Socio-Cultural Identity of the Community: Background, Main Features

Larysa Bogush*

Department for Employment Risks Studies, Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Social Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine

*Corresponding author: Larysa Bogush, Leading Research Scientist, Department for Employment Risks Studies, Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Social Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine

Abstract

The article reveals the essence, principles of formation and implementation of productive potential of socio-cultural identity of functional and territorial communities of different scale in the conditions of actualization of the problems of state integrity and ideological consensus of socium. Socio-cultural identity is interpreted as a combination of cultural and living, cultural and spiritual, ideological characteristics of communities, detailed in the respective individual values, views, signs and indicators of self-determination and self-comprehension, and serves as a basis for social harmony and solidarity and a factor for maintaining national security, establishing processes of sustainable reproduction of competitive economy.

keywords: Socium; Community; Socio-cultural Identity; Social needs; Public Values; Social and Cultural Space; Quality of Life

Introduction

The interdisciplinary category of socio-cultural identity is an essential component of the problems of state and political nation formation in its main socioeconomic, foreign economic, political and ideological, and cultural dimensions. The formation and strengthening of the basis of socio-cultural identity of different level communities (from grass-roots territorial communities to socium as a whole) simultaneously optimize the conditions of using the potential of their self-development embodied in harmonious social, economic and managerial interactions in the above-mentioned dimensions. The improvement of the fundamentals of state-building, socio-cultural self-identification of the community and separate individuals in it is an important part of the methodology of sustainable development aimed at: Working out reasonable benchmarks and criteria of the macro-social system evolution (in particular, in aspects of standardizing decent standards and improving the quality of life of the population, increasing the effectiveness of social solidarity and inclusion); optimization of the mechanisms for overcoming and preventing a spectrum of natural and anthropogenic threats of national security; acceleration of the pace of innovative resource saving modernization of the economy.

Overview

Based on recognized studies of the foundations and mechanisms of socio-cultural dynamics and stratification (in particular, J. Alexander, P. Bourdieu, I. Wallerstein, M. Weber, E. Giddens, G. Delanty, E. Durkheim, S. Lesch, N. Smelzer, P. Sorokin, J. Turner, J. Habermas, P. Shompky), Ukrainian researchers have numerous achievements in revealing the verbal, ethno-religious, historical and cultural factors and elements of socio-cultural identity on general and individual levels, among other things, covering:

a) theoretical and methodological principles of formation of socio-cultural identity in the interdependence of its national, ethnic, countrywide components involved in the processes of nation-building [1,2];

b) structure, forms and mechanisms of constructing national and transnational identities in the conditions of globalization of social and economic (first of all migration) processes; characteristics of the socio-cultural space as a sphere for extension of identification practices embedded in the diversity of life spheres [3,4];

c) specificity of creation of socio-cultural identity at the ethnic, civil, and global levels of multicultural education [5,6];

d) processes and factors of sub-cultural differentiation and value variability of socium; the role of socio-cultural identities (ethnic, territorial, professional, gender, religious, etc.) in the formation of value guides and behavioral stereotypes dominating in its various segments; the problems of diversification of public conscience due to historical experience [7].

Institutional and economic aspects of the formation and implementation of socio-cultural characteristics of functional and territorial communities related to the level of education, the parameters of reproduction and capitalization of other components of the socio-humanitarian potential (including the socio-psychological potential of the employee, the results of his/her creative work, in particular in the status of objects of copyright and related rights, formal and informal network relations and communications) are revealed in numerous sectoral studies on problems of state management, budgeting, competitiveness of the economy, regional policy, employment and labour market, social protection, etc. Both sectoral and narrow functional orientations of such studies retouch the role of relevant spheres and directions of social activity in the reproduction of socio-cultural identity of communities and individuals.

The Aim of the Article

Interdisciplinary character of research on the development of organizational and economic principles of social harmony and solidarity in the context of actualization of the problems of territorial integrity of the state and ideological consensus of socium necessitates further study of the features of socio-cultural identity, its institutional and resource provision at the regional and national levels, the main criteria and development vectors of this phenomenon, and the environment for its formation and reproduction.

Results

The multidimensionality of the category of socio-cultural identity depends on its understanding in the context of harmonization of a number of characteristics of territorial and functional communities, as well as self-determination of person. This allows formulating its content as:

a. a set of cultural and living, cultural and spiritual, and ideological features of a certain community that are the derivatives of the current mechanisms for harmonizing the spectrum of verbal, ethno-religious, socio-ideological and socioeconomic characteristics of population strata, groups, local and functional communities. This set determines the level of social interactions, harmony and solidarity that is sufficient for sustainable evolutionary development of processes of

maintaining and using the advantages of the territorial, political and ideological, and economic integrity of the state.

b. a set of features and indicators of determination and self-comprehension of the place and role of an individual as a member of a certain social strata, group, communities of different scale (up to the level of socium as a whole) with their intrinsic cultural and living, cultural and spiritual, and ideological characteristics that determine the way and strategies of his/her life (reproductive, consumer, educational, professional, career, sociopolitical, etc.), as well as basic algorithms and criteria for assessing information, events, historical facts, his/her own life experience, social and civilizational processes.

Table 1 shows the key role of some specific types of interactions in the formation of a spectrum of people's associations which are qualitatively different in terms of integration, mechanisms of origin, institutionalization and regulation.

Table 1: Associations of people arising from specific types of interaction. Source: [8].

Main type of interaction	Associations
Natural	Population
Natural + *Emotional*	Commonality
Natural+ Emotional + *Verbal and Communicational*	Community
Natural + Emotional + Verbal and Communicational + *Activity*	Society
Natural + Emotional + Verbal and Communicational + Activity + *Legal*	State
Various (including spiritual and mystical interaction) without the separation of specific	Socium (society in the broad sense of the word)

Therefore, the main components of nationality generalized in the studies of ethnicity (ethnos-or ethnic origin of the ancestors, logos-language, topos-symbolic transfiguration, expressive common features of the living space, ethos-core of values, the view of the world, practical knowledge, which justify awareness of the positions in socium and on the general civilization scale, the basic rights and responsibilities of citizenship, epos-prominent images and events, evidence of heritage in arts, science, and culture) [9] have a key role in formation and meaning of the socio-cultural identity category.

Given the environment of formation and the scope of using, this concept is based on the categories of social needs (in the common public, socially necessary and private dimensions), social values, public conscience, culture (as a social phenomenon and field of economic activity), attaining certain characteristics and trends in development in socio-humanitarian (in particular, its own social and cultural segments) and economic spaces of reproduction and life activity of community.

In the context of civilization development social needs (especially in the organization of collective life, self-affirmation and implementation of leadership functions, cognition, self-activity and self-realization) are recognized as the higher goals of life activity of society, which form its basic values, that is, abstract ideas embodied in social ideals and due to it are a benchmark of the proper [10]. Social values are beliefs on the objectives to be achieved, as well as ways and means of implementation of these objectives, which are common and recognized in society or social group [11]. Therefore, they are the basis for the formation and regulation of individual value orientations, the development of which is the essential component of all aspects of human socialization. The hierarchy of social and group values (among their main categories are theoretical, economic, political, legal, moral, social, aesthetic, religious) determines the hierarchy of value orientations of an individual and greatly affects the historical path of a socium; on the basis of their values and value orientations a society, state, nation, certain social group, and territorial community create a system of norms of these commonalities subjects' behavior as requirements that are mandatory for implementation in order to regulate life and effective functioning of socium, to establish the necessary interaction of its members [12]. Social norms developed by the state as a public institution, and authorities are, in particular, represented by constitutions, laws, state sectoral, building, sanitary norms and standards, instructions, etc.

The phenomenon of culture is most generally understood as a system of values, ideological beliefs and rules of conduct common to people associated with a certain way of life. The manifestations of this phenomenon are seen in the peculiarities of conscience, social-psychological state, specific directions of activity and life strategies of individuals in a society whose commonality and transmission determine the outlines and stability of the formal institutions and informal basis for the creation and realization of potential of socio-cultural identity. Hence, the culture of society is considered to be a specific way of organizing and developing human life activity, represented in the products of material and non-material (including spiritual) labour, in the system of social institutions and norms, their infrastructure, in spiritual values, in interpersonal relations, relations between social groups and strata, in the system of «human (socium)-economy-environment (nature)». Each of the existing concepts of culture (substantively and value, activity, individual and attributive, informational and sign, as well as the concept of culture as a subsystem of society) examines the essence of this multifaceted concept in a certain aspect; the basic functions of culture include cognitive, communicative, regulatory, predictive and value-orientation [13].

The features of national identity at the level of a certain country as a generalizing vector of the socio-cultural identity of its citizens and other representatives of the population, functional and territorial communities are determined by these subjects' life

experience at the specific historical stages, the peculiarities of its comprehension (including the assessment of the consequences-notably achievements, negatives, losses, threats, etc.-of periods of instability, crises, reforms, revolutions). The subject of relevant comprehension is first of all the dynamics of:

a. property status; quality of life and purchasing power; social guarantees and standards; availability, quality (effectiveness) of institutions and mechanisms for their implementation;

b. social status and social mobility; level of realization of natural and acquired abilities and knowledge, in particular, creative, intellectual, professional self-realization; connection of social status and own productive labor;

c. prestige of citizenship and place of residence;

d. democratic character of the mechanisms of expression of will; freedom of speech, religion and social activity.

Consequently, the formation of a national identity suggests a balance of a spectrum of interests and interactions of social and functional groups, nationalities and denominations, which is ensured by the conditions of awareness, development and realization of the goals and potential of these subjects, manifested, in particular, through public and individual welfare and health (physical, mental, moral), formal and informal mechanisms and regulations for the harmonization of the values and needs of the community / society as a whole and of the individual.

The material ground of individual and group socio-cultural self-identification, capitalization of its productive potential are social institutions, objects, their networks and systems that are created by individuals, teams, communities of compact residence and conducting economic, cultural and religious activities in order to meet the material and non-material needs, exchange of products of economy and communication, accumulation, knowledge and experience exchange and implementation, popularization of beliefs and creative work.

The main characteristics reflecting the principles, efficiency of reproduction and realization of the potential of socio-cultural identity of functional and territorial communities should include: the strategies of social security and protection, formation and use of human and social capital in general, accumulated by society; the stratification and features of a set of social statuses; the level of popularization and translation of heritage and modern manifestations of culture (in particular, national and religious traditions, customs) of territorial communities and regions.

A category of social space, which is defined as a hierarchy of social statuses and connections within which economic agents act [14], is closely related to the processes of providing and characteristics of socio-cultural identity. Since the basis of this hierarchy is the fact that the possession of a higher social status allows an individual

to have additional benefits and more information with less cost to receive them, the social space factor plays a significant role in: formation and preservation of territorial disparities; differentiation of the aggregate transaction costs of different social groups in the conclusion and control over the implementation of formal and informal agreements; self-determination of the elite regarding its basic values, relations with the rest of the population, acceptable and possible means of action [15]. In this context, the main forms of social stratification requiring analysis in the study of socio-cultural identity of the community are the characteristics of economic as well as professional and political status of its members, which are interrelated.

Another partial manifestation of the environment of formation of the socio-cultural identity of territorial communities is a cultural space. It is a set of social relations regarding the formation, development and assimilation by their subjects of the system of spiritual values, models and mechanisms of interpersonal and collective interaction, built on ideological and ethno-religious beliefs about behavior in socium and environment which is inherent in representatives of the spectrum of social strata, distinguished by the status and the way of life, and defines the social phenomenon of culture.

The institutional characteristics of the environment of socio-cultural identity reproduction are determined by the properties and dynamics of the main social institutions-economic (in particular, institutions of property and coordination of economic activity); legal, including the dominant institutions of coordination of the resources (material, financial, political, etc.) flows, whereby the infrastructure for satisfying the spectrum of social needs (common public, socially necessary, and private) operates, as well as stratification of socium is determined; cultural (in the sense of structures and mechanisms created by society for the institutionalization of morals, ethics, ideology).

Therefore, the functional structure of the environment for formation, reproduction and realization of the potential of socio-cultural self-identification is represented by the following segments:

a. socio-territorial commonalities of the population (social institutions of family, religion and community, social hierarchy and statuses).

b. labour market (primarily in the aspect of mechanism for formation and balancing of its supply and demand).

c. system for formation and adjustment of the social ideology, morals and ethics, reproduction and improvement of the intellectual, professional, qualification, innovative potential of the workforce.

d. economic activity related to the organization of the life environment and human consumption within the material and non-material production.

e. consumer market.

f. social protection system, as well as activities to support relevant directions of national security;

g. social communications (their system covers social and civil norms and rules, ways and methods of cooperation, mechanisms of conflict resolution, level of trust between individuals, social strata and groups, as well as between economic entities).

The last segment is quite significant at the individual level of socio-cultural self-identification, since it is social communications that a particular person owns or has access to, along with the origin, abilities, knowledge, skills and experience that are the key factor for its integration into socium, determining the conditions and prospects for productive use of intellectual, professional, qualification, and innovative potential, horizontal and vertical social mobility.

Conclusion

The socio-cultural identity of functional and territorial communities belongs to the essential factors of sustainable reproduction and evolution of the macro-social system, and hence preservation of integrity, maintenance of national security and competitiveness of the state. The implementation of rational mechanisms for harmonization of economic, political, ideological, and spiritual interests of social groups and territorial communities is aimed at establishing the common moral and ethical, spiritual and ideological basis of the development of the country recognized as appropriate and shared by the majority of subjects, justifying and optimizing the practice for maintaining social equity and harmony.

The main ways of establishing the processes of nationwide cohesion, reproduction and ensuring constructive evolution of the characteristics of socio-cultural identity of different types of communities should be recognized [16-18]:

a) increasing effectiveness of: strategies for preventing the effects of poverty, marginalization, social exclusion; mechanisms for adjusting excessive population property differentiation on the basis of fiscal redistribution of incomes;

b) establishing reasonable distribution of budget powers in the field of population social protection; strengthening the financial and economic base of local governments.

c) stimulating the diversification of economy and employment sphere of territorial communities; increasing the role of small and medium businesses in it, which are integrated into relevant sectoral and cluster regional structures.

d) implementation of the systemic policy of expanding the middle class as a pillar for social stability and support for the ideas of social protection solidarity.

e)   stimulating the social responsibility of business entities, as well as socio-cultural activity of civil society institutions.

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