

**"WHAT PREVENTS THE POPULARIZATION OF MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE?"**

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Now the dynamic processes of the transition of society to market are going on in this country. Some social institutes are not yet ready for the reorganization of their work according to modern requirements, for example the social institute of popularization of scientific knowledge. As the market relations are arising in developing in the Soviet Union general and specific problems of association "Znanie" functioning begin to arise but our knowledge about these processes is not yet comprehensive enough to determine the complete mechanism for its reorganization.

It is possible to suggest that the transition of lecturing work from directive management to selffinance and selfmanagement by the scientific association can be carried out effectively only in case direct impact is made from audience to lecturers and management bodies. In other words, the interest of citizens has to take priority over the interest of the political system in order to promote the solution of longstanding problems of popularization of knowledge, medical knowledge in particular, such as the slow renewal of lecture themes; their poor scientific contents; the weak connection of subject matters of lectures with the needs of rank and file people for the solution of their urgent problems; stagnation in the work of association "Znanie" and insufficient lecturing experience, especially for youngsters and so on.

On the other hand, we know but little about the attitude of the audience as well as the lecturers to knowledge. Thus the efficiency of popularization of medical knowledge depends not only on the causes mentioned above but also on the attitude of audience to medical knowledge. To establish this attitude it is necessary to answer such question as: first: what is the structure of audience's interest in medical knowledge? Second, to what extent are its interest reflected in lecture themes suggested by lecturers?

To determine this structure a research was pursued in Leningrad region in 1989-1990. Specially stratified samples of 318 lecturers and adult audience of 311 aged over 18 were interviewed in late 1989. Learning Lecturing experience there is prominence of those who have been lecturing on the subject matter over 5 years (75%). Although 87% of respondents have length of service over 10 years, only 45% lecturers have scientific degrees. Almost half of them are members of the communist party (48%). as to the audience there is predominance of respondents who work at enterprises as workers (26%) or engineers (26%). At the same time all other social strata were presented as well as all main organizations where lecturers gave their lectures on medical themes.

Thus one can say we observe the predominance of the most active social strata (94%) who work in different social spheres although pensioners (4%) and students were presented too.

In order to determine the structure of audience's interest in medical knowledge the list of lectures including 50 themes was prepared. After that respondents estimated the presence or absence of their own interest in each of these subject matters. Aimed at getting the list of the most popular themes we used the general and selective method of appreciation of their interest. In general we may suggest that the most popular are the ones below :

1. What do we know about the usefulness and harmfulness of medical preparations?

\*The smaller index number the higher popularity.

2. What is the human mind? The extrasensory phenomenon: myths and reality.

3. The making of the healthy way of life.

4. The mistakes of human behaviour in the extraordinary situations.

5. Emotional stress, its consequences and preventive treatment.

6. The rendering of first medical aid.

7. The physiology and hygiene of sexual relations.

8. Unconventional medicine: the treatment by physical methods, by any form of message.

9. The problems of bringing up children in the family.

10. Home first-aid kit.

11. Health and ecology.

12. Immunology development and the control of AIDS.

Taking into account the selective method of assessment we may suggest that second and third themes from the list presented above are of special interest for the audience.

On the other hand, we may suggest that the least popular themes with the audience are the following:

1. The strategy of health service renewal and the problems of spread of medical knowledge.
2. The education of a doctor. The problems of medical ethics and deontology.
3. The problems of health service economy.
4. The doctor and patient relations.
5. Developments of Soviet cardiology and other medical sciences.
6. Prevention of traumas and accidents.

In this case it would be useful to determine the correlation of subjective and "objective" factors arousing the interest of citizens in certain subjects. For instance, the share of the former factors is twice as large as the latter. Among the subjective factors the "personal interest" of listeners in the problems under consideration is predominant, its share quota is 80%." The family and relatives interest" have share 15% and "the professional interest" in a certain subject, its share is 50%. The interest aroused by Mass Media has share 40% and the determined by information which the listeners receive from "Znanie" association lectures has share 10%.

The results of the investigation prove the essential difference between the structure of interest in medical knowledge on the part of the audience and the subject matter of lectures suggested by lecturers themselves. This conclusion can be made if one compares the structure of interest of the audience considered above with that of the themes of lectures.

Taking into account the results of more thorough analysis we can draw some conclusions:

first, practically for all the themes we can say that there is sufficient disagreement between the degree of audience interest and degree of its realization by lecturers.

Second, it is expedient to increase the range of lectures on some subjects for certain groups of audience, on the one hand, and to decrease the range of lectures on other subjects, on the other hand.

Third, on the basis of comparison of these two groups of data concerning the lecture themes it is impossible to speak about the efficiency of lecturing work by which we mean the degree of reflection of real needs and interest of audience in the directions of the Association activity.

We are sure that the audience have to be one of subjects who manage the process of improvement of lecturing work of Association "Znanie". This assumption was made by 75% of lecturers. At the same time 84% of audience pointed out that it is necessary to take into consideration their wishes, estimation of lectures etc...

Among 28 general directions of improvement of Association "Znanie" activity we would like touch upon only the main ones:

1. To bring into as close contact as possible the content of lectures and real problems of people.
2. To increase the quality of lectures.
3. To improve the form of activity in different ways.
4. To give a comprehensive interpretation of socioeconomic and ethic problems of perestroika process.
5. To use Mass Media more actively.

The result of investigation allow us to determine the most "unpopular" directions of association activity, such as:

- Propaganda and popularization of Marx-Lenin theory.
- Giving offensive character to lecturing propaganda in respect of bourgeois propagand activity.
- Public discussion of themes and subject matter of lectures.