, it is reasonable to use emotional, segmented and algorithmic methods that mobilise the audience quickly and widely. According to this position, the main task of moral promotion is not to discuss values but to increase positive behaviour. Under conditions of media competition, slow dialogue, complex argument and balanced context may lose out in the attention economy.

The practical force of the antithesis cannot be denied. On social media, emotional content generates more reactions. William Brady and co-authors have shown that social reinforcement mechanisms amplify the expression of moral outrage online over time. Subsequent research has found that misinformation's exploitation of outrage increases the likelihood of its being shared. Thus, the media system may encourage "moral emotion", but this

⁷Christians C.G. The Technological Problem // Media Ethics and Global Justice in the Digital Age. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. – P. 32–91.

process is likely to amplify not moral reflection, but sharp reactions and group polarisation.⁸⁹

Algorithmic personalisation also increases effectiveness: a message matching a user's interests and previous behaviour reaches him or her faster. Using the example of TikTok, Hyunjin Kang and co-authors show that human agency and machine agency interact: users "train" the algorithm, while the algorithm shapes their content experience. Yet this synergy also gives rise to hidden value choices: which message becomes visible, which value is repeated and which view is marginalised — all of these are not technical but axiological decisions.¹⁰

The weakness of the utilitarian antithesis is that it equates short-term behavioural results with long-term moral development. Behaviour formed under emotional pressure may fade once external control disappears, while "goodness" tied to group identity may turn into the moral devaluation of others. Moreover, if an algorithm optimises only engagement metrics, the goal of moral promotion gradually shrinks to "more views", "more shares" and "more reactions".

The antithesis thus reminds us of an important truth: moral promotion must be influential. However, influence in itself is not a criterion of morality. A philosophical synthesis should not reject influence, but should bound it by autonomy, truthfulness, dialogue and accountability.

THE AUTHOR'S SYNTHESIS: THE "DIALOGICAL-AXIOLOGICAL SPIRAL" MODEL

8McLoughlin K.L. et al. Misinformation Exploits Outrage to Spread Online // Science. – 2024. DOI: 10.1126/science.adl2829.

9Brady W.J., McLoughlin K., Doan T.N., Crockett M.J. How Social Learning Amplifies Moral Outrage Expression in Online Social Networks // Science Advances. – 2021. – Vol. 7, No. 33. – eabe5641. DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.abe5641.

10Kang H., Lou C., Tan S.S. AI Agency vs. Human Agency: Understanding Human–AI Interactions on TikTok and Their Implications for User Engagement // Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication. – 2022. – Vol. 27, No. 5. – zmac014. DOI: 10.1093/jcmc/zmac014.

As a synthesis of the thesis and the antithesis, the article proposes a “dialogical-axiological spiral” model for improving moral promotion through the media. The image of a spiral signifies that the process is not a one-off campaign: selecting a value, creating content, disseminating it, understanding the audience’s response and morally reconsidering the strategy are repeated on a regular basis. Each new turn should rise to a higher reflexive level on the basis of previous experience and mistakes.

The first link of the model is value legitimization. The promoted value should not serve as a mask for the interests of an organisation or author; it must be grounded in common moral criteria such as human dignity, justice, honesty, non-maleficence and freedom. National values, too, are interpreted not as a closed claim to superiority, but as a historical and spiritual experience entering into dialogue with universal human dignity.

The second link is epistemic grounding. A moral claim should not be detached from facts, context and verifiable sources. If the facts selected to draw a moral conclusion are themselves selective, promotion defends not a value but a predetermined position. Facts and assessments, information and interpretation, expert opinion and editorial position are therefore clearly separated.

The third link is semantic translation. A complex moral category is transformed into a story, image, case, infographic or dialogue in accordance with the audience’s life experience, language and cultural context. However, simplification must not distort meaning, and tragedy and human suffering must not be turned into a spectacle. Visual and emotional means do not replace argument, but serve to make it comprehensible.

The fourth link is dialogical participation. The audience is given the opportunity to ask questions, comment, object and share alternative experiences. Research on fact-checking has shown that contextual community notes improve trust and the identification of misleading posts more than simple

“false” labels. This finding is also important for moral promotion: revealing reasons and context, rather than simply announcing a verdict, strengthens the audience’s epistemic participation.¹¹

The fifth link is algorithmic proportionality. A content distribution system should take into account not only maximum engagement, but also criteria such as diversity of information, limiting repetitive pressure, protecting vulnerable groups and explaining to users why content is recommended to them. In its approach to the governance of digital platforms, UNESCO identifies transparency of content curation and moderation policies, institutional checks and balances, and multi-stakeholder participation as key principles.¹²

The sixth link is reflexive accountability. An organisation evaluates not only the number of views of a piece of material, but also how it was understood, whom it harmed, which stereotypes it reinforced and how it affected the audience’s independent thinking. Mistakes are corrected openly, conflicts of interest are disclosed, and significant material created with the help of artificial intelligence is labelled. The Council of Europe recommends that human rights and professional responsibility be taken into account at every stage, from the decision to introduce artificial intelligence in journalism to its impact on audiences and society.¹³

Table 1. Structural mechanisms of the “dialogical-axiological spiral” model

¹¹Drolsbach C.P. et al. Community Notes Increase Trust in Fact-Checking on Social Media // PNAS Nexus. – 2024. – Vol. 3, No. 7. – pgae217. DOI: 10.1093/pnasnexus/pgae217.

¹²UNESCO. Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms. – Paris: UNESCO, 2023. URL: <https://www.unesco.org/en/internet-trust/guidelines> (accessed: 14.07.2026).

¹³Council of Europe. Guidelines on the Responsible Implementation of Artificial Intelligence Systems in Journalism. – Strasbourg, 2023. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/-/guidelines-on-the-responsible-implementation-of-artificial-intelligence-ai-systems-in-journalism> (accessed: 14.07.2026).

Stage	Main task	Ethical control question
1. Value legitimization	Identifying the universal and national foundations of the value	Is it consistent with human dignity and justice?
2. Epistemic grounding	Verifying facts, sources and context	Is the claim tested against evidence?
3. Semantic translation	Rendering the value in a relatable and comprehensible form	Does simplification distort the meaning?
4. Dialogical participation	Making room for questions, objections and alternative experience	Is the audience recognised as a thinking subject?
5. Algorithmic proportionality	Governing distribution by ethical criteria, not by reactions alone	Does the system artificially amplify anger, fear or dependence?
6. Reflexive accountability	Impact assessment, correction and open reporting	Is there a mechanism of responsibility for errors and harm?

INSTITUTIONAL AND COMMUNICATIVE MECHANISMS OF IMPROVEMENT

In practice, the dialogical-axiological model operates through several interrelated institutional mechanisms. The first is editorial-axiological review. Before material on a moral topic is published, its purpose, evidential basis, degree of pressure on the audience, impact on vulnerable groups, visual expression and method of distribution are assessed. This is not censorship; it is

the editorial office's own check of the consistency between its goals and its means.

The second is the ethical limits of segmentation. Studying the audience by age, language, interests or region helps make content comprehensible. However, the covert exploitation of psychological vulnerability, fear, religious sensitivity or personal crisis constitutes manipulation. The use of personal data must comply with the principles of consent, purpose limitation and data minimisation. The legislation of Uzbekistan on personal data restricts their disclosure and dissemination without consent.¹⁴

The third is dialogical content formats. Moral promotion should move from ready-made moralising to cases, debates, Q&A sessions, intergenerational dialogues, podcasts and “decision point” formats. Such material enables the audience to assess the situation independently, compare reasons and foresee consequences. A field experiment conducted in 2025 showed that counterspeech strategies encouraging users to adopt the perspective of minority groups increased the likelihood of xenophobic posts being deleted and reduced their social amplification. This finding suggests that, in moral communication, broadening perspectives may be more effective than condemnation.¹⁵

The fourth is treating media literacy not as an external precondition of promotion, but as an integral part of it. Moral content should give the audience not only the “right” conclusion, but also the skills to verify sources, recognise emotionally charged headlines, distinguish advertising from editorial content and manage algorithmic recommendations. If moral promotion does not enable a critical view of itself, it produces dependence rather than enlightenment.

The fifth is open accountability and self-regulation. The Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists of the International Federation of Journalists requires

¹⁴Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Personal Data” No. ZRU-547 of 2 July 2019.

¹⁵Gennaro G. et al. Counterspeech Encouraging Users to Adopt the Perspective of Minority Groups Reduces Hate Speech and Its Amplification on Social Media // Scientific Reports. – 2025. – Vol. 15. – Art. 22018. DOI: 10.1038/s41598-025-05041-w.

respect for facts, prioritising verification over speed, openly correcting errors, and protecting privacy and human dignity. National legislation likewise establishes, alongside the freedom of the mass media, the protection of honour, dignity and private life, as well as the right of refutation and reply. On this basis, it is advisable for editorial offices to introduce such instruments as codes of ethics, an ombudsman or an independent ethics council, a register of corrections and reports on algorithmic impact.¹⁶¹⁷

The sixth is differentiated protection for children and vulnerable audiences. The use of fear, depictions of violence, guilt or shaming under the pretext of a moral topic may not produce an educational effect and may, on the contrary, cause psychological harm. The legislation of Uzbekistan provides mechanisms for protecting children from information harmful to their health and for the age classification of information products. Therefore, alongside the content of moral promotion, age-appropriate language, imagery and intensity of influence should also be subject to review.¹⁸

The proposed mechanisms converge on a single idea: improving moral promotion through the media means not producing more content, but making the very relationship through which values are conveyed a moral one. The audience is not a number, a target or a passive object; it is a partner subject that creates meaning, engages in debate and makes responsible decisions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The main philosophical contradiction of moral promotion through the media lies between the good goal and the means used to achieve it. The morality of the goal does not automatically justify a manipulative method.

16Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Mass Media" No. ZRU-78 of 15 January 2007.

17International Federation of Journalists. Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists. – Tunis, 2019. URL: <https://www.ifj.org/who/rules-and-policy/global-charter-of-ethics-for-journalists> (accessed: 14.07.2026).

18Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Protection of Children from Information Harmful to Their Health" No. ZRU-444 of 8 September 2017.

2. Moral promotion differs from persuasion, propaganda and manipulation in that it respects the audience's capacity for deliberation, its epistemic interests and its freedom of choice.

3. The central thesis of the article has been confirmed: the genuine outcome of moral promotion is not to make the audience accept a ready-made conclusion, but to strengthen moral agency — the capacity for independent evaluation, responsible choice and accountability.

4. The concept of “legitimate effectiveness of moral promotion” has been proposed as a criterion that unites effectiveness with truthfulness, autonomy, dialogicity, transparency and accountability.

5. The “dialogical-axiological spiral” model, consisting of value legitimisation, epistemic grounding, semantic translation, dialogical participation, algorithmic proportionality and reflexive accountability, has been developed.

6. It is recommended that media organisations introduce editorial-axiological review, ethical limits on segmentation, dialogical content formats, media literacy, open correction and independent accountability mechanisms.

7. The effectiveness of moral promotion should be evaluated not only by views, reactions and shares, but also by the audience's understanding of arguments, tolerance of alternative opinions, the stability of behavioural decisions and the capacity for independent choice.

SCIENTIFIC NOVELTY OF THE STUDY

First, the concept of “moral promotion” has been redefined not as the external management of behaviour, but as a media activity that strengthens the audience's independent moral reasoning and responsible choice. Second, the concept of the “legitimate effectiveness of moral promotion” has been developed. Third, a six-link “dialogical-axiological spiral” model for the mediatization of moral values has been proposed. Fourth, the necessity of evaluating the moral status of media promotion not only by its content, but also

in conjunction with algorithmic distribution and institutional accountability, has been substantiated.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Theoretically, the article clarifies the relationship between axiology, media ethics and the philosophy of persuasion. Practically, the model can be applied in developing concepts for spiritual and educational content, drafting editorial codes, conducting ethical reviews, auditing platform recommendations and designing media literacy programmes.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The proposed model is conceptual in nature, and its indicators need to be tested empirically across various media genres and audience groups. Future research should develop, on the basis of the “legitimate effectiveness” criteria, content-analysis codes, an expert assessment scale and a sociological instrument for measuring the audience’s level of moral agency.

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