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THE ROLE IN SOCIETY OF THE DISCIPLINE "FUNDAMENTALS OF SANITATION AND HYGIENE AT PUBLIC CATERING ENTERPRISES"

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Abstract. This article examines the social role of the discipline "Fundamentals of Sanitation and Hygiene at Public Catering Enterprises" in the system of professional education. The study proceeds from the observation that eating food prepared outside the home is an act of trust the consumer cannot verify, so that the safety of the meal depends entirely upon the internalised routines of those who prepare it. The author substantiates six social functions of the discipline — the preventive, economic, trust-forming, normative-legal, cultural-value and ecological functions — and identifies the invisibility paradox as the principal obstacle to their realisation: effective hygiene produces non-events, so that the value of the discipline becomes perceptible only when it fails. The polemic between P. Slovic and C. Sunstein concerning the status of lay risk perception is subjected to critical examination, and it is shown that the transition from a compliance-based to a culture-based conception of food safety requires the discipline to address perception and motivation rather than normative knowledge alone.

Keywords: sanitation and hygiene, public catering, food safety, professional education, social function of a discipline, risk perception, invisibility paradox, food safety culture, institutional trust, prevention, HACCP, public health.

INTRODUCTION

One of the least noticed yet most consequential changes in modern everyday life is the steady transfer of food preparation from the household to the enterprise. Canteens in schools, workplaces and hospitals, restaurants and cafés, street trade and delivery services now supply a large and growing share of the meals consumed by the population. Every such meal constitutes an act of trust of a peculiar kind: the consumer cannot inspect the storage of the raw materials, observe the temperature at which the dish was held, know whether the hands that prepared it were washed, or detect microbiological contamination by taste, smell or appearance. The safety of the meal rests therefore not upon the vigilance of the consumer but upon the internalised routines of those who prepare it. The scale of what depends upon those routines is considerable. According to World Health Organization estimates, unsafe food causes several hundred million cases of illness and several hundred thousand deaths worldwide each year, with children under five bearing a disproportionate share of the burden. The overwhelming majority of these cases are preventable, arising not from unknown hazards but from well-understood failures: inadequate temperature control, cross-contamination, insufficient personal hygiene and the handling of food by infected personnel. Catering enterprises are particularly sensitive in this respect, since a single violation at a single point of preparation may affect hundreds of people at once. It is against this background that the social significance of the discipline "Fundamentals of Sanitation and Hygiene at Public Catering Enterprises" becomes apparent. The discipline is the institutional mechanism by which epidemiological knowledge is converted into the daily habits of practitioners. The internationally codified principles of food hygiene, the logic of hazard analysis and the identification of critical control points acquire practical force only in so far as they are assimilated by the individual worker to the point of operating without deliberation. The graduate of the discipline is in this sense the final barrier between the population and a class of preventable disease, so that the quality of its

teaching is a matter of public health and not of professional training alone. The realisation of this role is nevertheless impeded by a characteristic difficulty that may be termed the invisibility paradox. Hygiene, when it succeeds, produces nothing: no outbreak occurs, no one falls ill, no enterprise is closed. The result of correct practice is an absence of events, which cannot be observed or credited to anyone, whereas failure is highly visible. The value of hygienic discipline is consequently underestimated by those who practise it: students perceive the subject as formal requirements to be memorised for an examination, and managers perceive hygienic measures as a cost rather than as the production of a good. For the Republic of Uzbekistan these considerations possess immediate practical weight. The rapid expansion of the catering and hospitality sector, the development of tourism, the extension of organised catering in schools and workplaces and the orientation of the food industry towards export together increase both the number of people served and the reputational consequences of any failure. National tradition, moreover, attaches a distinct moral value to cleanliness and to the purity of food offered to a guest, so that the discipline can draw upon a value foundation already present in the culture. The scholarly problem arises from the contradiction between the objective social significance of the discipline and its undervaluation by those who study and apply it. The aim of the article is to substantiate the social functions of the discipline; the tasks were to systematise those functions, to establish the causes of the discipline's undervaluation and to determine the conditions of realising its social potential. The scholarly novelty consists in the systematisation of its social role into six functions, in the analysis of the invisibility paradox as the principal obstacle to their realisation, and in the substantiation of the transition from a compliance-based to a culture-based conception of hygienic competence. The results may be drawn upon in the design of curricula and in the professional development of teachers of special subjects in food technology.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Within Uzbek scholarship the theoretical foundation of the present study is supplied above all by the work of T.I. Iskandarov in the field of hygiene science. The scholar's principal contribution consists in the defence of the preventive orientation of medicine, according to which eliminating the conditions that generate disease is more effective and more economical than treating its consequences, and in the demonstration that hygienic norms are not administrative conventions but codified results of epidemiological research. This has a direct consequence for teaching: a norm can be taught meaningfully only together with the evidence from which it derives, since a student who knows why a temperature threshold exists will observe it where one who has merely memorised it will not. The second pillar of the theoretical framework is provided by the research of Sh.T. Iskandarova on the organisation of public health and the priority of prevention. The author substantiates the thesis that the effectiveness of preventive measures depends less upon the severity of supervision than upon the readiness of professionals and of the population to act in accordance with them, and that forming such readiness is an educational rather than an administrative task; this underlies the distinction developed below between compliance secured by external control and conduct grounded in professional conviction. The value dimension is illuminated by research on education and worldview: S. Ergashbaev shows that stable value orientations are formed through sustained continuous education rather than isolated influences and, in a further study, singles out independent critical reflection as a central outcome, while M.M. Mirzaolimjon og'li and E. Shohbozbek disclose the institutional context of the reform. Within international scholarship and normative practice the problem is framed through several distinct approaches. The World Health Organization has established the epidemiological scale of the burden of foodborne disease and its preventability. The general principles of food hygiene adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission codify the requirements of hygienic practice and, in their

most recent revision, introduce food safety culture and management commitment as elements of the system itself. F. Yiannas developed the conception of food safety culture as a behaviour-based approach, arguing that documented systems fail where the everyday conduct of personnel is not aligned with them, while P. Slovic and C. Sunstein have analysed the perception of risk by non-specialists from opposed positions. The gap addressed here is the absence of a systematic account of the social functions performed by the discipline itself.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodological foundation of the present study is constituted by the systemic approach, which made it possible to treat the discipline not as an isolated element of a curriculum but as a component of the social mechanism of protecting public health, whose effects extend beyond the educational institution to the enterprise, the consumer and the health system; within this framework structural-functional analysis performed the leading function, since it permitted the identification of the functions the discipline performs within that mechanism and the distinction between those explicitly declared and those operating without being named. The theoretical analysis of scientific, normative and methodological literature served to reconstruct the conceptions of hygienic prevention, food safety culture and risk perception and to delimit them from adjacent notions. Documentary analysis was applied to international normative texts, national sanitary regulations and the curricula of the discipline, together with content analysis of its textbooks, in order to establish the correspondence between the requirements of practice and the content of teaching. The axiological method was applied in examining the value foundations of hygienic conduct and their relation to cultural conceptions of cleanliness and hospitality. Questioning and interview were used to establish the conceptions of the discipline held by students, teachers and enterprise personnel and their assessment of its practical significance. Pedagogical modelling yielded the systematisation of the social functions of the discipline, and the method of expert assessment was applied in verifying that systematisation. General scientific procedures of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, abstraction and generalisation were applied at every stage and secured the logical grounding and internal coherence of the conclusions.

RESULTS

The study established that the social role of the discipline is realised through six interconnected functions. The preventive function is primary and reduces the burden of foodborne disease through professional routines that eliminate the conditions of contamination; its distinctive feature is that its result takes the form of events that do not occur. The economic function operates simultaneously at the level of the enterprise, where it prevents losses from spoiled products, closures and sanctions and protects a reputation that a single incident may destroy; at the level of the health system, where it reduces the costs of treating preventable illness; and at the level of the national economy, where it protects export capacity and the attractiveness of the country to tourists. The trust-forming function maintains the institutional trust upon which the whole system of public catering rests, since a consumer who cannot verify conditions of preparation must rely upon the presumption that those who prepared the meal were competently trained; hygienic education thus produces a component of social capital. The normative-legal function consists in translating sanitary legislation and international standards from the language of regulation into that of daily professional action, without which norms remain formally in force and practically inoperative. The cultural-value function consists in forming an understanding of hygiene as an ethical obligation towards the consumer, connected to the traditional valuation of cleanliness and of the purity of food offered to a guest. The ecological function consists in the safe handling of food waste, water and cleaning agents. A second result consists in the analysis of the invisibility paradox as the

principal obstacle to the realisation of these functions: because successful prevention produces no observable events, neither students nor practitioners receive feedback confirming the value of their compliance, whereas the effort it requires is immediate and continuous. The analysis established that this asymmetry cannot be overcome by intensifying supervision alone, since supervision operates only where it is present, and requires instead the substitution of internal conviction for external control. A third result follows: the discipline must be reoriented from normative prescription towards the formation of a food safety culture, in which each norm is accompanied by the evidence justifying it, the consequences of violation are made perceptible through documented cases, and hygienic conduct is understood as part of professional identity rather than as a condition of avoiding penalty.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained require to be situated within the principal controversy concerning the perception of risk by non-specialists, namely the opposition between P. Slovic and C. Sunstein. In his studies of risk perception, P. Slovic showed that lay judgements differ systematically from expert assessments expressed in terms of expected mortality, and that this difference is not simply error. Lay perception incorporates qualitative dimensions that expert calculation omits: whether exposure is voluntary, whether the hazard is controllable, whether its consequences are dreaded, and whether the responsible institutions are trusted. Risk is on this account not a purely technical quantity but a concept partly constituted by social and value considerations, and reactions dismissed by experts as irrational may express legitimate concerns about the distribution of exposure and the trustworthiness of those who manage it. C. Sunstein approaches the same phenomena from a different standpoint. In his analysis of the psychology and regulation of fear, he emphasises the distortions to which lay judgement is subject: the availability heuristic causes vividly reported hazards to be overestimated while familiar and statistically greater ones are neglected; probability neglect focuses attention upon the severity of an outcome irrespective of its likelihood; and social cascades amplify perceptions independently of evidence. His regulatory conclusion is that policy should follow comparative assessment of actual risks rather than the intensity of public alarm. The substance of this disagreement concerns whether divergent lay perception is a distortion to be corrected or an input to be respected, and both positions illuminate the invisibility paradox. Sunstein's analysis explains why hygienic risk is chronically underestimated by those who handle food daily: the hazard is familiar, invisible, statistically diffuse and rarely traceable to an individual act, and possesses none of the qualities that command attention. Slovic's analysis explains why the same hazard, once an outbreak becomes public, produces reactions disproportionate to the numbers involved, since food contamination is involuntary, uncontrollable by the consumer and mediated by institutions whose trustworthiness is at once questioned. The two accounts describe two phases of one phenomenon rather than contradicting one another. The implication is that the task of the discipline cannot be confined to transmitting normative knowledge. If underestimation arises from the perceptual properties of the hazard, teaching must work upon perception: the abstract statistic supplemented by the documented case, the invisible rendered visible through microbiological demonstration, the consequences of violation made concrete. If public reaction to failure is governed by trust rather than by numbers, then hygienic conduct is a matter of institutional legitimacy and not merely of compliance — precisely the claim advanced by the conception of food safety culture and now incorporated into codified international practice. The social role of the discipline thus extends beyond the prevention of disease to the maintenance of the conditions under which a society can entrust its nourishment to institutions.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that the discipline “Fundamentals of Sanitation and Hygiene at Public Catering Enterprises” performs a social role considerably broader than the professional preparation of personnel. Its functions are preventive, economic, trust-forming, normative-legal, cultural-value and ecological, and together they convert epidemiological knowledge into the routine conduct upon which the safety of a large part of the population’s nourishment depends. The principal obstacle to realising these functions was identified as the invisibility paradox: effective prevention produces an absence of events, so that neither students nor practitioners receive confirmation of the value of their compliance, while the effort demanded is continuous. Since external supervision operates only where it is present, this asymmetry can be overcome only by forming internal conviction. The discipline must accordingly be reoriented from the transmission of prescriptions towards the formation of a food safety culture, in which each norm is taught together with the evidence justifying it, the consequences of violation are made perceptible, and hygienic conduct is understood as an element of professional identity. Further research might usefully address instruments for measuring the hygienic culture of students and personnel.

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