

The Dao Cardamom Commercial Network in A High Region Community of North West Vietnam

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Abstract: Cardamom is a special flavoring with high economic value and large market in the world. For the Dao in Ta Phin commune, Sa Pa district, Lao Cai province, cardamom was grown long in history and soon played an important role in their economy. Currently, in the process of market economic development, cardamom also holds a remarkable position. In the process of developing the cardamom flavoring market, the Dao people in Ta Phin commune have applied their cultural capital effectively. From the analysis of social networks, cardamom commodity chains and people's efforts in market development, this article wants to learn more about the Dao people in Ta Phin commune, Sa Pa district have applied their cultural capital into economic development like.

Key words: cultural capital; cardamom; flavoring market; chain of goods

JEL codes: Z1

1. Introduction

In the market economy development of ethnic minorities in the mountainous Northwest of Vietnam, cultural capital plays a very important role. The concept of “Cultural Capital” is an important concept built and applied by the French scholar Pierre Bourdieu in the research process. In his sociological studies, Bourdieu has used many concepts of capital, mainly economic capital, social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital. Besides, he also uses many different words to refer to the types of capital in specific studies. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital exists in three main states: 1) Embodied state, which is cultural elements expressed through its subject (i.e., human), existing existence and enduring in the mind and body of the cultural subject. In other words, cultural capital in the state of expression is the human cultural potential and the ability to apply cultural factors to create value in the development process. Cultural capital in the state of expression is the system of cultural factors expressed through human factors. 2) Objectified state, is a system of cultural elements in the form of an objective existence outside the human being, which is the material forms of cultural capital such as books, tools, and houses, equipment, machines... and intellectual and spiritual products such as traces, realization of theories or critiques of theories. Cultural capital in an objective state can be the product of an individual or a community that exists and can be used for exchange and rotation to create value. 3) Institutionalized state, is cultural factors organized into patterns, shaping the existence and operation of cultural factors based on those patterns (Bourdieu, 1986).

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Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital was then further developed by Robert Putnam (2000) and Francis Fukuyama (2001). According to these scholars, cultural capital is the tangible and intangible assets involved in the production process to create material wealth for society. If Bourdieu views cultural capital as the personal property of each person, Putnam and Fukuyama see cultural capital as both individual and collective property. And the development of the concept of cultural capital of these scholars is considered a turning point in the process of applying to research and development in the context of the market economy.

In the context that Vietnam still attaches great importance to the promotion of cultural resources in socio-economic development, the research, conceptual approach and analytical framework of cultural capital by Bourdieu and subsequent scholars have many values both in theory and practice. But in fact, over the past two decades, access to social capital has received more attention from Vietnamese researchers than access to cultural capital. In 2006, the Ministry of Science and Technology organized a scientific seminar on social capital attracting many great researchers such as Tran Huu Dung, Phan Dinh Dieu, Dang Kim Son, Le Dang Doanh, Nguyen Quan, Tran Ngoc Tho... and their articles have also been published on two issues of the Tia Sang Magazine (Ministry of Science and Technology), number 13 and 14, in July 2006. In addition, social capital is also interested by many other researchers such as Dao The Tuan (2006), Hoang Ba Thinh (2008), Tran Huu Quang, Bui Van Nam Son and others (2014). Up to now, there are more than hundred studies related to the concept of Social Capital have been published in Vietnam. In which, it is divided into two groups: The group focuses on clarifying the concepts and capabilities, applying methods to reality in Vietnam and the group applying to specific case approaches. The approach to development problems from the concept of cultural capital has created new vitality in consciousness as well as explained some social problems, creating new inspiration for many studies in sociology, anthropology, economics, education...

In development research in Vietnam, the concept of cultural capital needs to be understood in a broad sense, including the types of capital that Bourdieu has analyzed. This is understandable when culture is a broad concept that encompasses the economy, society, institutions, symbols and people... Accordingly, cultural capital is understood as tangible and intangible resources, individual or community manifestations, which can be rotated and participated directly or indirectly in economic processes to generate benefits for human. In other words, cultural capital is understood as the sum of social networks, individual cultural capitals, community cultural capital and institutional cultural capital that an individual or a group can apply to economic development and create benefits for themselves. Cultural capital plays an important role in the development of the market economy. And that is clearly demonstrated by the Dao in Ta Phin commune, Sa Pa district in the process of developing their cardamom market.

The Dao are the community that plays an important role in the mountainous development in the Northwest of Vietnam. In recent years, the economy of the Dao in the Northwest has been strongly transformed towards market economic development. The Dao in Sa Pa district¹, Lao Cai province is an example. In the market economy activities of the Dao people in Sa Pa, aromatherapy plays an important role. In which, cardamom is aromatherapy tree with the highest economic value and plays the most important role in the network of trade of Dao aromatherapy here. Cardamom is a famous crop in the high mountains, associated with ethnic groups such as the Hmong, Dao in the Northwest. From the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, cardamom trade networks

¹ From September 2019, Sa Pa district was recognized as Sa Pa Town. However, since most of the field survey documents were conducted when it was not transformed into a town, the names of districts and communes are still left before the merger and change in the article.

across the Vietnam-China border were formed and the Dao (along with the Hmong and Giay) joined the herb trade network. Fruit that the Dao mainly provide fresh or dried cardamom. After harvesting, they can be left fresh or dried and then sold to traders who are Kinh, Giay or Chinese. From there their cardamom went to the dealers, distributors and extracts in the lowlands or across the border.

Research on cardamom trading network in the northern mountainous region of Vietnam is mainly of interest to foreign scientists. Although domestic researchers have mentioned much about the economics of aromatherapy and medicinal herbs of the Dao in Vietnam, they still do not pay much attention to the commercial network of cardamom. Meanwhile, cardamom is a medicinal plant with high economic value and an important role for upland communities such as Hmong, Dao, and has many cross-border commercial relationships with China. Therefore, research on cardamom commercial networks is of great value and should be considered.

2. Documents and Research Methods

2.1 Overview Document

Aromatherapy and medicinal herbs are important market activities for the Dao in Vietnam. Research on economic aromatherapy and medicinal herbs of the Dao is also interested by many scientists. In the book “Ethnic groups in Vietnam” the section on the Dao ethnic group presents many problems related to the cultivation of cinnamon by the Dao. Cinnamon was planted in many places by the Dao people from the Dao regions in Yen Bai, Lao Cai, Quang Ninh,... and participated in the cinnamon trading network (Vuong Xuan Tinh, 2019, p. 217). In places like Van Yen district (Yen Bai province), the Dao people only make up 21.1% of the district population but own 90% of the cinnamon tree area. They plant cinnamon into large tree forests called cinnamon forests, and build economic models of cinnamon (Hoang Nam, 1998, pp. 9-10). A number of other documents are interested in cultivating purple safflower, an important medicinal herb of the Dao that is grown in medium high mountains. According to Quoc Hong (2018), “The whole province of Lao Cai currently has about 398 hectares of purple amaranth trees, providing a stable income of tens of billions VND per year for upland farmers, contributing to sustainable poverty alleviation and creating momentum. To get rich effectively, the target is that by 2020, ethnic minorities in highland and border communes will continue to expand the acreage of purple amurum tree, reaching about 1,000 hectares. Lao Cai province has also included purple amurum in the development planning of medicinal plant areas of the province”. Despite paying much attention to aromatic plants and medicinal herbs of the Dao, researchers have not paid much attention to cardamom.

It can be said that much research on cardamom and the cardamom trade network in the Northwest are foreign scientists. Including the works of scholars such as: Sarah Turner and Jean Michaud (2008); Claire Tugault-Lafleur and Sarah Turner (2009); Jean Michaud (2010); Sarah Turner (2012); Sarah Turner, Christine Bonnin and Jean Michaud (2015); Sarah Turner and Jean Michaud (2016, 2017)... However, these foreign authors' studies focus on the Hmong community (the Dao villagers, living in the higher mountainous areas) in the transboundary context (research in North Vietnam and South China). These researchers are interested in the development of commercial network of cardamom. From analyzing cardamom trade networks and cardamom commodity chains, these researchers went into depth to explore the livelihood development strategies of the upland people of northern Vietnam, which they call “daily livelihood decisions” (Sarah Turner, Christine Bonnin & Jean Michaud, 2015). In the current market economy, these authors pay much attention to the commercial value of cardamom — a plant known as the “new poppy plant” of the people. The researches of these authors are of great value when they

suggest many important both theoretical and practical issues for research on mountainous development. It raises the issue of cultural identity, human personality as the basis for the analysis of economic development in the context of modernization and marketization in mountainous areas. It opens up interesting research directions for further research. And increasingly, research in this direction is more interested. But after all, these authors only focus on the Hmong group. Meanwhile, the Dao, a community that grows cardamom like the Hmong and plays an important role in the mountainous areas, has not been paid attention. So this study continues to survey the trade network of the Dao in Sa Pa on the basis of analyzing cultural capital used by the Dao to strongly develop the current cardamom trade network.

2.2 Research Methods

This article is the result of 4 field visits to the Dao people in Sa Pa from 2016 to 2020. In addition to the field research in Ta Phin commune, which is the main research area, I also surveyed a number of Dao communities in other communes in communes of Ta Van, Ban Khoang, Thanh Kim to have a broader view. The focus of these field trips is to analyze the cultural capital of the Dao in Sa Pa and how the Dao have applied these cultural capital to the development of the market economy, especially activities in the market of flavoring, medicinal herbs, handicraft market, and tourism market.

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The most important method in field research for data collection is in-depth interviews. To learn about the Dao trade network of cardamom in Sa Pa, I conducted 25 in-depth interviews. Including: 11 interviews with cardamom producers; 6 interviews with cardamom collectors and cardamom collectors; 3 interviews with local government officials regarding cardamom development policies; 5 interviews with noodle makers or Vietnamese medicine sellers. In-depth interviews give me a lot of information regarding economic activities as well as how specific people participate in cardamom market activities and how they have used cultural capital for development cardamom economy. Besides, I pay much attention to group discussion method. I have conducted 4 group discussions with Dao people in Ta Phin and Thanh Kim about the content of producing and trading cardamom. Group discussions often yield a lot of interesting content in which participants debate with each other many times to arrive at a final opinion.

In addition to the methods of gathering information from field research, I also pay much attention to surveying research papers of previous scholars, collecting information from socio-economic reports, digital statistics of local government to have a multi-dimensional and in-depth perspective. Besides, it is the exchange and consultation of experts in matters related to the research.

3. Research Results

3.1 Cardamom in the Life of the Dao

For the Dao in Sa Pa, cardamom is an important source of income for the people. In daily life, the Dao also use cardamom mainly in healing. But the amount of cardamom needed for this is very small. So the most

important role of cardamom is to sell to generate a large amount of money for households. The Dao people in the communes of Ta Phin, Ban Khoang, Thanh Kim, and Nam Cang are all interested in cardamom and see it as a treasure that can be stored.

In Ta Phin, most Dao families have upland field of cardamom. And the area of cardamom is constantly increasing. In 2004, the area of cardamomium in Ta Phin was just over 251 ha, by 2014, the area had increased to 283 ha and by 2020 this figure was 334 ha. The average annual yield of cardamom is about 80 kg/ha of fresh fruit. The current purchasing price is about 25 thousand VND/kg of fresh fruit, which each year also generates a sum of 668 million VND. It can be said that the household level is not a big source of money compared to other activities. But because it harvests at a time with large quantity and concentration, cardamom is a source of wealth for people to prevent illness, disease or natural disasters. In the past, when cardamom was harvested, it was often dried and then put away and sold only when money was needed. When selling cardamom, it is often time to need money to buy fertilizers, rice seeds, corn, medicine for sickness, buy other things during holidays, go to the market. In general, in everyday life, cardamom is an important source of storage money: “While there are sick people at home, we sell cardamom to buy medicine. When we have to buy rice seeds and fertilizers to sow the seasons, we only sell cardamom. I can’t make a lot of money, so I have to sell cardamom. If I don’t have cardamom for sale, I don’t know how to take care of family affairs when I need a large sum of money.” (Women, Dao ethnic group, Ta Phin commune, interview on June 28, 2018)

Furthermore, cardamom is a precious wealth that every family understands and stores. They see it as a source of safety for themselves in life. When they need money, they sell them, regardless of whether the price of cardamom is high or low. And also only cardamom can give a large sum of money to them when needed. Thus, it can be seen that, in the life of the Dao in Sa Pa, besides being used to make medicine, cardamom is a kind of commodity with economic value that people sell when they need a large amount of money to handle family affairs. It is also seen as a valuable asset that people store in the family for use when needed or be given to their children by parents to sell when they need money.

3.2 Social Network in Cardamom Production

3.2.1 Cardamom

Cardamom perennial, 2-3 m high, large rhizomes, branching, growing in clusters. The flowers are flowery, growing from the base of the stem, 15-20 cm long. Radio tubes, yellow corolla. The fruit grows in clusters, ovoid, purple in color. Seeds are yellow brown, with seed coat, sweet taste, and slightly spicy aroma. Cardamom is a special shade-loving tree that loves moisture, so it can only be planted under the forest canopy, at an altitude of 1,300-2,200 m, with a cool, humid climate all year round, the average annual temperature of 13-15.3 degrees C, fog often occurs, the rainfall is 3,500-3,800 mm/ year, the average humidity is from 90% to saturation. Cardamom is grown with seedlings planted from fresh seeds or grown with young branches separated from old shrubs. Newly planted trees after about 3 years, they will bear fruit. The Dao often cultivate seedlings from seeds for planting because it produces a longer lasting harvest and higher yields than separating young shoots for seedling. In order to produce cardamom, two important factors are needed: the area of forest land to plant cardamom and the source of labor.

3.2.2 Forest Land to Plant Cardamom

Cardamom usually grows well in high mountains, cool climates, and especially it grows under the canopy of old, dense forests with tall cover so that less sunlight can fall. If the amount of light is too much, the cardamom will die or stay alive but not produce many fruits and the fruit quality is poor.

Forest land for planting cardamom is increasingly limited. According to local statistics, the cardamom area over the past few years, especially the period before 2015, has increased quite rapidly. But according to the people, the area of their cardamom does not increase, or even decrease. The increase in the statistic state is because they have not listed this type of cardamom before, so it only increases every year. For example, the area of cardamom in Ta Phin commune from 2005 to 2015 has increased, but from 2015 to 2020 it almost did not increase.

3.2.3 Labor Source for Cardamom Production

In Sa Pa, growing cardamom is a household economic activity. Dao people in Sa Pa have a shareholding company in bath medicine, brocade cooperatives, but in cultivating cardamom, they are still the households. And the main source of labor is family labor. In the family, the labor division of cardamom is as follows: When going out to distribute small trees to plant cardamom, the men mainly do it. Nursing seedlings from seeds is mainly done by women. When planting seedlings in a cardamom field, both men and women go to work. People have to do weeding twice a year, mainly cutting down wild plants and the cardamom that are too old for the cardamom to grow better, this is mainly done by men. The inspection and protection of cardamomia are also done by the man. Harvesting season is mainly done by men in the family. If there is little work in the family, the woman has to join her husband to harvest cardamom. In the past, traveling was difficult, so people often dried them in the fields and brought dried fruits to sell. Currently, they mainly bring fresh fruit to sell. Cardamom growing needs a healthy source of labor. Cardamom cultivation field is usually in higher mountainous areas, so it takes a long time to travel and not everyone can go there. Therefore, between families with close relationships like brothers, relatives and close friends still exchange labor with each other to protect and harvest cardamom.

3.2.4 Cooperation and Conflict in Cardamom Production

In the process of producing cardamom of the Dao in Sa Pa, there are always cooperation and conflicts with many different understandings. If cooperation in cardamom production often takes place strongly within the internal networks of households and groups, then conflict occurs with people outside of those households' social networks. Collaboration usually takes place during planting, checking cardamom, protecting cardamom, harvesting, drying and transporting. Those who are brothers or in them have a closer cooperation relationship, especially when there are cardamomia together so that they can work together. They both help each other on the way, while exchanging work with each other and take turns doing some work related to cardamomia. When they have to stay to protect cardamom from thieves, they also work together to increase their strength. When they need a lot of labor, such as collecting firewood from the forest to dry cardamom, they work together. The years when cardamom is good, the cooperation is closer. In years of crop failure, the right to harvest is also transferred to someone who is closer to them. The most acute conflict was between the owners of cardamom and those who stole cardamom. During the years when cardamom is good, when a season comes, many bad people go to the forest and see any cardamom fields that are not guarded and will pick and sell them for money. Cardamom theft was repeatedly mentioned by Claire Tugault-Lafleur and Sarad Turner (2009) and analyzed the factors and solutions of the Hmong to this problem. Accordingly, the Hmong mainly try to protect their cardamom, but do not want to chase or sue those who steal cardamom because they fear the consequences of direct conflict and fear of costs when solving problems at levels of government. The Dao in Sa Pa also have a similar situation. And to limit, the years when cardamom is good, they gather together in groups to inspect and protect the cardamom field as well as to help each other. Doing so is creating a social network that is both convenient for work, and pressures them to limit the theft of cardamom from bad people. However, according to people here, in the past, cardamom thieves were mainly from other places and villages. Recently, when there are many people addicted to drugs,

many people lose money to gamble, the theft of cardamom is also more. Sometimes they know but can't catch the perpetrator directly, so they can't do anything.

3.3 Commercial Network of Cardamom

In the study of cardamom trade networks on the Vietnam-China border, Claire Tugault-Lafleur and Sarad Turner (2009) have fully analyzed the Hmong commodity chain and trading network of cardamom in the North of Vietnam. The Dao's cardamom commodity chain in Sa Pa is also not much different from the Hmong because both the Dao and the Hmong act as primary input suppliers, growing and selling cardamom to other traders, is the first group of cardamom commodity chains. Next in the commodity chain are the traders who collect cardamom, mainly the Kinh. The third group is agents that buy goods from traders, transport cardamom and sell to processors or retail consumers. This agent group has many different levels and it is not necessary to rotate cardamom between groups one after another. The fourth group is cardamom users and processors, and retail outlets of dried cardamom, which are restaurants that use cardamom as a condiment, medicinal plants or herbal drug stores. The last group is the consumer.

3.3.1 Cardamom Seller

In the past, Chinese traders went to villages to buy cardamom from the people. Or they come to Sa Pa to set up a buying point and then collect goods from the Kinh and Giay traders to collect from the villages. Then they hire shipping via China. Currently, the role of collecting cardamom in villages is mainly undertaken by Kinh people. There are at least 3 big spots in Sa Pa that specialize in collecting cardamom from the Dao. When cardamom season comes, they go back to the villages to buy cardamom, then return to Sa Pa to dry, then sell. In communes with large cardamom areas, there are Kinh people who act as collectors right in the commune. Most of them do this for a long time and have good relationships with the people. They collect cardamom and sell them to larger collection points in Sa Pa. People who harvest cardamom often bring them to sell to these people. They weigh them up and receive cash immediately. During the years of scarcity of cardamom, collectors also go to households with large areas of cardamom to pay in advance and when they are harvested they receive cardamom as well. Due to long-term cooperation, people create trust with each other. So it is very rare that families bring cardamom to Sa Pa or go to Lao Cai to sell to big dealers. But these collectors are different, because in a certain sense they are like a small dealer, and sometimes they collect a lot of goods, they are dried and sold to big agents without going through an intermediary in Sa Pa. Ta Phin is an example.

Cardamom collection in Ta Phin is done by a Kinh woman originally from Nam Dinh. This person has more than 30 years working as a collector to collect cardamom to sell to dealers. When she first came to Sa Pa, she bought them from villages and then sold them to a representative in the town. Since the beginning of 2000, seeing that Ta Phin area is favorable for development, she bought land to build a house at the beginning of the commune to buy cardamom and other services. The house is right on the main road of the commune, so people harvest and bring cardamom for sale. In this season, the person has to hire an extra maid to do the weighing and recording, and she pays the people. After more than 20 years living in the commune and purchasing cardamom from people, she created trust and a close relationship, becoming the only focal point for cardamom in this area. The fresh fruit, after being purchased, is dried by a large oven, which burns wood wood (must be purchased) and rice husks (available from the miller of rice). Each time one ton of fresh fruit is dried. The weight change during drying depends on fruit quality. Lots of big, old ones lose a lot, while small and young ones lose a lot. But usually 6-8 pounds of fresh is dried. Then she moved down to sell to a cardamom agent in Lao Cai city. Each year this person collects and sells 20-25 tons of dried cardamom to dealers in Lao Cai city.

3.3.3 Purchasing Agents, Concentrating Cardamom

They are the gathering points for goods from cardamom collectors. So agents have many different levels and do not always rotate goods from small to large. There are small dealers who gather cardamom from the traders to collect in the village and then sell them to a larger agent. For example, 3 agents in Sa Pa town often gather goods of 10-15 different traders. They collect and then dry them and sell them to a larger agent in Lao Cai. But there are also people who directly collect from the people without going through other traders but are also an agent as is the case in Ta Phin. They collect cardamom and bring them down to sell directly to a big dealer in Lao Cai. And agents like them in Sa Pa are also quite a lot because in recent years, roads are easier to transport, so moving 5-10 tons of goods to Lao Cai city is not too difficult and they can do without through an intermediary agent. In Lao Cai city, there are large agents gathering goods in the whole province, and even in other provinces to switch to selling to larger agents in China. Usually these big agents will talk with Chinese traders to agree on quantity as well as price. After that, they collect goods and export procedures across the border. However, there are also larger agents in Hanoi that buy goods from agents in Lao Cai for sale to pharmaceutical processing zones or export. Thus, only taking into account the chain of cardamom in Vietnam, it can be seen that there are a number of different agent levels: (i) Small dealers collect cardamom directly from the people and sell to a medium-sized dealer or sell to a large agent in Lao Cai city; (ii) The agent has just collected cardamom from traders and small dealers and sold them to big agents in Lao Cai city; (iii) The big agent in Lao Cai collects cardamom from small dealers in many places and then sells them to larger businesses in Hanoi or China; (iv) Agents or companies in Hanoi buy cardamom from many places, supply it to herbal processing facilities or export. However, as mentioned, this is not an agency decentralization of an enterprise, it is merely to consider the relationship with the cardamom planter through what intermediate steps. Left this decentralization has no value in the rotation of goods because people can sell to any agent depending on their agreement. Even people can bring cardamom and sell them directly to large dealers if they have large volumes.

These are establishments that buy cardamom from dealers for processing into medicinal herbs or use as a seasoning in culinary processing. In the processing of medicinal herbs, a variety of drugs require cardamom, making it an important raw material for the pharmaceutical processing industry in major cities and in many countries around the world. Cardamom is also an important medicine in traditional Vietnamese remedies and also used in oriental medicine with many different values. A variety of drug stores use cardamom, and they even serve as retail outlets of cardamom. In cuisine, *pho* is indispensable for cardamom spice. A series of *pho* managers in Hanoi or other localities use cardamom as spices. Besides, some candy industry also use this flavoring. As such, the system of different cardamom processing and using cardamom. They can buy cardamom from big dealers, they can also buy from small intermediaries or buy directly from people to use.

3.3.4 Cardamom Consumer

At the bottom of this chain are the consumers of cardamom-related products. This number is very large, are people who use medicine to cure diseases, eat *pho*, eat confectionery that uses cardamom. Whether they know it or not, they are participating in this chain of goods because they have to pay a sum of money to use cardamom related products.

3.3.5 Prices and Benefits in the Cardamom Commodity Chain

The prices of cardamom on the market fluctuate continuously. As Claire Tugault-Lafleur and Sarad Turner (2009, p. 397) said, in 2008, the price of cardamom of the Hmong (and other communities such as Dao) sold to traders in Sa Pa was 3.75 USD/kg, it is sold in the US or Canada for 20-24 USD/kg, in one case a Canadian

retailer has a price up to 220 USD/kg. In the distribution process of cardamom trading network, the Dao (and also the Hmong) play almost no role in determining prices. According to the owners of cardamom collecting and distributing agents, the prices are usually determined by big enterprises in China according to the fluctuations in the world market. The owner of a big agent in Lao Cai city said, “When Chinese enterprises come over to order, for example, 50 tons or 100 tons, they also set the price. Since then, I put prices on other small dealers for them to collect. The small dealers then set a price for cardamom collectors in the villages. And these people put prices to buy cardamom of the people. Every intermediate stage like that, the price of cardamom drops 1-2 prices. Selling is the lowest price to local people” (Men, Kinh people, Lao Cai city, interview on October 14, 2020).

This does not mean that from the beginning of the season prices have not changed. On the contrary, prices can change by day, or even during the day, sometimes. That requires the buyers to contact the major dealers to get the price so that it is reasonable. As for people, they harvested and sold them to small dealers or collectors. In case the price at that time is too low, they bring it back to sell the next day. There are also families who contact many places to consult the prices since they have a large quantity of cardamom in order to get a higher income from selling such cardamom. In general, cardamom collectors, who have a fairly close relationship with cardamom growers, also try to share prices with the people in a reasonable way. Most of them follow the general market price and get information from the cardamom trading networks in which they participate. When the price changes, the collectors let the people come to sell cardamom so that they can choose to sell or bring back.

Prices are often volatile, the interests of people participating in cardamom trading networks also differ. The Dao who produce cardamom get the money to sell their produce. It is possible that compared to the effort they put into, less effort is left, while the intermediaries in the commodity chain get more even with less effort. But that is not too irrational in the market economy because they also have to invest in other sources of capital. As for the people, in the past, cardamom was a natural source of income, and now has to invest in planting and tending, checking and protecting. But in the context that their livelihoods are not really diversified, capital sources are limited, such income from cardamom is also an important benefit. And increasingly, as people's capital increases, they know how to access the market, there will be changes, at least in the relationship between them and cardamom collectors. And in fact, there are some people who collect cardamom from their own family and close brothers and bring them to the larger dealers to receive a few more prices that if sold in the village they will not enjoy. As for the middlemen, they act as buying agents and then resell to a larger agent with a difference of about 3-5 thousand VND/kg of dried cardamom. They have capital so they can trade tens of tons a year, their income is also higher. So did the big dealers. That is also the reason why the prices from cardamom producers to consumers of cardamom so many times different.

4. Discussion

The Dao people in Sa Pa from early on, knew how to apply their cultural capital to the development of the cardamom market in the northwestern mountainous region. And more and more, social networks are playing an even more important role in developing this important flavoring market. They operate networks both internally and externally, both subjectively and objectively in cardamom production and trade. However, in the process, many important issues have not been resolved and the risk of conflicts still exists while the interests between stakeholders are still not guaranteed.

The Dao trade network of cardamom shows a rather complicated chain of cardamom products, with many

participants and in a large space not only in the Northwest but also in the lowlands, cross-border and to many different countries. Therefore, analyzing social networks in a social space related to cardamom commerce is important and has many scientific and practical values, because this analysis shows us the role. What are the groups participating in this commercial network and how it affects the operation of the whole commercial network. Analysis of cultural capital in a certain social space also gives us more clarity on how cultural capital impacts on socio-economic development.

And finally, through the above analysis, we also raise the question of the role of cardamom for the Dao in the future. Cardamom is a aromatherapy plant with high economic value in the life of the Dao in Sa Pa. They plant a lot of cardamom in the field and when the harvest comes, they sell them to traders or dealers. The source of income from cardamom is an important source of cash to help them solve many family problems. But increasingly, the role of cardamom is also decreasing because cardamom is growing more and more limited because the forest land area is not much, especially the old forest, which is a favorable place for cardamom growing. Moreover, climate change affects the cultivation of cardamom. Prolonged cold spells, creating ice, or intense heat waves all cause cardamom to die, damage and few fruits, and poor quality of the fruit. In addition, the Dao people's livelihoods here are also increasingly diverse. People have many other things to make more cash so the position of cardamom also declines.

5. Conclusion

The Dao in Sa Pa produced and traded cardamom very early and it became a historic part of economic activities of this community. In nearly a decade, the natural and socio-economic conditions have changed many times, the cardamom economy has also faced many difficulties, sometimes there is a crop failure, sometimes prices are reduced and prices are often pressed from China traders. However, no matter how you change, cardamom still plays a certain role in the Dao economy here. They constantly expand their social networks, promote cultural capital in the process of developing cardamom market. These efforts have at times achieved remarkable results. But because of the limitations in most of the capital sources, the development of the market for cardamom of the Dao also faces many difficulties. Therefore, in the coming time, in order for the Dao to participate actively and effectively in the cardamom trade network, it is necessary to take measures to improve cultural capital as well as promote other sources of capital for the Dao, which helps them gain an important position in that network.

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