

1. Definition of Cultural Heritage & UNESCO Perspective

Cultural heritage refers to the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes inherited from past generations, maintained in the present, and passed on to future generations. It represents the identity, values, traditions, and history of a society. Cultural heritage is not limited to monuments or historical objects; it also includes traditions, languages, performing arts, and social practices that shape a community's way of life.

At the international level, organizations such as UNESCO conceptualize cultural heritage as a broad and dynamic concept. UNESCO divides heritage into two main categories: tangible (material) and intangible (non-material). This classification helps in understanding and protecting different forms of heritage effectively.

According to UNESCO's 1972 World Heritage Convention, cultural heritage includes monuments, groups of buildings, and sites that have outstanding universal value from historical, artistic, or scientific perspectives. Later, the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage expanded this definition to include practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills that communities recognize as part of their cultural identity.

UNESCO emphasizes that cultural heritage is a “living” concept. It is not just about preserving the past but also about ensuring that heritage remains relevant in the present and future. Community involvement is central to this

approach, as local people play a key role in maintaining and transmitting their heritage.

Furthermore, UNESCO promotes the idea that cultural heritage contributes to cultural diversity, social cohesion, and sustainable development. By protecting heritage, societies can strengthen their identity while fostering mutual respect and understanding among different cultures worldwide.

References:

1. UNESCO (1972). *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*
2. UNESCO (2003). *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*
3. Smith, L. (2006). *Uses of Heritage*

2. Difference Between Tangible & Intangible Heritage

Cultural heritage is commonly divided into two main types: tangible heritage and intangible heritage. Although both are essential for understanding a society's culture, they differ in form, characteristics, and methods of preservation.

Tangible heritage refers to physical objects and places that can be seen and touched. This includes monuments, buildings, archaeological sites, artworks, and historical artifacts. Examples include temples, museums, and ancient ruins. Tangible heritage is usually preserved through conservation techniques such as restoration, protection, and

maintenance. It often plays an important role in tourism and economic development.

In contrast, **intangible heritage** consists of non-physical elements of culture. These include traditions, oral histories, languages, performing arts, rituals, and festivals. Unlike tangible heritage, intangible heritage exists in people's practices and knowledge. It is transmitted from one generation to another through participation and learning.

According to UNESCO, intangible heritage is considered "living heritage" because it evolves over time and adapts to changing social environments. However, it is also more vulnerable to disappearance, especially if younger generations do not continue practicing it.

Key differences include:

- Tangible heritage is physical, while intangible heritage is non-physical
- Tangible heritage is preserved through conservation, while intangible heritage is safeguarded through practice and transmission
- Tangible heritage is relatively stable, while intangible heritage is more dynamic and vulnerable

Both types of heritage are interconnected and equally important. Together, they provide a complete understanding of a society's cultural identity and history.

References:

1. UNESCO (2003). *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention*
2. Jokilehto, J. (2005). *Definition of Cultural Heritage*

3. Vecco, M. (2010). “A Definition of Cultural Heritage”