

Sustainable fashion and entrepreneurship in natural craft dyeing

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Abstract

Among those who are interested in sustainable fashion, handcrafting has come to be regarded as a technical alternative. However, historically, it has had disadvantages compared to modern production technologies, and it has declined due to industrialization. Thus, a challenge for craftspeople willing to revitalize the sustainable fashion field is ensuring economic and environmental sustainability. Despite the fact that dyeing is very important in the creation of fashion and relates deeply to human health and the natural environment, it is still unclear how natural craft dyeing studios can achieve these two types of sustainability. This study investigates the issue by analyzing the Japanese studio Takarajima Senko (TS), because there are few successful cases of natural dyeing studios that have established a competitive advantage over modern chemical dyeing factories in the modern clothing market targeting ordinary people. Using multiple sources of data, the study found that TS effectively ensures economic and environmental sustainability by following a set of measures: (1) differentiating themselves from competitors by developing attractive, inimitable products, (2) building trustful relationships with customers targeting the modern market by communicating effectively in a way that encourages them to accept natural craft dyeing, (3) attracting current and potential staff by providing opportunities for creative work that are easy to join, and (4) prioritizing environmental sustainability while maintaining sufficient business opportunities. This approach is an option for natural craft dyeing studios willing to achieve both economic and environmental sustainability.

Keywords: Natural dyeing, craft, sustainability, entrepreneurship, case study

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