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INVESTIGATING THE ESSENCE OF THE CONCEPT OF INTELLECTUAL ELITE

In the backdrop of the contemporary intellectual landscape, the term "intellectual elite" stands as a concept with diverse interpretations, prompting the need for a nuanced understanding. This research aims to address the pressing issue of the lack of consensus in defining the terminological boundaries of "intellectual elite" by undertaking a comprehensive exploration. The relevance of this study lies in the ubiquitous use of the term across academic, social, and political discourses, coupled with the absence of a universally accepted definition. Through an in-depth analysis of the roots and components of the intellectual elite concept, this research seeks to not only synthesize existing viewpoints but also extend and enrich the discourse.

The primary objective is to refine the cohort of individuals considered part of the intellectual elite, incorporating cognitive abilities and status privilege into a comprehensive definition. The research critically engages with the perspectives of prominent scholars, providing a multifaceted understanding of the intellectual elite's functions, professionalism, knowledge, and moral-ethical qualities.

The results of this study contribute to a clearer delineation of the intellectual elite, fostering a more informed dialogue on its role and significance in contemporary society. By addressing the complexities inherent in the term, the research aims to provide a foundational contribution to intellectual discourse and offer insights that resonate across academic disciplines, facilitating a more nuanced comprehension of the intellectual elite's impact on societal progress and innovation.

Research methods that are used in the research include: Literature Review, Content Analysis, Framework Development.

As a result, comprehensive overview of existing research and perspectives on the intellectual elite of the nation has been conducted. Furthermore, we have developed a conceptual framework that synthesizes findings, providing a structured understanding of the intellectual elite. What is more, a profound definition proposed in the article helps to understand the essence of the concept of intellectual elite.

Key words: elite, intellect, intellectual elite, concept, cognitive abilities, professionalism, knowledge.

Чихаріна К. І. Дослідження сутності поняття «інтелектуальна еліта». У контексті сучасного наукового дискурсу термін «інтелектуальна

еліта» має різноманітне тлумачення, що вимагає докладного й детального його розуміння. Дане дослідження спрямоване на вирішення актуального питання відсутності консенсусу в визначенні термінологічних меж «інтелектуальної еліти» шляхом проведення комплексного дослідження. Актуальність даного дослідження полягає в широкому використанні терміну у наукових, соціальних та політичних дискурсах, поєднаному з відсутністю універсально прийнятого визначення. Саме прошарок інтелектуальної еліти нації стає рушійною силою у розвитку країни, докладає зусиль у вирішенні нагальних проблем суспільства та розробці стратегії для побудови майбутнього.

Шляхом глибокого аналізу витоків поняття та складових концепції «інтелектуальна еліта», це дослідження спрямоване не лише на узагальнення існуючих точок зору, але й на розширення та збагачення дискусії, надання власного визначення поняття «інтелектуальна еліта».

Основна мета статті полягає у поглибленому аналізі існуючих точок зору щодо визначення поняття «інтелектуальна еліта», з'ясуванні суті терміну «інтелектуальна еліта», вдосконаленні розуміння когорти осіб, що вважаються частиною цього прошарку суспільства. Дослідження критично взаємодіє з поглядами визначних учених, надаючи багатогранне розуміння функцій та якостей інтелектуальної еліти.

Результати цього дослідження сприяють більш детальному визначенню поняття «інтелектуальна еліта», розумінню впливу цього прошарку на суспільний прогрес.

Методи дослідження, використані в роботі, включають: огляд літератури, контент-аналіз, синтез, узагальнення, розробку концептуального каркасу.

Таким чином, було проведено комплексний огляд існуючих досліджень прошарку інтелектуальної еліти, проаналізовано здобутки вчених у царині визначення цього терміну, окреслено ряд функцій прошарку інтелектуальної еліти. Крім того, було розроблено концептуальний каркас, який синтезує здобутки науковців, надаючи комплексне та структуроване розуміння поняттю «інтелектуальна еліта». Комплексна дефініція, запропонована в статті, допомагає більш глибоко зрозуміти сутність поняття, створює підґрунтя для подальших досліджень у цьому напрямі.

Ключові слова: еліта, інтелект, інтелектуальна еліта, концепція, пізнавальні здібності, професіоналізм, знання.

Introduction. In the tapestry of societal structures, the notions of intellect, elite, and the intellectual elite stand as pillars that shape the character of a nation. This article embarks on a journey to delve into the profound meanings and intersections of these concepts, unraveling layers that contribute to the nuanced understanding of the intellectual elite of a nation. At the core of our inquiry lies the

necessity to grasp the fundamental nature of intellect, the dynamics inherent in societal elites, and the distinctive fusion that gives rise to the intellectual elite.

The pressing need to articulate and scrutinize these concepts arises from the pivotal role they play in shaping the cultural, political, and economic landscape of a nation. The intellectual elite, in particular, emerges as a driving force behind innovation, progress, and the cultivation of a nation's identity. As we navigate through the labyrinth of definitions and interpretations, we aim not only to elucidate their meanings but also to underscore their significance in the contemporary context. This article posits that a precise understanding of the intellectual elite is essential for informed discourse on national development, education, governance, and cultural evolution.

A comprehensive exploration of the intellectual elite of a nation necessitates a scrutiny of the prominent investigations. In order to thoroughly analyze the notion we will focus on such terms: “intellect”, “elite”, “intellectual elite”. The term “intellect” has been defined and researched by different prominent scholars, such as: J. McArdle, R. Woodcock, A. Binet, D. Wechsler, J. Carroll, H. Gardner, R. Sternberg and others. Thus, a specific cohort of investigators follows the psychometric method for assessing intelligence (J. McArdle, R. Woodcock, A. Binet, D. Wechsler), while others opt for a contextual approach, underscoring the necessity for defining intelligence within cultural and social frameworks (J. Carroll). For some researchers, intelligence is characterized as an amalgamation of knowledge, cognitive proficiency, creative thought processes, and analytical capabilities (H. Gardner, R. Sternberg).

The term “elite” had been discussed by scientists of different time periods, such as: Aristotel, Heraclitus, Plato, N. Machiavelli, G. Mosca, V. Pareto, R. Michels, D. Bell, M. Veber, R. Aron, V. Goshovska, V. Kremen and others. Certain academics have embraced the notion of inherent individual inequality from the moment of birth (Aristotel, Heraclitus,), while others have directed their attention towards real-life experiences, skills, and inherent characteristics (Plato, N. Machiavelli). Another cohort of researchers has centered their focus on the functional concept of the elite, highlighting aptitudes, talents, and upbringing (V. Pareto, R. Michels, D. Bell).

Moving on to discussing the term “intellectual elite”, we have to mention that scholars and researchers have embarked on multifaceted inquiries, ranging from sociological and historical perspectives to psychological and political analyses. Let's focus on some prominent scholars that have discussed these matters such as V. Kremen, N. Averianova, V. Karlova, K. Myhaylova, V. Goshovska and others. Some scientists focused on functions of the intellectual elite of the nation through which this group can demonstrate own abilities (V. Kremen), some cohort of the scientists focused on main characteristics and professionalism (N. Averianova, V. Goshovska).

As we navigate through these investigations, it becomes apparent that the intellectual elite is not a monolithic entity but a dynamic and evolving force shaped by a myriad of factors. The synthesis of these diverse studies enriches our understanding, providing a mosaic of insights into the role, composition, and impact of the intellectual elite on the broader canvas of national identity and progress.

Aim and tasks. We aim to define the conceptual boundaries, establish clear and precise definitions for the key terms, including “intellect”, “elite”, and “intellectual elite”, to create a foundational understanding. We are going to provide a comprehensive overview of existing research and perspectives on the intellectual elite of the nation.

Tasks:

Critically review literature: Conduct a thorough literature review to critically assess and synthesize existing knowledge on the intellectual elite, identifying key debates.

Evaluate definitions and nuances: Scrutinize different conceptualizations of intellect, elite, and intellectual elite, highlighting the nuanced distinctions that contribute to a more precise understanding.

Propose a framework for understanding: Develop a conceptual framework that synthesizes findings, providing a structured understanding of the intellectual elite.

By specifying these aims and tasks, we set the stage for a focused and systematic exploration of the intellectual elite of the nation in the article.

Research methods:

Literature Review: Conduct a comprehensive literature review to analyze existing theories, definitions, and findings related to the intellectual elite.

Content Analysis: Perform content analysis of articles to identify recurring themes, patterns, and shifts in the perception of the intellectual elite over time.

Framework development: Develop a conceptual framework based on the findings to provide a structured analysis of the intellectual elite.

Research results. At the core of how societies work is the complex concept of intellect – our thinking abilities. It goes beyond just individual smarts; it's woven into the very identity of a nation. Studying intellect isn't just an academic exercise; it's like taking a journey into the intricate ways our thinking shapes the fate of entire civilizations. As we explore what makes up intellect, we're not just looking at individual smarts but diving into how a whole nation thinks. Understanding intellect is crucial because it's the foundation for our bigger investigation into the intellectual elite of a nation. Intellect isn't just about being smart; it's a key factor in how the intellectual elite, a group of influential minds, contributes to a nation's culture, government, and overall progress. Our exploration aims to not only define and study

intellect but to highlight how it's a crucial part of the intellectual elite's role in shaping a nation's history.

Over an extended period, a notable group of influential researchers dedicated to framing the concept of "intellect" has predominantly based their scholarly work on IQ indicators (McArdle & Woodcock, 2014). Consequently, they favored the psychometric approach, rooted in psychometrics (measuring intelligence through tests and indicators). This approach defines intellect as the outcome of measuring cognitive functions like perception, thinking, and memory. Alfred Binet, credited as the creator of the IQ test, emphasized the measurement of intellectual abilities. Later, David Wechsler innovatively developed his intelligence scales (Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, WAIS, and Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, WISC). Wechsler's scales marked a significant advancement in tests specifically tailored for measuring intellect.

Renowned American scholar John Carroll characterizes intellect as an individual's capacity for abstract thinking, grasping complex situations, and solving problems. This perspective underscores the cognitive dimensions of intellect and its proficiency in handling tasks that demand analytical approaches. Carroll sees cognitive abilities as a multi-faceted concept comprising various components, with verbal reasoning and spatial reasoning being among the significant elements.

Howard Gardner proposed the idea of multiple intelligences, categorizing intelligence into several types such as linguistic, mathematical, musical, spatial etc. This perspective implies that intellect can be expressed across diverse creative endeavors and areas of knowledge. Gardner argues in his writings that the contemporary understanding of intellect is restrictive, and each person can reveal their intellectual capabilities by becoming proficient in a particular field of activity (Gardner, 1983).

Robert Sternberg contends that intellect goes beyond cognitive functions; it involves the capacity to adapt to social situations and engage effectively with the environment. Sternberg defines intellect as the ability to adapt, solve practical problems, and interact successfully with others in society. In particular, he emphasizes the significance of practical intelligence, distinct from conventional intelligence tests, in determining life success. Sternberg highlights three key aspects of practical intelligence: analytical, creative, and applied (Sternberg, 2000).

Building upon a thorough analysis of various sources, we propose embracing the subsequent interpretation of the term "*intellect*". In this context, intellect is defined as the inherent capability residing within individuals, enabling them to not only comprehend but also actively process the information they acquire. This cognitive prowess is characterized by a dynamic interplay of mental faculties, including perception, reasoning, and memory. However, the true essence of intellect

manifests in its application – the purposeful utilization of the assimilated knowledge in practical scenarios. This extends beyond mere academic understanding; it encompasses the adept adaptation to novel situations and the adept resolution of intricate challenges. In essence, intellect is a dynamic and multifaceted cognitive capacity, encompassing the comprehension of information and the skillful application of acquired knowledge. It is the cornerstone of adaptability, empowering individuals to navigate the challenges presented by an ever-evolving world.

Having analyzed the term “intellect”, the investigation demands moving on to the next step related to the term “elite”.

The term “elite” (derived from the Latin *eligo*, meaning to choose or select, and the French *élite*, signifying select) has undergone a substantial evolution, touching upon facets of both agro-cultural and socio-cultural dimensions, to arrive at the conceptual boundaries that we are acquainted with today. In its early inception, “elite” was initially employed to describe superior and select varieties of plants. From the 17th century onward, the usage expanded to denote high-quality items and subsequently extended to refer to social groups belonging to the upper echelons of nobility (Bishchuk, 2012).

The ancient Greek philosophers Aristotle and Heraclitus primarily embraced the idea that people are inherently unequal from birth, and their societal status is predestined. In this view, the elite represents a distinct layer naturally destined for governance, while the majority is expected to be compliant (Bishchuk, 2012).

Plato characterized the elite as a natural and lawful occurrence, with its members anticipated to possess genuine experiences, requisite characteristics, education, and abilities (Plato, 2000).

In his writings, N. Machiavelli continues the hypothetical division of people into the majority and the minority. According to him, the elite represents an active minority within society, steering social processes and attaining its objectives by leveraging the majority (the socially passive masses). N. Machiavelli introduces the concept of the elite as a governing group, holding the managerial potential of the state. He links this notion to the unequal distribution of governance and power, honors, and privileges (Machiavelli, 2007).

In the early 20th century, the term “elite” became prevalent in sociology and political science, referring to the most privileged segment of society deemed essential to any social structure. The elite's primary functions included managerial responsibilities, the promotion of science, art, and culture, among other roles. In contrast, other non-privileged population groups were involved in routine functions.

The idea of the elite's functional origin has become a recurring theme in the academic inquiries of scholars like G. Mosca, V. Pareto, and R. Michels. Consequently, there is a consensus among researchers that the elite is shaped by

innate abilities, talents, and educational backgrounds. Furthermore, scholars highlight a desire for power and leadership, a willingness to engage in competitive struggles, and a distinct elitist self-awareness. All these elements collectively contribute to perpetuating the distinction between the “elite minority” and the “non-privileged, uncreative majority” (Bishchuk, 2012).

The concept of the “ruling class” was introduced and discussed in G. Mosca's work. Mosca posits that the ruling elite is an essential layer for the proper functioning of any society, ensuring stability and progress through pivotal decision-making (Mosca, 1939). Italian scholar V. Pareto characterizes the elite as individuals possessing the highest qualifications and professional achievements. Pareto defines the elite as a select group with power and control over resources, underscoring the societal inequality in power and resource distribution and positioning the elite at the summit of this inequality (Herasymchuk, 2004). German researcher R. Michels deduces that any system necessitates the establishment of a ruling elite, a distinctive group assuming leadership positions. This role is fulfilled by the active minority — the elite (Michels, 2017).

German sociologist M. Weber played a crucial role in advancing the understanding of the elite concept. Weber underscored that the fundamental role of the elite is control and management. According to Weber, membership in the elite should be determined by competence and effectiveness in actions (Oleksyn, 2017).

V. Kremen adopts the following definition for the term “elite”. According to the scholar, it encompasses the finest individuals within social, professional, or other groups who embody the collective and professional culture, moral standards, and principles. The elite comprises highly skilled and morally upright personalities with advanced intellect and a strong sense of responsibility (Kremen, 2017).

Taking into account the sources analyzed above, it is noteworthy that at any stage of human development, there has been a more privileged stratum of the population capable of participating in crucial administrative and managerial decision-making. Nevertheless, approaches to identifying the privileged stratum of the population in different countries and at different historical stages have varied. Despite some divergences in the definitions of the term “elite”, certain characteristics can be highlighted as common in defining this concept by scholars from different eras. These include the delineation of the elite as a distinct privileged group, emphasizing a specific set of necessary key qualities (knowledge, power, responsibility, etc.).

In the research, we will consider the *elite* as a distinctive layer of society endowed with high moral and intellectual qualities, ready to work effectively in their field, continually improving their skills, and capable of serving the good of their state and people. The ability to successfully apply knowledge and experience in practice

allows such a professional to occupy higher positions, judiciously managing the majority, and thereby becoming part of a certain “elitist group”.

Recognizing the absence of consensus in categorizing elites, which leads to debates on defining “intellectual elite”, we aim to systematically explore this concept. Our focus is on clarifying the term, outlining the diverse functions it encompasses, and shedding light on its areas of activity.

In N. Averianova's perspective, the intellectual elite constitutes a group that plays a central role in managing the knowledge domain by safeguarding and promoting knowledge. Simultaneously, this elite is entrusted with upholding moral and ethical standards, contributing to the development and exploration of innovative ideas. The core features defining the essence of the intellectual elite, according to Averianova, include a strong educational foundation, professionalism, innovative thinking, and a disposition for creativity (Averianova, 2011).

According to K. Mykhailova, the key attributes of the national intellectual elite encompass an impressive intellectual capacity, education, personal refinement, creativity, and innovative thinking. The focus on professionalism and elevated moral-ethical standards becomes crucial when outlining the expectations for the intellectual elite of the nation (Mykhailova, 2008).

Sociologist D. Bell explores the concept of the intellectual elite and its pivotal role in the functioning of post-industrial societies (Bell, 1976). According to Bell, the emergence of new professions tied to information technologies, scientific research, creativity, and more characterizes post-industrial societies. The intellectual elite is instrumental in these fields, actively contributing to innovation and driving societal transformations. This elite group is influential in shaping technological progress, socio-cultural dynamics, and various facets of social development.

The works of German sociologist M. Weber delve into the examination of the intellectual elite as a group capable of directly influencing society through its ideas and knowledge (Weber, 1998).

In the academic writings, V. Kremen outlines several essential roles of the intellectual elite, encompassing integrative, communicative, normative value, innovative, cognitive, controlling, and advisory functions. According to the researcher, fulfilling these diverse tasks is crucial for the intellectual elite to contribute positively to the well-being and development of the nation (Kremen, 2017).

It's important for society to recognize that the term “intellectual elite” extends beyond being a mere synonym for high education and erudition; rather, it represents a comprehensive concept. This social stratum is expected not only to embody high and capable intellectual capital but also to act as a potent driving force within their

respective fields, preserving traditions and serving as societal guides (Chykharyna, 2023).

The dynamics of contemporary society and globalization processes continually empower the intellectual elite of the nation, assigning it strategic importance. Modernity requires intellectuals to engage in critical thinking and reevaluate outdated systems. In scope of this investigation, we will examine the intellectual elite as a collective comprised of scholars, educators, cultural influencers, artists, and individuals distinguished by advanced education, intellectual prowess, and robust moral values. Their dedication lies in the propagation and safeguarding of knowledge. Furthermore, under the sociological umbrella of the intellectual elite, we can encompass intellectual figures in politics, official advisers, ideologists, consultants, and experts who operate closely with the political elite but exist independently. This study will intentionally avoid delving into the political elite as a distinct subject, concentrating instead on the intellectual elite and its endeavors in various domains such as politics, economics, and science.

Given the diverse range of activities within the intellectual elite, it retains the authority to influence political decisions at the highest levels, shape collective societal consciousness, contribute to culture, education, and scientific processes. The intellectual elite of a nation is entrusted with the responsibility of accumulating, preserving, and promoting knowledge, scientific accomplishments, and the intellectual wealth of the nation. It actively contributes to enriching the spiritual and intellectual fabric of society amid the era of globalization, disseminating innovative technologies, methodologies, knowledge, resources, and more.

The intellectual elite must rely on professional and moral-ethical accomplishments and resources. Contemporary global development imposes rigorous standards on the intellectual elite, emphasizing that its strength is not solely determined by the quantity of academics and scholars but by the genuine quality of their intellectual and scientific capacities. Their adeptness in navigating the complexities of state processes within a specific historical context is crucial. Additionally, their capability to fortify the country's intellectual and scientific underpinnings becomes especially vital during challenging periods, necessitating coordinated efforts to safeguard the nation's fundamental values.

By thoroughly examining all facets of the term “*intellectual elite*”, we present a comprehensive definition that not only ensures a broad understanding of the concept but also places a specific emphasis on its core components. The term is dissected into two key elements: “intellectual”, which signifies cognitive abilities, and “elite”, highlighting status and privilege. This approach aims to provide a nuanced understanding that encompasses both the cognitive prowess and elevated societal position associated with the intellectual elite.

The *intellectual elite* of a nation represents a distinct social stratum enriched with profound spiritual, cultural, and intellectual knowledge. This unique group of individuals, considering the prevailing sentiments in society, addressing critical issues across various domains of public life, and aligning with the overarching state strategy, actively contributes to the betterment of their own country. The *intellectual elite* is not only characterized by high expertise in a specific field but also by individuals with well-defined moral and ethical principles, influenced by national self-awareness, possessing the skills necessary for self-realization in the 21st century, and harboring a distinctive vision for the future of their nation. This stems from the extensive sphere of influence held by members of the intellectual elite and the multifaceted functions discussed earlier.

Discussion. The lack of consensus in defining the terminological framework of the concept of “intellectual elite” has underscored the relevance of our conducted research. By scrutinizing the origins and components of the term, we not only examined proposed viewpoints but also affirmed researchers’ perspectives, enriching and deepening the discourse. The article clarified the cohort of individuals we consider pertinent to the intellectual elite. A comprehensive definition of the term “intellectual elite” was proposed in the article, aligning with certain perspectives. V. Kremen, in his scholarly works, deems it necessary to delineate specific functions through which the intellectual elite operates, an idea prevalent in the contemporary world. K. Mykhailova focuses on professionalism, abilities, education, and more, which is a pertinent observation. Similarly, N. Averianova places knowledge, moral-ethical qualities, development, and exploration of new ideas at the core. These insights collectively contribute to a nuanced understanding of the intellectual elite, forming the basis for our discussion.

Conclusion. In conclusion, our exploration into the multifaceted concept of the “intellectual elite” has illuminated the complexities and variations inherent in its definition. The lack of unanimity in the terminological framework prompted a comprehensive investigation that delved into the diverse perspectives offered by scholars. By discerning the key components and origins of the term, we aimed not only to consider existing viewpoints but also to provide a nuanced understanding that transcends conventional boundaries.

The article proposed a refined cohort of individuals to be considered part of the intellectual elite, emphasizing the need for a discerning approach in the delineation of this distinctive societal stratum. Our comprehensive definition, encompassing cognitive abilities and status privilege, serves as a foundational contribution to the ongoing discourse surrounding the intellectual elite.

We defined the conceptual boundaries, provided a comprehensive overview of existing research and perspectives on the intellectual elite of the nation, identifying

common themes, discrepancies, and gaps in the literature. During the research, we have critically reviewed literature, evaluated definitions, proposed a framework for understanding the term. What is more, the definition proposed in the article helps to understand the essence of the concept of intellectual elite.

As we navigate the intricate landscape of intellectual discourse, it becomes evident that the intellectual elite not only reflects the collective intellectual capital of a nation but also plays a pivotal role in steering societal progress, fostering innovation, and influencing positive change. In the ever-evolving landscape of the 21st century, understanding and appreciating the intellectual elite's diverse functions and qualities is imperative for shaping a future that leverages the full potential of human intellect and creativity.

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