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Intangible cultural heritage as a resource for consolidating modern Ukrainian society

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Abstract

Relevance. The relevance of this study lied in actualising the issue of increasing the level of social consolidation of Ukrainian society under the conditions of a number of political, economic, social, and cultural transformations. Intangible cultural heritage serves as the main resource for the establishment and development of national consciousness, which, in turn, strengthens integration processes within society.

Purpose. The purpose of the study is to prove the value of intangible cultural heritage in the modern life of Ukrainians and substantiate the need to preserve cultural values in the course of historical development as a powerful ethno-unifying factor.

Methodology. In the course of the study, general scientific methods, namely analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, systematic, and comparative were used for logical and consistent presentation of the material. A critical approach to information allowed comprehensively and thoroughly examining the issue of cultural heritage as a unifying factor.

Results. As a result of the study, it was discovered that due to complex socio-political and globalisation processes, there is still a need to preserve the traditional heritage, which is an indicator of cultural independence, proving the uniqueness and originality of each nation. Therefore, in the course of the technologisation of society, shifting from the conventional provisions, Ukrainians continue to preserve long-established values, transmit elements of intangible cultural heritage from generation to generation, emphasising the heredity of Ukrainian culture. In the context of this subject, there are currently a small number of publications that only briefly mention the consolidating function of intangible cultural heritage for a particular culture, and, to a greater extent, cover the issues of preserving this type of cultural heritage.

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Conclusions. The scientific value of the study lies in emphasising the relevance of preserving and further transmitting cultural traditions and languages to protect national identity and raise the level of civic consciousness.

Keywords: traditions; language; spiritual culture; consciousness; self-identification.

Introduction

In recent years, discussions on actualising the issue of preserving intangible cultural heritage have considerably intensified. The discussion is urgent due to the need not only to preserve the cultural heritage but also to further transmit it to the next generations, in the form of historical evidence and as a living culture. This provision is supplemented by the importance of intangible cultural heritage as a powerful consolidating factor. Most researchers note the need to preserve the cultural values of the people because they are proof of the historicity of the development and establishment of an ethnic group, a confirmation of its uniqueness. This study is of great theoretical and practical importance. Based on conditional postulates about the value of the cultural heritage of the people, the study examines specific examples of elements of intangible culture that affect all spheres of social life, which is a driving force in the development of a conscious citizen and a consolidated ethnic group in general. The practical importance lies in the possibility of applying the results of the study to substantiate the relevance of preserving living cultural traditions for the development of a healthy national consciousness.

Researchers define heritage as something that is transmitted from generation to generation, something that was previously owned by a particular community, group, or society and has now become a priority in preserving culture [1]. Thus, heritage acts as a conditional link between generations, which forms the cultural environment and ideological values of the community. While many discussions have taken place concerning the preservation of material cultural heritage in the context of the need to preserve valuable historical and cultural objects, the case of the non-material or spiritual culture is different. Material inheritance has a physical form that is subject to preservation. Elements of spiritual culture are images that are more difficult to capture. Manifestations of intangible culture can be recorded in tangible objects, but in this form, they do not always continue to act as a living culture of the people, and sometimes become remnants. However, such a form of intangible cultural heritage allows preserving it and providing access to it to the next generations.

Spiritual cultural heritage consists of all intangible manifestations of culture, representing the diversity of the heritage of humanity, it also acts as one of the most important means for the development of cultural diversity [2]. This interpretation of Intangible cultural heritage represents one of its main functions – demonstrating cultural diversity, which leads to a position on cultural communities and differences. What is common to one group increases its unity, and difference with others creates division. In the context of the approach to intangible cultural heritage as a factor of consolidation of society, the subject of this study is developed. The main purpose of the study is to establish the basic principles of the influence of intangible cultural heritage on the consolidation of modern

Ukrainian society, while the object of research is elements of Ukrainian intangible cultural heritage. The establishment of cultural identity occurs under the influence of the environment in which a person is located, so it remains important to determine the factors that contribute to the development of ethnic and national identity [3], undoubtedly affect modern processes in Ukrainian society, and, therefore, are subject to consideration in this study. Intangible cultural heritage is the unifying factor underlying national consolidation processes. Its preservation and study allow creating conditions for confirming the historical and cultural uniqueness of the Ukrainian people, forming common traditions, customs, values that are the main ones of any ethnic community since the consolidation of the Ukrainian community is a crucial condition for its further development [4]. For that reason, Ukraine's policy on preserving cultural heritage at all levels needs attention, which requires a review of its effectiveness [5].

Literature Review

The review of scientific literature on the stated subject suggests that there is no wide range of publications on the role of intangible cultural heritage in the consolidation of modern society. However, in recent years, many studies have been published that emphasise the value and importance of spiritual culture and the relevance of its preservation. Thus, the study J. Litter, in which the researcher focuses on the role of knowledge and intangible forms of communication is interesting from standpoint of interpretation and description of the functionality of intangible cultural heritage [2]. The author discusses the increased interest in the experience that is historically formed, acquired by past generations, which is reflected in the elements of cultural heritage. L. Arizpe covers the relevance of preserving cultural heritage, including non-material [6]. The main idea of his study is cultural memory. In the 21st century, customs change, and, in some places, become obsolete, value orientations are transformed, but the core remains. People cannot completely disengage from memory, which develops into an inherited experience. Constantly striving for new things, people attempt to obtain something ingrained, permanent, not fleeting. Experience-sharing (cultural, historical, ethnic, etc.) with others gives the social community a sense of identity in a globalised world.

When studying the issue of intangible cultural heritage, it is crucial to consider such an important aspect as language, which is a demonstration of ethnic and national identity, and, most importantly, the result of identity development [3]. Another component of the intangible cultural heritage is tradition, which was considered in detail in the study by E. Afonin & A. Martynov [7]. Researchers note that traditions act as a kind of value-semantic forms, such as new myths, that are designed to counteract the loss of national identity and social integrity.

Researchers have different approaches to the interpretation of intangible cultural heritage. G. Mergos & N. Patsavos [8] define it as a complex concept that undergoes constant development but combines cultural, historical, aesthetic symbols, spiritual, historical and cultural values. In turn, A. Kitsikidis *et al.* [9] consider intangible cultural heritage a representation of living cultural expressions and practices that are recognised by citizens as separate aspects of identity. All these definitions can be summarised as follows: intangible cultural heritage is a set of spiritual values and traditions that have been transmitted from generation to generation and serve as the backbone for the worldview of a particular social group.

Research in this area unanimously emphasises the importance of transmitting socially accepted values through intangible cultural heritage. In Ukrainian society, under the conditions of acute socio-political contradictions, in the context of conducting military operations, the issue of national consolidation is more relevant than ever, which is manifested in the preservation and transfer of historical and cultural experience, improving the level of proficiency in the Ukrainian language, etc. The identification process is important for the consolidation of citizens [4], and the backbone of this process is vital common values developed in the course of historical development, on which, accordingly, the intangible cultural heritage is based [10].

Materials and Methods

In the course of the study, basic general scientific methods were used, such as analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, and systematisation. The involvement of these methods allows thoroughly approaching the literature within the framework of research, analysing it for the reliability of data, their relevance, and drawing conclusions based on disclosing issues that were not previously studied. The integrated use of these methods allows determining the role of intangible cultural heritage for the consolidation of modern Ukrainian society. The involvement of a wide range of literature data allows comprehensively studying the most important aspects of the issue, considering the pluralism of positions, various terminological variations, and the views of researchers on certain cultural phenomena.

The study was conducted in three stages, which were aimed at:

1. Outlining the subject, purpose, and main objectives of the study, designate the object and select the necessary scientific methods. The first stage provided for theoretical preparation for future research, formulation of the main principles of further study, including substantiation of its relevance, originality, practical and theoretical value, which gave an idea of the prospects for the development of this subject and determines the problem areas in its context.

2. At the second stage, a thorough practical and search preparation for the study took place. This stage provided for the selection of literature (special emphasis on modern publications that cover the role of intangible cultural heritage on social processes), which corresponded to the research subject and disclosed aspects that are the most important in the context of the outlined purpose. The search for relevant literature was accompanied by its direct analysis, inference of general patterns and unique features

in the presentation of the authors' own views. Upon using methods of analysis and synthesis, the main points were formulated, according to which the results of the study were presented, which included two main areas: the terminological aspect of intangible cultural heritage and its impact on the consolidation of modern Ukrainian society (in the context of this point, the language issue, the relevance of preserving traditions, forming cultural identity, etc. are covered).

3. The final third stage provided for the final design of the research results, their summary. At this stage, the key provisions on intangible cultural heritage as a resource for consolidating Ukrainian modern society were summarised, the information obtained was systematised, and its consistent interpretation was carried out. The results of the study prove the theoretical and practical relevance of the study, emphasising its originality. The study results give grounds to assert that the issue of identity directly depends on the intangible cultural values that exist in the social environment. This fact, in turn, affects the political, economic, cultural, and social processes in modern society.

Within the framework of the study, upon using these methods and approaches, a postulate was developed about the objective need to preserve intangible cultural heritage, which is an expression of deep-rooted social values that were inbred in a certain social group over a long historical period and transmitted to future generations. Modern processes of individualisation and globalisation blur cultural standards, which, to a certain extent, negates long-established values. Therewith, their preservation is the key to maintaining ethnic and national identity in civil society to strengthen social consolidation not only in difficult socio-political and economic conditions but also to protect the values that led to the development of an independent Ukraine with its unique cultural traditions, customs, folklore, and other elements of intangible cultural heritage.

Results and Discussion

The intangible cultural heritage is interpreted differently in the studies of researchers. However, it is generally accepted that intangible cultural heritage was officially formulated for the International Convention for the protection of the natural and cultural heritage of 1972. Long before that, researchers were engaged in studying, collecting, and storing elements of spiritual culture. Thus, in the second half of the 19th century, anthropologists and ethnologists conducted research, during which they carefully documented fragments of the culture of peoples [6]. The spiritual culture was considered a set of components of non-material manifestations of culture [11], that is, cultural expressions and practices that are the property of the people. In recent years, in the era of integration thinking and public informatisation for sustainable development, the issue of preserving not only historical material monuments but also intangible cultural heritage has become relevant. Now researchers, politicians, and economists are interested in this issue since spiritual culture serves as a tool of sustainable social development. Critics consider such an increased interest in this issue as speculation of cultural values, a threat to the heritage itself, which can lead to its commercialisation, exploitation, and distortion [8; 12].

It is necessary to outline in more detail the economic interests of modern society in preserving the intangible cultural heritage. A separate study edited by G. Mergos & N. Patsavos is devoted to this issue [8], where researchers analyse the economic value of cultural heritage, its role in the development of investment flows to improve infrastructure, economic standards of living, etc. In general, in the materialistic approach, researchers focus on the profitability of using intangible heritage as an important factor in popularising culture and the orientation of this approach on the market. Therefore, for them it is a factor of intensification of the tourism business, which should be handled by the community at the local level, demonstrating the features of the regional flair [13; 14]. It is impossible not to notice that this approach in the capitalist world has its own prospects for development from several positions: popularisation of one's own culture, economic factors, and the possibility of using profits for the development of the region. However, this approach distorts the basic principle of intangible cultural heritage, which is based on basic human values, namely its integrity – a measure of the inviolability of the cultural heritage itself and its attributes [10]. The cultural heritage is defined as a point in time fixed in such attributes that are given legitimacy as conventional [6].

The key point in intangible cultural heritage is its lability, it is a construct that, although is mostly preserved, is subject to changes, and therefore its definition and methods of protection should go through a number of heuristic discussions [6]. Comprehensive care of cultural heritage involves the development of a set of values, ideas, traditions, symbols, views, and achievements [15]. In this context, it is worth focusing in more detail on traditions as one of the key elements of intangible cultural heritage. Traditions as a factor of consolidation of society were considered in detail in the study by E. Afonin & A. Martynov [7]. Tradition is the process of reproducing the experience of generations through social institutions and adapting it to the requirements of modernity. This is a complex socio-historical and socio-psychological process that directly affects the transformation of the paradigm and the development of a new rationalistic type of thinking. This new type of thinking, in turn, affects social practice and distorts social behaviour, which becomes deviant to long-established standards.

Modern culture is no longer as preserved as it used to be. Modernisation processes largely erode the conventional way of life and deny the previous social experience. Innovations, affecting the social system, force it to transform and adapt to new conditions. Thus, the social system becomes fragmented and gradually tends to a state of anomie [7]. In such conditions, there is a destruction of social standards and institutions. Tradition and its bearers in such conditions act as levers of social consolidation, which is necessary for solving urgent issues of social development. However, it was determined that social consolidation and the model of such social behaviour cannot be established naturally. They are established as a result of the emergence of common values or purposes, and therefore the components of such a model of social interaction are a democratic way of life, freedom of self-determination and self-expression.

The discovery of the holistic character of heritage leads to the development of identity. The subjective view of cultural heritage shapes individual vision and worldview in the context of traditions and cultural values. Thus, a set of social roles is established and the meaning of the individual in the group is disclosed [15]. Depending on social experience, the ability to make value judgments is formed, since the evaluation ability plays a key role in determining possible ways of development of events and making the most optimal decision for a given situation. Identity development is influenced by a number of factors. One of them is the environment. Social experience in childhood is acquired through socialisation in institutions. Thus, educational institutions are a mandatory source of familiarisation with intangible cultural heritage. This process takes place during educational events, excursions, lectures, which not only introduce the national or ethnic cultural heritage but also shape the image of a person who adopts the values laid down by conventional guidelines [16; 17].

Cultural education is one of the most important functions of educational institutions. Such education can, within the framework of traditional culture, provide social opportunities, in a broader context, the issue of establishing principles that correlate the interaction between public life and long-established values remains open. The way intangible cultural heritage is transmitted through education is somewhat limited, as it is easily separated from the original space. In classroom settings, it becomes abstracted, which can lead to a distortion of the original idea [18]. Notably, the study of the relationship between universality and relativity in the truth and in the development of judgments about the value of cultural heritage in various social contexts plays an important role in the development of individuality. Sources of information may change, depending on cultural conditions, circumstances, time, and interpretation. This aspect is important since it directly concerns the search for objective truth, which does not exist, and therefore subjectification is the basis for replacing concepts, which leads to a distortion of reality. In the context of the given issue, the above-mentioned matters are crucial, since they legitimise the position of each party to the conflict, considering the facts that matter and rejecting minor, in the opinion of the party, circumstances [10; 19]. Therefore, the existence of a common concept under the influence of intangible cultural heritage is a key condition for the development of a consolidated society.

The preservation of intangible cultural heritage increases awareness of the value of the historical past in the context of the present. This is explained by a number of aspects: the preservation of historical heritage, which is on the verge of disappearance, the demonstration of cultural features of the world's achievements, promotion of the identity development, ensuring social consolidation and cooperation, the creation of historically determined heredity, educational function [6]. However, the concern about the loss of traditions due to a number of globalisation processes provokes a shift in emphasis from recording and collecting information to the experience obtained in the living cultural environment. The need to maintain a system that preserves intangible cultural heritage as a living being designates it as an environment [2] that coordinates the

relationship of material and spiritual long-established values with modern ontology.

Intangible cultural heritage is a powerful resource for national consolidation. The main idea is to unite people through common values, ideals, and aspirations. A common historical past allows society to realise the unity of the past, and heritage is proof of this community. A number of events in recent years have created prerequisites for increasing the level of consolidation of modern Ukrainian society, which has provoked a number of changes. 2014 demonstrated the ability of Ukrainians to consolidate and self-organise in difficult conditions [3]. The reason that undoubtedly influenced social consolidation is national identity. A person who shares Ukrainian national interests defends the ideas obtained through education concerning the social roles of a patriot and a citizen as a person with a stable national identity. This does not mean that their views cannot undergo transformations, however, the values gradually laid down in different circumstances are crucial for modelling behaviour.

Abandoning the previous regime and understanding the need for change for the effective development of society provided for solving a number of issues: the transition from paternalism to institutionally organised development of political parties and the development of civil society. Institutionalisation became an important step in the transition from a call to action, transforming leaders' visions into policies that follow appropriate structures, rules, and procedures. However, this process is complicated by the features of democratic consolidation amidst the legacy of the post-Soviet totalitarian system. Overcoming its remnants has become one of the key points in the transformation processes of Ukrainian society. The Revolution of Dignity in 2014 became an indicator of increasing the level of democratic consolidation of society under the conditions of a number of economic, political, and social problems [20; 21].

In the context of this issue, it is worth noting the importance of consolidation processes within the framework of the development of civil society. Civil society is one of the main factors of social integration and community unification [4]. This is an opportunity to identify initiatives of free citizens and organisations that take responsibility for preserving public life and making decisions on the way to achieving the purpose. The consolidation of Ukrainians in the struggle to defend independence is emphasised by the effectiveness of the functioning of civil society and its institutions. The mobilisation of society proves the thesis about the possibility of promoting and defending the interests of society outside of political parties, which gives grounds for the operation of laws that protect freedom in one's choices, opinions, and views that do not contradict universal values. The events of 2014 created a new civic spirit of activity and engagement, based on the values of individual freedom, responsibility, and dignity [22; 23].

The socio-historical tradition as a factor of social integration and consolidation of Ukrainian society created the basis for strengthening national identity [7]. Under the conditions of subjectification of public position and worldview ideas, there is a differentiation of ideas about the potential possibilities of traditional knowledge, which

can be interpreted by modern generations as outdated or ineffective. Modern society is actively involved in creating a globalised world. At this level, the issue of preserving national identity, cultural values and traditions is actualising. Therefore, society has entered a stage where not only property relations play a decisive role, but also orientation to the future and strategies for long-term development.

The development of intangible cultural heritage does not stop, only the forms of its existence or fixation change. When a society strives to inherit cultural values and preserve them, an opportunity is created for the current transformation of cultural heritage. The individual's participation in this process implies the prospect of empowerment, considering the necessary social responsibility. Thus, the sustainable development of traditional skills lies in the need for constant transfer of social experience through various institutions. Thus, cultural traditions will be preserved in practical forms [18], not exclusively in established ones. If intangible cultural heritage is interpreted as "remnants of culture", its value for modern society disappears, so strengthening the common historical past in the form of cultural achievements of the people is required.

The key point in consolidating society, as mentioned above, is the development of nationally conscious identity. It is developed through a number of other internal decisions that create a special structure of human consciousness. Thus, the basic criterion for identity development is the recognition of human value and human rights – the basic principle of social interaction [10; 24]. Identity is developed at the intersection of internal values and external influences. Imposed ideas and views, in any case, intersect the moral and value system of a person, undergoing analysis for compliance with one's own beliefs while their perception or rejection is provoked by a number of external circumstances. The problem of social conflict remains urgent, which requires finding solutions based on the social experience enshrined in the intangible cultural heritage.

In the era of the information society, relevant resources are becoming essential. The advantages of creating reliable information resources with the possibility of their further integration into the national resources are an important step towards social consolidation. A single information space creates the basis of a globalised information society, the main task of which is to provide everyone with wide and unhindered access to information, historical and cultural heritage. Information resources play a key role in the development of consciousness at the individual level, and therefore the selection of information resources in the modern world is important for the correct perception of reality, which is impossible without a critical approach to information analysis [25; 26].

The protection and management of cultural heritage resources are an opportunity to ensure its productive existence for future generations, providing them with such an important property as social consolidation. The main conditions for understanding the value of intangible cultural heritage are its comprehensive study, its variability in interpretation, exposition in accordance with social needs, interpretation, and reinterpretation. Commonly, the primary meaning of certain traditions is lost over time, and

new content is given to them by people who adhere to these traditions, not knowing the original reason but giving it new meanings [15; 27].

One of the main aspects of national self-determination is linguistic identity. Language is another important consolidating factor, a sign of national identity [3]. Language serves as an indicator of nationality. In Ukraine, the language issue gained relevance after 2014, when raising the level of national consolidation was more important than ever, and language, as one of its main attributes, became a bright expression of social transformation. In the course of the transformation, the number of people who speak the Ukrainian language has increased, the state issued official regulations on the use of the state language, public spheres of activity have been introduced [28], etc.

In modern society, the manifestations of postmodernism have become striking, interpreting the social as a return to priority on the biological essence of man. In such conditions, moral values and the evaluation scale are subject to criticism and require rethinking, according to postmodernists. They interpret the presence of moral and value orientations as collective and give the individual the ability to rationalise judgment, which is supported by complex processes of reflection and analytical properties of the brain. This provokes the coming to the fore of individualistic, and, in a sense, selfish interests that are the impetus for activity and determine the area of human activity. However, the presence of cultural experience and intangible cultural heritage does not allow completely abandoning the existing moral standards. They provide an opportunity to understand the basic principles of social interaction [29; 30].

Consequently, the social consolidation of Ukraine has considerably intensified due to a number of difficult circumstances that forced citizens to protect their state values [31-33]. Accordingly, social consolidation has become possible only in the context of individual national identification, as a result of which a person adheres to generally accepted institutions, standards, and values promoted by this community. To a large extent, the consolidation processes were influenced by the intangible cultural heritage, which became a link with the historical past that shapes the nation.

Conclusions

In the course of the study, the role of intangible cultural heritage in the process of consolidation of modern Ukrainian society was determined. Its main function is to

unite society around a common historical past, values, and traditions. The need to preserve intangible cultural heritage is not criticised, but the methods and means of fixing intangible values seem contradictory. Their formal fixation leads to the preservation of spiritual culture. It remains necessary to maintain the viability of cultural traditions in their usual environment, the heredity of achievements for the possibility of observing a living culture. In recent years, the level of national consciousness and consolidation of Ukrainian society has considerably increased, which is explained by a number of difficult political, social, economic, and cultural circumstances. However, the transformation of consciousness and the rooting of national ideals have shaped the ideological image of Ukrainian identity, which serves as an example of the development of the social role of a citizen.

Further development of this subject and a more in-depth analysis of the impact of individual elements of intangible cultural heritage on consolidation processes in Ukrainian society remain promising. The rejection of long-established values, which has acquired a trend in a globalised world, cannot be completely eradicated in Ukrainian society, since it implements measures to preserve and popularise culture not only within its own state but also at the global level. Striving for the development and growth of authority in the international political arena, Ukraine shapes the image of a supporter of traditional culture and customs, preserving the memory of the historical past, tracing the trend towards uniqueness and features of development as an original state. For further possible studies the aspect of correlation of social consolidation amidst a common intangible cultural heritage with internal regional cultural features, which is part of the All-Ukrainian historical heritage is of great interest, but due to historical circumstances, various social and cultural influences have undergone certain transformations. Further development of the subject should involve field research in ethnology, cultural and social anthropology, sociology, which could provide more accurate and specific evidence regarding intangible cultural heritage as a resource for consolidating processes, along with statistical data concerning various aspects of spiritual culture.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Нематеріальна культурна спадщина як ресурс консолідації сучасного українського суспільства

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Анотація

Актуальність. Актуальність цього дослідження полягає в актуалізації питання підвищення рівня соціальної консолідації українського суспільства в умовах низки політичних, економічних, соціальних та культурних трансформацій. Нематеріальна культурна спадщина виступає основним ресурсом для становлення та розвитку національної свідомості, що, своєю чергою, посилює інтеграційні процеси в суспільстві.

Мета. Мета дослідження – довести значення нематеріальної культурної спадщини в сучасному житті українців та обґрунтувати необхідність збереження культурних цінностей у процесі історичного розвитку як потужного етнооб'єднувачого чинника.

Методологія. У ході дослідження використовувалися загальнонаукові методи, а саме аналіз, синтез, індукція, дедукція, системний та порівняльний для логічного та послідовного викладу матеріалу. Критичний підхід до інформації дозволив всебічно та ґрунтовно дослідити питання культурної спадщини як об'єднуючого чинника.

Результати. У результаті дослідження було виявлено, що у зв'язку зі складними соціально-політичними та глобалізаційними процесами зберігається потреба у збереженні традиційної спадщини, яка є показником культурної незалежності, що доводить унікальність та самобутність кожного народу. Тому в процесі технологізації суспільства, відходячи від загальноприйнятих положень, українці продовжують зберігати усталені цінності, передавати елементи нематеріальної культурної спадщини з покоління в покоління, підкреслюючи спадковість української культури. У контексті цієї тематики наразі існує невелика кількість публікацій, в яких лише побіжно згадується консолідуюча функція нематеріальної культурної спадщини для певної культури, а більшою мірою висвітлюються питання збереження цього виду культурної спадщини.

Висновки. Наукова цінність дослідження полягає у підкресленні актуальності збереження та подальшої передачі культурних традицій і мов для захисту національної ідентичності та підвищення рівня громадянської свідомості.

Ключові слова: традиції; мова; духовна культура; свідомість; самоідентифікація.