

Harnessing Traditional Entrepreneurial Pottery Skills to Create House Ceramics Cottage Industry to Promote Industrial Development and Economic Growth in Delta State, Nigeria*

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ABSTRACT

This study provides an in-depth analysis of Nigeria's pottery industry, highlighting its predominantly traditional and familial nature. The study was conducted in three communities of Ughewwughe, Iwhrekeka and Otor-Edo in These communities are approximately 5 kilometers apart in Ughelli South Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. A community-based cross-sectional survey was designed using a quantitative study method to assess the traditional entrepreneurial pottery skills for the creation of house ceramics cottage industries. A sample of 240 pottery households was selected with 80 from each community using a convenient sampling technique. A self-constructed questionnaire was used for the collection of data. The questionnaire contained questions on demography, structure and production pattern, quantity and acquisition of input as well as financial value of the product. A total of 20 research assistants collected data from the participants. Frequency and percentage were used for analysis. The data were entered into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 14. The study underscores that while Nigeria's pottery industry is deeply rooted in tradition, it faces challenges related to scalability, technological integration, and market dynamics. Addressing these through enhanced financial support, improved market access, and targeted policy interventions could unlock new opportunities for sustainable growth and cultural preservation.

Keywords: *Traditional Entrepreneurial Pottery Skills, House Ceramics, Cottage Industry, Industrial Development, Economic Growth*

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INTRODUCTION

One of the oldest crafts known to humanity is pottery, this craft entails shaping and firing of clay to create durable objects; these objectives have served as food storage and artistic expression (Rice, 2015). On the other hand, clay is a natural earthy material composed primarily of fine-grained minerals. According to evidence, pottery craft dates back to the early years of civilization. Globally, pottery craft has progressed over time from basic handmade clay vessels to highly developed production of ceramics using more advanced technologies (Tite, 2019). However, it is argued that the change in pottery is associated or closely linked to the progression experienced by humans. In developed countries such as the United Kingdom and China, pottery has evolved into using 3D printing and digital technologies to bring mass production and customization of ceramic products (Chung et al., 2012). Nigeria, one of the largest and the most populated countries in Africa has a history of pottery and this is deeply rooted in the country's cultural and artistic traditions.

Evidence highlights that clay which is usually used for pottery is found in several states of Nigeria and the states are inclusive of Delta, Edo, Akaw-Ibom, Kebbi, and many other states (Abdulsalam et al., 2015). According to evidence, traditional pottery in Nigeria is largely focused on handmade which employs the technique of coiling and molding that is fired or burnt either in open pits or rudimentary kilns (Oladapo, 2016). However, in recent times the pottery industry has encountered both challenges and opportunities respectively. Globalization and industrialization have both introduced mass-produced alternatives that compete with traditional hand-crafted pottery items and the influx of these cheaper, machine-made ceramics has led to a decline in the demand of artisanal products in urban markets (Ogunleye, 2015). On the other hand, the cottage industry is faced with difficulties in accessing modern technologies and markets, and many potters lack formal training in the management of the pottery band marketing which therefore restricts their ability to expand beyond their usual local markets (Adebayo, 2020).

Notwithstanding, there is a growing appreciation for authentic, handcrafted products both locally and internationally. Also, the rise of cultural tourism and the global trend towards sustainable and ethically produced goods have opened new market avenues. Hence, several Governmental and Non-Governmental organizations have made different initiatives to revitalize the pottery sector by providing training in modern pottery production techniques, quality control, and business management (Adesina & Adewale, 2018; Ogunleye, 2023). Therefore, this study aims to harness traditional entrepreneurial pottery skills to create a house ceramics cottage industry in Nigeria.

Nigeria's rich tradition of pottery is deeply embedded in its cultural heritage which offers a significant opportunity to develop the house ceramics industry. This initiative can harness indigenous entrepreneurial skills, stimulate economic growth, and reduce the

nation's reliance on imported ceramic products. Despite abundant raw materials and a history of skilled artisans, Nigeria imports a substantial portion of its ceramic products. In 2019, the Federal Government reported that the country imported pottery products worth \$600 million annually, primarily from China and India (Ojo & Okafor, 2019; Ugwu, 2024). This heavy reliance on imports not only drains foreign exchange reserves but also stifles the growth of local industries. By establishing a robust house ceramics sector, Nigeria can retain this capital within its economy, fostering job creation and industrial development. For example, traditional pottery centers like the Dada Pottery in Ilorin exemplify the resilience and economic potential of indigenous pottery practices. Such centers, not only preserve cultural heritage but also contribute to job creation and poverty alleviation. Hence, it is argued that revitalizing moribund centers through the establishment of house ceramics cottage industries can enhance product quality and appeal, meeting contemporary market demands. This approach has been observed in communities like Ìjàyè and Abéòkúta, where traditional hand-built pottery continues to thrive, serving both functional and aesthetic purposes. Moreover, fostering such industries aligns with economic diversification efforts, reducing dependence on imports and conserving foreign exchange. It also promotes cultural tourism, as unique, locally crafted ceramics attract both domestic and international visitors. Therefore, empowering local artisans through training and access to resources can transform traditional pottery into a vibrant, economically viable sector, contributing to sustainable development and cultural preservation in Nigeria.

This study aims to harness traditional entrepreneurial pottery skills to create a house ceramics cottage Industry. Specifically, it aims

- i. To ensure that the project creates employment opportunities for both craftsmen\women in the house ceramics industry in the short run, and building materials in the long run through training of Iwhrekeke, Otor-Edo, and Ughevughe people.
- ii. To create domestic and foreign markets for products of the transformed pottery and allied industries in the communities mentioned above.
- iii. To ensure that the pottery enterprise and her allied industries achieve quality control, aesthetics, standardization, and large-scale production
- iv. To contribute to the growth of the domestic economy and increase foreign earnings by growing the house ceramics manufacturing sector of the economy.

Local Crafts and Industries in Nigeria

Nigeria's rich tapestry of local crafts and industries reflects its diverse cultural heritage and serves as a vital component of its economy. From the intricate beadwork of the Igbos to the renowned pottery of the Gwari people, these traditional crafts not only preserve cultural identities but also offer significant economic opportunities. Ojo and Okafor (2019)

emphasize that indigenous industries are essential for economic diversification, particularly in rural areas where formal employment opportunities are limited. Their study on the pottery industry in Abuja found that the sector employs a significant number of women and provides a source of livelihood for many low-income households.

Emeafor and Eze-Uzomaka (2018) found that Ushafa pottery attracts tourists, thereby boosting the local economy. However, challenges such as poor road networks and inadequate marketing strategies hinder the sector's growth. Additionally, Ugwu (2024) argues that Nigeria's craft industry has the potential to thrive if properly integrated into formal economic systems and supported through policy frameworks. On the other hand, in India, traditional crafts significantly contribute to national income, with the handicrafts sector generating over \$4 billion annually (Ugwu, 2024). Government initiatives such as the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme have successfully promoted local artisans by providing market access and financial incentives. In contrast, Nigeria's craft sector lacks structured government support, making it difficult for artisans to scale up production. Also, in Thailand, the government has implemented policies that integrate traditional crafts into the tourism sector, allowing local artisans to benefit from global markets (Adebayo & Adekeye, 2021). Nigeria can adopt similar strategies by leveraging its rich cultural heritage and expanding local crafts into international markets through digital platforms.

Consensual Issues

The Nigerian pottery industry, which is rich in cultural heritage and artisanal craftsmanship, faces several consensual challenges that hinder its growth and sustainability (Adetoro & Olayemi, 2018). One of the major consensual issues in Nigerian pottery is market accessibility. Many local potters struggle to compete with mass-produced ceramics and imported goods. According to Ojo and Okafor (2019), the lack of structured marketing channels limits artisans' ability to reach broader audiences, thereby stifling the growth of the industry. Moreover, the absence of robust international market linkages has hindered the expansion of Nigeria's pottery industry (Ugwu, 2024). Without adequate government intervention, local artisans continue to face immense pressure from cheaper imported alternatives.

Another consensual issue is technological adaptation and innovation, the integration of modern technology into Nigerian pottery remains a contentious issue. Traditional potters often resist mechanization due to concerns about cultural erosion (Alhassan et al., 2020). Despite the advantages of modern kilns and glazing techniques in enhancing product durability, many artisans lack the financial means to acquire these technologies (Adebayo & Adekeye, 2021). Addressing this issue requires targeted policies that encourage artisans to adopt new technologies without undermining traditional practices. Another critical challenge facing the pottery industry is the declining interest among younger generations.

Historically, pottery skills have been passed down through apprenticeships, yet many young Nigerians now prefer white-collar jobs over artisanal work (Emeafor & Eze-Uzomaka, 2018). This generational gap threatens the survival of traditional pottery techniques. Some scholars suggest incorporating pottery education into formal vocational training programs to attract younger practitioners (Afolabi & Oke, 2023).

Furthermore, limited access to financial support remains a significant barrier to the growth of the Nigerian pottery industry. Artisans often face difficulties securing micro-loans due to high interest rates and stringent conditions (Olaoyenikan, 2024). Furthermore, government initiatives to support the industry have been inconsistent, with inadequate funding for pottery cooperatives (Ugwu, 2024). Addressing these challenges requires a more structured policy approach that ensures sustained financial and infrastructural support for local artisans.

Theoretical Framework

Consensus Theory

Consensus theory, primarily associated with functionalist perspectives in sociology, argues that societal institutions function harmoniously when there is agreement on fundamental values and norms (Durkheim, 1892; Parsons & Shils, 2017)). Social stability is maintained when individuals and groups work collaboratively and maintain a common set of values to achieve common goals. In economic contexts, this theory underscores the importance of shared economic practices, cultural preservation, and cooperative engagement for industry sustainability (Giddens, 2020). In the context of Nigeria's pottery industry, consensus theory can be applied to examine how communal values, cultural heritage, and cooperative frameworks contribute to the sustainability and growth of pottery practices. The Nigerian pottery industry is deeply embedded in Nigerian traditions, thus it is expected that communities should maintain their unique ceramic styles through generational knowledge transfer (Emeafor & Eze-Uzomaka, 2018). Also, consensus among artisans, cultural leaders, and government agencies would help in the preservation of indigenous pottery techniques and ensure that traditional skills are not lost to modernization (Ojo & Okafor, 2019).

More so, integrating pottery into formal education systems can ensure continuity by fostering a collective appreciation for indigenous crafts (Olaoyenikan, 2024). Training programs and apprenticeships also emphasize collaboration, reinforcing the consensus-driven approach to skill acquisition (Adebayo & Adekeye, 2021). Furthermore, pottery clusters should operate on cooperative structures, where artisans share resources, training, and market access; collective economic approaches align with consensus theory's emphasis on social cohesion as a driver of economic sustainability (Adebayo & Adekeye, 2021;

Afolabi & Oke, 2023). Additionally, consensus-driven policymaking, where potters engage with local and national governments helps foster industry growth (Alhassan et al., 2020).

METHOD

The study was conducted in three communities of Ughevughe, Iwhrekeka and Otor-Edo. in Ughelli South Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. A community-based cross-sectional survey was designed using a quantitative study method to assess the traditional entrepreneurial pottery skills for the creation of house ceramics cottage industries in Nigeria. A sample size of 240 pottery households was selected with 80 each from the three communities using a convenient sampling technique. Self-constructed research questionnaire was used for the collection of data from participants. A total of 20 research assistants administered and collected data from a sample of 240 using questionnaire. However, before the commencement of data collection, the research assistants were trained to ensure adequate data collection.. The research questionnaire contained questions on demography, structure and production pattern, quantity and acquisition of input as well as financial value of product. Data from research questionnaire were entered into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 14. Frequency and percentage were used for analysis.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographics of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1. Age Group		
Below 20	25	10.42%
21-30	30	12.5%
31-40	40	16.66%
41-50	70	29.17%.
51-above	75	31.25%
2 Gender		

Male	138	57.5%
Female	102	42.5%.

3 Educational Level

No formal Education	50	20.83%
Primary Education	112	46.67%
Secondary Education	53	22.08%
Tertiary Education	25	10.42%

4 Years of Experience

Less than 5 years	15	6.25%
5-10 years	50	20.1%
11-15 years	56	23.3%
16-20 years	59	24.6%
Above 20 years	60	25.0%

The demographic analysis of respondents reveals significant insights into the pottery industry. A large proportion of artisans are older adults, with 31.25% aged 51 and above and 29.17% in the 41-50 age range. Younger generations show lower participation, with only 10.42% below 20 and 12.5% aged 21-30, suggesting declining youth interest. Gender distribution indicates a slight male dominance, with 57.5% male and 42.5% female participation. Educational attainment is relatively low, as 46.67% have only primary education, 22.08% completed secondary education, and 20.83% have informal education. Only 10.42% attained tertiary education, underscoring the need for targeted skill development programs. In terms of experience, 25% have worked for over 20 years, with significant representation in the 16-20 years (24.58%) and 11-15 years (23.33%) categories, indicating that the industry is dominated by seasoned artisans. The findings highlight an aging workforce, gender imbalance, and low educational levels. To ensure sustainability, policies must promote youth participation, skill acquisition, and modernization of the industry.

Table 2: Structure of the pottery industry

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1. What is the structure of your pottery business?		
Sole proprietorship	80	33.3%
Family business	140	58.3%
Cooperative group	10	4.16%
Government-supported enterprise	10	4.16%
2. How is the production of native plates and pots organized in your business?		
Handmade only	180	75.0%
Partly handmade, partly mechanized	55	23.0%
Fully mechanized	5	2.0%
3. How many workers are involved in your production process?		
1-5 workers	80	33.3%
6-10 workers	120	50.0%
11-20 workers	35	14.5%
More than 20 workers	5	2.0%
4. How often do you produce native plates and pots?		
Daily	40	16.6
Weekly	60	25.0
Monthly	35	14.6
Seasonally	105	43.75

Table 2 indicates that the majority of pottery businesses operate as family businesses (58.3%), with sole proprietorships constituting 33.3%, while cooperative groups and government-supported enterprises each account for 4.16%. Most production of native plates and pots is executed entirely by hand (75.0%), highlighting a strong reliance on traditional methods; a smaller segment (23.0%) employs a hybrid approach, and only 2.0% are fully mechanized. Regarding workforce size, half of the businesses employ between 6 and 10 workers (50.0%), followed by 33.3% employing 1–5 workers, 14.5% employing 11–20 workers, and a minimal 2.0% employing over 20 workers. Production frequency is predominantly seasonal (43.75%), with 25.0% operating weekly, 14.6% monthly, and only 16.6% producing daily. These findings underscore the continued importance of traditional production methods and familial business structures in sustaining Nigeria’s vibrant pottery industry amid gradual mechanization trends.

Table 3: Main Production Stages in the Pottery Industry

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1. Production stages		
Clay sourcing and preparation	180	90.0%
Molding/shaping	170	85.0%
Drying	160	80.0%
Firing/Baking	150	75.0%.
Decoration and finishing	120	60.0%

The study analyzed the main production stages in the pottery business based on multiple-choice responses. The findings show that all respondents engage in multiple stages of pottery production, with varying emphasis on each step. As presented in Table, clay sourcing and preparation was selected by 90% of respondents, indicating its fundamental role in the process. Molding/shaping was chosen by 85%, while drying and firing/baking were identified by 80% and 75%, respectively. Decoration and finishing had the lowest selection rate at 60%, suggesting that not all artisans engage in decorative processes. These results suggest that while all artisans participate in essential production stages, there are variations in engagement with decoration and finishing. This may indicate differences in skill specialization or market demand for decorative pottery.

Table 4: Quantities and Acquisition of Inputs

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1. Where do you source your raw materials?		
Locally within the community	95	39.5%
Neighboring communities	80	33.3%
Other states	60	25.0%
Imported	5	2.0%
2. How do you acquire these inputs?		
Self-extraction	180	75.0%
Purchased from suppliers	55	23.0%
Government supply	5	2.0%
Donated	0	0.0%
3. What is the estimated number of native plates and pots produced per production cycle?		

	Less than 50 pieces	80	33.3%
	51 – 100 pieces	120	50.0%
	101 – 200 pieces	35	14.5%
	More than 200 pieces	5	2.0%
4.	What are the major challenges in acquiring raw materials?		
	High cost	40	16.6
	Scarcity of quality raw materials	60	25.0
	Poor transportation	35	14.6
	Government regulations	105	43.75

Table 4 indicates that a significant portion of pottery businesses in Nigeria source raw materials locally (39.5%) or from neighboring communities (33.3%), with 25.0% obtaining them from other states and only 2.0% relying on imports. Most businesses (75.0%) practice self-extraction, highlighting a reliance on locally available resources, while 23.0% purchase inputs from suppliers and 2.0% receive government supplies. Production per cycle is predominantly moderate, with 50.0% producing between 51 and 100 pieces, 33.3% producing less than 50 pieces, 14.5% producing 101–200 pieces, and 2.0% producing more than 200 pieces. Major challenges in acquiring raw materials include stringent government regulations (43.75%), scarcity of quality materials (25.0%), high costs (16.6%), and poor transportation (14.6%). Furthermore, this data underscores local artisans' self-reliance and the need for improved policy support and infrastructure to enhance production efficiency and sustainability.

Table 6: Financial values of products

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1. What is the price range for each products?		
Below ₦500	70	29.1%
₦500 – ₦1,000	80	33.3%
₦1,001 – ₦2,000	40	16.6%
Above ₦2,000	50	20.0%
2. What is your estimated monthly income from pottery production?		
Below ₦50,000	40	16.6%
₦50,000 – ₦100,000	70	29.1%
₦100,001 – ₦200,000	65	27.0%
Above ₦200,000	65	27.0%
3. How do you sell your products?		
Local market	120	50.0%

	Online market	30	12.5%
	Wholesale distribution	70	29.1%
	Export	20	8.3%
4.	What are the major challenges in selling your products?		
	Low market demand	60	25.0%
	High competition from imported ceramics	40	16.6%
	Poor access to customers	35	14.6
	Lack of financial support	105	43.75

Table 6 shows that pottery products are predominantly priced between ₦500 and ₦1,000 (33.3%), with nearly 29.1% below ₦500, 16.6% between ₦1,001 and ₦2,000, and 20.0% above ₦2,000. This pricing spread suggests artisans are targeting multiple consumer segments. The monthly income distribution indicates that 27.0% earn above ₦200,000, 27.0% earn between ₦100,001 and ₦200,000, 29.1% earn between ₦50,000 and ₦100,000, and 16.6% fall below ₦50,000, reflecting varied market success. Local markets remain the dominant sales channel (50.0%), followed by wholesale distribution (29.1%), online platforms (12.5%), and exports (8.3%). However, significant challenges persist, with 43.75% citing lack of financial support, 25.0% low market demand, 16.6% competition from imported ceramics, and 14.6% poor customer access. Effective strategies such as increased financial support, enhanced market access, and competitive pricing could stimulate further industry growth and stability. Addressing these challenges is imperative for long-term sector development.

The study reveals that the structure of pottery businesses in Nigeria is predominantly familial, with a significant 58.3% of pottery businesses being family-operated, with 33.3% functioning as sole proprietorships, while cooperative groups and government-supported enterprises each comprising only 4.16%. This dominance of family-run operations underscores the importance of intergenerational knowledge transfer in preserving indigenous craft techniques and cultural heritage (Adeyemi & Salawu, 2015). The familial structure supports not only the continuity of artisanal practices but also a commitment to quality and tradition, which remains central despite emerging market pressures. The production process within these enterprises is primarily manual, with 75.0% of respondents indicating that their operations rely entirely on handcrafting. This traditional approach ensures authenticity and cultural significance, yet it also limits scalability and efficiency. A modest 23.0% of businesses have adopted a hybrid model that incorporates some mechanization, while only 2.0% are fully mechanized. This cautious integration of technology reflects a deliberate balance between maintaining artisanal integrity and the potential benefits of modern production techniques (Ogunlade & Aluko, 2022). While mechanization might increase output, many artisans remain concerned that it could compromise the unique character of their products.

The workforce structure further illustrates the industry's small-scale, labor-intensive nature. Half of the businesses employ between 6 and 10 workers, 33.3% rely on 1–5 workers, 14.5% engage between 11 and 20 workers, and a mere 2.0% have over 20 employees. This distribution suggests that the sector values skilled craftsmanship over mass production, emphasizing quality and traditional methods. Production frequency also varies significantly: 43.75% of operations are seasonal likely linked to cultural festivals and fluctuating market demand while 25.0% produce every week, 14.6% monthly, and only 16.6% operate daily. These variations reflect differing business strategies aimed at meeting both local and broader market needs (Okonkwo, 2021; Adebayo et al., 2018).

Delving into the production stages, the study shows that every artisan participates in multiple steps essential to crafting quality pottery. Clay sourcing and preparation, selected by 90% of respondents, is foundational; the quality of raw clay directly affects the durability and aesthetic appeal of the final product (Adeyemi & Salawu, 2015). Molding or shaping was chosen by 85% of participants, underscoring its importance in defining both form and function. The craftsmanship involved in these early stages not only creates utilitarian objects but also adds an element of artistry that is highly valued (Okonkwo, 2021). Subsequent steps include drying (80% participation) and firing or baking (75%), both critical for transforming the raw, molded clay into robust, finished products.

Interestingly, decoration and finishing had the lowest engagement, with only 60% of artisans incorporating these steps. This reduced emphasis may indicate either a specialization in functional over ornamental pottery or a response to market demand that prioritizes durability over aesthetics. The additional costs and specialized skills required for decoration could also deter some artisans from engaging in these processes (Eze & Nwosu, 2017). Ogunlade and Aluko (2022) further observe that market preferences often lean toward utilitarian pottery, explaining the lower rate of decorative production. Nonetheless, this gap represents an opportunity for further specialization and value addition as market tastes evolve (Zhang & Li, 2023). Raw material sourcing is another critical facet of the industry. The study reveals that 39.5% of raw materials are sourced within the local community, 33.3% come from neighboring areas, 25.0% are obtained from other states, and only 2.0% are imported. The fact that 75.0% of artisans practice self-extraction highlights a deep-rooted reliance on indigenous resources and traditional procurement methods (Adeyemi & Salawu, 2015). However, significant challenges persist in this area. Artisans face stringent government regulations (43.75%), scarcity of quality materials (25.0%), high input costs (16.6%), and poor transportation infrastructure (14.6%). These constraints impede production efficiency and profitability, necessitating policy reforms and infrastructural improvements to support the industry (Ogunlade & Aluko, 2022).

Financial performance is closely tied to these production challenges. The study indicates that moderate production volumes when combined with high input costs, leave

artisans vulnerable to fluctuations in raw material availability and pricing. This vulnerability underlines the need for enhanced policy support and strategic investments, which could not only improve financial returns but also preserve the artisanal heritage intrinsic to Nigerian pottery (Zhang & Li, 2023; Eze & Nwosu, 2017). Pricing strategies further illustrate the adaptive nature of the sector. With 33.3% of products priced between ₦500 and ₦1,000 and nearly 29.1% below ₦500, artisans cater to a wide range of consumers. This flexibility in pricing, which aligns with the findings of Adeyemi and Salawu (2015), allows the sector to capture various market segments while maintaining the traditional value of the craft. Monthly income data reveals significant variability in market success 27.0% of artisans earn above ₦200,000, another 27.0% fall within the ₦100,001–₦200,000 range, 29.1% earn between ₦50,000 and ₦100,000, and 16.6% earn below ₦50,000. This variation likely reflects differences in production quality, market access, and pricing strategies (Okonkwo, 2021). Local markets dominate sales channels, accounting for 50.0% of transactions, which underscores the importance of community-based networks in traditional industries. Wholesale distribution (29.1%), online platforms (12.5%), and exports (8.3%) indicate that some artisans are successfully expanding their market reach beyond local confines. Despite these promising trends, the industry faces significant challenges. A lack of financial support, cited by 43.75% of respondents, poses a major barrier to growth. Additionally, low market demand (25.0%), stiff competition from imported ceramics (16.6%), and limited customer access (14.6%) further constrain the sector.

Summary of key findings

- Nigeria's pottery industry is predominantly family-run: 58.3% family enterprises and 33.3% sole proprietorships, with only 4.16% cooperative and government-supported models.
- Seventy-five percent rely exclusively on manual handcrafting, 23.0% use a hybrid approach, and 2.0% are fully mechanized.
- Artisans operate on a small scale, with 50.0% employing 6–10 workers; production is largely seasonal (43.75%), linked to cultural festivals and fluctuating market demand.
- Raw materials are mainly sourced locally, with 75.0% of artisans practicing self-extraction. Challenges include regulations, material scarcity, high costs, and poor logistics, urging policy support.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive insight into the multifaceted nature of Nigeria's pottery industry. While the sector is firmly anchored in traditional, family-run enterprises and manual production processes, it is simultaneously challenged by limitations

in scalability, technological integration, and market dynamics. Addressing these challenges through increased financial support, improved market access, and strategic policy interventions is essential for fostering long-term growth and preserving the cultural heritage that Nigerian pottery embodied. The study underscores that while tradition remains the cornerstone of the industry, gradual modernization and targeted support could unlock new avenues for value creation and economic sustainability.

To enhance the sustainability and growth of Nigeria's pottery sector, several recommendations are proposed.

- i. Policymakers should reform regulations and offer financial incentives like subsidies and low-interest loans to reduce production costs and boost competitiveness.
- ii. Gradual integration of suitable technology, supported by training and pilot projects, can improve efficiency while preserving artisanal quality.
- iii. Capacity building through workshops and collaborations is essential for skill development.
- iv. Improving transportation and logistics infrastructure will facilitate raw material access.
- v. Expanding market channels via online platforms, export opportunities, and cooperative models can further enhance financial stability and market reach. These measures will secure long-term industry resilience.

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