

Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development: A Case for Present Day Ijaye Pottery Tools Genre

Patience Anthony-Euba

Department of Industrial Design, School of Arts, Design and Printing, Yaba College of Technology.
nkemobby@yahoo.com

Towobola, W.L

Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED), Yaba College of Technology, Yaba, Lagos.

Abstract

It is no longer news that unemployment has reached an intolerable level that has led to restiveness among the Nigerian youths. This situation is not peculiar to Nigeria alone, but has become a global phenomenon which governments, world over, are trying to tackle (Nigeria inclusive). This has informed the setting up of self-empowerment programs such as SURE-P, as part of Nigeria's president Goodluck Jonathan's transformation schema.

This paper tries to look at pottery tools used by the Ijaye Kurunmi indigenous potters and the challenges of sustainable entrepreneurship. The paper identified selected types of tool used by the potters and the different aspect of pottery production to which these tools are subjected. The paper looked at the challenges being faced by indigenous pottery makers with the lack of appropriate tools for their trade and the effect it is having on their productivity as well as on the sustainability of pottery as a trade. The methodology adopted in this paper is a combination of qualitative and analytical as well as oral interviews. The writers of this paper are of the opinion that with the reactivation and revolutionizing of the indigenous tool making industries and the indigenous pottery industries, entrepreneurship sustainability can be ensured as well as youth engagement/employment and economic growth.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Sustainable, Genre, Indigenous, Ijaye Kurunmi.

INTRODUCTION

Ijaye is a town in Abeokuta south local government area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Ijeyans trace their origin to Oduduwa through the defunct Oyo kingdom¹, through Orile-ijaye from where they migrated into Abeokuta.

For clarity, it is important to state here that three different Ijaye people groups exists in Abeokuta. These are Ijaye-Obinritin, Ijaye-Kukudi and Ijaye-Kurunmi. They, however, relate to each other as a people of common origin and aspirations².

Ijaye is one of the few places in among the Yorubas, where well established pottery is still being practiced. Pottery culture is an integral part of the Ijaye people as it is long instituted to the origin of the people. Archaeological findings³ have revealed the dominance of pottery materials among the Ijaye people. Before the advent of modern technology, Ijaye people revered their potters as essentials to life. This is because all other local industries depended on them. For example the black soap makers depended on them for their highly cherished vessels known as *Ládiró* and *Lókítí*; the palm-oil, palm-kernel oil and the coconut oil trades depended on them for *Májògé* and *Yánkó* vessels. Potteries such as *agbébi* (used in burring placentas or after birth of new born babies), *àsèje* (used in preparing medicinal soups) and *orù àgbo* are highly valued by the ethno-medicinal sector of their community, just like other earthenware vessels were produced on demand to serve daily domestic, storage, and religious purposes, to mention but a few.

The predominance of the female folk in Ijaye pottery has been conserved overtime, as the art is passed down from generations to generations among females. The male folks regard pottery as a challenging and less profitable venture, and as such, would rather engage in less strenuous but more profitable profession⁴.

It is important to state here that this paper examines indigenous tools used in present day Ijaye pottery.

CONCEPTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

Entrepreneurship even though universally practiced has been defined by various authors differently. This is because it is an everyday experience which may differ for each individual, a reason why Mark Casson (2002) upholds that entrepreneurship means different things to different people.

Jones and Sakong (1980) claims entrepreneurship is the force that mobilizes other resources to unmet market demand. Ronstadt on his part sees entrepreneurship as "The dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. He states further that wealth is created by individuals who assumes the major risks in terms of equity, time and/career commitment or provide value for some products or services which may or may not be new or unique. He says, however that value must somehow be infused by the entrepreneur through receiving and allocating the necessary skills and resources. Stevenson and Gumpert (1985) define entrepreneurship in their own case as "the process of creating value by pulling together a unique package of resources to exploit and opportunity".

Abraham (1999) on the other hand, considers entrepreneurship as having to do with conceptual approach to doing new things, within a new philosophy of value, purpose, utility, quality and use which satisfies needs. While Udeh (1999) has it that entrepreneurship is the willingness and the ability of an individual to seek out an investment opportunity, establish an enterprise base on this, and run it successfully either for profit making or social benefit.

It should be noted however that the word entrepreneurship/entrepreneur is a word imported from French verb "entreprendre". According to Ndubuisi, (2004), the Frenchman who organized and led military expeditions in the 16th century was referred to as an entrepreneur and Marco Polo was noted as the first entrepreneur when he acted as the go between venture capitalist and buyers, when he attempted to establish a trade route to the Far East. However, it was Richard Cantillon an Irishman that first introduced the word *entrepreneur* into business in the 17th century. It was used to describe a risk bearer when observed farmers, Merchants Craftsmen and others bought their goods at certain known price and sold at an unknown price, bearing the risk involved.

The understanding of the concept of entrepreneurship is very important as it will, according to Yaba College of Technology, Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) Study manual, make everybody to appreciate the fact that any situation one may have found oneself offers opportunities for being beneficial and making life better for others.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

According to the United Nation's Commission on Environment and Development (UNCED), Sustainable Development is defined as a "developments that meets the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The concept of sustainable development requires balancing environmental, societal and economic considerations in the pursuit of development and an improved quality of life.

The need for sustainable development arose out of three factors, viz:

1. The fact that there is limited availability of natural resources. It is to be noted that the amount and quality of natural resources like * Energy generation: Storage, Distribution and Usage

*Air and Water: Emission, Pollution and Scarcity

*Toxicity: Human and Environmental disruptions

*Materials: Over-exploitations and Scarcity; are inadequate when compared to the needed amount and quality.

2. There is exponential growth in the world population. This is due to improvement in health care delivery and improved economies world over, of which international trade has become an essential tool in the process of economic growth and sustainable development

3. Current and future generations have the right to fulfill their needs.

The aforementioned are the three challenges that sustainable development aims to address. According to CREATE IMPACT; a handbook for sustainable entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship has the potential to create value within each of the three dimensions of sustainability while boosting innovation through new products, services and business models.

POTTERY RAW MATERIAL

Clay is the basic raw material used in pottery production. It is the product of the disintegration of the feldspartic rock brought about by agents of geological forces and weathering⁵. Weathering has made clay one of the most common materials on earth.

To the western civilization, two major clay groups are known. These are the primary clay and the secondary clay. Primary clay are so termed because they are found in the site of the parent feldspartic rock while the later refers to such clay that has been transported from place of origin (formation) to other places and contains impurities, gathered in the course of transportation. Secondary clays are easily pliable since nature has made them plastic, finer in grain and fires at relatively low temperature. They are mostly used by indigenous pottery.

Yoruba refer to clay as *amò*, and various types are used. These are differentiated by place of origin, colour, and certain characteristics or qualities they exhibit. As such, clays like *amò dúdú* (black), *amò funfun* (white) otherwise known as *onisíméntì* (cement like), *amò pupa* (red) are so named on the basis of colour. *Amò Báánkì*, simply referred to as *Báánkì*, is so named because it is found and collected by the river bank. No wonder, most Ijaye potters avoid it. Others are *ewùyá* and *iró*. *Ewùyá* is compact, gritty and less plastic while *iró*, on the other hand, is very plastic but malleable. Most suitable and used by Ijaye potters are *iró* and *ewùyá*. Others are *onisíméntì*, *amò dúdú*, and *amò pupa*.

CLAY PREPARATION

Hodges (1964:19) asserts that no clay, immediately after digging, is suitable for pot production. This is also corroborated by Newman (1974:30) who avers that no clay is usable immediately after being dug up. As such, newly dug up clay has to be processed in order to improve its characteristics so as to render it plastic and pliable. Lumps of clay, collected from clay sites are stored for some time to dry after which they are broken into smaller

lumps with the use of an *okó* (a hoe) or an *àáké* and sprinkled with water. The wet mass, covered with *lálìlòn* or *lálìlònù* (cellophane sheet), is left for a couple of days to slake. Further steps are taken with the use of different tools in order to realize successful pottery.

TOOLS

A tool can refer to a piece of equipment that is designed to do a particular work⁶. This most times, is one you hold in your hand to work with. It could also be any physical item that can be used to achieve a goal.

The various aspect of pottery production requires the use of different tools; right from the forming of the pot using hand modeling techniques to the decorative finishing stage. Although many tools can be used by the potter, but the ability to know identify what is suitable comes from experience. Methods of pottery production include the age long methods of using the hand, (pinch, coil and slabs); the studio practice of throwing and the industrial use of molds and heavy machines such as the jigger-jolley and roller machines. Each of these methods requires the use of tools specially designed to suit the method. For example, tools like fettling knife, pin tool, cutting wire, sponge, sponge tool, calipers, ribs, kidneys and pear pitters are used for throwing, while spring scale, plaster rasp, planning/surform tool, spatula and mold bands are used in pottery production involving plaster works. Interestingly, these tools are not familiar to indigenous pottery. This is because most of their tools are either improvised or adapted from ordinary odds and ends found in nature, in the house or on a rubbish heap.

A potter can make use of many tools ranging from wood, metal, brushes, kitchens utensils and objects from man's immediate environment⁷. Knowing what to look for beyond the basics come with experience. Certain pottery tools are common to all Yoruba potters but variations exist between cultures. Overtime, Ijaye potters have developed pottery tools that are convenient for their method of pottery making⁸. Some are designed for use in clay digging and carriage, some for clay preparations, while others are employed in the forming, decorative and finishing aspect of their pottery production.

TOOLS USED IN CLAY EXCAVATION AND TRASPORTATION

TOOLS	USES
CUTLASS (<i>ÀDÁ</i>)	Used to clear the weed on clay deposits.
PICK AXE (also referred to as <i>OKÓ</i>)	Used to dig up layers of soil atop the clay bed.
HOE (<i>OKÓ</i>)	Is used to remove the unwanted soil dug up from the top of the clay bed. in this Process, the clay deposits is revealed.
ADZE (<i>KÙDÚSÙ</i>)	This is used to dig up clay compacts.
HEAD PAN (<i>POONPÓN</i>) LARGE CALABASH (<i>IGBÁA EERÙ</i>)	Used for loading up and transporting dug up clays to pottery centers.

Most important to a traditional potter is the availability of clay. Clay must be easily accessed and must be in abundance to ensure they do not run out of supply for a very long time. As such, potters go in search of clay sites. Once a clay site is discovered, the practice was for husbands of potters or hired laborer's to carry out the clay digging with the use of tools such as cutlass (*Àdà*); pick-axe (*àáké*); hoe (*okó*), basins, head pans among others are employed. The cutlass is used to clear the weed on sited clay deposits while the pick-axe is used to dig up layers of soil above the clay deposit after which clay digging commences⁹.

These days, it is however not uncommon to see dug up clay lumps packed in discarded cement bags as the use of large calabash could be said to have virtually gone out of fashion among the Ijaye potters, coupled with the fact that enamel basin may be considered too expensive and highly cherished for better use than to be subjected to clay conveyance. Hodges (1964; 19) asserts that no clay is suitable for pot production, immediately after digging. Ijaye potters strongly believe that a successful pot is the result of a well prepared clay body aside expertise. As such, excavated clays have to be processed in order to render it malleable and pliable.

This paper shall not preoccupy itself with details of indigenous clay preparations so as not to lose touch on its focal point; which is tools used in different aspect of present day indigenous pot production by the Ijaye people.

TOOLS USED IN CLAY PREPARATION

Chunks of clay lumps are poured on a flat surface in an open space or spread in the sun to dry properly after which certain tools are employed to further hasten the preparation process as under listed:

TOOLS	USAGES
HOE (<i>OKÓ</i>) AXE (<i>ÁÁKÉ</i>)	Used for breaking dried hard lumps into smaller lumps and then tiny clay fragments
CELLOPHANE SHEETS (<i>LÁÍLÒNÙ</i>)	Used to cover wet clay mass in order to facilitate proper clay slake
THICK CELLOPHANE SHEETS (<i>LÁÍLÒNÙ</i>) or WIDE WOODEN PLANK (<i>PÁKÓ</i>)	This is spread on the ground and well slaked clay is heaped on it, to be mashed bare footed.
POTTERS BARE FEET	Employed to bring about proper clay body mixture. This is done in a rhythmic dancelike movement on either a wide wooden plank or on a thick cellophane sheet.
MORTAR (<i>ODÓ</i>)	For pounding clay into workable consistence. Used to pound clay body in order to improve plasticity. To crush tinier lumps that must have escaped the kneading process.

It is important to state here that the thick cellophane and wide are only improvised to be used in place of a wide smooth clay platform on the ground, carved out from the work space. This smooth platform otherwise referred to as *ojuada* is specially designed for traditional clay kneading among Ijaye potters. The other options were necessary because *ojuada* can only be used in the dry season as it swells and becomes unsuitable for clay kneading in the rainy season¹⁰.

TOOLS	USAGES
Basin	To contain the smooth pound clay mass
Potters bare palms	Used to cut and roll clay chunks into balls. To further beat and remove air pockets from balls of clay.
Wet cloth and cellophane sheets	To wrap up well prepared clay balls. To help retain moisture in clay and keep balls of clay ready for use.

TOOLS FOR POT FORMATION AND DECORATION

The next stage a potter embarks upon is the actual pot formation. Assorted tools are also employed here. In modern pottery, a wide variety of useful tools are commercially available. As such, studio potters do not preoccupy themselves with production of tools for their profession. This practice is not tantamount to indigenous Ijaye pottery. Individual potter has been able to find and make tools that are just right and suitable for her hand building process. This is possible because indigenous pottery practice avails a potter the opportunity to explore clay with her hands and fingers thereby bringing about an affinity between the potters and the clay. This may further be explicated using Shoji Hamada's claim that to work with clay is to be in touch with the tap root of life¹¹. One may claim that this affinity have brought a deep sense of understudy of their raw materials and as such, given them an insight into what and what to make or look for, to serve as pot formation tools. It is of no wonder they have adapted a variety of objects, ranging from odds and ends that may have been found in nature, in the house, scrap heap, trash heaps, discarded items found around the house or along the road. These may include a piece of cloth or rag, metal spring, stones or smooth pebbles, broken combs, shells or the cover of sardine tins. Some of these tools and their uses are under listed:

TOOLS	INDEGENOUS NAMES	USAGES
Cellophane sheets	Láílònú	To keep clay balls moist while work and free from unwanted debris that may stray into the clay balls while working.
Molds	Ìdé	They are made from clay and come in different sizes and are used to form or cast the bottom part or base of pots when the in direct method of pottery production is employed
Beater	Tìmù	These are specially baked clay balls used in beating out clay and spread slab on the pre-molds
Kidney	Pelebe	Fashioned from the covers of empty tins of sardine, aluminum or other metal sheets. It is used for smoothening, scraping and trimming off excess clay, in order to reduce weight and to create an even rim in pottery production.
Potter's knife	Òbe	Basically, for cutting clay in the course of pot formation, to ensure an evenness in the neck of a pot. It is also used for decoration, trimming and to create an opening which serves as the neck of an <i>orù</i> .
Pebbles	Aàré or Àré	They are simply used for burnishing leather hard pots (shiny decorative effect). They are also used to smoothening pottery surfaces.
Snail shell, Broken calabash	Ìkaraun Àfòkù'gbá	These serve as scrappers and scoopers.
Corn cob, Kakawa, Metal spring, Cowry shells, Short broom	Sùkù àgbàdo Wáyá, Owó eyo, Qwò	Basically used as decorative tools, they are used to stamp different patterns and motifs on leather hard pottery.
Sticks	Igi	Used, both for decoration and for easy removal of pots from molds.
A bowl of water	Abó omi	A bowl of water is necessary to help keep the potter's fingers moist while production is in progress. It also helps keep the pot workable.
A piece of cloth or rag	Aşo or Àkísà	After the rim of a pot is formed, a wet rag is used to finish it.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Although Ijaye pottery is well established and is still being practiced, it is important to state here that the boom is on the decline. So many factors are responsible for this. Some of these are manpower related, government economic policies related, low patronage, and probably the non-availability of modern machines and tools, among other factors.

As earlier stated, there is no known indigenous industry that specializes in tool making, where Ijaye potters could purchase tools for their occupation. This may have posed a great challenge to the development of pottery, among other traditional African institutions.

To support sustainable improvements in the quality of traditional pottery and other marginalised local industries in Africa, it is recommended that local tool making businesses such as blacksmithing are revived and encouraged. The likelihood is that:

*Most indigenous industries would be revived

*Graduates from such indigenous business backgrounds would have something to fall back to thereby reducing the search for white-collar jobs. This is because entrepreneurial studies have been introduced into the Nigerian educational system; such that school leavers are equipped with entrepreneurial skills, the willingness and the ability to seek out an investment opportunity in tool making, establish the enterprise, and run it successfully either for profit making or social benefit.

*Being educated, these graduates are bound to introduce improved technologies into indigenous industries like pottery making. This will certainly reduce the rate at which local industries fold up. The result is sure to bring about the needed growth in the national economy.

*Traditional pottery is sure to be less strenuous, potters will become more creative as they are relieved of the task of searching for and making tools themselves.

Nigerian government should make policies that would foster local tools production, dedicated to improving living conditions and creating better opportunities for indigenous potters and their profession, without regard to their faith, origin or gender.

Government should also set aside a sum as intervention fund to revive the ailing local industries especially the tool making industry that will serve others.

In all the aim of sustainable entrepreneurship is to solve social and environmental problems by applying business principles.

REFERENCES

1. Madam Nuratu Oyadeyi (65 yrs.)
2. Folarin, O. (1931). *Egba History*
3. Olayinka, O. (1997). *A preliminary ethno-archaeological work in Orile-Ijaye*
4. Madam Oyarin Ojo
5. Speight and Toki. (2004). *Hands in Clay*. Mc Graw-Hill. New York. P.3
6. Rundell, Michael (et al) eds. (2007). *Macmillan English Dictionary for advanced learners*. United Kingdom. P. 1579
7. Peterson, S. (1999). *The Craft and Art of Clay: A complete potter's handbook*. P.30
8. Patience Anthony-Euba. (2010). *An analysis of forms and classification of Ijaye pottery*. P.35
9. Fatunsin, A (1992). *Yoruba pottery*. P. 19
10. Patience Anthony-Euba. (2010). *An analysis of forms and classification of Ijaye pottery*. P.32
11. Speight and Toki. (2004). *Hands in Clay*. New York. P.182
12. Oriol Pascal (et al). (2011). *Create Impact: Handbook for Sustainable Development*, draft 1.0 Enviu-innovators in sustainability.
13. Ronstadt, R. (1985). *The Educated Entrepreneur: A new Era of Entrepreneurial Education is beginning*. American Journal of Small Business, Vol. 10 pp. 7-23.
14. Arogundade, B. B. (2011). *Entrepreneurship Education: An imperative for sustainable Development in Nigeria*, Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS) 2(1): 26-29.
15. Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED), (2011): *Entrepreneurship Study Manual*.
16. Casson, Mark (2002). *Entrepreneurship*. Martin Robinson. Oxford.