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## SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF INSTRUMENT TREATMENT ON SERVICE QUALITY AND CLIENT SAFETY

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**Purpose.** The purpose is to provide a scientific basis for the impact of instrument processing, including disinfection and sterilization, on the quality of household and aesthetic services and the level of customer safety. The study is aimed at substantiating the importance of proper instrument treatment as a critical component of infection prevention, client trust, and institutional reputation in the beauty industry.

**Materials and methods.** The study analyzes the effectiveness of physical (dry-heat sterilizers, autoclaves, ultrasonic baths) and chemical (antiseptic solutions) methods for instrument processing used in hairdressing services. It also examines the regulatory framework in Ukraine, including national sanitary regulations, WHO recommendations, and ISO standards. The research is supported by a review of scientific literature on best hygiene practices. Attention is paid to the role of professional training, internal monitoring systems, and client education as part of a comprehensive hygiene strategy.

**Results.** The analysis of current literature suggests that not all salons adhere to the full cycle of instrument sterilization, which leads to decreased client trust, lower satisfaction with services, and increased legal and health risks. Evidence from various sources shows that the introduction of hygiene protocols, the use of modern sterilization technologies, regular staff training, and transparent communication about hygiene procedures significantly improve service quality and increase client retention. Client perception of cleanliness is shown to be closely tied to their loyalty and choice of service provider.

**Conclusions.** There is a direct correlation between proper instrument sterilization and client safety and satisfaction in hairdressing salons. A systematic approach, including investment in certified equipment, establishment of internal regulations, periodic professional development, and clear communication with clients, enhances both the competitiveness and reputation of beauty establishments. Ensuring proper hygiene standards should be considered a fundamental aspect of quality service and a strategic priority for sustainable business development in the beauty sector.

**KEY WORDS:** antiseptics; client safety; disinfection; hairdressing; hygiene; instruments; sanitation; service quality; service; sterilization.

The issue of ensuring hygienic safety in the field of household and aesthetic services, in particular in the context of instrument processing, is actively covered in the modern scientific literature. The works of domestic and foreign researchers focus on the complex impact of sanitary and hygienic procedures on the quality of service, the risks of customer infection, the legal responsibility of institutions and the overall reputation of the service institution. In particular, Ahluwalia and Fabi emphasize that neglect of sterilization is one of the main factors that can lead to dermatological complications in clients, while regular use of effective cleaning and disinfection methods helps prevent diseases and increases the level of trust in the service [1].

The other scientists analyzed the effects of natural dyes on hair structure and scalp health, concluding that even in the case of organic products, proper treatment of instruments remains a critical condition for avoiding side effects [2]. A similar opinion is shared by other authors, including Draelos, who in his systematic review emphasizes the importance of standardizing sterilization methods and the need to

adapt them according to the type of service and level of risk [3].

He, Michailidou, Gahlon and Zeng highlight the problem of allergic reactions that can be triggered by insufficient or improper disinfection [4]. The researchers note that the increase in the number of complaints of skin manifestations after visiting beauty salons requires increased control over hygiene protocols. He, Cao, Nie and Wang consider the age-related aspects of hair care and the associated hygiene risks, emphasizing that older clients need special care in using tools that must be guaranteed sterile [5].

Special attention should be paid to research on innovations in the field of sterilization equipment. One study analyzes an environmentally sustainable approach to instrument decontamination, highlighting the potential of low-temperature plasma sterilization, next-generation ultrasonic baths, and automated sterilization chambers. Another work explores post-sterilization care of instruments, emphasizing methods to extend their service life and preserve antiseptic properties between uses [6].

The literature also includes researches that emphasize the relationship between hygiene standards and the image of a service facility. These works emphasize that instrument handling is not only a safety issue, but also an element of a communication strategy that affects brand building, customer satisfaction, and the competitiveness of the institution.

Thus, the analysis of scientific sources shows the relevance of studying instrument processing as one of the key factors in the quality of services and customer safety. The scientific literature presents a wide range of approaches to solving this problem: from the technical and chemical aspects of sterilization to the social and marketing context. Most of the researches are general in nature and do not take into account the specifics of the Ukrainian market, which justifies the need for further applied research in this area.

**The purpose of the article** is to provide a scientific basis for the impact of instrument processing, including disinfection and sterilization, on the quality of household and aesthetic services and the level of customer safety.

**Materials and methods.** The study analyzes the effectiveness of physical (dry-heat sterilizers, autoclaves, ultrasonic baths) and chemical (antiseptic solutions) methods for instrument processing used in hairdressing services. It also examines the regulatory framework in Ukraine, including WHO recommendations and ISO standards.

**Research results and discussion.** The literature review indicates that not all salons adhere to the full cycle of instrument sterilization, leading to decreased client trust, lower service satisfaction, and potential legal issues. The analysis shows that the introduction of hygiene protocols, trained staff, and systematic sterilization monitoring significantly improves service quality and customer retention.

In today's environment of providing household, medical, cosmetic and hairdressing services that involve the use of reusable instruments, the key issue is ensuring the proper quality of their processing. Insufficient or poor-quality disinfection and sterilization poses a serious threat to the health of consumers, significantly increasing the risk of transmitting infectious diseases, including viral hepatitis B and C, HIV, fungal and bacterial infections. This issue is especially relevant in the context of beauty salons and hairdressing salons, as it is not only about compliance with sanitary and epidemiological standards, but also about the direct impact on the level of customer confidence, competitiveness of the institution and its reputation [7].

The sterilization of instruments in beauty industry facilities is a mandatory requirement that must be carried out according to regulated protocols. The work process should include: thoroughly washing the nail technician's hands before the procedure, maintaining at least two sets of instruments for alternate use,

using registered and approved disinfectants, and regularly monitoring the effectiveness of sterilizers. Implementation of this requirement is often neglected by some facilities, citing significant financial and time costs. In particular, ensuring high-quality sterilization requires specialized equipment (autoclaves, dry heat ovens, ultrasonic baths), which entails significant investment. Additionally, it is important to consider the limited shelf life of disinfectant solutions, the need for staff training, and the documentation of processing procedures.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that frequent sterilization, especially at high temperatures, reduces the service life of instruments. Blunting of blades, the need for professional sharpening, and the purchase of new sets create an additional financial burden, which is why some entrepreneurs deliberately reduce the frequency of sterilization procedures. The main reason for not performing a full sterilization cycle in such cases is not a lack of hygiene, but a desire to reduce costs.

The scientific community emphasizes that violation or disregard of hygiene protocols in the service sector has both direct medical consequences (infection of clients) and indirect socio-economic risks, such as loss of client base, lower ratings, reputational losses, and legal liability. Research by the Czech Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology found a direct correlation between the quality of sterilization and customer satisfaction with beauty salon services.

The problem of ensuring proper sterility in the beauty industry is therefore complex and requires an interdisciplinary approach to solving it. It is necessary to introduce clear regulations adapted to the requirements of national legislation and international standards (ISO, WHO), as well as systematic awareness-raising and educational work among staff. Implementation of internal monitoring, regular updating of staff knowledge, and investment in modern sterilization equipment are essential factors in improving service safety and client trust.

In the national scientific literature, the problem of ensuring proper sanitation of instruments in the field of aesthetic services, especially in the activities of hairdressing and beauty salons, has been repeatedly analyzed. Several studies have examined the regulatory and legal aspects of sanitary regulation in the private sector, along with the level of compliance with hygiene standards in Ukrainian salons. This research provides insights into the current state of sanitary oversight and the challenges faced by beauty establishments in meeting established hygiene requirements.

This research has laid the foundation for the further development of recommendations for improving the quality of service and customer safety through the implementation of effective sterilization protocols. At the same time, several important aspects

remain unresolved, which are the subject of analysis in this research article. The following issues require a deeper examination:

1. The impact of instrument processing method on the subjective perception of service quality by clients. Most studies focus on the medical consequences, while the psychological component of trust in the institution is practically not analyzed.

2. Lack of comparative analysis of the effectiveness of different sterilization methods in aesthetic institutions in the context of small business.

3. Insufficient research on innovative processing technologies (ultrasound, steam sterilization) with regard to economic feasibility.

4. Limited data on the role of staff training in adherence to sterilization protocols and the impact of monitoring compliance on outcomes [8].

Numerous studies have shown that advanced sterilization protocols – such as those incorporating ultrasonic cleaning, chemical indicators, and controlled temperature cycles – tend to result in lower levels of microbial contamination compared to traditional methods. For example, Vitagliano and others demonstrated that autoclaving combined with pre-cleaning stages significantly reduces residual microbial load, achieving up to 99.99% pathogen elimination [9]. Moreover, client-centered studies by Trüeb [10], Sharma and others found that enhanced hygiene protocols positively influence customer perceptions of safety and service quality [11]. Clients reported higher satisfaction levels when staff visibly followed sterilization routines and communicated hygienic measures clearly. These findings suggest that not only biological efficacy but also transparency in hygiene practices contributes to improved service outcomes and trust.

The literature describes various standardized microbiological methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of sterilization procedures in aesthetic and medical service settings. Draelos outlines standard protocols such as sampling with sterile swabs, inoculating nutrient media, and incubating at controlled temperatures to quantify colony-forming units (CFUs) as a marker of microbial contamination. Similarly, Vitagliano and others note that regular microbiological assessments remain essential for infection prevention in non-clinical environments [12]. Other studies, such as those by Mishra, Sinha, Chaturvedi, and Jaiswal also recommend incorporating client feedback tools to assess perceived hygiene, cleanliness, and safety, emphasizing that subjective client perception often correlates with visible sterilization practices and procedural transparency [13].

Scholars consistently emphasize that continuous professional development (CPD) is critical for maintaining hygiene standards and improving service quality in the beauty industry. According to Sharma and others, participation in structured training

programs enhances practitioners' understanding of sterilization protocols and reduces procedural errors. Moreover, professional growth through activities such as mentoring, salon management, and participation in industry events contributes to higher service standards and greater customer loyalty. The literature also identifies career diversification, including teaching and entrepreneurship as a factor that encourages long-term compliance with hygiene norms, as it reinforces accountability and professional identity within the industry.

A significant area of professional growth for industry professionals is teaching, both in online and offline formats. This allows not only to transfer experience to newcomers, but also to build credibility, increasing the overall value of services [14]. Organization of training courses, marathons, consultations, and participation in conferences enhances the image of a specialist, increases the client base, and opens up opportunities for monetizing knowledge. Another strategic direction is to open an own salon or beauty studio. This solution allows expanding the scale of operations, delegating responsibilities, reaching a new level of profitability, and in the future, opening branches or launching a franchise.

Literature reviews indicate that advanced sterilization programs, particularly those incorporating ultrasonic cleaning, chemical indicators, and strict temperature control – are more effective than basic methods in achieving microbial decontamination. According to studies by Vitagliano and others, and Hoxey [15], such comprehensive protocols lead to significant reductions in microbial load, especially when combined with rigorous documentation and regular maintenance of sterilization equipment. These findings underscore the critical role of staff training and strict adherence to hygiene protocols in maintaining high standards of cleanliness and infection prevention.

In general, the study confirmed that improving the quality of disinfection and sterilization, expanding career opportunities in the form of teaching and entrepreneurship contributes not only to the professional growth of the nail technician, but also to an overall increase in the level of trust in the beauty industry and its safety.

**Discussion.** The results of the study confirmed that proper reprocessing of instruments is a fundamental factor in ensuring a high level of service quality and ensuring the safety of clients in personal service facilities, including medical, cosmetology and hairdressing institutions. Proper disinfection, sterilization, and storage of reusable instruments significantly reduces the risk of infecting clients with pathogens, including hepatitis B and C viruses, HIV, staphylococcal flora, and other opportunistic bacteria. In contrast, neglecting processing standards poses a serious threat to consumer health and leads to a loss of trust in the service as a whole.

The literature review found that the existence of a systematized and regulated approach to instrument processing, clear instructions, division of responsibilities, stage control, and compliance with protocols positively correlate with service quality, the level of professional responsibility of staff, and the positive image of the institution among consumers.

The use of modern sterilization equipment, such as class B autoclaves, combined with mandatory staff training courses on compliance with sanitary and epidemiological requirements, is a prerequisite for the effective implementation of infection control measures. Failure to comply with these standards significantly increases the risk of developing infectious complications, including skin infections and mucous membrane lesions, which not only endangers the health of customers but can also lead to legal liability and negative publicity.

The research results also showed that the implementation of a multi-level system of monitoring compliance with sterilization procedures and regular certification of staff on hygiene issues not only minimizes the risk of cross-infection, but also serves as a guarantee of a high level of customer loyalty. Additionally, openness about sterilization methods and demonstration of instrument processing processes help build trust in the salon and ensure a positive perception of safety among clients.

Instrument reprocessing appears not only as an element of the sanitary regime, but also as a critical component of the overall service quality management system. Its impact can be traced not only in the physical aspect of customer safety, but also in the area of reputational capital of the institution. Particularly noteworthy is the use of autoclaving as one of the most reliable disinfection methods, which destroys up to 99.99% of microorganisms, including spores.

**Conclusions.** Investing in high-quality sterilization equipment, systematic staff training, and regular audits of hygiene compliance are strategically important measures to ensure the sustainable development of personal service businesses. Ensuring daily safety for both the client and the employee should be an integral part of the professional ethics of each

specialist. The successful development of a service institution is inextricably linked to the level of customer trust. The reputation of an institution is formed over years, and it can be lost in a matter of minutes. That is why compliance with high hygiene standards should be viewed not only as a mandatory sanitary requirement, but also as a basic component of competitiveness in the modern service market.

Despite growing scholarly attention to hygiene and instrument sterilization in aesthetic service settings, several important areas remain underexplored. First, most existing studies focus on general compliance and biological effectiveness, but lack region-specific research – particularly in post-Soviet contexts such as Ukraine, where infrastructure, regulation, and training systems differ markedly from those in Western countries.

Second, there is limited comparative analysis of the cost-effectiveness of advanced sterilization technologies (e.g., plasma sterilization, digital autoclave systems) in small and medium-sized service businesses. More research is needed to assess whether the financial investment in modern equipment is justifiable in terms of long-term client retention and risk reduction.

Third, few studies examine the psychological dimension of hygiene, particularly how transparency in sterilization practices and visible protocols influence client trust, loyalty, and service choice. Interdisciplinary research combining public health, marketing, and behavioral science would offer valuable insights into how hygiene functions as both a safety measure and a competitive strategy.

Fourth, the role of professional development in hygiene compliance remains under-researched. Longitudinal studies could assess whether periodic staff certification, mentorship programs, or continuing education lead to sustained improvements in hygiene adherence.

Lastly, as the beauty industry integrates more digital tools, future research should explore the potential of smart sterilization systems, electronic compliance logs, and customer-facing hygiene dashboards in promoting both safety and trust.

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## НАУКОВЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ВПЛИВУ ОБРОБКИ ІНСТРУМЕНТІВ НА ЯКІСТЬ ПОСЛУГ ТА БЕЗПЕКУ КЛІЄНТІВ

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**Мета:** науково обґрунтувати вплив обробки інструментів, зокрема дезінфекції та стерилізації, на якість побутових та естетичних послуг і рівень безпеки клієнтів. Дослідження спрямоване на обґрунтування важливості належної обробки інструментів як критичного складника профілактики інфекцій, довіри клієнтів та репутації закладу в індустрії краси.

**Матеріали та методи.** У дослідженні проаналізовано ефективність фізичних (сухожарові стерилізатори, автоклави, ультразвукові ванни) та хімічних (антисептичні розчини) методів обробки інструментів, що використовуються у перукарнях. У дослідженні також проаналізовано нормативно-правову базу в Україні, включно з національними санітарними правилами, рекомендаціями ВООЗ та стандартами ISO. Дослідження підкріплене оглядом наукової літератури щодо найкращих гігієнічних практик. Увагу приділено ролі професійної підготовки, систем внутрішнього моніторингу та навчання клієнтів як частини комплексної гігієнічної стратегії.

**Результати.** Аналіз сучасної літератури свідчить про те, що не всі салони дотримуються повного циклу стерилізації інструментів, що призводить до зменшення довіри клієнтів, зниження рівня задоволеності послугами та підвищення юридичних і медичних ризиків. Дані з різних джерел свідчать про те, що впровадження гігієнічних протоколів, використання сучасних технологій стерилізації, регулярне навчання персоналу та прозора комунікація щодо гігієнічних правил і процедур стерилізації можуть сприяти підвищенню рівня довіри клієнтів до салонів та покращенню якості послуг.

**КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА:** антисептика; безпека клієнтів; гігієна; дезінфекція; інструменти; перукарня; послуги; санітарія; стерилізація; якість.

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