

A Comprehensive Study on the Haenyo of Jeju Island: Tradition, Sustainability, and Women's Empowerment

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Abstract

This comprehensive paper showcase the intricate facets of Jeju Island's Haenyeo community, systematically examining their cultural heritage, sustainable practices, and the empowerment of women. The historical narrative unfolds by tracing the evolution of their diving techniques, encompassing the development of diving suits, dive practices, and swimming methods. A focused analysis on sustainable harvesting and environmental awareness underscores the Haenyeo's commitment to ecological balance, emphasizing topography, eco-friendly practices, and environmental stewardship.

The cultural significance section elucidates the matriarchal structure and the pivotal roles women play within the Haenyeo community. We explore the historical context, particularly the Haenyeos' resistance against Japanese influence, providing historical depth to their resilience. It also include the pivotal role played by Haenyeo leaders such as Kim Ok- Nyeon, Bu Chun-Wa and Bu Deok-Ryang in Anti-Japanese Movement played by Haenyeos of Jeju Island. Indeed, the Haenyeos of Jeju Island stand not only as stewards of sustainability but also as historical trailblazers. Their courageous resistance against Japanese influence during a period when societal norms stifled women's voices underscores their pivotal role in shaping history. In a time when women were often relegated to the sidelines, the Haenyeos emerged as advocates for their community, demonstrating resilience and challenging societal expectations. Their legacy, therefore, transcends the realms of sustainability, weaving a narrative of empowerment and defiance that remains a powerful testament to the strength of the Haenyeo spirit.

Subsequently, the paper addresses contemporary challenges, such as an aging population, tourism pressures, and environmental degradation, laying the groundwork for pragmatic solutions. Recognition and preservation initiatives take center stage, with an emphasis on both global and national endeavors, showcasing the Haenyeo community's adaptive measures to diversify income streams through tourism. Looking forward, the paper outlines strategies for the seamless continuation of tradition and cultural education. From a business perspective, the 'Haenyeo Corporation' is scrutinized, accompanied by an in-depth analysis of the Social Corporate Responsibility (SCR) Tourism Business Initiative Plan, offering innovative pathways for sustainable economic growth. (SCR) initiative plan outlined in this context serves as a strategic framework tailored for Tour and Travel Entities. The plan aims to establish collaborations with the Haenyeo community, fostering sustainable tourism practices and fulfilling social corporate responsibility. This initiative reflects a concerted effort to integrate business goals with environmental and social considerations, contributing to the broader ethos of responsible and ethical tourism. The

establishment of a Social Security System and the integration of innovation and technology add a forward-looking dimension to the narrative. In conclusion, this research paper harmonizes the enchanting tale of the Haenyeo, advocating for the preservation of their unique heritage while proposing pragmatic business initiatives for enduring economic sustainability.

Keywords: Haenyeo , Haenyeo culture, Jeju Island, Cultural heritage, female divers, gender roles, Tourism, Diving technique, Sustainable Harvesting, Women Matriachal Structure, Challenges, Adaptations, Haenyeo educatoion, Technology and innovation.

Introduction

Jeju Island is the largest island of Republic of Korea situated at the south of the Korean Peninsula and South Jeolla Province, located approx. 130 km from its southern coast. It covers approx. 1846 Square Kilometre and has about 670000 inhabitants. Jeju Island is one of a two special self governing province besides Gangwon. It boasts diverse geographical features, including Hallasan, a dormant volcano and South Korea's highest peak. Its volcanic terrain also includes lava tubes and craters, forming unique landscapes. The island's coastline offers picturesque beaches like Tyeopjae and Jungmun, complemented by cliffs, caves, and stunning coastal views.

The female Divers of Jeju Island are called Haenyeos, meaning 'Sea Women'. Haenyeos are appreciated for their diving and breath-holding skills without using any modern apparatus such as oxygen cylinders. Haenyeos dive deep into the sea for collecting seafood such as abalone, seaweed and shellfish. Their work involves gathering seafood from the ocean depths, harvesting them, and subsequently selling it in markets.

The Haenyeo, the female divers of Jeju Island in South Korea, have a rich heritage deeply rooted in history. The evolution of the Haenyeo on Jeju Island is a captivating journey through time, reflecting the intricate interplay of historical, cultural, and environmental influences. Centuries ago, fishing and diving for seafood were typically male-dominated activities. However, the emergence of the Haenyeo, or "sea women," marked a significant shift in this paradigm. Women gradually took over this profession due to many reasons involving physiological and historical aspects. As the number of women divers increased, Haenyeos became the faces of this tradition, a matriarchal society began to take shape on the island. The Haenyeo developed a culture that not only encompassed the diving practices but also entailed a structured system of knowledge transfer. Experienced Haenyeo passed down their skills, techniques, and rituals to younger generations through apprenticeships, ensuring the preservation of this specialized knowledge. However, the trajectory of the Haenyeo tradition wasn't immune to change. Jeju Island experienced rapid modernization, altering the socio-economic landscape and societal dynamics. Shifts in fishing regulations, environmental concerns, and the younger generation's changing aspirations posed challenges to the continuity of the Haenyeo culture.

Despite these challenges, concerted efforts have been made to safeguard this invaluable heritage. The UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage recognition elevated global awareness of the Haenyeo's significance, prompting increased governmental and cultural initiatives to protect and promote their traditions. Various programs aimed at educating the public, supporting Haenyeo communities, and preserving the ecosystem have been instrumental in nurturing the continuation of this unique cultural

practice. Today, the Haenyeo are not only skilled divers but also symbols of resilience, gender equality, and environmental stewardship. Their journey from ancient fishermen to cultural icons embodies the essence of tradition evolving with time, standing as a testament to the enduring spirit of Jeju Island's heritage. What began as a means of sustenance transformed into a cultural phenomenon, embodying the spirit of independence and environmental conservation. The Haenyeo not only harvested seafood but also became stewards of the marine ecosystem, employing sustainable harvesting practices and preserving the delicate balance of the underwater world.

The Haenyeo, emblematic of self-reliant women, defied the traditional gender roles dictated by Confucian norms prevalent in their society. Within the challenging volcanic landscape of Jeju Island, they embraced the role of breadwinners, deviating from the conventional expectations imposed on women. Despite the strict application of Confucian ideals dictating women's lives, the Haenyeo forged their own path, becoming providers for their families and contributors to the local economy. The sale and trade of their harvested seafood not only sustained local communities but also became a source of revenue, driving economic growth on Jeju Island. Additionally, their practices attracted tourists interested in their unique culture, further bolstering the economy through tourism. Following Korea's opening in the late 19th century, Haenyeo became trailblazers, extending the local economy's reach beyond Jeju Island to nations like Japan, China, Russia, and mainland Korea.

In the face of modernization and societal changes, the Haenyeo tradition perseveres as a symbol of cultural heritage and gender empowerment. Efforts to preserve their unique practices, stories, and rituals highlight the significance of these women in South Korean history and serve as an inspiration for future generations. Their legacy transcends the boundaries of time, resonating as a testament to the enduring strength and resilience of women and their vital role in shaping local traditions and communities.

Historical Context

The historical lineage of the Haenyo, the female divers of Jeju Island, is deeply embedded within the cultural heritage of the region, showcasing a tradition spanning numerous centuries that persists in contemporary times. Despite encountering significant upheavals such as World War II and sweeping societal transformations, the Haenyo community stands resolute, upholding their enduring practices, traditions, and cultural heritage within the province of Jeju Island. Haenyo represent female divers who skillfully navigate depths ranging from 13 to 20 meters, adeptly gathering mollusks, seaweed, and various marine life forms. These Jeju-based women rely on diving and harvesting from the ocean as their primary means of sustenance and livelihood.

In tracing the origins of women engaging in diving activities for seafood procurement on Jeju Island, a historical continuum spanning millennia emerges. Initially, this practice served as a means for women to contribute to household economies while men pursued farming or fishing activities. The genesis of the Haenyo tradition finds its roots within Jeju itself. Historical records reveal the presence of breath-hold male divers as early as 503 AD, whereas evidence of female divers emerges in records dating back to the 17th century. During this period until the 18th century, the predominant participation in diving tasks was by males, albeit with exceptions of their wives joining them in coastal endeavors. Literary references from

the 17th century, particularly Japanese accounts referring to female divers as 'ama,' denoted as 'haenyeo' in Korean, allude to these women as 'sea women.'

In the historical context of mainland South Korea, women's roles were greatly confined, particularly within the lower classes, due to the prevailing traditional Confucian principles. These societal norms restricted women primarily to domestic roles. Among the privileged Yangban Women of the aristocratic class, who had comparatively better access to education and cultural activities, their engagements revolved around managing households, raising children, and participating in ceremonial events. On the other hand, women from non-aristocratic backgrounds faced significant limitations in their opportunities. Their responsibilities mainly revolved around domestic chores and supporting the family, with societal expectations strongly discouraging involvement in activities outside the home. While some women were involved in informal trades or crafts, formal education and career advancements were primarily reserved for men. These gender-based divisions significantly restricted women's access to professional opportunities beyond household duties. Many women in mainland South Korea were relegated to the role of maids for Yangban women, but Jeju Island stood apart from the mainland, providing limited opportunities for women. Throughout its history, Jeju Island endured significant hardships. In the 15th century, it fell under the highly centralized rule of the Joseon Dynasty. A 200-year travel ban was imposed, and several uprisings by Jeju islanders were harshly suppressed. They were even regarded as foreigners, and Jeju was designated as a site for horse breeding and the exile of political prisoners. Consequently, the people of Jeju had limited options for income and livelihood, leading them to rely on the sea for their sustenance.

Jeju Island stood apart from mainland Korean society, fostering an environment where not all Confucian norms held sway. This divergence facilitated the emergence of the Haenyeo community, providing an alternative narrative where women achieved success, unencumbered by the strict Confucian norms prevalent in mainland Korea. The Haenyeo primarily gather nine crucial marine products, encompassing various seaweeds, sea cucumbers, sea urchins, abalones, and horned turbans, among others. The economic value of these marine treasures notably surged in the early 20th century, primarily owing to their trade and market exchange value. Moreover, their expansion into farming activities and outreach beyond regional borders underscore their significant impact on local and international economies. The economic value associated with the marine products they harvest has substantially contributed to the region's economic vitality, distinguishing the Haenyeo not only as sea divers but also as pivotal contributors to economic prosperity.

During the 18th century, the term "Haenyo" became commonplace in describing breath-hold female divers of Jeju Island, marking a pivotal shift where female divers outnumbered their male counterparts in this trade. Various factors contributed to this transition, elucidating the multifaceted reasons behind the increasing participation of women and the concurrent decline of male divers. The societal landscape, governed by strict Confucian norms, enforced mandatory war service for males, leaving many women as widows with limited avenues for sustenance. Simultaneously, the advent of female divers yielded notable advantages, showcasing enhanced productivity and greater endurance compared to men, particularly in colder waters. Historical records from the 18th century illuminate the imposition of taxes on dried abalone

sales, compelling women to assist their husbands in diving endeavors to augment seafood collections, furthering the integration of women in this maritime profession.

During the Japanese colonial period in Korea, Jeju Island faced significant challenges that deeply affected its inhabitants, especially the Haenyoes. The Japanese administration aimed to assert control over the island and its resources, leading to the suppression of local culture and traditions. Policies were implemented to enforce Japanese language and cultural practices, which posed a threat to the unique heritage of the Haenyo and their way of life. Additionally, economic exploitation became prevalent as Japanese authorities sought to profit from Jeju's natural resources, including the marine products collected by the Haenyo. Taxation and control over their catches impacted the livelihoods and independence of these divers, disrupting their traditional economic practices. While the Haenyo occupation was historically male-dominated, a notable shift occurred, leading to women becoming the primary labor force. This transition gained momentum, particularly after the Japanese colonization of Korea in 1910, transforming diving into a more profitable profession. The prior tradition of delivering harvested goods to the Joseon government as tribute ended under Japanese rule, allowing Haenyo to engage in more profitable market sales. Moreover, their employment by Japanese and Korean merchants as wage laborers significantly improved their financial situation. Notably, on Yeonpyeong-ri, an island near Incheon, Haenyo wages constituted a substantial portion of overall family income, indicating their economic significance. Under colonial rule, the Haenyo faced forced labor and restrictions on their workplace. Many were compelled to work in industries beyond their traditional diving activities or were sent to labor in mainland Japan, resulting in separation from their families and communities. Moreover, travel restrictions imposed by the Japanese limited the Haenyo's mobility, affecting their ability to freely navigate coastal waters and engage in their diving practices. Cultural erosion was another significant consequence, with the suppression of traditional rituals and ceremonies essential to the Haenyo's cultural identity, impacting their social fabric and community cohesion. Despite these challenges, the Haenyo demonstrated resilience and determination to preserve their cultural heritage and traditional way of life, safeguarding their unique practices and passing them down through generations. Their endurance played a vital role in maintaining Jeju's cultural identity despite external pressures during the Japanese colonial era.

Diving Techniques and Practices

Diving is an ancient practice dating back thousands of years, is the art of submerging underwater, often for various purposes such as exploration, fishing, or gathering resources. The techniques and methods of diving have evolved significantly throughout history, shaped by cultural practices and technological advancements. One of the most fascinating aspects of diving is the diverse array of techniques employed by different cultures and communities worldwide. From free-diving without equipment to modern scuba diving with specialized gear, each method reflects a unique blend of tradition, skill, and innovation. These techniques not only enable humans to access the underwater world but also serve as a testament to human adaptability and resourcefulness in exploring the depths of the seas and oceans.

Jeju Haenyeos practice breath-hold diving, a technique that involves diving without the aid of modern equipment like scuba gear or oxygen cylinders. Using only basic diving tools such as goggles, a wetsuit, a weighted belt, and a basket or net, they descend into the ocean, holding their breath for extended periods. They navigate the depths, reaching up to 20 meters, for collection. With remarkable skill and precision,

they harvest these marine delicacies while utilizing their expertise and knowledge passed down through generations. This traditional method of diving, without relying on modern technology, showcases their exceptional abilities and the deep-rooted connection they have with the ocean environment.

Evolution of Diving Suits of Haenyeos

Cotton bathing suits

The historical practices of Haenyeo, the female divers of Jeju Island, were once characterized by a unique tradition of working unclothed while collecting sea abalones and seaweed, often in collaboration with men. This practice was deeply embedded in Jeju's culture, where swimming naked with individuals of the opposite sex was not considered taboo. However, historical records reflect a shift in this practice over time. In the early 1100s, local authorities, notably Yun Eung-gyun, imposed restrictions termed the "bare skin operation of haenyeo." Subsequently, during the Joseon era, particularly under King Injo's reign, there were prohibitions on the joint operations of men and women at sea. A written account in the late Joseon period by an exile named Lee Geon described the astonishment at witnessing women diving naked alongside men, emphasizing their work together without any sense of shame. The artistic representation in "Tamna Sullyeokdo," a painting from the early 1700s, showcases Haenyeo adorned in white clothing while engaging in diving activities near Yongduam Rock in Jeju-si. These historical records suggest a transition in Haenyeo practices, indicating a shift from diving unclothed to the adoption of clothing termed "murot" during the early to mid-Joseon period. This shift could potentially be attributed to mainland authorities' interference, coinciding with the adoption of tools derived from agricultural equipment to facilitate their work in challenging marine conditions. The evolution of their attire and tools underscored the adaptive wisdom and ingenuity of the Haenyeo community.

During the mid-Joseon period, Haenyeo donned specialized dive clothing known as "murot," meaning 'water clothes.' This attire consisted of several components designed for underwater activities. The upper garment, termed "muljeoksam" or 'water jacket,' and the lower garment, called "mulsojungi" or 'water intimates,' formed the primary attire, complemented by the head covering referred to as "mulsogeon" or 'water towel.' The "mulsojungi" featured functional slits along the sides, facilitating easy adjustment and wearability. Historical records indicate that during the Joseon period, these "murot" were crafted from "mumyeong," a white cotton fabric traditionally woven on looms. However, during the Japanese occupation, there was a transition to using machine-woven "gwangmok" fabric, which was dyed black. The adoption of "muljeoksam," a white cotton shirt worn over the "mulsojungi," gained popularity in a later period. This garment featured narrow sleeves designed to reduce water resistance while also serving the purpose of shielding the divers' backs and shoulders during drying sessions by the fire after their underwater work. These bathing suits were typically made from 100% cotton, featuring a 30-count fabric, measuring approximately 0.5mm in thickness, and exhibiting an 8.5% water absorption rate in dry conditions. It's worth noting that before the availability of broadcloth imported from Japan, the haenyeos utilized muslin, a thin cotton cloth, to style their bathing suits. However, the haenyeos demonstrated a preference for broad cotton over muslin due to its relatively greater thickness and durability when exposed to salty water conditions. Wearing a Cotton Swim Suit, Haenyeo could stay in the water for only up to an hour at a time during the winter months. After an hour, they got out of the water and sat by the fire for 3–4 hours to dry off. After this break, they would jump back into the water for another hour. During the summer months, however, they stayed in the water for up to 3 hours at a time before a break.

The haenyeo employ tools like "tewak mangsari," "bitchang," "homaengi," and "jokswenun" for diving. These tools, resembling variations of farming hoes and sickles, serve various purposes, from creating buoys like "tewak" to using "bitchang" for picking up abalones. Additionally, "homaengi" functions like a slender hoe, aiding in capturing conch, octopus, and sea urchin. The incorporation of swimming goggles, particularly "jokswenun" and "swenun," reflects a practical approach to their underwater activities. The historical connection to traditional farming implements adds depth to these tools, with 15 of them officially designated as part of Jeju Folklore in 2008.

Wet Suits

In the early 1970s, a significant transformation occurred within Jeju's haenyeo community when divers who had worked in Japan returned to the island, introducing the use of wetsuits or diving suits they had acquired abroad. These wetsuits, along with flippers that were also supplied with them, marked a pivotal change for the haenyeos, shielding them from the previously harsh and cold waters. Although this adaptation to wetsuits brought about enhanced comfort and productivity, it also extended the duration of their dives. Presently, Jeju haenyeos are provided with wetsuits tailored to different seasons, varying in thickness: 4mm for summer, 5mm for spring and autumn, and 6-7mm for winter. The introduction of swimming goggles, referred to as "nun" in Korean, in the early 1900s signifies a notable technological advancement. These goggles significantly improved underwater visibility, expanding the range from an initial 2-3 meters to approximately 20 meters and reducing eye fatigue. Haenyeos also applied mugwort to the inner surfaces of the goggles to prevent them from fogging up underwater.

The haenyeos' equipment comprises a range of tools, including a wetsuit, diving mask, fins, gloves, chest weights (to aid diving), an L-shaped weeding hoe, and a net attached to a flotation device. These nets serve as containers for storing the day's catch until the haenyeos conclude their dives. The diving masks worn by haenyeos play a crucial role in enhancing underwater visibility, allowing them to navigate and spot marine life with clarity. Fins provide efficient propulsion and maneuverability, aiding haenyeos in reaching greater depths and moving through the water with ease. Gloves serve a protective function, shielding haenyeos' hands from sharp edges and abrasive surfaces while handling various sea creatures. These gloves not only enhance safety but also allow for a better grip on tools and the catch. Chest weights are essential for buoyancy control during dives. By adjusting the weights, haenyeos can regulate their depth underwater. This is particularly important for reaching specific areas on the seabed and effectively utilizing tools like the L-shaped weeding hoe. The L-shaped weeding hoe, a distinctive tool in haenyeos' equipment, is utilized for harvesting various types of seafood, including abalones and other shellfish. Its design enables precision and efficiency in collecting marine resources from the ocean floor.

Together, these components form a well-coordinated set of equipment, enabling haenyeos to navigate the underwater environment, harvest seafood, and safely manage their catches as they continue their traditional diving practices.

Dive Practices

Skill levels among haenyeos are categorized into three classes based on their diving capabilities. Class 1 haenyeos can delve to depths exceeding approximately 16 meters while holding their breath for about 2 meters, while Class 2 can manage depths of around 13 meters, and Class 3 operates at shallower depths

of less than 13 meters. Achieving Class 1 status requires approximately three decades of diving experience. When haenyeos aim to dive as deep as 20 meters, they employ a heavy ballast belt, coupled with additional weights of up to 30 kilograms, tailored to their body weight. Diving durations for haenyeos vary between 1 to 5 hours per day, contingent upon seasonal changes and tidal patterns. Their daily diving routine consists of an estimated 113-138 dives, with only 52-63 minutes spent submerged, while the remaining time is allocated at the water surface. During winter months, the typical dive lasts for around 60 seconds, followed by a rest interval. In terms of workdays, haenyeos, clad in traditional cotton bathing suits, worked an average of 28 days a month from March to August and 15 days a month during the winter season. For haenyeos in cotton bathing suits, the total time spent submerged ranged from about 30 minutes in winter to approximately 40-60 minutes from spring to early autumn.

However, with the advent of wetsuits, diving shifts were prolonged, stretching from 70 to 180 minutes in summer and 10 to 120 minutes in winter, in contrast to their time spent wearing traditional cotton bathing suits. This adaptation led to increased durations underwater during dives for haenyeos equipped with wetsuits. Before the advent of wetsuits, haenyeo were restricted in their time underwater. During winter, when equipped solely with cotton swimsuits, their immersion in the water was limited to about an hour. Post that duration, they would exit the water and spend 3-4 hours near a fire to dry off before resuming their diving activities for another hour. In contrast, the summer months allowed for longer immersion periods of up to 3 hours before a break was necessary. However, with the introduction of wetsuits, haenyeo observed a significant improvement in their underwater endurance. Even during the winter, they found they could remain submerged for five to six hours at a stretch.

An average haenyeo demonstrates remarkable breath-holding prowess, often staying submerged for up to a minute and diving to depths of around 10m to 30m (98 feet) to collect various marine resources such as abalone, conch, octopus, sea urchins, sea squirt, brown algae, top shell, various types of sargassum, oysters, and sea slugs. Their diving technique involves a delicate balance between their distance from the water's surface and the depletion of oxygen within their lungs, often holding their breath for over three minutes. Contrary to common assumptions about factors like lung capacity or tolerance to cold, the proficiency of haenyeo divers predominantly stems from their experiential knowledge. Their expertise is cultivated through years of practice, wherein they refine their physical strength, master precise control, expand their mental understanding of the underwater reefs, and efficiently integrate their knowledge into seamless movements. This amalgamation of physical conditioning and mental acuity is crucial for haenyeo to navigate the underwater terrain and collect marine resources effectively.

Despite their expertise, haenyeo encountered various hazards during their dives, including jellyfish, adverse weather conditions, and encounters with sharks, adding an element of danger to their already challenging work environment.

Swimming Technique

The swimming technique utilized by Haenyeo, the female divers of Jeju Island, revolves around free diving, which involves diving without any equipment. Before diving, they take a deep breath to fill their lungs with air. Once underwater, they use a series of efficient swimming strokes and controlled movements to navigate the depths. The strokes are designed to conserve energy and ensure precise movement.

Haenyeo rely on their extensive training and experience to manage their breath-holding ability, allowing them to stay submerged for several minutes at a time.

Their swimming technique emphasizes fluidity, with gentle and deliberate movements to reduce disturbance in the water, ensuring a minimal impact on the marine environment. Haenyeo often employ a unique leg-first diving style, allowing them to descend rapidly while maintaining control and minimizing resistance underwater. Their swimming prowess is complemented by their ability to adapt to varying water conditions, utilizing their knowledge of the ocean's rhythms and tides to efficiently collect seafood. This mastery of swimming techniques, breath control, and underwater navigation enables Haenyeo to carry out their harvesting activities effectively and sustainably.

Haenyeos believes that the act of swimming isn't something that can be comprehended solely through verbal or visual explanations; it's a skill absorbed through physical engagement. The body learns to swim by being immersed in the performative act, registering the sensations and responses to the water, becoming an exclusive conduit for this skill. Those Women Diver solely believes that swimming isn't a process governed by analytical thinking or calculations about the speed of currents or angles of movement. Rather, it's an accumulation of embodied memories, etched into the body without the need for explicit mathematical considerations. A Haenyeo should first should view herself not just as gatherers of marine resources but as stewards of the ocean, employing proper harvesting techniques which ensure the preservation of marine life and habitats. This understanding of swimming and diving philosophy, residing not in the brain but in the body's memory, is akin to a unique imprint formed through the bodily experiences and sensations while moving through water. This notion of "bodily affect" is fundamental to comprehending the local and traditional knowledge of Jeju haenyeo divers in their sustainable management of sea product agro-biodiversity.

Sustainable Harvesting and Environmental Awareness

Topography and Harvesting Technique

The haenyeo adopt a discerning approach to harvesting, focusing on selective extraction practices that maintain a sustainable marine ecosystem by allowing natural regeneration. The Haenyeo's expertise in navigating the reef topography plays a crucial role in their successful seafood harvests. Their extensive local knowledge enables them to predict potential spots for specific catches, refined through years of diving. Experienced Haenyeo have an intricate understanding of marine species' whereabouts, such as the likely areas to find abalone on any given day. This specialized knowledge, passed down orally through generations, revolves around the distribution of marine life along the reef. It's important to note that the precise diving locations for optimal yields heavily depend on individual experiences.

The haenyeo's occupational activities are significantly influenced by wind patterns, necessitating an in-depth understanding of winds for successful dives. At Marado Island, situated at Korea's southernmost point, the diving locations of haenyeo pivot on wind direction. When an east wind prevails, these divers work in the sea to the west of the island, while with a west wind, their focus shifts to the sea on the east side. Moreover, the haenyeo's navigation within the marine environment demands consideration not only of wind but also of sea currents. When wind and current align in the same direction, the current's velocity intensifies, while opposing directions slow the current's flow. Consequently, the haenyeo adjust their

diving strategies accordingly. If wind and current coincide, these divers remain closer to the shore due to the increased current speed. Conversely, when wind opposes the current, haenyeo have the flexibility to venture further into the sea for their dives.

The haenyeo methodically factor in the intricacies of tidal conditions, referred to as 'tide time,' when determining their dive sites and timings. Before commencing their dives, these divers conduct a comprehensive assessment encompassing various elements: the tide's status, the current's speed, optimal working durations, and underwater visibility. This understanding of 'tide time' aids them in selecting dive spots immune to disruptive tide effects, ensuring their equipment—such as floats and nets—isn't carried away. Upon resurfacing, this foresight facilitates the seamless transfer of their catch into nets. Central to haenyeo culture is the preservation of eco-friendly diving practices, grounded in the recognition of human limitations in prolonged submersion without breathing equipment. To curb excessive fishing, each village fishery cooperative, holding exclusive sea access rights, governs the diving schedule, daily work hours, and restricts certain technologies. These measures align with the cooperative's perception of the underwater domain as a 'sea farm,' fostering collective efforts between haenyeo and cooperatives in coastal cleanup, intertidal zone maintenance, and the periodic removal of undesirable seaweed. The communal ethos of the Jeju haenyeo is vividly displayed in the establishment of designated fishing zones aimed at community welfare. These distinct zones, such as the Halmangbadang, aegibadang, and public fishing zones, serve specific purposes within the village fishing grounds. The Halmangbadang, situated in the intertidal zone, caters to elderly haenyeo, allowing them to continue diving and gathering seafood with ease. In contrast, the aegibadang is reserved for young and inexperienced haenyeo, providing them with an area to gain practical experience in underwater harvest work. Lastly, the public fishing zone is allocated for the communal development of village communities, with the profits channeled into supporting local schools and public programs. These designated fishing zones underscore the profound integration of the Jeju haenyeo fisheries with communitarian values, emphasizing community well-being and cohesion. These joint initiatives aim to enhance the growth of desirable marine resources and promote sustainable diving practices within their designated territories.

The collaborative harvesting of Hijiki seaweed stands as a model for equitable access to natural resources among the residents of Jeju Island. Hijiki is a type of edible seaweed commonly found in Japanese and Korean cuisine. It typically grows in shallow coastal waters and is characterized by its dark color and fine, wiry texture. Hijiki is known for its high nutritional value, containing various vitamins and minerals like calcium, iron, and fiber. In culinary use, it's often rehydrated and then cooked or used in salads, stir-fries, and other dishes for its unique flavor and nutritional benefits. Haenyeos are traditionally engaged in the harvesting of various marine products, including seaweed like hijiki. The process involves meticulous underwater gathering techniques, where Haenyeo navigate the coastal waters, searching for specific areas where hijiki seaweed grows. They manually collect the seaweed, carefully handling and separating it from other marine life forms to ensure its quality. This practice is part of their broader expertise in sustainable harvesting methods, contributing to both their livelihoods and the preservation of marine ecosystems. This resource, found abundantly on the marine rocks in the region, is meticulously gathered, dried, and marketed collectively by members of each village fishery cooperative. Equally important, the income generated from the Hijiki sales is equitably distributed among the participants. Each family joining the

cooperative contributes one member, irrespective of gender, for the harvesting efforts. Notably, a portion of the proceeds is allocated by some villages for local management initiatives.

Efforts to oversee the Hijiki harvest involve the administration of distinct zones within the sea. The collective income relies on the growth performance of Hijiki in these demarcated zones. For instance, on Gapado Island, the sea is sectioned into 10 harvest zones. Annually, the allocation of zones to each group undergoes rotation, ensuring a fair distribution of resources among participants. Peaceful coexistence necessitates effective conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms. Across diverse cultural contexts globally, local social customs embodying dialogue, conflict mediation, and reconciliation play pivotal roles. These informal yet sophisticated customs not only facilitate harmonious communal living but also address distinct social and environmental concerns. Additionally, they regulate access to communal spaces and natural resources, showcasing adaptability to diverse circumstances and fostering equitable resource utilization.

The collection of seafood depends on the natural environmental knowledge and understanding. Reading the subtle indications of wind, tidal currents, ocean conditions, and geographical features is crucial; harvesting proceeds only when nature permits, and activities cease if environmental conditions are unfavorable. Jeju Island's unique geological formation arises from volcanic activity, resulting in the prevalence of volcanic ash soil, locally known as tteunttang or tteunbat. This geological aspect renders much of the island's land infertile. Despite an annual precipitation averaging 1918 mm (significantly higher than South Korea's average of 960 mm and the world's average of 743 mm), Jeju's soil, primarily clay loam with a 37.5% to 50% clay content, is termed "thick soil" due to its inadequate water retention capacity. Consequently, rice farming, a staple in agricultural societies, is challenging on most parts of the island. This agricultural constraint is attributed not only to the volcanic ash soil but also to the island's shield volcano shape, limiting flat land availability. With a topography resembling an inverted shield, rainwater rapidly drains into the sea through gareria (comparable to dry riverbeds in arid regions) due to the short runoff distance. This inadequacy in water retention, a result of Jeju's geography, significantly hinders agricultural endeavors, compelling Jeju Islanders to largely consume locally grown agricultural produce rather than exchanging it for other goods.

In contrast, the reliance of Jeju haenyeo on marine products for sustenance and income stands out. These products serve as their primary source of revenue, constituting a significant part of their household economy. Studies, such as Takahashi's analysis, underscore the pivotal role of haenyeo in generating cash within individual households. Their harvest of marine products directly finances essential expenses like education, energy, clothing, taxes, and other vital expenditures within the Jeju Island household economy. The dietary life of the Jeju haenyeo is intrinsically intertwined with the marine products they harvest, which play a crucial role in their nutrition and sustenance. Haenyeo rely on their gathered marine goods to create their own food provisions, often utilizing flawed shellfish or less popular marine plants for their culinary needs. Despite the simplicity of their culinary practices, the haenyeo's rigorous gathering endeavors, which involve considerable energy expenditure, are supported by the fresh and nutrient-rich ingredients they utilize. This sustenance enables them to maintain their robust gathering activities for extended periods.

Eco-Friendly Practices

Across generations, the haenyeo have preserved their adeptness in eco-friendly harvesting techniques, contributing significantly to biodiversity management. They exert control over various facets of harvest operations, including the timing, duration, and volume of catch during their underwater harvest activities known as "muljil." In a collaborative effort, haenyeo communities, organized as fishing village cooperatives, collectively oversee the technology and tools necessary for their harvesting endeavors. They regulate the duration of diving sessions and the permissible quantities of marine products collected. This cooperative approach serves to protect the coastal ecosystem and ensure the conservation of biodiversity. Throughout successive generations, the haenyeo have meticulously passed down a wealth of traditional knowledge and technological insights. Their expertise spans an array of ecological understanding, encompassing underwater topography, wind patterns, tidal schedules, and current dynamics. This extensive knowledge base also encompasses specialized skills essential for harvesting seafood from the depths of the ocean. As haenyeo ventured beyond Jeju for bakkanmuljil, the practice of harvesting in foreign waters, they carried and disseminated their accumulated wisdom and technologies. Consequently, Jeju emerged as a pivotal hub for the sea-diving industry across Northeast Asia.

It's crucial for haenyeo to uphold this ecological balance as an overload or imbalance in the population of any specific species disrupts the symbiotic circulation within the ecological cycle. The Jeju haenyeo possess a deep understanding of these nuances, particularly regarding the non-harvest seasons of marine products. Complying with these non-harvest periods is a conscious effort to refrain from disrupting the ecological cycle. By avoiding scenarios that could prompt excessive harvesting without limits, they steer clear of what is known as "the tragedy of the commons." This term refers to the environmental degradation that occurs when numerous individuals exploit a scarce shared resource without restraint.

The Jeju Haenyeo Fisheries System stands as a pivotal contributor to sustaining the islanders' food sources and livelihoods. This system not only enabled the haenyeo to gather seafood within the village fishing grounds but also complemented the agricultural endeavors by allowing them to collectively sell their catch, distribute profits, and sustain their families through the seafood remaining after sales. The sea-diving industry in Jeju operates through individual fishing grounds administered by 102 fishing village cooperatives. Within this framework, seafood within these grounds is regarded as communal property, tended, harvested, and preserved collectively by the hardworking women. Presently, this enduring fisheries system of shared ownership and administration continues to thrive, anchored in ongoing discussions and consensus-building among the members of the haenyeo community within each fishing village.

The Jeju haenyeo fisheries system is built upon a correlation between five fundamental needs and their cultural responses. These needs encompass metabolism, ecological stability, knowledge conservation, social stability, and stable reproduction. In response to these needs, haenyeo practices such as gathering sea products, preserving agro-biodiversity through local and traditional knowledge, practicing liberal communitarianism etc and values such as resilience, community solidarity, courage, perseverance, environmental stewardship, and a strong work ethic. They demonstrate incredible strength, both physically and mentally, while also preserving their heritage and fostering a sense of camaraderie among themselves. This chain of values within the Jeju haenyeo fisheries system indicates a likely causal

relationship between cultural responses and basic needs. It underscores how socio-cultural values and material culture are influenced by ecological conditions.

Haenyeo primarily harvest nine species of seafood for sustenance and livelihood, and their success in securing these resources over time is attributed to the stable supply of marine products. This stability, in turn, arises from maintaining an ecological balance among these nine species. The interdependence among these species provides mutual shelter and nutrition, fostering a sustainable ecological cycle. The Jeju Haenyeo exhibit eco-friendly practices through their sustainable fishing methods and conservation efforts. They harvest sea creatures by hand without damaging the underwater ecosystem, utilizing traditional techniques that minimize the impact on marine life and the environment. They use free diving techniques, relying solely on their breath-holding abilities without the use of oxygen tanks. This method minimizes disturbances to the marine environment, as they carefully select and harvest specific species by hand, leaving other marine life undisturbed. Moreover, their deep understanding of the ocean's cycles and ecosystems enables them to harvest sustainably. They follow seasonal patterns and traditional rules, allowing marine resources to replenish and maintain healthy populations. Their selective approach to harvesting ensures the preservation of species diversity and the natural balance of the underwater ecosystem. Additionally, they've actively engaged in advocating for marine conservation and raising awareness about the importance of preserving the ocean's biodiversity, contributing to a more eco-conscious approach to their livelihood.

Environmental Stewardship

Haenyeos embody an unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship. Their steadfast advocacy for marine conservation and active engagement in initiatives promoting sustainable fishing practices underscore their profound sense of responsibility towards the ocean's well-being. Within the realm of the Haenyeo, a diver's proficiency in muljil (underwater harvest work) stands as a testament to individual determination and skill. The hierarchical structure within the Haenyeo community closely aligns with the principle of complete self-ownership.

Collectively, they have established measures to limit their diving days and hours to mitigate overfishing. During crucial sea life breeding periods, haenyeo abstain from harvesting to support the replenishment of finite marine species. In a concerted effort to rejuvenate the ocean's shellfish population, they engage in reseeded by introducing iron dust to the ocean, stimulating phytoplankton growth and thereby fostering a healthier marine ecosystem. Moreover, younger haenyeo actively dive to remove litter, including plastics, fishing nets, bottles, and other human-induced debris from the sea. These resilient women, often retiring around the age of 80, having devoted their lives to the sea, play an integral role in preserving and passing down their invaluable knowledge for future generations.

The expertise and customary practices of traditional fishers, exemplified by Jeju's haenyeo, are invaluable in advancing research for environmental sustainability. These seasoned fishers harbor profound insights that offer strategic solutions to the prevailing challenges in marine biodiversity. Their profound understanding extends to the intricate ecology and behaviors of marine life, encompassing fish, shellfish, seaweed, and other aquatic species, including insights into migrations, habitats, and seasonal fishing

practices. This multifaceted, ever-evolving knowledge repository stands poised to significantly contribute to the conservation efforts aimed at preserving marine biodiversity.

Jeju haenyeo, residing within an environment governed by the competitive exclusion principle—where success defines survival and defeat leads to lagging behind—seemingly maintain local and traditional knowledge systems for sustainably managing the agro-biodiversity of sea products. Despite this competitive context, the Jeju haenyeo have adopted an ecological approach, displaying a commitment to sustainable management practices for sea product diversity. This success is rooted in their culture, values, and social structures, evident in the "liberal communitarianism-based hierarchical tradition" of the Jeju haenyeo. The interrelation between the hierarchical tradition and the liberal aspect of Jeju haenyeo's culture finds its apex in the divers' concept of "self-ownership," a fundamental tenet of liberalism. Self-ownership implies an individual's rights over themselves. In this context, "oneself" is reflexive, denoting a singular, indivisible entity formed by both the owner and the owned. Within the framework of liberalism, a cornerstone of an ideal society revolves around ensuring its members' absolute right to self-ownership.

Sustainable development hinges on the foundation of peace, characterized by the absence of conflict, discrimination, and all forms of violence. Achieving ecological peace relies on ensuring equitable access to and control over natural resources, a fundamental right that local communities, devoid of any discrimination or exclusion, must enjoy. This fair and unprejudiced access empowers communities to responsibly manage their resources, ensuring harmony with the environment—a cornerstone in fostering sustainable ecological practices. The traditional hierarchy of the Jeju haenyeo encapsulates deeply ingrained liberal values centering on "personal capabilities and responsibilities." Liberal values create a paradoxical relationship with communitarian values when considering the "perspective that the community is the source of the principles of justice." This perspective signifies that the social standard of justice isn't established through non-historical, external norms but rather through historical, intrinsic norms. In essence, the Haenyeo represent more than just skilled divers; they epitomize empowerment, environmental stewardship, resilience, and the preservation of a distinctive cultural heritage.

Cultural Significance

The cultural significance of the Haenyeo, the renowned female divers of Jeju Island, transcends mere occupation; their legacy embodies profound cultural, social, and historical importance within the Korean heritage. At its core, the Haenyeo tradition challenges conventional gender roles, establishing a unique matriarchal society where women are the primary breadwinners. Their exceptional diving prowess and extensive knowledge of the ocean symbolize empowerment and autonomy, confronting societal norms and celebrating the strength and capabilities of women within their community. These divers are custodians of an ancient heritage, preserving traditional techniques, rituals, and knowledge passed down through generations. Their steadfast commitment to heritage preservation contributes significantly to safeguarding Jeju's cultural identity. Their practices, deeply rooted in the island's history, represent a living link to ancestral customs and ways of life that define the local ethos.

Knowledge and diving techniques are traditionally passed down from mothers to daughters, reinforcing the cultural significance of women in sustaining this unique way of life. In the context of the Jeju haenyeo, the daily rhythms and working hours differ between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, shaped by

physical capabilities and tasks. The elder mother, constrained by diminishing physical strength, engages in fieldwork while foregoing the more physically demanding sea diving (muljil) activities. Despite this limitation, if capable of basic physical tasks, the elderly haenyeo contributes to fieldwork while the daughter-in-law primarily works at sea. Consequently, the younger haenyeo, actively involved in muljil, aligns her working cycles with the tide time, while the older haenyeo adapts her schedule according to her health condition.

This discrepancy in their daily routines extends to mealtime schedules. For example, the mother concludes breakfast earlier, around 5:00 a.m., departing for fieldwork at 6:00 a.m. In contrast, her daughter-in-law finishes breakfast at 7:00 a.m. before heading to the sea for muljil at 8:00 a.m. This variance in mealtime and work routines signifies a distinct generational pattern. Traditionally, older divers prepare their own meals, respecting the separate cooking cycles of the younger generation, thereby maintaining a clear division between the cooking schedules of the two generations. The interplay between the cultural practice of separate living spaces in Ahn'gō'ri-Bak'gō'ri and the distinct liberalism within Jeju haenyeo tradition demonstrates a nuanced connection. In the local social fabric, elderly haenyeo, particularly mothers-in-law, earned their livelihoods based on their individual capabilities as divers. This emphasis on personal capacity and competition contradicted the notion of relying on daughters-in-law for sustenance in old age, aligning with their lifelong pursuit of independence. These women uphold a tradition of secrecy regarding the locations of abalone, even from their daughters, instilling survival skills. Even in old age, they refrain from imposing meal preparations on their daughters-in-law, showcasing a respect for autonomy. This dynamic, reflected in the working hours of both the married son's mother and wife, adapts based on their age and roles as haenyeo. This specific environmental influence on the haenyeo's working schedule eventually echoes the distinctive pursuit of independence seen within Jeju haenyeo culture.

The fireplace, known as the "gama," is an integral part of the Haenyeo community. Constructed from stone or clay, this space serves as a center for various activities beyond its function for warmth and meal preparation. It's a hub for socializing, drying diving equipment, and exchanging stories at day's end. The "gama" represents more than just a fireplace; it embodies a cultural space where the Haenyeo nurture their traditions, fostering a strong sense of unity and heritage among the divers. The fireplace holds a significant cultural and practical role within the Haenyeo community, fostering a sense of togetherness and tradition. In the haenyeo community, while members are wary of those lacking effort or competence, they warmly embrace individuals striving to contribute, evident in the gae-sok̃ practice. Gae-sok̃ denotes a tradition wherein divers yielding more seafood share a portion of their catch with those obtaining lesser amounts. Typically, higher-tiered divers are expected to yield more, while those in the lower tier may produce comparatively less. This hierarchical system is intended to encourage haenyeo to assess their skill levels, identify areas for improvement, and collectively enhance their expertise. The gae-sok̃ culture exemplifies a cooperative economic system within Jeju haenyeo fisheries, embodying a win-win framework that fosters mutual benefit without a sense of loss or competition.

A significant aspect of haenyeo culture encompasses shamanistic rituals performed in reverence to sea deities, such as the 'jamsugut,' conducted to invoke bountiful catches and collections. Additionally, women engage in prayers at ceremonial sites near the sea, often located at the haesindang (shrines). In addition to the religious facets of Jeju Island's haenyeo culture, folkloric expressions hold substantial importance,

exemplified by the 'haenyeo norae'—songs sung during the journey from the coast to the diving location. The arduous routine of Haenyeo women involves six to seven hours of daily diving during summer and four to five hours during winter, amounting to an average of ninety diving days per year. Among the customs practiced is the 'Haenyeo-kut,' a shamanic ritual collectively conducted by the Haenyeo community to beseech good fortune. 'Kut,' the ritual's name, extends beyond Jeju Island, widely practiced across Korea. Historically, these rituals aimed to safeguard the well-being of fishermen and young divers, also seeking prosperity in livelihood. While often celebrated as a significant annual festival, these rituals can be conducted individually for various specific issues and needs.

One particular rite involves an offering to the Ocean Gods for the protection of boats and captains and the year's profitability. The ceremony, an elaborate affair, features a shaman and apprentices accompanied by diverse instruments, performing chants, dances, and presenting various offerings. Depending on the ritual's significance, offerings typically include rice, fruits, alcohol, dried fish, rice cakes, and at times, an entire pig or cow. Shamanism in Korea traces back to prehistoric times, embodying a belief that the deity in focus is an ancestor, linking individuals through a shared lineage. This practice resonates with Korea's deep-rooted tradition of ancestral reverence, symbolizing gratitude and requests to past ancestors for blessings, ensuring their legacy benefits future generations.

Moral education is also a part of jamsugut, a shamanistic ritual to pray for safety at sea and an abundant catch. The god's revelation during the ritual, narrated by the shaman (called a simbang), includes a warning that the haenyeo should not be greedy underwater, an acknowledgment that the hard and dangerous diving work is appreciated and a request that the haenyeo should live in harmony within the haenyeo association and collaborate with each other under the head of the haenyeo association and the head of the village fishery cooperative.

Matriachal Structure and Women Leadership

The Haenyo community cultivated a distinctive matriarchal society, positioning women as the primary earners who showcased exceptional diving prowess and profound oceanic expertise. Their unwavering resilience and substantial economic contributions elevated their standing within Jeju's societal framework. Representing a female-dominated industry, numerous Haenyo replaced their husbands as the primary laborers, effectively becoming the family breadwinners. During periods of conflict and the imposition of Confucian norms restricting women, engaging in Haenyo activities served as an alternative for coastal women, providing an escape from the Confucian societal constraints. For women, especially those residing near the coastline, becoming a Haenyo offered more than just a mere occupation; it bestowed freedom and a distinctive identity in the family. Contrasting with the experiences of women in the Yangban or royal families, those who pursued the life of a Haenyo gained unparalleled autonomy and recognition. Consequently, many young girls, ranging from 11-year-olds to women in their mid-20s, commenced Haenyo training in shallow waters, progressively honing their skills to navigate more challenging depths. This marked the inception of their journey into the esteemed Haenyo profession, rich with cultural significance and historical identity.

The Haenyeo, known for their remarkable breath-hold diving skills and deep-rooted traditions, operate within a structured hierarchy, each rank carrying specific responsibilities.

1. **Jangggun:** The Jangggun represents the highest rank among the Haenyeo. These skilled divers hold extensive experience and knowledge, earned through years of diving. They're responsible for leading diving expeditions, making crucial decisions regarding diving locations based on their expertise in marine ecology and understanding of weather patterns. Jangggun guide the entire diving process, supervise the divers' operations, and pass down their knowledge to the younger members, ensuring the preservation of diving techniques and cultural practices.
2. **Joonggun:** Occupying the middle tier, Joonggun divers are experienced individuals who have developed competence in diving techniques and sea navigation. They work closely with the Jangggun, assisting in decision-making, overseeing diving activities in the absence of senior members, and mentoring the novice Sookgun. Their responsibilities involve diving for various seafood, refining their skills, and supporting the overall operations of the Haenyeo community.
3. **Sookgun:** The Sookgun represents the novice, trainee or apprentice level among the Haenyeo. These divers are in the early stages of their training and are under the mentorship of the Jangggun and Joonggun. Their primary responsibilities include learning the fundamentals of diving, familiarizing themselves with the ocean's dynamics, assisting in the collection of seafood, and gaining essential skills from experienced divers.

Their responsibilities extend beyond diving; the Haenyeo engage in communal activities like repairing fishing equipment, maintaining their diving gear, processing collected seafood, and sharing knowledge among themselves. This cohesive operation and division of labor within the Haenyeo community contribute to their success in sustaining their livelihoods while preserving their cultural heritage.

This structure differs from other social organizations in South Korea, which are usually based on age. Interestingly, the haenyeo ranking system prioritizes a person's diving experience and skills over their age. This means that a younger, highly skilled diver might hold a higher rank than an older diver with less experience. Age naturally increases the likelihood of being ranked higher due to more accumulated experience, but it's not the sole determinant. The crucial factor for a haenyeo's status lies in their expertise in diving and collecting seafood rather than their age. The female divers of Jeju Island, operate within a distinctive hierarchical classification comprising three tiers. This stratification system, predicated on proficiency, age, and character, serves a dual purpose as a knowledge and technology transfer mechanism while also functioning as a cooperative "buddy system" ensuring mutual support and safety. Within this structured hierarchy, the Haenyeo community has cultivated cultural norms, established value systems, and constructed social structures characterized by horizontal organization and reciprocal relationships.

The Haenyeo community of Jeju Island epitomizes a distinctive matriarchal structure deeply ingrained in their cultural fabric. At its core, this societal framework centers around female leadership and economic dominance within the community. Here, women take on the pivotal role of primary breadwinners, managing household finances and wielding significant decision-making power. The diving profession follows a matrilineal inheritance pattern, symbolizing the lineage of skills, traditions, and knowledge from mothers to daughters. This inheritance underscores the critical role women play in preserving and perpetuating the Haenyeo heritage. While maintaining individual autonomy over diving spots and catches, these women form a cohesive support network, sharing experiences and resources. Their economic contributions are substantial, cementing their influential status not just within their families but also in the

broader context of the local economy. This matriarchal structure not only empowers Haenyeo women but also signifies their resilience, unity, and cultural significance within their unique community.

In the landscape of Jeju society, the role reversal was evident within the households influenced by the haenyeo profession, leading to a semi-matriarchal structure. On smaller islets like Mara Island, where sea-diving served as the primary income, traditional gender roles were markedly flipped. Here, men shouldered responsibilities typically associated with women, attending to childcare and household duties while the women engaged in the strenuous diving work to support the family financially. Unique customs further characterized Jeju society, including practices like men offering dowries to the bride's family, a divergence from the norms prevalent on the Korean mainland, and the celebration of the birth of girls over boys.

However, despite these distinct aspects, Jeju's society remained rooted in Confucian values, evident in its political and familial structures. While the matriarchal influences were notable within homes, broader societal elements largely adhered to the patriarchal framework. Men held sway in political leadership roles, controlled ancestral rituals, and inherited property. Even amidst colonial times, haenyeo remained confined to peasant roles, unable to ascend to higher socioeconomic positions. Within households, while haenyeo often took on primary caregiving duties, domestic chores remained a shared responsibility. Thus, while certain segments exhibited a shift in gender roles, Jeju society remained largely entwined with traditional mainland customs, particularly within broader societal domains.

Jeju Haenyeo Anti- Japanese Movement

The Japanese rule in Korea refers to the period from 1910 to 1945 when Korea was under Japanese imperial control. This era was marked by significant political, economic, and cultural changes imposed by the Japanese government. The annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910 led to the suppression of Korean identity and autonomy. Koreans experienced forced assimilation, with policies aimed at erasing Korean culture, language, and heritage. The Japanese administration implemented industrialization and modernization, but it was often at the expense of Korean interests. The harsh conditions and exploitation faced by Koreans during this period contributed to lasting tensions and historical grievances between the two nations. The Japanese rule in Korea came to an end with Japan's defeat in World War II in 1945, leading to the liberation and eventual establishment of two separate Korean states. The Haenyeo, while renowned for their diving expertise and environmental stewardship, also played a notable role in resisting Japanese colonial rule in Korea. During the period of Japanese colonization, which began in 1910 and lasted until the end of World War II in 1945, Koreans, including the Haenyeo, faced various forms of oppression and cultural suppression.

During the period of Japanese colonial rule from 1910 to 1945, Jeju Island underwent substantial transformations across its societal and economic realms. The Japanese administration implemented significant changes, particularly in land ownership and agricultural practices, reshaping the traditional farming sector and altering the island's economic dynamics. Culturally, efforts were made to assimilate the local population into Japanese society, leading to measures that aimed to suppress Korean culture. These measures included discouraging the use of the Korean language, promoting Japanese language education, and enforcing Japanese cultural norms. The objective was to erase Korean identity and foster

loyalty to the Japanese Empire, profoundly impacting the island's cultural fabric. Despite these attempts at assimilation, resistance against Japanese rule endured. The people of Jeju, like other parts of Korea, faced discrimination and economic exploitation under colonial governance. Movements such as the 1932 Jeju Haenyeo Anti-Japanese Movement served as symbols of the islanders' resistance against the colonial regime, highlighting their ongoing struggle against oppression and exploitation.

The Jeju Haenyeo, deeply rooted in Jeju's cultural fabric, became part of the resistance movement against the Japanese occupation. Despite their primary focus on maintaining their livelihoods and preserving their traditions, many Haenyeo were involved in activities supporting the independence movement. Their involvement ranged from providing assistance to independence activists by aiding in clandestine operations, such as transporting supplies or delivering messages, to participating in protests against Japanese policies. Some Haenyeo also contributed financially to support the independence movement.

However, due to the repressive nature of the Japanese occupation and the risks involved in openly opposing the colonial regime, much of the Haenyeo's resistance activities were often conducted covertly or indirectly. They played a role, among many other Koreans, in fostering a spirit of national identity and resilience against the colonial oppressors. The Haenyeo's contribution to the resistance movement, while not widely documented, symbolizes their commitment to their homeland's freedom and their active participation in the struggle for Korea's independence. During the early 1930s, there were significant movements and protests organized by the haenyo against the Japanese colonial rule and its policies that affected their livelihoods and communities on Jeju Island.

Kim Ok-nyeon, Bu Chun-hwa, and Bu Deok-nyang were influential figures involved in the 1931-1932 Jeju Haenyeo Anti-Japanese Movement. They were key leaders who played crucial roles in organizing and leading the haenyeo members from various villages in a large-scale protest against Japanese control. Their dedication and leadership were pivotal during negotiations with the Japanese-born Jeju governor and in voicing the demands of the haenyeo community. These leaders, along with others, faced adversity, including arrests and hardships during their imprisonment, yet their anti-Japanese spirit remained unbroken despite the challenges they encountered. Their perseverance and commitment solidified their place in Korean history as integral figures in a women-led public movement against Japan during the colonial period. The 1932 protest, as part of the haenyo resistance, likely aimed to address issues related to the exploitation of marine resources, labor conditions, and the government's control over the Haenyeo Association. These protests were significant in showcasing the resistance of the haenyo community against the oppressive policies and regulations imposed by the colonial administration.

Kim Ok-nyeon embarked on her diving journey at the age of nine, displaying exceptional talent that often placed her at the top among her peers. Despite parental objections, she defied the odds and pursued education, attending night school—an instrumental shift in her life. Reflecting on this experience, she recalled the transformative impact of the night school. It was not only where she met her future husband but also where she formed connections with leaders of the haenyeo movement. During the Japanese colonial era, these covert night schools primarily served as hubs for young male intellectuals striving for independence. However, they also provided a rare opportunity for women like Kim Ok-nyeon to seek education, creating an indirect path toward national enlightenment at a time when overt independence

movements faced severe suppression. As per her account, the haenyeo movement evolved into an organized, anti-Japanese resistance, led by figures such as Bu Chun-hwa, herself, and mentored by key members of the Jeju Island Youth Council, including Oh Moon-kyu and Kim Soon-jong. This underscores Kim Ok-nyeon's significant role and the pivotal role of education in the haenyeo movement during that period. Bu Chun-hwa and Bu Deok-ryang were influential figures in the history of the haenyeo community, both pivotal in spearheading movements against the injustices faced by the haenyeo during the Japanese colonial era in Jeju Island. Born in the early 20th century, these two remarkable women, like many others in their community, began diving at a young age to support their families. Their experiences as haenyeo shaped their determination to fight against the exploitation of marine resources and unfair working conditions imposed by the Japanese authorities. Through their leadership and activism, they played significant roles in organizing protests and advocating for the rights, welfare, and cultural preservation of the haenyeo, leaving an indelible mark on the history of Jeju Island.

The largest mobilization orchestrated by women in South Korea occurred in the early 1930s on Jeju Island, led by the haenyeo, or female divers. This monumental protest involved approximately 17,000 participants and was aimed at challenging the exploitation of marine resources and labor by the colonial Japanese regime. This movement marked a significant milestone in South Korean history.

The anti-Japanese movement gained momentum among 800 female divers, culminating in the active participation of approximately 17,000 women across 238 rallies spanning three months. A lasting testament to this historic event stands tall today in the form of a monument dedicated to the Jeju female divers' anti-Japanese movement in Gujwa-eup. The protest, orchestrated primarily by female divers known as haenyeo, unfolded as a substantial challenge to the Japanese colonial regime's exploitation of marine resources and labor on Jeju Island in the early 1930s. Led by influential leaders such as Bu Chun-hwa, Kim Ok-ryeon, and Bu Deok-ryang, this movement gained momentum, culminating in a significant gathering involving around 17,000 participants. Starting with 1,000 haenyeo residing in the eastern region of Jeju Island, spanning Hado, Jongdal, Sehwa, Udo, Siheung, and Ojo villages, emerged as the vanguards of the anti-Japanese movement. The haenyeo movement sought to confront the government-aligned Jeju Haenyeo Association, which had fallen under extreme authoritarian control. The protest gatherings, notably during the Five-day Market events and gatherings on January 7 and 12 in January 1932, served as focal points for the demonstrators to voice their opposition to the exploitation they faced. Hailing from Gujwa-eup on Jeju Island, driven by the need to support their families by diving for sustenance. The movement's genesis can be traced back to 1930 in Hado-ri, a small village in Jeju. The movement aimed to challenge the oppressive regime's control over their work, resources, and livelihoods.

Taguchi Teiki was the Japanese-born governor of Jeju during the colonial period. He held a prominent position of authority and governance on the island. Taguchi Teiki was directly involved and present during the events of the 1931-1932 Jeju Haenyeo Anti-Japanese Movement. He encountered opposition from the haenyeo women during their protest, facing their demands and expressions of resistance firsthand. The haenyeo members confronted Taguchi Teiki and his party during a protest in Sehwa Village, exhibiting their determination to voice their demands and stand against Japanese control. The confrontation between Taguchi Teiki and the protesting haenyeo women became a significant moment within the historical context of the movement. During the protest on January 12, haenyeo wielding jonggae homi (seaweed-

collecting hoes) and bitchang (abalone-collecting sickles) confronted Jeju Gov. Taguchi Teiki and his entourage in Sehwa Village, asserting, "If you respond to our demands with a sword, we will respond with death!" The Japanese police resorted to force to suppress the protest. Despite the arrest and six months of relentless police interrogation and torture, haenyeo leaders like Kim Ok-nyeon, Bu Chun-hwa, and Bu Deok-nyang retained their unwavering anti-Japanese spirit. The haenyeo's struggle stands distinct in Korean history as a women-led public movement against Japan, an unparalleled event during the Japanese colonial period that didn't materialize elsewhere in Korea.

Kim Ok-nyeon faced the harsh repercussions as for her pivotal role in the haenyeo struggle against Japanese imperial rule, enduring a grueling six-month imprisonment. Her testimony recounted instances of severe physical abuse, including lashings with a cow whip, painful twisting of her arms, and being repeatedly forced to kneel on a wooden bar during relentless interrogations. She vividly recalled her clandestine education in Hangeul and Korean history, taught by instructors who evaded Japanese surveillance at night school. Her memories also centered around young comrades involved in the socialist movement, sharing imprisonment for their participation in the haenyeo struggle. Following these challenging times, she married Han Young-taek, a fellow protester from Jongdal Village. However, their paths diverged after liberation, as he journeyed first to Japan and then to North Korea during the repatriation of Korean residents. The anguish endured by these prominent figures of the haenyeo movement due to their anti-Japanese activism was compounded by the tumultuous events post-liberation, including the tragic legacy of Jeju 4·3 and the painful division of the Korean peninsula.

The result of this massive mobilization was a forceful resistance against the exploitative practices of the Japanese colonial administration. The movement highlighted the determination and collective power of these women, shedding light on the inequalities and injustices they endured. While the immediate impact might not have led to substantial changes in policies, the protest marked a significant moment in history, showcasing the resilience and courage of the haenyeo in fighting against oppressive forces and advocating for their rights and cultural autonomy.

The "Jeju 4.3 Incident" refers to a tragic and tumultuous period in the history of Jeju Island, South Korea, occurring from April 3, 1948, onwards. This incident was a civilian uprising against the authorities on Jeju Island, initially sparked by disagreements over the establishment of the Korean government and the first elections following the liberation from Japanese colonial rule. The protests escalated into a larger conflict between locals, who were often associated with left-wing ideologies, and government forces, with deep-rooted social, economic, and political factors contributing to the tensions. The events of Jeju 4.3 resulted in widespread violence, loss of life, and a prolonged period of unrest. The exact death toll remains a subject of debate, with estimates ranging from thousands to tens of thousands of civilians killed during the brutal suppression of the uprising by government forces. This tragic incident has left a lasting impact on Jeju Island, South Korea, and its people, with ongoing efforts to commemorate the victims and seek reconciliation for the injustices that occurred during that period.

During the tragic events of the Jeju April 3 Uprising (4.3), the haenyeo of Jeju Island found themselves embroiled in the turmoil and upheaval that swept across the region. While specific details about the direct involvement of haenyeo in the events of Jeju 4.3 might vary, it's acknowledged that the island's entire

population, including haenyeo, was affected by the conflict. The Jeju April 3 Uprising was a pivotal moment in Korean history marked by protests against the division of the Korean Peninsula and the oppressive policies enacted by the authorities. During this period, many innocent civilians, including haenyeo, were caught in the crossfire, facing hardships and often becoming inadvertent victims of the political strife.

The South Korean government has undertaken a series of acknowledgments, both academically and through local government initiatives, to commemorate the haenyeo struggle as a pivotal anti-Japanese movement. On August 15, 2003, the government formally recognized this struggle as an integral part of the anti-Japanese independence movement. Notably, this recognition was conferred upon Bu Chun-hwa and Kim Ok-nyeon, alongside two members of the Hyeogwoo Alliance, Moon Do-bae, and Han Won-taek, through the awarding of the independence merit for their committed endeavors. Subsequently, on March 1, 2005, additional recipients of this prestigious merit were announced, which included Kang Chang-bo, responsible for the Jeju branch of the socialist group Yacheika, and Kang Kwan-soon, Kim Seong-oh, and Kim Soon-jong, all pivotal members of the Hyeogwoo Alliance. Augmenting this recognition, on August 15, 2005, the independence merit was extended to Bu Deok-nyang, another core member of the trio leading the haenyeo struggle, Shin Jae-hong, the de facto leader of the Hyeogwoo Alliance, and Chae Jae-oh, a member of the same alliance. This comprehensive recognition elevated the status of the haenyeo struggle, positioning it as a nationally acclaimed anti-Japanese independence movement. This acknowledgment marks a resurgence, having been subdued during the anti-communist regimes, within the historical annals of Korea's democracy movement.

A lasting testament to this historic event stands tall today in the form of a monument dedicated to the Jeju female divers' anti-Japanese movement in Gujwa-eup. A government official emphasized, "Any effort towards liberation deserves rightful acknowledgment and respect. The government remains committed to impartially identifying more facets of the independence movement, irrespective of gender or role. Unearthing the complete narrative of the independence movement's obscured history and recognizing its activists will signify yet another stride towards liberation."

The 1932 Jeju Haenyeo Anti-Japanese Movement is a seminal chapter within the annals of the anti-Japanese independence movement during the Japanese colonial era. Notably distinctive for its leading protagonists, who were female divers, this movement etches its place as the largest anti-Japanese mobilization on Jeju Island, boasting the active involvement of 17,000 individuals. Simultaneously, it stands as Korea's most significant fishers' uprising. Furthermore, it is assessed as an organized anti-Japanese endeavor that organically intersected with the youth social movement in Jeju.

Challenges faced

The resilience and enduring traditions of the Haenyo community have encountered a series of formidable challenges lately, primarily stemming from the effects of modernization, evolving societal norms, and environmental shifts. These multifaceted challenges have instigated a drive towards adaptation in order to preserve their distinctive way of life. Jeju's revered sea-diving tradition confronts significant hurdles, notably a declining and aging population of haenyeo due to socioeconomic transformations and the depletion of marine resources triggered by the far-reaching impacts of global warming.

Aging Population Haenyeo

One significant challenge is the aging demographic of the Haenyeo community. The profession is physically demanding, and younger generations often opt for other livelihoods due to its demanding nature, leading to a decline in the number of active Haenyeo. The Haenyeo community is experiencing a declining interest among younger women to pursue the traditional path of becoming divers, signaling a worrisome trend contributing to the reduction in the number of Haenyeo. A major concern threatening the sustainability of the Jeju haenyeo fisheries system is the advancing age of the haenyeo population. Currently, an overwhelming 98% of the haenyeo on Jeju are aged 50 or above. This aging demographic poses a severe threat to the community. Simultaneously, there's an observable decline in the total haenyeo population. Figures from 1965 show a haenyeo population of approximately 23,000, yet projections estimate a sharp decrease to fewer than 4,000 by 2017.

Economic prospects in alternative sectors have been instrumental in drawing younger women away from the physically strenuous and unpredictable profession of diving, impacting the sustainability of the Haenyeo community. The sea-diving industry, much like several other historical cultural practices, fell prey to the waves of industrialization. During the 1960s, the Korean government embarked on an ambitious mission to bolster the country's economy, seeking avenues for growth in every province. As Jeju was not conducive for industrial development, the government shifted its focus towards making the region a prominent exporter of mandarin oranges. By 1969, a substantial portion of rural laborers had transitioned to this burgeoning industry, with approximately 2% of Jeju's land dedicated to cultivating mandarin oranges. Subsequently, in the 1970s, the government further initiated measures to elevate Jeju's tourism sector, ultimately surpassing agriculture as the island's primary industry by 1978.

This transformative period had a profound impact on the Haenyeo community, significantly altering their numbers. The introduction of alternatives offering relief from exhausting labor in challenging conditions led to a mass exodus of women from the sea-diving industry. Between 1965 and 1970, Haenyeo numbers plummeted from 23,081 to 14,143. Moreover, the allure of educational prospects and lucrative positions in emerging industries dissuaded younger girls from pursuing a career as Haenyeo. Data from 1970 revealed that 31% of Haenyeo were aged 30 or younger, 55% were between 30 and 49 years old, and only 14% were 50 or older. In stark contrast, statistics from 2014 indicated that a staggering 98% of Haenyeo were over the age of 50, underscoring the decline in younger generations embracing this traditional occupation. With modernization and changing societal norms, younger generations may not view the profession as an appealing or viable option, leading to a potential loss of the traditional knowledge and cultural heritage associated with the Haenyeo.

Tourism

Despite the Economic boost in Recent Years due to Tourism, the soaring tourism industry has brought both opportunities and challenges to the Haenyeo community. The substantial increase in tourists, while beneficial for the economy, has introduced environmental and social costs. Problems such as traffic congestion, increased littering, and water depletion have emerged, impacting the traditional practices and lifestyle of the Haenyeo. Additionally, concerns regarding environmental pollution, including heightened household waste and greenhouse gas emissions, have cast shadows on the sustainability of Jeju's economy and the traditional practices of the Haenyeo. Changes in the fishing industry and economic fluctuations

have impacted the profitability of the profession. Diminishing marine resources, market competition, and fluctuations in seafood prices have affected the sustainability of their income.

Increased tourism has remarkably amplified the spotlight on the Haenyo community, affording a global audience a glimpse into their distinct traditions and centuries-old diving practices. However, this surge in attention and exposure has unfolded a phenomenon termed "Unescoization," as denoted by anthropologist David Berliner, leading to the intensification of tourism and potentially distorting the authenticity of indigenous customs. This commercialization paradigm commodifies culture for global consumption, often staging or inaccurately presenting traditions to cater to market demands.

The striking surge in tourism is underscored by the Seoul-Jeju route, ranked as the busiest flight path worldwide in 2019, facilitating an overwhelming 17 million seats across 85,000 flights. Yet, the implications of this heightened tourism surge on Jeju's culture and environmental integrity remain a pressing concern. The upsurge has sparked issues such as beach and national park littering, and a strain on water resources, posing significant challenges to the island's ecological balance.

Environmental Degradation

Changes in ocean ecosystems, including overfishing, pollution, and climate change, have affected marine resources, impacting the availability of seafood for the Haenyo. Environmental changes, have also impacted their ability to maintain consistent yields during dives.

Today, the haenyeo, while continuing their timeless connection with the ocean, confront pressing environmental challenges threatening their way of life. Altered by warmer temperatures and pollution, the marine habitats they've depended on are endangered, leading to a notable decline in their daily catches. Recounting the past, A Haenyeo in an interview highlighted a stark decrease in productivity, with a diver's daily conch catch dwindling from a substantial 331 pounds (150 kilograms) to a mere 44 pounds (20 kilograms). Additionally, the disappearance of the sardine population from South Korean waters has been attributed to the impacts of climate change altering migration routes and overfishing by Japanese vessels. The annual reduction in icy waters, warming up to 2.6 times more than the global average, has substantially altered the undersea habitat crucial for their livelihoods. This drastic transformation is placing immense uncertainty on the future sustenance of the haenyeo community.

Marine life preservation is of utmost importance given the significant role oceans play in our ecosystem. Covering over 70% of the Earth's surface, oceans harbor diverse life forms that range from microscopic organisms to majestic marine creatures. Their significance extends beyond their intrinsic value, as marine life regulates our planet's climate, sustains various industries, and provides sustenance for millions of people globally. However, marine ecosystems face numerous threats, including overfishing, habitat degradation, pollution, and the impacts of climate change. These factors jeopardize the delicate balance of marine life and its interconnectedness. To address these challenges, governmental intervention becomes pivotal. Governments possess the authority to establish and implement regulations that safeguard marine habitats and species. Additionally, they can allocate resources to support research and conservation initiatives aimed at preserving marine biodiversity.

The transition in sea temperatures, surging at a rate significantly higher than the global average, has led to substantial changes in the underwater ecosystem. Researchers at the National Institute of Fisheries Science affirm the observations of haenyeo, highlighting the migration of non-native species and alterations in marine habitat due to climate change. Warmer waters have introduced subtropical species, displacing traditional catches and transforming the sea floor, causing the extinction of seaweed forests and subsequent decline in marine resources. The disappearance of vast seaweed beds, replaced by rock-like coralline algae, has further exacerbated the degradation of marine resources, impacting the haenyeo's ability to gather adequate seafood for sustenance and trade.

Moreover, the increasing depths to which haenyeo must dive, in search of diminishing marine life, pose physical challenges, while heightened pollution further complicates their perilous tasks. The introduction of modern fishing techniques and technologies has altered the landscape of fishing practices, posing challenges to the traditional methods employed by the Haenyeo. A Haenyeo during an interview also highlights the growing discrepancy between finding sea cucumbers and discovering discarded golf balls, indicating the rising pollution levels in their once pristine diving grounds. With these adversities becoming more pronounced annually, the younger generation of haenyeo faces mounting hurdles in continuing this traditional occupation. The worrying reality of dwindling catches and escalating environmental degradation resonates deeply, emphasizing the seriousness of the situation for the survival of this time-honored practice among South Korea's sea women.

Awards and Preservation

International and National Recognition

The cultural significance of the Haenyeo community from Jeju Island is recognized across various regional, national, and international intangible cultural heritage lists. Starting in 1971, the Haenyeo song was the inaugural item on the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Jeju Province. Similarly, the Ritual Yeongdeunggut was acknowledged in the Korean National Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 1980, later earning a place in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009. Notably, the wetsuits and accessories utilized by Haenyeo during their dives received protection as regional folklore heritage in 2008.

Local authorities enacted the Haenyeo Culture Promotion Ordinance in 2014, signifying a concrete commitment to elevate the significance of Haenyeo culture. The primary objective of these regulations was twofold: to enhance the value of Haenyeo culture and its contributions to the local economy, thereby enhancing the quality of life for the local population. These regulations aimed to provide essential conditions for the promotion and support of Haenyeo culture, encompassing both its heritage and cultural aspects, as well as its role in economic activities. As a result, the local government formally acknowledged Haenyeo culture as a legitimate participant in economic sectors connected to marine resource utilization. To improve this, various measures were implemented, including financial subsidies aimed at fostering the development and promotion of Haenyeo products in both national and international markets.

The Jeju Provincial Government has been actively involved in safeguarding the Haenyeo community and its traditions. This includes the integration of women into a no co-payment health insurance scheme in 2002. Additionally, a financial support system was established in 2017, offering permanent monthly

payments of 200,000 KRW for women over 70 years old and 500,000 KRW for those under 40 in training, aimed at preventing accidents and maintaining income. These efforts were initiated following the formation of the Provincial Committee for Safeguarding Jeju Haenyeo Culture in 2011, which introduced the first five-year safeguarding action plan (2011–2015) to support the Haenyeo culture.

In contemporary times, the Haenyeo culture has undergone a gradual decline primarily attributed to intensified industrialization, the emergence of alternative educational and occupational avenues for women, and the environmental deterioration of Jeju Island. Recognizing the urgency to safeguard this unique heritage, in 2016, the Haenyeo culture earned a distinguished spot on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. International Recognition through inclusion in the UNESCO Representative List, preceding its addition to the national list a year later, specifically under number 132. The UNESCO listing aimed to acknowledge its distinctive historical significance, to raise awareness about the Haenyeo's distinctive cultural legacy, highlighting their ecological knowledge, sustainable fishing practices, and the significant role they play in the local community and heritage. This international acknowledgment has contributed to increased attention, support, and preservation efforts directed towards safeguarding the Haenyeo culture and the marine environments they depend upon for their livelihoods. Elevating its status through the UNESCO listing has triggered a transformation in the Haenyeo community, leading to the establishment of a burgeoning tourist industry and an upsurge in protective measures and funding for both the women involved in the industry and the island's natural environment. Government interventions such as free healthcare provisions, provisions of essential diving equipment, and the inauguration of a dedicated diving school and museum underscore the state's commitment to preserving this age-old tradition.

On November 30, 2016, the 'Culture of Jeju Haenyeo (women divers)' was officially inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, following a nomination by the Republic of Korea. The decision by the Intergovernmental Committee emphasized the significant contributions made by the Jeju haenyeo culture. It acknowledged the promotion of women's rights, highlighting their skills, substantial role in household incomes, and the fostering of environmental sustainability through the adoption of eco-friendly fishing methods and community engagement in fisheries management. The Committee's evaluation underscored that the inclusion of Jeju haenyeo culture on the Representative List would enhance the global recognition of intangible cultural heritage rooted in local knowledge. Furthermore, it would serve to advocate for nature conservation and sustainable development while raising international awareness about the pivotal role of women's labor as an essential component of intangible cultural heritage. The inscription of Jeju haenyeo culture stands as a testament to the multifaceted contributions and significance of this unique tradition on the global stage, showcasing its importance in fostering sustainable practices and gender equality within cultural heritage.

In 2019, the Jeju Island Biosphere Reserve underwent an expansion, encompassing all regions where haenyeo traditionally dive within the reserve's transition areas. Biosphere reserves are known for their emphasis on the significance of traditional knowledge in effectively managing ecosystems. This recognition encouraged endeavors to merge biodiversity preservation with cultural diversity, acknowledging the invaluable role played by the traditional ecological knowledge and diving expertise of the haenyeo. The haenyeo's practices serve as exemplary instances of integrating both biodiversity and

cultural diversity within biosphere reserves. Their traditional ecological knowledge, acquired through generations, embodies a harmonious relationship between human activities and the natural environment. By integrating these age-old practices into biosphere reserve management, there's an acknowledgment of the synergy between biodiversity conservation and the preservation of cultural heritage, highlighting the intrinsic connection between the haenyeo's skills and the sustainable management of the marine ecosystem.

However, the new found heritage status has introduced a paradigm shift, presenting a double-edged sword for the Haenyeo community. While it has brought notable benefits, including increased visibility and financial support, it has also commodified the women, transforming them into living exhibits who perform their work for tourist audiences. This commercialization of the Haenyeo culture is evident in spaces where tourists can pay to witness the divers in action and purchase their harvested goods, creating a complex interplay between cultural preservation, economic sustainability, and the impact of tourism on the Haenyeo way of life.

Preservation Initiatives and Efforts

Documenting the Haenyeo's practices, sharing their stories through museums, cultural centers, and educational programs, aims to raise awareness and preserve their heritage. The establishment of the Haenyeo Museum in 2006 marks a pivotal milestone in the concerted efforts to safeguard and promote the Haenyeo practices. Situated in Gujwa-eup on the eastern side of Jeju Island, this museum comprises two buildings housing three permanent collections, a children's museum, a projection room, a concert hall, and dedicated spaces for educational activities. Notably, the museum strategically situates itself amidst a thriving and actively engaged haenyeo community.

The institution's objectives encompass a spectrum of initiatives ranging from research, meticulous documentation, and thoughtfully curated exhibitions to multifaceted educational programs. Haenyeo Museums showcase historical artifacts, traditional attire, and interactive displays illustrating the unique culture of Jeju Island's female divers. Exhibits feature tools like tewak mangsari and bitchang, while educational programs highlight diving techniques. It plays a vital role in the conservation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage. Moreover, as an integral part of its endeavors, the museum initiated an annual Haenyeo festival since 2007. This festival serves as a platform not only to celebrate the rich heritage but also aims to bolster the sense of self-worth and instill pride among the women divers within the community. The multifunctional nature of the Haenyeo Museum not only serves as a repository of history but also actively engages in contemporary endeavors to empower and elevate the status of the haenyeo women divers in society. Its holistic approach, comprising education, cultural festivities, and community engagement, epitomizes its dedication towards preserving and nurturing the invaluable legacy of the Haenyeo culture.

Haenyeo women have emerged as the symbolic representation of Jeju Island's cultural identity. Beyond practical objects utilized by the divers themselves, public spaces across cities and villages prominently feature murals portraying these women. Numerous stylized sculptures, while not necessarily dedicated to specific haenyeo individuals, serve as reminders of the collective presence and significance of these women within the Jeju Island community. These sculptures, which depict haenyeo women, are not only

memorial in nature but also stand as visual testaments to their importance. Alongside other iconic visual elements of Jeju Island such as dol hareubang sculptures, Jejuma horses, black pigs (Jeju heukdwaeji), and tangerines, haenyeo figures have increasingly dominated the souvenir market, appearing on various items like postcards, magnets, canvas bags, and more. These souvenirs typically showcase stylized illustrations portraying women in contemporary contexts, often wearing neoprene wetsuits, which intentionally conceal any indications of their age. Notably, during research in 2017, such souvenirs were sporadic, but just two years later, in 2019, they became pervasive, evident from airport arrivals to souvenir shops on the outskirts of Jeju City.

Adaptaion and Tourism

Some Haenyo communities have diversified their sources of income by engaging in cultural tourism, offering diving experiences, and selling handmade crafts or products related to their traditions. The ownership of businesses among the haenyeo, the female divers of Jeju Island, isn't a conventional aspect of their culture. Traditionally, the haenyeo have primarily engaged in free-diving to harvest marine products for personal use or to sell in local markets, rather than establishing formal business ventures. However, in recent years, some haenyeo or their families might have explored diversification, possibly establishing small-scale enterprises related to the local seafood industry or offering cultural experiences centered around the haenyeo traditions for tourists. Yet, large-scale commercial enterprises or formal business ownership within the haenyeo community remains limited due to the traditional nature of their occupation and the challenges associated with transitioning into business ownership.

Throughout the 1980s, Jeju Island emerged as a prime honeymoon spot, fostering substantial tourist accommodations and cultural landmarks. The onset of mass tourism bolstered by the Jeju Grand Hotel, Korea Condominium, Jeju Folk Village, and the Jeju Sculpture Park initially elevated Jeju as a renowned destination. However, the advent of liberalized international travel in 1989 signaled a decline, followed by a tourism slump due to economic upheavals, notably the International Monetary Fund's currency crisis, crippling Jeju's tourism competitiveness by the late 1990s [14]. In response to the globalization wave, the government introduced the Jeju Free International City Special Act in 2002, envisioning Jeju's transformation into a "Free International City." This initiative aimed to boost tourism and free circulation of people, goods, and capital, intending to reshape the tourism landscape. Subsequently, the tourism sector experienced a significant upsurge, affecting various facets of Jeju's economy.

Since then, Haenyeos have been seeking opportunities to diversify their incomes and raise awareness about their tradition and practices. With the increasing number of tourists visiting Jeju Island, the Haenyeo tradition has become an important aspect of the island's cultural heritage. As the tourist numbers rose, there was a growing demand among them to experience this tradition and learn more about the practice. Consequently, this led to the establishment of Haenyeo Schools and diving classes.

The establishment of the Jeju Hansupul Haenyeo School in 2007 along the western coast of Jeju Island stands as a pivotal initiative. This school offers aspiring haenyeo a platform to learn the intricacies of this ancient craft from experienced practitioners. Beyond transmitting skills, the institution serves as a stronghold for preserving the rich cultural heritage associated with haenyeo, nurturing a potential future generation of marine gatherers on Jeju Island. This concerted effort not only ensures the continuation of

traditional diving techniques but also fosters a sense of cultural continuity, safeguarding the legacy of the haenyeo for generations to come. The application process for the Jeju Hansupul Haenyeo School welcomes both genders, encompassing male divers, known as haenam, alongside women, a divergence from the trade's conventional female-exclusive practice. This inclusivity extends to foreigners, constituting 5 out of 1 percent of applicants. Fluency in Korean or exceptional swimming prowess isn't mandatory for enrollment. However, the ability to hold one's breath underwater for extended periods, akin to the adeptness demonstrated by seasoned Jeju haenyeos, remains a highly advantageous asset for aspiring students.

The acknowledgment of Haenyeo as an intangible cultural heritage has not only increased cultural exposure but also provided significant financial benefits to these traditional divers. Their participation in the tourism industry has facilitated income generation by offering various Haenyeo-led experiences incorporated into travel packages. Activities like guided tours along diving trails, diving sessions, fishing escapades, and boating encounters are paid experiences that directly contribute to the Haenyeos' earnings. Moreover, the tailored packages designed for scholars, researchers, professors, explorers, and industry experts seeking specialized insights into the Haenyeo culture have further enhanced the income prospects for these divers. As these individuals opt for customized and in-depth experiences, Haenyeos receive compensation for sharing their unique knowledge, heritage, and expertise. This not only promotes the preservation of their cultural traditions but also provides a sustainable means of income for their livelihood. The involvement of Haenyeos in tourism activities doesn't just benefit the divers themselves but also generates a positive ripple effect on various related sectors within the local economy.

Indirectly, their involvement creates a domino effect that benefits other entrepreneurs in the area, particularly those involved in the fishery industry and local cuisine. Haenyeo-led tourism activities often lead to increased foot traffic in areas where seafood cuisine and street food are prevalent. As tourists engage in these experiences, they often seek out authentic local seafood, creating a boost in demand for street food vendors and seafood restaurants. This surge in patronage benefits these businesses, supporting local entrepreneurs and enhancing the overall economic landscape of the community. Furthermore, the promotion of these authentic cultural experiences by Haenyeos encourages collaborations and partnerships with various stakeholders. It fosters a symbiotic relationship between the Haenyeos, the tourism industry, local food vendors, and the broader community. As a result, it creates a more robust and diversified tourism sector, offering visitors a comprehensive and immersive experience of the local culture, cuisine, and traditions while bolstering economic opportunities for all involved parties.

The Haenyeo community exemplifies remarkable adaptability, consistently facing challenges by embracing innovative solutions while staying true to their heritage. Their resilience shines through as they navigate societal shifts, environmental shifts, and economic pressures, blending tradition with innovative approaches to safeguard their cultural legacy.

Future prospects

Tradition and Cultural Education

The Haenyeo continue their revered tradition by blending the essence of their heritage with contemporary practices. Embracing innovative approaches, they have established Haenyeo schools to transmit their

invaluable skills to younger individuals keen on preserving this cultural legacy. Moreover, fostering community engagement and organizing cultural events not only bolsters solidarity among Haenyeo but also educates the wider populace about their unique way of life. To further ensure the tradition's longevity, collaborations with environmental agencies and policymakers are vital. Implementing and showcasing their sustainable fishing practices, creating marine conservation programs, and supporting local regulations to safeguard marine habitats would empower Haenyeo to continue their heritage while promoting environmental stewardship. This harmonious combination of tradition and innovation paves the way for a sustainable future for the Haenyeo culture.

Certainly, the evolution and sustenance of the haenyeo community can be propelled through systematic strategies and reforms. Presenting a range of key proposals:

1. 'Haenyeology' Resource Development.: The development of "Haenyeology" as an inclusive educational resource signifies a pivotal milestone in the preservation and dissemination of Haenyeo culture and practices. This meticulously curated compendium would aim to amalgamate diverse elements encompassing traditional wisdom, diving methodologies, environmental sustainability practices, and entrepreneurial insights. However, transcending these foundational aspects, "Haenyeology" should be designed to intricately incorporate the invaluable perspectives and narratives shared by the Haenyeo themselves. By integrating the sayings, personal anecdotes, and interviews of Haenyeo divers, "Haenyeology" endeavors to offer readers an authentic, firsthand understanding of their lifestyle, values, and practices. These accounts serve as profound windows into the cultural richness, ethos, and wisdom perpetuated across generations within the Haenyeo community, thereby enhancing the educational experience with insightful, firsthand perspectives.

Furthermore, "Haenyeology" would also aim to spotlight unique observations and cases related to environmental dynamics and weather phenomena as perceived and practiced by the Haenyeo. Documenting their interactions with the marine ecosystem, their adaptive measures in response to weather patterns, and their sustainable practices, this resource would emphasize the Haenyeo's role as stewards of tradition and nature, fostering a deeper appreciation for their harmonious relationship with the environment. Ultimately, "Haenyeology" strives to transcend the conventional bounds of a reference book, aspiring to be a dynamic repository of Haenyeo wisdom, experiential insights, and environmental consciousness. By encapsulating these multifaceted dimensions, this educational compendium would aim to become an indispensable guide for divers and individuals seeking an authentic understanding and preservation of the profound heritage embedded within Haenyeo culture and practices.

2. Empowering Education: Integrating Haenyeo Culture into Academic Disciplines

Integrating Haenyeo programs into formal educational courses within fisheries, food and beverage studies, and related disciplines presents a unique opportunity to blend academic learning with experiential understanding. These specialized subjects could offer students a comprehensive view of the Haenyeo practices, allowing them to explore the intricacies of traditional diving techniques, sustainable harvesting methods, and the cultural significance embedded within these traditions. Including Haenyeo topics in academic books offers multifaceted benefits. These discussions contribute to cultural preservation,

presenting a deep dive into the traditions and practices of the Haenyeos. The interdisciplinary nature of Haenyeo studies allows for a holistic approach, blending marine biology, anthropology, and cultural studies. Moreover, insights into sustainable harvesting methods provide valuable lessons for environmental science and fisheries management. Economic perspectives, gender studies, and considerations of tourism impact contribute diverse angles for exploration. Ultimately, incorporating Haenyeo topics enriches academic literature, fostering a deeper understanding across various disciplines and promoting cultural exchange.

One avenue could involve facilitating educational trips to Jeju Island, the heartland of Haenyeo culture. These trips would immerse students in the daily routines and working systems of Haenyeo. By witnessing firsthand the challenges, nuances, and cultural importance of this profession, students can gain a profound understanding that goes beyond theoretical knowledge. Moreover, encouraging industry-oriented students to volunteer alongside Haenyeo and along the coastline could provide invaluable experiential learning. This direct involvement would offer insights into the challenges faced by Haenyeo, fostering a sense of empathy and understanding among aspiring professionals within the field.

Moreover, the establishment of licensed or certified diving courses could strengthen the academic framework and act as a gateway to employment, offering significant advantages, especially to women lacking formal school degrees who are seeking opportunities in the job market. These courses would not only offer educational avenues but also create promising employment opportunities within the industry, contributing significantly to gender empowerment and the preservation of cultural heritage. Furthermore, these courses can serve as a gateway for women and individuals from various professions to venture into diving and related fisheries professions, expanding the diversity within these fields.

The integration of Haenyeo programs into South Korean educational curricula would aimed at perpetuating this rich cultural legacy. By fostering the involvement of the next generation, these programs strive to ensure the continuity of Haenyeo traditions, while simultaneously enriching academic learning with hands-on experiences and practical insights into an integral part of South Korea's cultural heritage.

3. Formation of Haenyeo Corporations

The establishment of Haenyeo Corporations would mark a strategic shift, allowing haenyeo communities to shift into structured social enterprises or corporations. This transformation presents a compelling opportunity for collective empowerment among the haenyeos, facilitating cohesion and collaboration within organized entities. By consolidating their endeavors within formal structures, these corporations can effectively leverage synergies, pool resources, and collaboratively address multifaceted challenges pertaining to business management, marketing strategies, and sustainable practices. Centralizing their efforts within well-organized entities would enables them a more streamlined approach to decision-making processes and provides a unified platform to navigate contemporary business complexities. Structured corporations would empower haenyeo communities to surmount hurdles concerning market access, economic sustainability, and the preservation of their profound cultural heritage. This transformation would also facilitates an adaptation to contemporary business methodologies while retaining the intrinsic values of their traditional occupation.

Furthermore, the emergence of Haenyeo Corporations would serve as an appealing model, captivating increased interest and participation from individuals eager to contribute both economically and culturally. This shift and approach would offer not just economic prospects but also serves as a conduct for safeguarding and promoting the rich legacy of the Haenyeo, ensuring its enduring legacy for forthcoming generations.

4. Social Corporate Responsibility (SCR) Initiatives :

Business organizations and companies can support Haenyeo communities through robust Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Financial support is a fundamental aspect wherein companies can allocate resources to procure essential equipment like wetsuits, diving gear, or boating tools, ensuring the safety and efficacy of Haenyeo practices. Moreover, investing in tailored skill development programs, encompassing modern techniques, safety protocols, and entrepreneurial skills, empowers Haenyeos to adapt to changing environments while fostering their professional growth and sustainability.

Engaging in community-driven projects stands as a significant avenue for companies to make a tangible impact. Participating in initiatives focusing on infrastructure development, educational enhancements, healthcare provisions, or environmental conservation within Haenyeo villages directly contributes to their welfare and overall progress. These initiatives strengthen community resilience, foster economic stability, and aid in preserving cultural heritage. Collaborative partnerships serve as a vital component of CSR endeavors. Companies can collaborate with Haenyeo communities to address challenges such as sustainable fishing practices, environmental conservation, or technological advancements. These partnerships leverage combined expertise and resources to devise innovative solutions, ensuring the preservation of Haenyeo traditions while simultaneously fostering economic sustainability.

In essence, through comprehensive CSR initiatives encompassing financial aid, skill development, community engagement, collaborative partnerships, and advocacy, Organization would play a pivotal role in supporting Haenyeo communities. These initiatives not only provide immediate assistance but also lay the groundwork for sustainable growth, community resilience, and the preservation of a profound cultural legacy for future generations.

The initiative CSR plan is a business plan for Tourism Entities and Tour and Travel organisations to carry out CSR initiatives towards sustainable tourism and support communities who roots for the same objective. It can be utilized as an idea or a business strategy to broaden your business's reach or expansion in sustainable practices.

Executive Summary:

The proposed initiative entails a strategic partnership between a tourism agency and Haenyeo communities to promote eco-tourism and preserve cultural heritage. By offering unique experiences and fostering CSR initiatives, we aim to benefit both sectors while aligning with sustainable tourism practices.

Objectives:**1. Economic Development:**

By integrating tourism-related activities, such as guided tours, diving experiences and sessions, and cultural workshops, the aim is to create sustainable income sources for Haenyeo communities. These initiatives would not only generate revenue directly through participation fees but also indirectly benefit local businesses, such as accommodations and retail, consequently boosting the overall economy of the Haenyeo villages. The goal here is to establish income avenues that can support Haenyeo families and contribute to their financial stability over the long term.

2. Cultural Preservation:

Through tourism offerings and community engagement, the plan strives to showcase the unique Haenyeo culture and traditions to visitors. By providing immersive experiences that delve into their diving practices, storytelling events, craft demonstrations workshop, and sharing cultural insights, tourists gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of Haenyeo heritage. This not only ensures the preservation of their cultural legacy but also encourages the continuation of age-old practices, passing down traditions from one generation to another while fostering a sense of pride within the Haenyeo community.

3. Sustainability:

The implementation of eco-friendly practices within tourism activities stands as a critical pillar. It involves respecting the natural environment and the traditional way of life of the Haenyeo. By promoting responsible tourism practices, such as minimizing waste, conserving local ecosystems, and ensuring that visitor activities align with the Haenyeo's ethos of harmony with nature, the aim is to safeguard the environment and the cultural integrity of the villages. This sustainable approach ensures that tourism activities benefit the community without compromising the environment or the cultural values of the Haenyeo.

These three pillars together form a comprehensive strategy that not only supports the economic growth of Haenyeo communities but also ensures the preservation of their rich cultural heritage while promoting sustainable practices that respect both the environment and the Haenyeo way of life.

Strategies:**1. Tourism Offerings:**

The aim is to curate diverse and immersive experiences that offer visitors insights into the unique Haenyeo traditions and cultural heritage. This involves designing guided tours that showcase Haenyeo diving practices, traditional fishing techniques, and daily routines. Immersive experiences may include hands-on participation in these activities under the guidance of Haenyeo divers, providing visitors with an authentic understanding of their way of life.

2. Community Engagement:

Collaboration with Haenyeo community members is pivotal in offering genuine and enriching experiences. Haenyeo collaboration would involve cultural exchanges where community members share insights, stories, and experiences with visitors. Craft demonstrations, storytelling sessions, and cultural

performances serve as means to immerse visitors in the Haenyeo culture, allowing for personal connections and a deeper understanding of their traditions.

3. Education and Awareness:

An integral aspect of the tourism plan involves educating tourists about the significance and value of Haenyeo culture. This educational approach aims to foster appreciation and respect for their customs and traditions. Educational initiatives may include guided discussions, informational sessions, and interactive experiences that highlight the historical, cultural, and environmental importance of the Haenyeo community.

In essence, these strategies collectively aim to provide a holistic and culturally enriching experience for tourists while respecting and preserving the traditions, cultural heritage, and environment of the Haenyeo community. This approach not only creates memorable experiences for visitors but also contributes to the sustainable development and preservation of Haenyeo culture for future generations.

Revenue Model:

1. Guided Tours, Diving Experiences, and Cultural Workshops:

These activities form the core revenue source, where tourists pay fees to participate. Guided tours allow visitors to explore Haenyeo villages, witness diving practices, and engage in cultural workshops, offering an immersive experience into the Haenyeo way of life. Diving experiences may include supervised sessions allowing tourists to experience traditional diving techniques firsthand. Fees for these activities contribute directly to the revenue stream.

2. Craft Sales:

Haenyeo communities often produce unique crafts, artwork, and traditional products reflective of their culture and heritage. Facilitating the sale of these items to tourists presents an additional revenue avenue. This can include handmade crafts, artisanal goods, artwork depicting Haenyeo life, and locally sourced souvenirs. Revenue from craft sales directly benefits Haenyeo artisans, supporting their livelihoods and preserving their traditional crafts.

3. Accommodation and Services:

Collaboration with local accommodation providers, such as guesthouses or homestays operated by Haenyeo or local community members, serves as an auxiliary revenue stream. Tourists looking for an homestay accommodations at Haenyeos Houses could benefit by closely observing the lifestyle of Haenyeos. Additionally, offering services such as traditional cuisine experiences, guided transportation, or cultural performances can generate supplementary income for the community.

By diversifying revenue streams through guided tours, craft sales, and additional services, the tourism plan not only supports economic growth within the Haenyeo community but also provides visitors with a range of experiences, fostering a deeper appreciation for Haenyeo culture and heritage. These revenue streams contribute directly to the sustainability and economic well-being of the Haenyeo villages.

Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative

1. Community Support:

Reinvesting a portion of profits into community development projects within Haenyeo villages plays a pivotal role in fostering growth and sustainability. This allocation of funds aims to enhance the infrastructure within these communities, focusing on improvements that benefit residents and visitors alike. This might include initiatives such as renovating communal spaces, improving roads or transportation facilities, upgrading sanitation systems, or installing sustainable energy solutions. By investing in these infrastructure projects, the tourism initiative contributes directly to the well-being and quality of life of Haenyeo communities, creating an environment that supports both residents and visitors.

2. Cultural Preservation:

The preservation of Haenyeo heritage requires concerted efforts and financial support. This can involve funding initiatives dedicated to safeguarding and passing down traditions and cultural practices unique to the Haenyeo community. Financial support could be directed towards programs that promote traditional storytelling, performances, exhibitions, or workshops where the older generation imparts their knowledge and skills to the younger members of the community. Preserving and celebrating these cultural elements ensures the continuity of Haenyeo heritage for future generations, fostering a sense of identity and pride within the community.

3. Responsible Tourism:

Promoting responsible and sustainable tourism practices is fundamental to ensuring the well-being of the Haenyeo. This involves creating guidelines and practices that respect Haenyeo customs and values. It includes educating visitors about the cultural significance of the Haenyeo, encouraging respectful behavior during tours, and ensuring that tourism activities do not disrupt the natural environment or the Haenyeo way of life. By prioritizing responsible tourism, the initiative aims to strike a balance between tourism revenue generation and the preservation of the Haenyeo culture, ensuring that tourism benefits the communities while respecting their traditions and fostering economic sustainability.

By focusing on community support, cultural preservation, and responsible tourism practices, the tourism initiative aims to create a symbiotic relationship between visitors and the Haenyeo communities, ensuring that tourism activities contribute positively to the preservation of culture and traditions while fostering sustainable development within these unique villages.

Impact Measurement:

1. Economic Growth:

To measure the economic impact of tourism activities on the Haenyeo community, tracking revenue generated is crucial. This involves detailed monitoring of income directly stemming from tourism initiatives, such as ticket sales for guided tours, fees for cultural experiences, craft sales, and related services offered to visitors. By assessing the financial growth and income sources within the community, it becomes possible to evaluate the effectiveness of tourism activities in enhancing the economic well-being of the Haenyeo people.

2. Cultural Preservation:

Evaluating visitor feedback and engagement serves as a key metric for understanding the impact of cultural preservation initiatives. Visitor feedback provides valuable insights into their experiences, interactions, and appreciation for Haenyeo traditions and heritage. Analyzing feedback regarding their engagement with cultural workshops, storytelling sessions, or other immersive experiences helps gauge the effectiveness of these initiatives in fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Haenyeo culture among tourists. Increased visitor engagement with cultural elements indicates a successful preservation and promotion of Haenyeo heritage.

3. Sustainability Metrics:

Monitoring and evaluating eco-friendly practices are essential to assess their impact on minimizing the environmental footprint of tourism activities. This includes tracking metrics related to waste reduction, energy consumption, conservation efforts, and adherence to responsible tourism guidelines. By quantifying these sustainability metrics, such as reduced waste production or increased use of renewable resources, it becomes possible to measure the effectiveness of eco-conscious initiatives in preserving the natural environment surrounding Haenyeo villages.

By establishing these metrics and continuously evaluating the impact of tourism activities on economic growth, cultural preservation, and sustainability, the initiative ensures a comprehensive assessment of its outcomes. This assessment allows for informed decision-making, enabling adjustments and improvements to enhance the positive impacts of tourism on the Haenyeo communities while preserving their cultural heritage and natural environment.

Conclusion:

This business plan aims to harness tourism as a means to support Haenyeo communities, fostering economic growth, preserving culture, and promoting sustainability. Through carefully crafted tourism experiences, community engagement, and a commitment to responsible practices, the goal is to ensure that tourism becomes a driver for positive change while safeguarding the invaluable heritage of the Haenyeo. Implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives within tour and travel agencies presents a significant avenue for supporting Haenyeo communities. Through CSR, agencies can allocate a portion of their profits towards community development projects, educational programs, or infrastructure improvements within Haenyeo villages. This funding aids in economic empowerment, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism practices, amplifying the positive impact of tourism on the Haenyeo while aligning with responsible business practices."

4. Establishment of Haenyeo Social Security Systems:

Establishing a social security framework within Haenyeo corporations is paramount to ensuring the stability and welfare of these divers. This system must encompass a wide range of essential components, including comprehensive insurance coverage, retirement plans, healthcare provisions, and various support mechanisms. The primary objective is to fortify the resilience of Haenyeos as they persist in their customary profession, ensuring their financial security and well-being.

The successful implementation of such a comprehensive social security system necessitates a concerted effort involving Haenyeo corporations and government intervention through policy initiatives. By enacting policies tailored to the unique needs of Haenyeo divers, the government plays a pivotal role in fostering a sustainable and supportive environment. These policies would facilitate the integration of vital elements such as insurance coverage, retirement benefits, and healthcare provisions, thereby bolstering the security of Haenyeo livelihoods. Moreover, a well-structured social security framework has the potential to elevate the appeal of Haenyeo diving as a profession. By providing assurances of stability and security, it can attract a broader and younger workforce, ensuring the continuity of this esteemed tradition. This not only safeguards the cultural heritage of Haenyeos but also contributes to social and economic stability within these communities.

Implementing a government-funded rescue operation system and medical aid specifically tailored to Haenyeo divers holds immense significance, especially considering that half of the Haenyeos are below the age of 50. This initiative would significantly enhance the safety and longevity of their livelihoods. The allocation of resources towards specialized rescue teams equipped to swiftly respond to emergencies during diving expeditions is critical. These teams would undergo extensive training, ensuring their preparedness to handle potential accidents or injuries effectively. Additionally, the availability of specialized equipment, rescue vessels, and underwater communication systems through government funding ensures prompt and efficient responses in critical situations, reducing the risks inherent in Haenyeo diving practices.

Moreover, focusing on medical aid and emergency response aligns with the demographic data highlighting the relatively younger age distribution among Haenyeos. By providing immediate medical support and rescue operations tailored to the specific risks faced during their diving activities, the government-funded initiative significantly enhances the safety and security of these younger Haenyeo divers. This not only ensures their well-being but also would contribute to the preservation of their cultural heritage by safeguarding the lives of those actively engaged in continuing this traditional practice.

In essence, the establishment of a comprehensive social security system and a Rescue team assigned for Haenyeo divers demands collaborative efforts between government policies and the active engagement of Haenyeo corporations. This initiative is pivotal in securing the livelihoods of these divers, fostering a conducive environment for their sustained practice, and preserving this unique cultural legacy for future generations.

Innovation and Adaptability

South Korea's Tech and IT sectors have made significant inroads into revolutionizing the fishing and seafood industry. Leveraging advanced technology, such as GPS tracking, IoT devices, and AI, has greatly modernized the industry's operations. In the fishing sector, the integration of technology has optimized fleet management, allowing vessels to precisely track fishing grounds, monitor weather conditions, and efficiently navigate maritime areas. Real-time data collection and analysis aids fishermen in making informed decisions, maximizing catch potential while minimizing fuel consumption and environmental impact.

For seafood processing and distribution, innovative IT solutions have streamlined supply chain logistics. These technologies facilitate inventory management, ensuring the timely transportation and preservation of fresh catches. Moreover, blockchain-based systems have been introduced to authenticate the origin and quality of seafood, providing transparency and traceability for consumers concerned about sustainability and ethical sourcing. Additionally, South Korea's tech advancements have facilitated the emergence of online seafood markets and platforms. E-commerce platforms specializing in seafood offer consumers a convenient way to access a wide variety of fresh products, enabling fishermen to expand their market reach beyond traditional boundaries. The utilization of technology and IT within South Korea's fishing and seafood industry has significantly enhanced operational efficiency, leading to improved sustainability, quality assurance, and increased accessibility for consumers. Additionally, the application of technology should also stand to offer substantial support to the haenyeos, aiding in the preservation of their cultural heritage and the improvement of their livelihoods.

Efforts should be made by employing tech and AI, led by scholars, fisheries institutions, and concerned individuals, which would play a pivotal role in promoting this cultural asset within the fishing industry. The strategic integration of technology within the haenyeo community would serve a dual purpose of heritage preservation and community support. Initiatives should be led by young startup ventures and university-based projects encouraging aspiring talents to leverage technological advancements for the documentation and dissemination of haenyeo knowledge, culture, and practices. Entailing the development of digital platforms and applications meticulously designed to showcase the intricate haenyeo lifestyle, techniques, and the profound environmental significance of their work. These tech-enabled mediums would serve as educational conduits, offering insights into a spectrum of current affairs—ranging from seasonal updates, weather conditions, policy implementations of government towards Haenyeos, and the introduction of new systems and laws, to comprehensive coverage of community events, live festivals, and traditional ceremonies—effectively raising public consciousness.

Tech companies and startup ventures possess significant potential to revolutionize and support the day-to-day work of Haenyeo divers through innovative technological interventions. These firms can introduce modernized yet culturally sensitive solutions aimed at enhancing diver safety, efficiency, and knowledge preservation. For instance, the development of smart diving gear equipped with sensors and communication tools could drastically improve diver safety by providing real-time environmental data, monitoring vital signs, and enabling swift communication between divers and onshore support teams. Additionally, the creation of user-friendly mobile applications tailored to Haenyeo divers could offer educational resources, safety guidelines, and community platforms to share traditional knowledge and experiences, fostering a sense of community while integrating modern safety practices. Moreover, these companies can facilitate training programs utilizing virtual reality (VR) simulations, allowing Haenyeos to practice emergency responses and improve their skills in a controlled and safe environment. By leveraging technology in a culturally sensitive manner, tech companies and startup ventures have the potential to significantly elevate the safety, efficiency, and sustainability of the traditional Haenyeo practices while preserving their invaluable cultural heritage for future generations.

Furthermore, technology facilitates the establishment of efficient networks for marketing and selling haenyeo products. This extends beyond the confines of traditional seafood offerings to encompass

processed goods, Packed Seafood and wholesale distribution, thereby enabling divers as well as entrepreneurs in Food and beverage Industry to access a broader market spectrum, ensuring the sustainability of their livelihoods.

In addition, tech-centric educational programs which should be meticulously designed to impart essential diving skills, safety protocols, and environmental conservation methods to aspiring haenyeos. By bridging the rich tapestry of tradition with modern tools, these endeavors would be a beneficial in ensuring the perpetuation of this cherished cultural heritage. Collectively, these initiatives would underscore South Korea's tech industry and its efforts to preserve haenyeo traditions while seamlessly integrating modern tools for sustainability and heightened exposure.

Conclusion

In culmination, the exploration of Jeju Island's Haenyeo community reveals a captivating narrative intertwining tradition, sustainability, and women's empowerment. The meticulous examination of historical roots, diving techniques, and cultural significance provides a nuanced understanding of the Haenyeo's heritage. Challenges such as an aging population, tourism pressures, and environmental degradation underscore the need for adaptive strategies. Recognition and preservation initiatives, both at national and international levels, emphasize the community's resilience and commitment to safeguarding their unique way of life.

Looking forward, the envisaged future prospects encompass a comprehensive 'Haenyeology' resource development, empowering education, the establishment of the Haenyeo Corporation, and innovative Social Corporate Responsibility (SCR) Tourism Business Initiative Plans. These business-oriented strategies aim not only to preserve the Haenyeo culture but also to foster sustainable tourism, aligning with corporate responsibility. The envisioned future hinges on a delicate balance between tradition and adaptation, where technology and innovation play pivotal roles. As the Haenyeo community navigates the challenges of the modern world, these initiatives strive to ensure the preservation of their cultural legacy while contributing to the sustainable development of the region.

In essence, the journey of the Haenyeo serves as an inspiring testament to the symbiotic relationship between tradition and progress, offering valuable lessons for sustainable tourism and responsible corporate engagement in cultural preservation.

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