

Indigo Culture of 'Dong' at Chengyang Ba Zhai Village in Guangxi Region, China: Local Wisdom and Ethnicity in the Context of Minority Identity

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Abstract

This qualitative study focuses on the "indigo culture" of the Dong ethnic group in Chengyang Ba Zhai Village, Liu Zhou City, Guangxi Province, China. This study examines the local wisdom involved in the production of unique indigo-dyed fabrics that are dark blue with a purple-red luster. It explores the relationship between indigo fabric and the life and society of the Dong people, including daily life and rituals related to social memory. The key findings of this research, titled "Indigo Culture of Dong People at Chengyang Ba Zhai Village," highlight the inseparable relationship between "local wisdom" and "ethnic characteristics." These two components interact to form a distinct indigo culture that reflects the Dong people's self-identity. Negotiating self-identity within the context of modernity presents an intriguing contemporary challenge. This research is valuable in both the academic study of ethnic identity and as a crucial database for informing the Chinese government's minority development policies in various ways.

Keywords: Indigo culture, Local wisdom, Social memory, Ethnicity, and Ethnic Identity.

Introduction

Chengyang Bazhai is a Dong ethnic community and an ethnic minority in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, southern China (Guangxi Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County Chronicle Compilation Committee,1992). Dong ethnic groups have culturally strong ties to the local ecosystems in which they settle. The Dong have produced a large number of 'local knowledge sets. ' One such local knowledge is the "wisdom of producing special indigo fabrics" inherited from generation to generation. The indigo- dyed fabrics of the Dong people had a unique identity. In addition, such special indigo- dyed cloth is not just an ordinary object. But it is a "material culture" that relates to their everyday life and rituals. According to Jones 'Material Culture, Andrew(2007) is related to social memory. The relationship between the life and society of the Dong people is 'indigo culture, ' which indicates the self-identity of the Dong people. In the academic dimension, "Indigo Culture" acts as 'ethnicity, ' indicating to the Dong people that "We are Dong at Chengyang Ba Zhai Village." Meanwhile, people outside the Chengyang Ba Zhai village community perceive them as 'Dong People at Chengyang Ba Zhai Village'

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through their "Indigo Culture."

However, the phenomenon of " Dong's Indigo Culture at Chengyang Ba Zhai Village" contained the above extremely important academic points. However, the overall study of the Indigo Culture of Dong focused on gathering fundamental data on the phenomenon. "Indigo Culture of 'Dong' at Chengyang Ba Zhai Village in Guangxi Region, China: Local Wisdom and Ethnicity in the Context of Minority Identity" is a research that elevates basic information to describe and analyze the academic issues of Local Wisdom, Social Memory, Ethnicity, and Ethnic Identity. In addition, this research can serve as an important knowledge base for the development of the Chinese community in the context of the minority development of the current Chinese government.

Research Methodology

This is basic research using qualitative research methodology. Two main groups of data were collected: data from fieldwork at Chengyang Bazai village and documentary data from research and other papers. The researcher's field data were collected through observation, participant observation, general interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group interviews. Documentation information and generally related documents, paper documents, and Internet systems. Data synthesis is based on the research framework, namely, information on local wisdom in the indigo dyeing process. In addition to the relationship between indigo fabric products and the social lives of the Dong. The research results are presented with a descriptive analysis under two main concepts: "Local wisdom" from the concept book of "Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology" by Geertz, Clifford (1983), and the concept of "Ethnicity" from the book "Ethnic and Identity" by Anthony Appiah, Kwame (2005).

Research results

Part 1: Physical Space People & Society Dong People at Chengyang Ba Zhai

1.1 Physical Space and Ecology System: Place of the Material and Indigo drying wisdom

Physical Space of Dong village

Chengyang Bazhai Village belongs to the mid-tropical Lingnan humid climate zone, with rain and heat in the same season throughout the year, distinct cold and hot seasons, and an average annual rainfall of approximately 1,493 mm. (Liang Wei, Li Nafeng, 2019). Chengyang Bazhai is located on the banks of the Linxi River northeast of the Sanjiang Dong Autonomous Region. It is a physical area that is rich in natural resources. It comprises vast forests, plants, and animals. Specifically, "Linxi" is a river that flows through the community. This has an important effect on moistening the soil. has given rise to a wide variety of plants, including indigo trees, cotton, glutinous rice wine, and yam. In addition, it is a river that supports people's way of life and Dong people's society. They relied on the Linxi River for consumption and were a part of the indigo dyeing process.

Therefore, the aforementioned physical space is a place where much local knowledge is accumulated, including a set of indigo dyeing techniques made from natural materials.

1.2 Social Space and Ethnic settlement wisdom in the special cultural landscape

'Dong' is one of the 56 minorities in China nationality and one of the oldest ethnic groups in the Sanjiang area. The Dong people call themselves "Kam," which means brave and quiet people. Historically, the majority of the Dong people live in mountainous areas. Dong areas are often referred to as "Xidong" or "Mandong," while the minorities living in these areas are referred to as "Dong ren" (Dong people).

Chengyang Bazhai is a Dong community located northeast of Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County. It is 19 km. from Sanjiang Country. Chengyang Bazai has a history of more than 300 years (Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County Chronicle, 1992). The ancestors of this village occupied a mountainous area with an elevation of 1,300 meters. The Linxi River flows through this river. Chengyang Bazhai covers a total area of 12.55 square kilometers.

Chengyang Bazhai is the oldest and most beautiful Dong Village in Sanjiangdong Autonomous Region. It consists of eight small villages: Ma'an, Ping, Pingzhai, Yanzhai, Dongzhai, Pingpu, and Jichang. Therefore, this Dong village was called "Chengyang Bazhai", which means "eight villages" with a spear. The eight houses are located at the center of each village. The Wind and Rain Bridges are five shared public spaces. The Chengyang Yongji Bridge" is one of the four most famous historical bridges in the world. Owing to the limitations of the geographical environment, the number of households in Chengyang Bazhai is limited. Currently (2023) Chengyang Bazhai is divided into 8 villages, hence the name "Bazhai." Dong village has 2197 households. The total population is 9701 people. Xi Zhuang, 1987)

The Dong Ban Chengyang Bazai people are a unique ethnic group in terms of architecture and special indigo-dyed fabric production wisdom. The two characteristics of Chengyang Bazai Dong Ban are ethnic wisdom related to the local ecosystem. In particular, the ingenious indigo dyeing technique was used.

Part 2: Local Wisdom of Special Indigo Fabric Production : Dong People's Identity, Ma'Anzhai Community

The term "local wisdom" refers to the capacity for problem-solving, adjusting to new information, and passing on acquired knowledge and experience from one generation to the next to ensure survival (Clifford Geertz. 1983). The Dong Chengyang Bazai people's indigo accumulate experience and knowledge from the physical space, providing local natural raw materials. Ma' An Zhai is an outstanding indigo community in China. They produced indigo fabrics using a special technique, resulting in a unique indigo fabric. However, in addition to indigo dyeing, Ma' An zhai's indigo wisdom also uses special ingredients, such as yam, straw ash, fermented sticky rice distillers' grains, cowhide glue, and fish scales. It is a raw material that makes the fabric bright and high quality. This fabric has been passed down from one generation to another. It has been used as a Material Culture in daily life and rituals. This makes the indigo culture reflect the ethnicity, identity, and identity of this minority group, as follows:

2.1 The process of producing special indigo-dyed fabrics of Dong at Ma'An Zhai

1) Procedure for making indigo mud

Indigo mud refers to making colored gelatin from the indigo plant into a solid mud-like mass. Therefore, it was called "indigo mud" for use as a precursor to indigo dyeing. There are many different ways to make indigo mud in indigo dyeing communities. In this regard, the researcher explained Dong indigo mud-making wisdom through participatory observations in fieldwork with Yang Nianying's family in the Dong Ma'An community in July 2022 as follows:

2) Indigo plant fermentation process

Traditional indigo dyeing is a complicated fermentation process with different recipes used by master dyers from different regions and ethnic groups. Even within the same region, there are variations in these recipes and diverse additives (Li, Cunningham, 2022). Every step of Yang Nianying was carefully prepared. Start by putting 'Banlan' (*Strobilanthes cusia*) (Nees) Kuntze, 1891) into a 150 liter plastic bucket. Then pour about 2/3 of the water. Press Banlan into a sink with a bamboo net and three bricks over it. The local firestone was then placed in the barrel. The heat of the stones made it easier

for indigo to dissolve in hot water. The Banlan bucket was covered with a lid for several days. Once the indigo from Banlan was dissolved in water, any remaining plants were removed from the bucket. An appropriate amount of lime ($\text{PH} \geq 11$, measured with blue test paper). Lime binds indigo to sediment deposited at the bottom of the tank. For the microorganisms to get air while adding the mortar, water must be scooped up and poured into the bucket repeatedly until the indigo water turns greenish-yellow. When the indigo comes into contact with air, it begins to turn blue. Then slowly pour the water out of the top layer to get the indigo mud at the bottom of the tank.

3) Build an Indigo Dye Barrel



Figure 1: Yang Nianyin and Chen Limei are building blue indigo dye vat

Source: Hu Wenli (July 2022)

Every year, the women choose the sixth day of the sixth month of the lunar calendar to build the indigo vat. In the past, there was another priest who helped each family choose a day. This is now simplified to one day (Yang Nianying, 2020). A dye vat is a vat containing dye water that has been conditioned to dye fabrics with indigo. The dye is alkaline. Today, residents often use plastic buckets to create dyed buckets. Nianying used a dye bucket measuring approximately 55 cm. high and 66 cm. in diameter. The alkalinity of the dyeing water was adjusted to maintain the pH of the liquid at ~ 11 . Three bowls of indigo mud (approximately 3 liters) were placed on a bowl of fermented rice grains to stimulate the growth of microorganisms. To ensure the success of fermentation, some other local plants will be added, and incense will be offered to worship the indigo god. At this time, everyone should say blessings to the indigo vats.

4) Process of indigo dyeing to Dark blue

The deep blue indigo dyeing of the Dong Ma' Anzhai people involved several steps. Wisdom in this process is related to the Linxi River, which flows along the village.

4.1) on the 1st day, dry natural white cotton was placed into the dyeing vat. The fabric was stirred back and forth for approximately 10 min so that every part of the white fabric absorbed the indigo dye in the dyeing tub. The fabric was dried, and the first step was repeated five times per day. The dyed fabric was washed in the Linxi River and dried.

Daily staining depletes microorganisms in the dyeing vats. The Dong people, therefore, prepare indigo vat for a new dyeing process called "Additional paint buckets" to maintain continuous dyeing capability. Therefore, they added indigo mud, grains, caustic soda, and water.

4.2) Re-dyeing: Dong people re-dye for about 15 days to increase the intensity of the color. The dyeing operation followed the same process as on the first day. Repeated dyeing causes gradual dyeing of the fabric. Change to darker blue. When the dyed fabric became dark blue as desired, re-dyeing was discontinued. The indigo-dyed cloth was then washed off in the river. Dong people generally also water in the Linxi River for daily consumption. Thus, the Dong people accept the nature and environmental friendliness of the indigo and indigo dyeing process.

2.2 The process of turning dark blue indigo fabric into red



Figure 2: Yang Nian Ying is dyeing the dark blue indigo cloth red with yam water

Source: Hu Wenli (October 2022)

Deep blue indigo-dyed fabric with red glaze is unique to traditional indigo-dyed fabric. It is regarded as a special type of indigo cloth that is superior to ordinary indigo cloth. Making a red-lacquered indigo cloth is high-tech wisdom of the Dong Ma'anzhai people. The red color in Dong language is the pronunciation of "Ya." Yam roots harvested from the surrounding mountain soil were used as a red pigment, peeled, sliced, and soaked in alkaline water with a pH of approximately 11. Dip-dyed in tubs to ensure red blends into the deep blue tones of the fabric. Then, a red indigo-dyed cloth was spread under the sun on the central square in front of the Drum Tower of the village. In magic, the fabric on the side that receives sunlight is black, while the shade that faces away from the sun is purple (Yang Nianying, 2022). According to the ancient records of the Dong people, red makes the fabric and the color last longer. This process of dyeing is, therefore, a wisdom that relates to local raw materials that make a difference and add value to indigo fabrics with special beautiful colors.

2.3 The process of creating bright, dazzling sequins for indigo-dyed fabric

Brilliant brilliance is another special wisdom of Ma' An Zhao's indigo dyes. It is a mystery and wonder of the village outsiders. With other people not knowing that great wisdom, indigo-dyed fabric was given the nickname "Pha Dong" as a cloth containing magical magic. It is wisdom that is passed down from generation to generation by the Dong people. However, dazzling brightness was used. 'Grass carp scales' are special available in Ma An'zhai paddy fields. The Dong people collect and boil fish scales. The red-dyed cloth dried in the sun was then boiled in a pot of boiling fish scales. The dark indigo-dyed fabric was coated with a red glaze, which also increased the durability and color of the fabric.

1) Beat the cloth: Wisdom that makes condensed cloth special

In addition to the deep blue, red, and glossy appearances, the condensed texture of the fabric is a special characteristic of the bath towel. The Dong people condense the fabric by pounding. They folded the pretreated cloth, placed it on a flat stone, and hit it using a hammer. Pounding the fabric expands and compresses the fibers. Simultaneously, being crushed by beating gives the bouncy fabric a smooth surface and adds a more lustrous

appearance and a soft touch to the body⁵. All of these are secrets of the miraculous wisdom of indigo fabrics, and most importantly, the special property of indigo dye fabrics is their medicinal properties. It is also perceived as a skin-healing fabric by the wearer. The odor of indigo is also a medicinal herb (Huang Jingming. 2023: Interview).

2) Steaming: The final process for color fastness

After beating the clothes, the Dong people folded clothes alternating with zigzag teeth. The folded clothes were placed into a wooden steamer. Steam for approximately 4-5 hours in hot steam. The cloth was then dried for approximately 2-3 days in a row. In addition, it increases the durability of fabrics and dyes. The final steaming process also caused the fabric to glow red. All of these are secrets of the miraculous wisdom of indigo fabrics. Most importantly, the special property of indigo dye fabrics is their medicinal property. It is also perceived as a skin-healing fabric by the wearer. In addition, indigo is a medicinal herb (Yang Nianying. 2022: Interview).

Part 3: Indigo Culture in the Dimension of Ethnicity and Minority Identity

The indigo-dyed cloth derived from the special wisdom of the Dong people presented in part 2 is a “material culture” and “cultural material.” It is related to the Dong's life and society, both in daily life and rituals. Indigo-dyed cloth is the 'material culture' of the Dong people, so it can simultaneously identify their ethnicity and minority identity of the Dong people.

Therefore, the researcher presents indigo-dyed fabric and the life of the Dong people in two parts: indigo-dyed fabric in everyday life and ritual traditions.

3.1 Indigo-dyed fabric products in the everyday life



Figure 3: Daily clothing for women in the village

Source: Hu Wenli (September 2022)

The Dong live their daily lives as a group of people in an agricultural society, and their main occupation is farming in the fields and gathering food and natural resources in the rivers and mountain forests surrounding the village. Their daily lives are outdoors in fields, rivers, and forests. and their daily lives in families and communities.

Daily life affects the culture of dressing from head to toe. Consists of hats, shirts, and pants. Their costumes are mostly made of indigo-dyed cloth. This special bright color has become a unique symbol of Dong tribal attire. This culture of dress can be traced back to ancient times and continues to affect the lives of the Dong people today.

⁵ These three specialties of bouncy fabric are the key reasons modern fashion designers use this amazing magical fabric as a staple of their global modern fashion styles. which has created a modern fashion collection that is different from the ordinary characteristics of other fabrics.

The indigo-dyed fabric has become a staple in the traditional costumes of Dong people of all ages. Iconic black and red and signature shiny finishes have become a color culture in everyday wear. It consists of hats, shirts, skirts, and pants. Most importantly, the Dong people created beautiful embroidery on dark indigo fabric. The dark color of the floor drives the pattern to stand and become more beautiful. It also includes the use of small pieces of fabric left over from sewing costumes, making small accessories in conjunction with silver body adornments in everyday life (Chen Limei. 2022:Interview). They have become an integral part of the everyday clothing culture of the Dong. Considering its artistic value, it is a gorgeous and glamorous dress.

In addition to clothing, indigo-dyed fabrics are used for general household items, such as bedding, blankets, pillows, and curtains. In addition, these indigo-dyed fabrics are the main material for handicrafts and daily necessities such as satchel handbag purses, wallets, and souvenirs from various embroidery works. These handicrafts are not just works of art but are deeply rooted in everyday life that reflects the ethnic identity of the Dong people very well.

Climate, ecology, and cultural ecology include the ability to absorb sweat, protecting the skin during the daily domestic and farming work of the above people is essential to preserving the traditional costumes of the people. It has been inherited, handing down ethnic identity from generation to generation in a strong, powerful, and enduring manner.

3.2 Indigo-dyed fabric products in the Ritual Theater of Dong people

Bell, Catherine (2009) mentions "Ritual" in the book "Ritual Theory and Ritual Practice" that rituals are manifestations of human and collective behavior through a system of symbols and beliefs. Therefore, ritual is a special sociocultural area of human beings that is separate from everyday life. Therefore, rituals have the appearance of a stage of human expression for the special occasions of each society. This special opportunity was established to help society maintain the order needed from birth to death. Therefore, ritual is a symbolic interaction area for society. It has been reproduced from generation to generation to become a shared social memory and convey ethnicity along the way.

In the Dong people's ceremonial arena, indigo-dyed fabrics appear in many types of symbolic ceremonial systems. These include wedding ceremonies, birthday parties, funerals, housewarming ceremonies, and so on. In this section, the author would like to provide an example of a wedding ceremony to describe it as follows.

1) The wedding ceremony's rite of passage and indigo-dyed fabric

One significant 'Rite of Passage' in moving from single to family life is marriage. Families are very important to the Dong Chengyang Bazhai people, who also value the wedding ceremonies. Therefore, the attire, ornaments, and key components of rituals were all made from special indigo-dyed fabrics and clothing for the wedding ceremony. Therefore, the wedding ceremony serves as a venue for preserving the knowledge of creating unique indigo-dyed fabrics so that it can continue to be used in Dong society today⁶.

Dong traditional wedding procedures

Grandma Yang (85-year-old), an elder in Chengyang Bazhai Village, was very happy to see me wear a Dong wedding dress, which brought back memories of Grandma's youth. Grandma Yang told me about her wedding: Dong wedding ceremony is an orderly, staged, and colorful process. The main steps are the betrothals, weddings, and return of

⁶Since the Dong community is now accessible to cultural tourists, the wedding custom has developed into a significant part of the Dong identity. The history of indigo clothing and dress is also strengthened and promoted at weddings.

the bride. Traditional wedding ceremonies of the Dong people are usually held during the transition from old to new years. On New Year's Eve night, the wedding had a "Bride-stealing ceremony." The groom secretly takes the bride home in the middle of night.



Figure 4: Dong Grandma in Ma an zhai Village was taking the author's indigo cloths

Source: Hu Wenli (December 2022)

On the first day of the Lunar New Year, the bride would carry water herself and use that water to cook oil tea for the entire village. The bride and groom distribute oil tea to the guests, which symbolizes that they have become new members of the family. On the day of sending, relatives will hold a wedding feast, and on the second day, the groom's family will hold a feast. On the third day of the New Year, the bride was "stolen" back to the groom's home. (Although both parents usually find this in advance.) The bride and groom were obliged to return to the bride's house. It is a "bridal reunion" giving back to the bride's parents. The groom expresses gratitude to the bride's parents. The bride's brother will light firecrackers at the intersection to welcome the bride's home.

The "Bride Homecoming Ceremony" takes place on a stage where a sizable crowd is present, causing the ambiance to be lively. The new family received numerous gifts from many participants, gifts, such as sour fish, sour duck, sweets, glutinous rice, and red pork, which have recently been decorated. In addition, it accurately captures joy and celebrations. (Yang, Interview 2022).

Indigo-dyed cloth and fabric in a wedding ceremony

Indigo-dyed cloth and indigo cloth were used as the raw materials for rituals. The researcher selected The main parts of the study were as follows.

Indigo-dyed fabric as a cultural object of marriage

The unique indigo-dyed cloth of the Dong people is a distinctive symbol of their culture, which, in addition to being used in daily life, also plays an important role in ceremonies such as weddings. In a traditional wedding, the mother of the bride must prepare 12 ready-made clothes. Two cotton-padded jackets and several pieces were made entirely of an indigo-dyed fabric. The dowry is sent when the bride gives birth to a child and holds a celebration ceremony. This may be a symbol of the complete passage of a wedding. These indigo dowries represent not only the hard work and delicacy of the bride's family. It also represents the gift of the bride to a new family and positive expectations for future life.

2) Wedding dress and costume

The traditional wedding ceremony of the Dong people is full of seriousness but excitement and joy. It represents the Dong people's love for life and respect for their social memories. Indigo-dyed fabrics are an important element of wedding ceremonies that connect the past and present. This represents the wisdom of the Dong people and the inheritance of ethnic culture, which has a long history.

A wedding dress distinguishes the bride and groom from the general public. The ritual protects wedding dresses made of special indigo-dyed fabrics to remain with the Dong people. It has become an integral part of the bride and groom's body saying that "They're the Dong people" and are now the new Dong family. In addition, clothing simultaneously reproduces social memories.



Figure 5: The bride and groom in Dong Wedding Ceremony at Ma Anzai village

Source: Hu Wenli (February 2023)

In wedding ritual theater, the bride is the main person in the wedding ceremony. A wedding dress indicates a change in marital status. This ritual was passed down from ancestors. Therefore, the bride's attire and physical discipline play important roles in this process. The bride wears a wedding dress made of an indigo-dyed fabric, which is not only a symbol of respect and continuation of ethnic traditions. This also shows the commitment and expectations of a new family of communities. The bride's wedding dress, especially the deep indigo color, conveys a solemn, sacred mood and shows the seriousness of the ceremony. Simultaneously, the bride's dazzling jewelry reflects happiness and joy, symbolizes a new beginning, and indicates a happy life in the future.



Figure 6: The wedding guests in Dong Wedding Ceremony at Ma Anzai village. They wear also dressing indigo-dyed cloths

Source: Hu Wenli (February 2023)

At the New Year's Eve reception, the groom comes to the bride's house with a group of the best men. Upon arrival at the destination, a member of the bridal party presents a valuable belt by tying it to the waist. The fabric was wide and long enough to make an entire dress. This represents the deepest welcome of the bride's family and their respect for this great event.

In addition to the bride and groom, there were various other participants on ceremony grounds. It consists of relatives, friends, groomsmen, bridesmaids, etc. of the bride and groom. At the ceremony, when the groom sends the bride home, the groom's elders wear Dong clothes made by themselves. They congratulate and witness the new status of the bride and groom. Collective participation recreates wedding ceremonies and carries a rich tradition.

The groom's wedding attire was handmade by the groom's mother. After marriage, the bride's mother continues to make new Dong indigo clothes and shoes for the groom. The best man's brothers and groom will wear traditional grove uniforms as well. To show the unity of the team and the spirit of mutual assistance. The bridesmaid's dress is almost the same as that of the bride, except for the indigo-dyed headscarf and beautiful accessories. Young people are very willing to have traditional weddings, even if they are held in modern hotels, and the bride wears traditional Dong clothes. (Chen Limei, 2022 : interview).

In this study, researchers found that the production of indigo-dyed fabrics is a complex process that involves various techniques and skills passed down from generation to generation. The knowledge and skills needed to cultivate indigo plants, extract the indigo pigment, and dye fabrics are all considered part of the "local wisdom" of the Dong people.

Furthermore, the research highlights the significance of indigo-dyed fabrics in the social and cultural lives of the Dong people. Fabrics are not just practical items for clothing, but they are also deeply intertwined with the rituals and social memory of the community. For example, the Dong use indigo-dyed fabrics for their traditional costumes during festivals and ceremonies, which play a vital role in preserving their cultural identity.

Additionally, the research findings reveal that the "Indigo Culture" acts as a symbol of ethnic identity for the Dong people. The production and use of indigo-dyed fabrics serve as a way for the Dong people to assert their distinct cultural identity and distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups. This aspect of this study sheds light on the significance of material culture in constructing and maintaining ethnic identity.

These research findings have significant implications for the cultural identity of the Dong ethnic group. With the rapid pace of modernization and globalization, there is growing concern about the erosion of traditional cultures and the loss of cultural diversity, particularly for ethnic minority groups such as the Dong people, who often face unique challenges in preserving their cultural heritage.

This study emphasizes the importance of local wisdom and social memory in shaping the cultural identity of the Dong people. It also highlights the role of material culture, such as the production of unique indigo-dyed fabrics, in connecting the Dong to their history and traditions.

However, the Dong people also face challenges in preserving their cultural heritage. Rapid urbanization and economic development have led to the displacement of many Dong communities and loss of traditional knowledge and practices. Additionally, the increasing influence of mainstream culture and consumerism has led to a decline in the demand for traditional products, such as indigo-dyed fabrics.

Therefore, it is important for policymakers and cultural heritage organizations to recognize the value of local wisdom and social memory in preserving the cultural identity

of ethnic minority groups such as the Dong people. Efforts should be made to support the production and promotion of traditional products such as indigo-dyed fabrics and to provide opportunities for Dong communities to share their knowledge and practices with the wider society.

This study provides important insights into the relationship between local wisdom, social memory, and ethnic identity. It also highlights the challenges faced by the Dong people in preserving their cultural heritage in the face of modernization and globalization.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of the "Indigo Culture" of Dong People at Chengyang Ba Zhai Village reflects the important social and academic issues of Local Wisdom about producing one of the most unique indigo-dyed fabrics in global indigo culture. The mysterious indigo fabric was extremely dark, red-glazed, condensed, and shiny. The uniqueness of this fabric indicates "local knowledge," which is the wisdom gained from learning material things in the rich local area of people. Therefore, this research upgrades and strengthens the concept of "Local Wisdom" and knowledge. In particular, the issue of differentiating other indigo fabric products by means of reddening, condensing, and glossiness from red yams in the mountains, pounded, and fish scales in the fields.

In addition, this research has pointed out to the academic community that local knowledge of material matters must be considered along with duties and uses in life and society. 'Material Culture' along the way. found issues related to the Self-Identity of the Dong, a minority group. which they want to tell themselves and others that "We are Dong people" through special indigo-dyed fabrics and everyday life, including life in important rituals that must be had. How does the 'special indigo fabric' from advanced ethnic wisdom get involved through the phenomenon of "indigo culture" that relates living spaces and cultural lifestyles at the same time.

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