

TITLE PAGE

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES IN
NSUKKA AND AWKA**

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UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND TOURISM

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AREA AND AWKA**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
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APPROVAL PAGE

This project has been approved for the award of Master of Arts in Archaeology and Tourism, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

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DATE

DEDICATION

This work is specially dedicated to Almighty God and to my blessed family.

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To God be the Glory for the successful completion of this project work. I can hardly thank adequately the scores of respondent in various villages in Nsukka and Awka who volunteered information during this research work.

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PREFACE

This research work is based on traditional crafts and industries in Nsukka and Awka Areas. It deals on the comparative analysis of the various crafts in the both study areas with an attempt to understand the cultures of Nsukka and Awka people as the two sub-cultural groups have lived and interacted with each other for centuries. It is therefore not impossible that there have been frequencies of cultural hybridism between the two groups. It is also not impossible that the blacksmithing tradition, carving art, broom making, thatching and basketry originated from the Nsukka Igbo and diffused to their neighbours through bilateral cross-cultural interactions or vice versa.

However, the work is grouped into five chapters. Chapter one serves as the introductory part, chapter two examines the various literatures and theories relevant to the work. Chapter three reviews the background information of the study areas. Chapter four comprises of data presentation and analysis and finally chapter five serves as the concluding chapter.

LIST OF PLATES

Plate One: The Land Area Vegetation of Nsukka - - - - -	39
Plate Two: The Land Area Vegetation of Awka - - - - -	40
Plate Three: Showing some tools for blacksmithing - - - - -	73
Plate Four: Showing the blacksmithing hearth - - - - -	73
Plate Five: Showing the Researcher observing the smith in the act - - - - -	73
Plate Six: Showing some axes with wooden handles- - - - -	73
Plate Seven: Showing metal traps made by Mr. Asogwa Godwin - - - - -	73
Plate Eight: Showing the bellow - - - - -	73
Plate Nine: Showing Mr.Ugwuja Elias in his workshop - - - - -	74
Plate Ten: Showing the Researcher with Mr. Asogwa Sunday and Mr. Ugwuja Elias-	74
Plate Eleven: Showing <i>Nkpo ana</i> (canon gun) - - - - -	74
Plate Twelve: Showing Mr. Onyeibor Isaac drawing a pattern on a metal sheet -	74
Plate Thirteen: Showing few <i>ogene</i> (musical instrument) made by Mr. Michael Okpara-	75
Plate Fourteen: Showing Mr. Ndubuisi Chigbata forging <i>Nkpo ana</i> (canon gun) -	75
Plate Fifteen: Showing <i>eka</i> (ritual objects) made by Eze Kenneth - - - - -	75
Plate Sixteen: Showing Mr. Michael Okpara's Workshop at Mbaukwu, Awka -	75
Plate Seventeen: Showing Mr. Eze Kenneth's Workshop at Amora-Nru Nsukka -	76
Plate Eighteen: Showing Mr. Emmanuel Odinaka and the Researcher in front of Eze-Uzu's Palace - - - - -	76
Plate Nineteen: Some of the tools of woodcarving - - - - -	85
Plate Twenty: Showing Mr. Ogugua Okey working - - - - -	85
Plate Twenty One: Showing some Awka style of mortars - - - - -	85
Plate Twenty Two: Showing some pestles ready for sell - - - - -	85
Plate Twenty Three: Showing <i>Azi</i> (wooden pillars) - - - - -	85
Plate Twenty Four: Showing Woodcarving Raw Materials - - - - -	85
Plate Twenty Five: Showing Mr. Eze Carving a pestle - - - - -	86
Plate Twenty Six: Showing Mr. Umoro Ugwu with the Researcher - - - - -	86

Plate Twenty Seven: Showing the Researcher and Mr. Nnoruka Patrick carving a pestle	86
Plate Twenty Eight: Showing logs of wood - - - - -	86
Plate Twenty Nine: Showing Mr. Ezea Okwudili weaving the basement of the basket	89
Plate Thirty: Showing the placements of wefts - - - - -	89
Plate Thirty One: Showing when the first round of weaving is completed - -	89
Plate Thirty Two: Showing the weft shaped to have arrow head - - -	89
Plate Thirty Three: Showing the strands of the basket - - - -	89
Plate Thirty Four: Showing the strands of the basket - - - -	90
Plate Thirty Five: Showing <i>Ishi</i> , a type of basket - - - - -	90
Plate Thirty Six: Showing <i>Nkata</i> , a type of basket - - - - -	90
Plate Thirty Seven: Showing <i>Owuru-egbe</i> , a type of basket - - - -	90
Plate Thirty Eight: Showing <i>Agaghele</i> , a type of basket - - - -	91
Plate Thirty Nine: Showing <i>Nwa-abo echicha</i> , a type of basket - - - -	91
Plate Forty: Showing <i>Abo/Ukpam</i> , a type of basket - - - - -	91
Plate Forty One: Showing a big <i>Agaghele</i> , a type of basket - - - -	91
Plate Forty Two: Showing large <i>Ngiga</i> , a type of basket - - - -	92
Plate Forty Three: Fresh Palm Fronds - - - - -	95
Plate Forty Four: Mrs. Oguagha threshing the leaves - - - -	95
Plate Forty Five: Mrs. Ezeaso threshing the leaves - - -- - -	95
Plate Forty Six: Mrs. Ezeaso tying the brooms - - - - -	95
Plate Forty Seven: Showing Brooms Ready for Use - - - - -	95
Plate Forty Eight: Showing brooms in the making - - - - -	96
Plate Forty Nine: Showing brooms display for sale - - - - -	96
Plate Fifty: Showing bundles of brooms for exportation- - - - -	96
Plate Fifty One: Showing the researcher and Mrs. Ugwu Rose - - - -	97
Plate Fifty Two: Showing Ogbu Chekwube and the Researcher in her work shop- -	97
Plate Fifty Three: Showing bundles of dry leaves (<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>) - -	101
Plate Fifty Four: Showing a thatch roof under construction with (<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>)-	101
Plate Fifty Five: Showing a fine thatch roof constructed with (<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>)-	101

Plate Fifty Six: Showing Mr. Ezema and the Researcher	-	-	-	-	101
Plate Fifty Seven: Showing a fence made with (<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>)	-	-	-	-	102
Plate Fifty Eight: Showing a seedling bed covered with (<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>)-	-	-	-	-	102

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 1: Map of Enugu State Showing the Study Areas	-	-	-	-	30
Fig 2: Map of Nsukka Area Showing the Study Locations		-	-	-	31
Fig 3: Map of Nsukka Town Showing the Distributions of Crafts in the Area	-				32
Fig 4: Map of Ede-oballa Showing the Distributions of Crafts in the Area	-				33
Fig 5: Map of Ibagwa-Aka Showing the Distributions of Crafts in the Area	-				34
Fig 6: Map of Anambra State Showing the Study Area	-	-	-	-	36
Fig 7: Map of Akwa Town Showing the Distributions of Crafts in the Area	-				37

ABSTRACT

This research report though primarily designed to reveal traditional crafts and industries in Nsukka and Awka in its comparative contexts. It is an attempt at reconstructing an aspect of the economic history of Nsukka and Awka people, the impact it made on the people and on the Igbo, as well as neighbouring non-Igbo societies in general.

This research work will seek to explore the nature and level of traditional Igbo civilization in the both study areas as the two sub-cultural groups have lived and interacted with each other for centuries. It is therefore not impossible that there have been frequencies of cultural hybridism between the two groups.

This is evident in the socio-cultural similarities, especially in their technical process of crafts that attest to the historical and cultural links between them (Nsukka and Awka). Also, they had mutually existed and interacted well which encouraged exchange of cultural borrowings among them.

Be it as it may, it is not impossible that one or two crafts traditions may have originated from the Nsukka Igbo and diffused to Awka or other neighbours through bilateral cross cultural interactions.

In conclusion, this research work will examine the growth of the local industries in the study areas and ways in which the potentialities of the local crafts industries can be harnessed for tourism development and promotion.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Various communities of the world have their peculiar local crafts and traditional industries which they are well known for and fulfilled with. It represents people's ingenuity and creativity in the consumption of nature in an environment. In Nigeria, the high practice of agriculture before the discovery of oil promoted the utilization of local crafts which were produced by our craftsmen. Such crafts are baskets, hoes, local guns, machetes, brooms etc. Among the Igbos, Oguagha and Okpoko (1988) state that, "*Igbo people posses specialized craft industries excluding agriculture.*" They stressed that crafts are very prominent among the Igbo people due to it supplies them with farming implement, household utensils, weapons, etc.

However, Nsukka and Awka people have perpetually maintained their tradition of various traditional crafts for years now. At present, smelting, palm oil production, basketry, local thatch making, wood carving, blacksmithing, palm wine tapping etc have remained as their major traditional crafts.

Traditional crafts will be seen here as a local type of business that involves the application of systematic skills acquired informally by a particular people or society in their pursuit to become accustomed to the natural environment. These people (craftsmen and women) are known to be small scale industrialists. On the other hand, a local industry consist of many indigenous producers or home workers who are engaged in a common task whose ownership, management, control and source of raw materials are in greater percentage from the local environment.

According to Hornby (2005:341), craft refers to an activity involving a special skill at making things with your hands e.g mat weaving. It involves activities that require both artistic and practical skills.

Traditional crafts and industries in Nsukka and Awka are very useful and valuable. They are remunerative because virtually every village practices and specializes in several crafts thereby leaving every man independent.

However, Abu (2002) noted that *“Nigerian traditional craft is at a crossroads and there are many forces pulling in different directions. On the one hand, government pays little heed to developing this sector of the economy, and on the other hand artists, craftsmen, investors, and enlightened planners are the visionaries upon whom the future of Nigerian traditional crafts depends.”* It is on the note that the researcher has considered it right to study Nigeria traditional crafts and industries using Nsukka and Awka as a case study which represent the population covered.

Therefore, the work identifies and documents some traditional crafts in Nsukka and Awka with a view to finding out the general similarities/differences (comparatively) of the basic crafts under study. Also, to examine how traditional crafts affect other aspects of the peoples' culture and how best to harness these traditional crafts/industries for tourism development in the area.

The study was conducted in twelve communities of Nsukka and Awka areas of Enugu Anambra State respectively. In selecting the study sites, the main interest was to focus on the areas with a high concentration of the practice of woodcarving, blacksmithing, local thatch making, broom making and basketry.

However, to execute the study, the researchers used ethnographic research techniques relevant for the study. These include key informant interviewing, oral tradition, documentary sources among others. To effectively cover the entire study areas, seven communities: from Nsukka - Umuegiri Ibagwa, Amaezi Ede-oballa, Umuobo Obukpa, Owerre Ibagwa, Amauzu Ede-oballa, Amora Nru Nsukka, Okparigbo Ovoko from Awka – the five towns are Umuogburu Awka, Mbaukwu, Umubuele, Umuokpu, and Umuike were earmarked and studied. The selections were based on the communities' key roles

in aspects of traditional crafts, economic, political and socio-cultural activities in the local government council.

1.1 Statement of Problem:

Although several researches have been carried out on traditional crafts and industries of different people, none of these researchers have taken the time to document the comparative analysis of the production of crafts in Nsukka and Awka respectively taking into consideration the fact that the two indigenous communities of Nsukka and Awka are among those that dominate the crafts market of Igboland and Nigeria at large.

Therefore, this research work is carried out to;

- Ascertain the historical difference about the origin of the crafts under study.
- To determine the similarities the two towns have in their occupation of crafts making and finally,
- To identify the various factors that led to change and continuity peculiar to one community or town, which may have affected positively or negatively to the industry of the host community.

In order to achieve the above, ethnographic study was conducted in the twelve communities within the research area by the researcher.

1.2 Research Objectives:

This research report, though primarily designed to document traditional crafts in Nsukka and Awka will concentrate mainly on blacksmithing, local thatch making, woodcarving, broom making and basketry.

1. Document the crafts and the accompanying products.
2. To analyze the findings from the areas by comparing their cultural differences, and similarities. This will enable the researcher to examine the extent to which Awka Craft Industry is more or less advanced in blacksmithing industry, woodcarving, thatch making, basketry and broom making than Nsukka Craft Industry.

3. Based on the above findings, to establish the existence of change or cultural continuity between the past and present inhabitants of the two towns that formed my case study and, also the factors that led to that change.
4. Consequently, this work will also look at the contributions of these crafts in the socio cultural way of life of the people and in the development of our nation.
5. In conclusion, it will examine the problems militating against the growth of the industries.

1.3 Method of Research:

The method of research adopted was ethnographic survey. This is a collection of qualitative methods used in the social sciences that focus on the close observation of social practices and interactions (Erial, 2016). These qualitative methods enable the researcher to interpret and build theories about how and why a social process occurs.

Ethnographic survey equally entails the collection of information from knowledgeable people on the subject matter through various techniques that formed primary sources of data collection. Therefore, in carrying out this research, the researcher made use of both primary and secondary sources of data collection. However, for the primary sources of data collection, participant observation or On-the-Site Observation, key informants' interview and in-depth interview methods were used in conducting this research.

This was achieved by visiting the target population namely wood carvers, blacksmiths, local thatch makers, and basket and broom makers.

However, the research was established after five initial visits to the craftsmen's workshop. All together, (31) regular crafts makers were interviewed out of the numerous crafts makers in the study areas. The other three craft makers (potters, mat weavers, and palm wine tappers) were not studied due to geographical distance. But in the areas accessed and studied, more than one outstanding craftsmen were interviewed from each of the following villages from Nsukka - Umuegiri Ibagwa, Amaezi Ede-oballa,

Umuobo Obukpa, Owerre Ibagwa, Amauzu Ede-oballa, Amora Nru Nsukka, Okparigbo Ovoko, and from Awka – Umuogburu Awka, Mbaukwu, Umubuele, Umuokpu, and Umuike. Thus, the researcher was restricted to these areas because they are more popular and more skilled in these crafts than other towns that constitute the study areas.

The researcher visited these workshops to observe the processes of figurine and mask carving, making of mortars, hoes, machetes, metal gongs making, broom making, thatch making and basket making.

Nevertheless, my observations divulged the different production processes adopted in different traditional industries. Also, the uses of such products in Nsukka and Awka were examined and documented.

On the secondary sources of information, Published and unpublished works which comprises of thesis, dissertations, project reports, textbooks, and articles etc. were consulted. Other materials used are internet materials collected from the World Wide Web. All these helped in giving useful information that guided the course of the research.

1.4 Significance of Study:

When completed, this research will help to educate the members of the public on traditional crafts and industries that have survived to this present time in Nsukka and Awka. While focusing on blacksmithing, woodcarving, local thatch making, basketry and broom making, it will give attention to lifting the status of professional manufacturers of art tradition in the system of a heritage or acquired skills through apprenticeship program.

It will also go a long way in bring to focus the dynamics but creative ingenuity peculiar to a group of crafts men (under study) which is speculative to be common in the craft industries.

Since crafts are the good way of preservation of tradition, and is part of Nigeria's intangible heritage, this research work will help to document and add to the existing knowledge about the people and more especially the importance of a craft culture for creative economy in the areas under study.

However, this study will ensure the fact that traditional crafts and industries needed some measure of protection from massive degradation and neglect from the people due to reasons like importation of cheaply produced finished goods and often inferior articles and lack of interest by the locals in the business of crafts making and rural-urban drifts and Christianity.

This work intends to make the people under study to be proud of their culture as well as to preserve for posterity. It will also serve as a reference material for future archaeologists, tourism students and other researchers/scholars and as well to tourists who visit this area.

Finally, this work will generally help the people to understand their ways of life and those aspects of their culture that are dying off.

1.5 Limitations of the Study:

In carrying out any research work, there are always some limiting factors that directly or indirectly affected the total success of this research. Some of the problems I encountered during this research work are as follows:

1. Traditional Beliefs: Religious beliefs and fear of the unknown made some of the craftsmen conservative about divulging information. A typical example of this was witnessed in Awka blacksmithing industry among the gun makers. They all denied the fact that they have any idea about gun making.

2. Lack of Money: This is one of the major hindrances that affected my research work. Its availability will positively affect the research while lack or inadequacy of it will have negative result. For instance, most of the craftsmen demanded for money before giving out information. Some used indirect and delay tactics to ensure that they collect

money from the researcher before information was divulged. Such delay and money conscious attitude affected this study.

3. Limited information/material: here, the secondary materials or sources which were needed especially for the literature review were not easy to lay hands on as much work has not really been done on this particular subject in the study areas. Experts in the field have not written much concerning the comparative analysis of traditional crafts and industries in Nsukka and Awka. Therefore, empirical literature is limited to an extent.

4. Limited Pictures/Photographs: Also, because of security reasons and lack of trust on the part of the craftsmen, some refused to take pictures. Also, finished product like local guns were not available at the time the research was carried out; therefore, the photographs were not taken.

1.6 Scope of the Study:

This research covers the old Nsukka Division with the following towns Umuegiri Ibagwa, Amaezi Ede-oballa, Umuobo Obukpa, Owerre Ibagwa, Amauzu Ede-oballa, Amora Nru Nsukka, Okparigbo Ovoko, and from Awka – Umuogburu Awka, Mbaukwu, Umubuele, Umuokpu, and Umuike.

The researcher was restricted to these areas because they are more popular and more skilled in the crafts than other towns that constitute the study areas.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THEORETICAL LITERATURE

This section presents a review of the theories that were used in writing this research work. Onuegbu (2004:18) defines theory as a set of ideas that provide explanation for something. Theories are generally used in the study of societal cultures, values, ideas and the various meanings obvious to these things by individuals in the society.

According to Igbo and Okpoko (2006), theories are important issues for consideration in tourism planning and development. Theories for them provide not only a guide to empirical research in tourism, but also expand as well as help us to understand the conceptual and spatial scope of such research.

Therefore, the researcher adopted three theoretical approaches. They are diffusionism, modernization theory and structural functionalism.

DIFFUSIONISM

Diffusionism as an anthropological school of thought was an attempt to understand the nature of culture in terms of the origin of culture traits and their spread from one society to another. Versions of diffusionist thought included the conviction that all cultures originated from one culture center (heliocentric diffusion); the more reasonable view that cultures originated from a limited number of culture centers (culture circles); and finally the notion that each society is influenced by others but that the process of diffusion is both contingent and arbitrary (Winthrop 1991:83-84).

Diffusion may be simply defined as the spread of a cultural item from its place of origin to other places (Titiev, 1958:446). A more expanded definition depicts diffusion as the process by which discrete culture traits are transferred from one society to another, through migration, trade, war or other contact (Winthrop 1991).

Diffusionist research originated in the middle of the nineteenth century of the distribution of human culture across the world. By that time scholars had begun to study

not only advanced cultures, but also cultures of nonliterate people (Beals and Hoijer 1959:664).

Boas (1938), argued that though the independent invention of a culture trait can occur at the same time within widely separated societies where there is limited control of individual members, allowing them freedom to create a unique style, a link such as genetic relationship is still suspected. He felt this was especially true in societies where there are similar combinations of traits.

Boas emphasized that culture traits should not be viewed casually, but in terms of a relatively unique historical process that proceeds from the first introduction of a trait until its origin becomes obscure. He sought to understand culture traits in terms of two historical processes, diffusion and modification. Boas used these key concepts to explain culture and interpret the meaning of culture. He believed that the cultural inventory of a people was basically the cumulative result of diffusion. He viewed culture as consisting of countless loose threads, most of foreign origin, but which were woven together to fit into their new cultural context. Discrete elements become interrelated as time passes (Hatch 1973:57-58).

MODERNIZATION THEORY

Modernization theory is used to evaluate the development in which modernization processes in a society take place. This theory looks at the aspects of countries which are beneficial or those that constitute obstacles for economic development. The idea is that development assistance targeted at those particular aspects that can lead to modernization of traditional or backward societies (Khun, 2008:9).

Modernization theory is used to explain the process of modernization within societies. Modernization refers to a model of a progressive transition from a “pre-modern” or “traditional” to a “modern” society. Modernization has been defined as the process by which an underdeveloped region change in response to input (ideology, behavioral, code, communities and institution models) from already established industrial centers’

(Igbo and Okpoko 2006:16). The theory looks at the internal factors of a country while assuming that, with assistance, “traditional” countries can be brought to development in the same manner more developed countries have. Modernization theory attempts to identify the social variables that contributes to social progress and development of societies, and seeks to explain the process of social evolution. Modernization theory is subject to criticism originating among socialist and free-market ideologies, world-systems theorists, globalization theorists and dependency theorists among others. Modernization theory not only stresses the process of change, but also the responses to that change. It also looks at internal dynamics. While referring to social and cultural structures and the adaptation of new technologies.

STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONALISM THEORY

Structural functionalism was the dominant perspective of Cultural Anthropologists and Rural Sociologists between World War II and the Vietnam War. Structural functionalism in itself is not a theory but only a perspective that points to way of organizing information on given subject matter to make scientific statements of the subject matter possible (Onyeneke, 1996).

Structural functionalism as a perspective sees the social life of a group, community or society as a working dynamic, harmonious whole which arises from the activities of its constituent parts which themselves may be differentiated.

Each of the constituent parts has its own specific structure of action and activity that contributes towards the maintenance of the whole group as a unit.

Structural functionalism as a theoretical perspective/concept was developed by such Anthropologists like Cloude Levi Strauss and Edmund Leach as well as Samuel P. Huntington. They are of the view that society consists of parts (e.g farms, schools, police, hospitals etc) each of which have their own functions and work together to promote social stability. A social function is “the contribution made by any phenomenon to a larger system of which the phenomenon is a part”, Radcliffe Brown in Onyeneke

(1996) likened structural functionalism to an organic model or a living organism (i.e a human society) as one social unit arising from many component social structures.

It is a system of differentiated parts with activities that are varied, yet these activities relate together to sustain the organism and ensure its survival. Structural functionalism strives to assume the whole of social life of a people in all its aspects. One may choose to devote attention or interest to some particular aspect of it rather than another. This theory therefore is talking about “different structures” in the society and “their functions” in maintaining that society etc.

Structural-Functionalism is applied in this work to show that every society as a cultural entity is made up of different structures such as traditional crafts and industries and this aspect of the people’s culture has its function and roles it plays to make sure that the culture of the people survives.

2.2 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

In the course of writing this research, the following key terms need clarification. They are Craft, Traditional Crafts, and Industries.

- **Crafts:**

Craft is a skill, especially involving practical arts. It may refer to a trade or particular art. It is also defined as a pastime or a profession that requires particular skills and knowledge of skilled work (en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/craft).

Hornby (2005:341) defines craft as an activity involving a special skill at making things with hands. Mbagwu (1978) sees crafts as objects produced through a lot of skills.

- **Traditional Crafts:**

These are those indigenous activities that require both artistic and practical skills, for example weaving, wood carving, pottery making etc. Traditional industries/technologies constitute an important aspect of people’s culture. They represent the adaptive mechanisms through which people survive in any ecological niche they find themselves. These include the mechanisms for sourcing tools, food, shelter, medicine and other

necessities of life for sustainable living (Okonkwo and Ibeanu, 2014). In view of that a traditional craft should meet the following five requirements in recognition of the Traditional Industry Law of 1974 (www.aiweb.or.jp/english/dento/html/howto1.html).

A traditional craft should be:

- **Used mainly in everyday life**

“Everyday life” is taken as a broad meaning. For example, ceremonial occasions (e.g, wedding and funeral) and seasonal festivals that a person experiences only occasionally in one year or in one’s whole life are considered to be part of “everyday life.”

- **Manufactured mainly by hand**

Original features and manual labor of a traditional craft are inseparable from each other. If the manual labor of a traditional craft is carried by machine processes even while preserving a traditional technique, it has no meaning because the original features of the craft will be lost. Therefore, the main processes of a traditional craft must be done manually.

- **Manufactured by using a traditional technique or skill**

Here, the term “traditional” is defined as continuing more than a hundred years. Even if the initial technique or skill from a hundred years ago has not been kept perfectly the same but there has been any improvement or development, it is considered “traditional” as long as features peculiar to the craft products are kept unchanged.

- **Made from traditional Materials**

Similarly to technique and skill, materials are also very significant for features of a craft product. The term “traditional” used here also means a history of more than a hundred years.

In addition, main materials should be natural substances. Since some materials do not exist anymore or are difficult to obtain these days, other materials are permitted for use in exceptional cases as long as they do not alter the unique characteristics of the product.

- **Manufactured in a certain area with a certain number of manufacturers**

A certain number of workers (more than ten businesses or more than 30 workers) should be engaged in the industry in a designated area. Namely, a traditional craft needs a certain scale in manufacture and an established manufacturing area.

- **Industries**

Hornsby (2005:761), industry is the production of goods from raw materials especially in factories or the people and activities involved in producing a particular service. Ali (2006) defines handicrafts and traditional industries as vital part of the country which is cultural, national and popular and they are usually associated with the style and mode of people's living.

Traditional crafts and industries are said to come into existence when "cognitive" known knowledge is translated into manipulations knowledge.

ART AND CRAFTS IN PERSPECTIVE

Before the era of colonization, Africa had its own functional art and crafts. It was highly respected because it was an integral part of their culture and their indigenous activities. Crafts then were mainly sculpturing, blacksmithing, wood carving in the form of masks; figurines etc. and they were used for religious or cultic purposes (www.contemporary-african-art.com/african-craft.html)

Africans before colonization engaged in the art of sculpturing, weaving (textiles), dyeing of cloths etc. There was also the culture of pottery making and traditional paintings using traditional colours made from vegetables.

All these art and crafts were practiced before the introduction of Christianity and Islamic religion which was introduced as a result of the coming of the Europeans (African Traditional Art Note Book, 2010).

We live in a world of art (Onwudufor, 2006). Without art and crafts, life would not be bearable. Okonkwo and Itanyi (2011) stress the point that "man has produced and used many materials and other devices to survive from the precarious environment he found

himself. Most of these cultural implements were initially geared towards the procurement of food, shelter and protection.” This remark made, generally characterized and distinguished Igbo craft world and gave it a special perspective.

However, the processing and producing of cultural materials is particularly noteworthy in West and Central Africa, where abundant natural raw materials such as fibres, woodcarving, weaving and others are predominant.

African Art and Craft works can be grouped into broadly four; sculpture, painting, textiles, weaving and pottery. The others can be metal work, beading, leather works etc. Blackmun (2001) pointed out that “African art constitutes one of the most diverse legacies on earth, though many casual observers tend to generalize traditional Africa art, the continent is full of peoples, societies, cultures.” No wonder Wangboje (1976) in his article tries to distinguish between arts and crafts though this differentiation was of Western European origin. This difference was spotted using example from Western Europe, those works that were created in the pre-colonial era and which were mainly inspired by traditional religion and attendant ceremonial and ritual practices were classified as art while the ones that were made as functional objects were classified as crafts. Consequently, the former is regarded in the Western world as non-practical and of high aesthetic value while the latter are relegated to the background as minor art since they do not possess the same awe and hidden meaning that are the hallmark of great art.

However, blacksmith is a metal smith who creates objects from wrought iron or steel by forging the metal, using tools to hammer, bend, and cut. Blacksmiths produce objects such as gates, agricultural tools, weapons etc (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blacksmith>).

The “black” in “blacksmithing” refers to the black fire scale, a layer of oxides that forms on the surface of the metal during heating. The origin of “smith” is debated, it may come from the old English word “smythe” meaning “to strike” or it may have originated

from the Proto-German “smithaz” meaning “skilled worker.” (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blacksmith>).

According to Njoku (2002), blacksmithing is the process by which the extracted ore or, more accurately bloom, is converted into items for human use such as knives, hoe, spears etc. smithing was carried out in series of stages, each of which was preceded or accompanied by elaborate religious rituals.

Africans were very good in the art of smithing before colonization.

Attesting to the ingenuity of the African wood carving tradition, ([www. contemporary – african-art.com/African-craft.html](http://www.contemporary-african-art.com/African-craft.html)), wood carving was a popular and common art form of traditional sculpture. This was an art through which figurative objects were made. Such figurines are standing or sitting wooden sculpture, masks in different forms and shapes, house posts particularly in village houses and palaces.

Wood carving remains today the primary sculptural art form of the sub Saharan continent. African art history shows the earliest wooden sculptures from the 17th century are attributed to the Kuba, Central Zaire but the earliest surviving sub-saharan sculpture is a zoomorphic head found in 1928 in central Angola. It is dated to the 8th – 9th century and survived being buried under the water table ([www. contemporary – african-art.com/African-craft.html](http://www.contemporary-african-art.com/African-craft.html)).

The blacksmiths and carvers were mainly respected for their creativity. They were feared because they were the producers of all these images of the gods and goddesses which people feared. People saw craftsmen as special beings.

Pottery, they are produced with special clays and not just mud. Only few areas in the Igboland have the special clay. According to Nwabueze (2005), Pottery involves the making of pots, cups etc. before the invention of metals and other modernity.

Then, traditional painting Africans had their own traditional form of painting. For many years, the Europeans did not believe that Africans had a painting tradition because they were thinking in the European style of painting using chemicals and brush. Traditional

African Painting was mainly body painting, wall painting (mural painting) calabash or gourd painting for ritual purposes (African Traditional Art Note Book, 2010).

Finally, beading, this is the act of producing objects or art forms with beads. These beads were primarily used for aesthetic and beautification of objects such as necklace, ceremonial staff etc (African Traditional Art Note Book, 2010).

In every African Traditional Society, traditional crafts play major roles in religious setting. It also plays political roles, domestic roles, social roles, cultural roles, therapeutic roles and aesthetic roles. This shows that in the traditional African Society, crafts are indispensable in our daily activities. Topmost of all the functions is religion i.e. the art is strictly and solely in the art of religious worship which is why several images both figurative and non figurative are found on various shrines which includes community shrines, village shrines, household shrines, personal shrines, etc. These images are consulted for various purposes. This is why the art is also social.

Social in the sense that many social events take place after due consultation of various shrines' images. In summary, without crafts and art, there cannot be any society. It is the life of people and that is why we need to preserve such endowment (www.contemporary-african-art.com/African-craft.html).

STUDIES IN TRADITIONAL CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES IN IGBOLAND

In Igboland, lots of crafts and industries existed and some of them still exist and appreciated by the people. These crafts and industries are found in different places among the Igbo people. Among them are the blacksmithing, local weaving, wood carving, pottery production, broom making, and basketry.

Ramasubben (1977) in Nwabueze (2005:12) sees traditional crafts and industries as the embodiments of the knowledge people have accumulated in their struggle to harness the forces of nature in line with cultural norms. This is an affirmation to what Okonkwo and Itanyi (2011) wrote about Ukpok community in Anambra State, thus "local crafts and industries are integral part of Ukpok Culture depicting the town's indigenous

customs and traditions in a meaningful and colourful way". They further state that the range and number of local crafts and traditional industries reflect the rich diversity that exists within the town and can provide tourists with a unique opportunity to sample and flavor the Ukpok culture in some of its purest forms.

However, according to Okafor and Emeka (1998:103), "many of the arts or crafts are functional but there is a group which for aesthetic qualities stands on its own. To this group belongs the bronze works of Igbo-Ukwu, Benin and Ife, the terracotta of the Nok and Owo, the mud wall murals of the Omambala folk, Nigeria's body adornments and the corpuses of oral poetry that are the measure of refinement and traditional education. These can deservedly be called the high arts (fine and liberal of Nigeria)".

For blacksmithing, according to Njoku (1992), metal-working is a very ancient craft in Igboland but the paucity of certified data makes it difficult to place a specific date to its beginning and to define its development through time and space. It is therefore certain that by the end of 19th century, the craft was already a highly organized professional enterprise in some Igbo communities. The smiths exhibited the enterprising spirit of the entire Igbo people. The smiths were encouraged and motivated by the institutionalized mechanism such as annual festivals and title-taking together with social mobility. After all, the Igbo, past and present have been an intensely achieving society with a lot of premium on personal achievement and hard work.

Strides and Ifeka (1980) in Nwabueze (2005:10) are of the opinion that people who were noted for their early craftsmanship in iron were the Awka blacksmiths of Eastern Nigeria.

Blacksmithing is a very strenuous job, requiring considerable expenditure of physical energy Njoku (2002). It also called for imagination, technical and artistic virtuosity and steadiness of the nerves. Blacksmithing dates as early as iron smelting in Nigeria, in the past, blacksmithing workshops were roofed with palm fronds and grasses. The floors of the blacksmithing workshops, which are located near living houses are usually rough,

sandy and dusty and characteristically littered with tools, raw materials and products of the smiths.

The following characterize any blacksmith's workshop in most parts of Nigeria: a forge (a fire point: a circular depression located at the centre or corner of the workshop and always filled with unlighted charcoal), an anvil, bellows, a mud wall (constructed in front of the fire point and behind the furnace to prevent flying chunks of burning charcoal or palm kernel from hitting the blacksmith), furnace, tongs (pincers), chisels and hammers. The Nupe blacksmiths also make use of stone and iron anvils while the Igbo (e.g. Amube, Awgu, Awka etc) blacksmiths use mainly the iron anvils.

Smithing was such a lucrative and respected profession that mostly exhibited a great deal of vigour (Amalumilo, 2006). Awka and Nsukka blacksmithing were no doubt at a flourishing state in the nineteenth century. According to Basden (1938:171), a foreign missionary spent seventeen years in Awka. He said that Awka smith practically dominates the situation, and they hold the leading place in the blacksmithing profession. He also observed, "hardly is there any bit of iron or metal that is impossible for the Awka blacksmith to fabricate or reproduce." But the factors responsible for the rise of Awka to a position of eminence in the industry when compared to Nsukka blacksmithing industry have hitherto not been sought. According to Amalumilo (2006), such a consideration should provide a useful insight into the development of blacksmithing industry in Awka.

Traditional wood carving has been an ancient industry. The story has not changed for the traditional woodcarver who began working in the stone and iron ages. With his main material as green wood, he carved simple objects as handles for simple implements like hoes, cutlasses and ploughs (Hauser, 1982). The ancient wood carver also carved handles for weapons such as spears, axes, bows and arrow shafts (Vansina, 1984).

For Wagboje (2001) in Nwoye (2008) viewed carving as mainly confined to the forest zone in the south where varieties of wood suitable for carving are available in large quantities carved items such as doo panels.

Nwoye (2008) said that artworks and crafts made out of bronze and brass based on Eyo's opinion (1977) are used to know the relationship between the Benin and Ife art.

The wood carving industry in the Awka and Nsukka has provided employment for a large number of people in the design and production of different forms of carved objects and articles such as stool regalia, drums, human figures, animal forms and entertainment objects.

Like any other industry in Nigeria, the wood carving industry in Awka and Nsukka has its own prospects and challenges. Key among the challenges of the Woodcarving industry in the Awka and Nsukka include the difficulty in the acquisition of wood due to the high cost of available wood as a result of the activities of commercial timber loggers and chainsaw operator. The lack of financial support for the woodcarving industry as well as the over reliance on imported carved objects.

Among the key tools used for carving are: Adze, Chisels, Knives, Machete, Files, Mallets, Scrapper, etc.

Thatching is a highly-skilled job and a good Thatcher will lay the material so that water runs quickly, evenly and efficiently off the roof and is carefully directed away from any points where a leak might occur, particularly junctions with chimney stacks or dormers. The steeper the pitch of the roof, the faster rainwater runs down the stems of the thatching material and off the roof (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thatching>). Damp does not penetrate far into the top layer of a thatched roof in good condition; most of the thatch remains dry all the time. Unlike other roofing materials, there is no need for guttering because thatch has deep projecting leaves. This ensures that water is shed from the roof well away from the base of the walls, avoiding splash damage. Thatched

roofs provide excellent insulation, keeping the house warm in cold weather and cool in hot weather.

As an organic material thatch decays and, over time, the stems of the thatching material degrade and rot back. The ridge of a thatched roof is particularly vulnerable and will need replacing at intervals of anything between six to twelve years. The rest of the thatch will last much longer. When the fixings of thatch (which may be horizontal lengths of split wood called sways, or today, sometimes wire), which are covered by courses of thatch, begin to show, it is an obvious sign that it is time to carry out some patching, or re-thatching (www.thatching.com/thatching.html).

Historically, many different local materials were used to fix the thatch to the roof. The layer fixed to the roof construction was sometimes tied or stitched on to the timbers with tarred twine, but hedgerow materials were also used. Split hazel, willow, or rope made out of twisted straw were used to fix down each course of thatch. The centre "bone or stem is known as "akpa" and is used for constructing thatched houses locally called "*Ulo-Avurivu*" (Agu and Okagu, 2013).

Today some thatchers use steel rods or wires and screws in place of sways (www.thatching.com/thatching.html).

Brooms are common household item. Broom making is a traditional work that involves very simple manual process & suitable for rural unemployed women in Igbo land. Various types of brooms (long /short handles) of different weight can be made out of coconut midribs or palm leaves. It is widely used by all means in industrial as well as domestic. Brooms are used for floor cleaning, dust removing etc.

The oil palm leaves serve as food for sheep and goat locally called "Nri-Ewu" is kept to dry and then threshed. The leaf blade is scrapped, all round (making sure it is smooth) with a very sharp small knife. A great quantity of scrapped mid-ribs makes up the broom which the people locally call "Aziza". The people of Awka and old Nsukka Division used

this broom “Aziza” for sweeping their houses and compounds and cob webbing the house.

A basket, according to the Lexicon Webster’s (2015) of the English Language is a vessel (often of weaker or flexible material) for containing shopping, laundry and waste paper etc.

Basketry is usually considered to be the oldest of all the craft as we know them today and one of the most fascinating aspects of this craft is that with each generation it has been easily adapted to fit in with man’s everyday life.

Generally, Basketry is the process of weaving un-spun vegetable fibres into a basket. People in the profession of weaving baskets are basket makers.

The people of my study areas use the ventral skin of the palm leave for basket making – “Aria or Nkata”. Basket making is done by intertwining of the fibrous materials derived from the palm branches. The fibrous tread is got from the palm branches and kept for two or three days so as to enhance its elasticity. The fibre from the dorsal surface which is thick, is used for farming while the light ventral surface is used on the intertwining process – “Ikpa – Aria” or “Nkata” (Agu and Okagu, 2013).

When the determined size is gotten, the excess-fibrous is cut and a thick fibre is used in finishing the lip of the baskets – “Aria” or “Nkata”. Other type of basket in my study areas is the Abo - a rectangular shaped basket used for carrying items. Nkata are used for carrying different things like maize, yam, etc. *Nyo* basket sieve used for sieving things, *Ngiga* basket used for keeping dried fish, meat, *Ogiri*, (Flavour) etc.

The tools and equipment needed for basketry are very inexpensive and quite light and portable. The materials are also very cheap and many can be gathered free.

In conclusion, the traditional crafts and industries of Awka and Nsukka people depict the ingenuity and creative agility of the people which makes them different from their neighbouring towns or communities. The craftsmen and women of the study areas have deemed it right to continue with the production of these precious cultural materials or

objects. They see them as a room of retaining that which their forefathers or ancestors handed over to them as a traditional legacy that must be preserved and protected from any internal or external force that has the ability to jeopardize their survival in Awka and Nsukka land.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITIONAL CRAFTS AND LOCAL INDUSTRIES IN THE SOCIETY

In Awka and Nsukka, cultural materials produced by our skillful craftsmen are done based on subsistence and commercial levels, fulfilling utilitarian purposes.

Their craftwork formed the basis of the town in terms of the economy just like in many parts of the world where crafts are produced and exported to countries; Chinese basketry and batik are examples.

This buttresses the point made in the work of Okonkwo and Itanyi (2011), that traditional crafts are already a strong factor in local economies and that these activities can and should be strengthened as they hold the potential to develop tourism and create jobs for people. Agu and Okagu (2013) write, many families are engaged in the processing of palm tree in one way or the other thereby being self-employed. Children and even disabled ones are not left out as they are responsible for broom making and basketry.

Also, the rural people are given the opportunity to work with their hands and to express their individuality especially in an increasingly mechanized and standardized society. Also, crafts are often used in occupational therapy; for example the blacksmiths that use slag in the treatment of a bitten human. In addition, an emotionally disturbed person might be taught a craft that would serve as an outlet for feelings and also provides the disabled with purposeful activity that diverts attention from their handicaps.

Finally, Okonkwo and Oguamanam (2013) writing about the Etim Ekpo Community pointed out that traditional crafts encourage faith-based activities while guaranteeing cultural tourism. Peoples' crafts are closely linked to religion as carvers create objects

that are well recognized and appreciated in the context of religious worship. These objects include figurines, which are used in decorating shrines, charm figures, stools used for initiation into cults, dance staff, apparatus of divination, among others. Most of these religious objects provide insights into African traditional religion and religious genies.

TRADITIONAL/INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES AND NIGERIAN ECONOMY

For both developing and developed countries, indigenous industries play important roles in the process of industrialization and economic growth. Indigenous industries create employment opportunities, enhanced regional economic balance through industrial dispersal and generally promote effective resource utilization considered critical to economic development and growth.

For Okafor and Emeka (1998:103-104) says that “although Nigerians are a mainly agricultural people, several types of crafts are produced with such specialization and scope that they truly constitute traditional industries. They further stressed that specialization often runs as family traditions but also runs as clan or ethnic traditions, so that certain parts of the country and certain clans or ethnic groups may be associated with specific traditional industries.”

Some of the Indigenous industries are categorized under small scale industry which requires limited capital outlay to commence business. It also has a simple management structure resulting from the fusion of ownership and management by one person or very few individuals as well as revolves around the owner-manager, rather than as a separate corporate entity.

Informal employer employee relationship is one of the characteristic features of these industries. As a matter of fact these industries create employment opportunities for rural dwellers and mitigate rural-urban migration and resources utilization. It also serves dispersed local markets and produced goods with low scale economy for riche markets,

and is widely dispersed throughout the country because of accessibility to raw materials.

Finally, it fosters development and the promotion of self-reliance through the utilization of local talent.

2.3 THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

Orientation is the act of directing your aims towards a particular thing. According to Okpoko and Eze (2011:11), theoretical orientation is a relative emphasis in theory. It is concerned with how a theory is applied in a research and the rationale behind this. The researcher made use of the structural functionalism theory, modernization theory and diffusionism.

Structural Functionalism Theory

The structural functionalism is used in this research work to explain the function and concept of traditional crafts and industries to the culture of the people. It is hinged on the idea of the contribution of sub-units as well as the nature of interaction of functional dependence between subunits. Structural functionalism is concerned with continuity of the social order (status quo) group solidarity and social consciousness. It deals with the functions performed by these structures to maintain the society.

According to Onyeneke (1996:31) stresses structural functionalism as that which creates harmony among the various structures of a society, for whatever may be the size of the list of the substructures of a society, all the structures are presumed to work together in harmony. They are assumed to cooperate or to mutually interact towards the achievement of a relatively peaceful existence for the society. When their harmonious interaction is disrupted, problems arise or are experienced in the society. He also stressed that it suggests that any given structure of society or social event as a subject matter should not be taken as an isolated phenomenon but as something co-existing with the many other structures of the same society in such a dynamic relationship that makes the relatively ordered harmony that is seen to exist in the society possible.

But according to Radcliffe-Brown saw human society as one social unit arising from many component social substructures should be likened to a living organism. It is a system of differentiated parts with activities that are varied, yet these activities relate together to sustain the organism and ensure its survival. This perspective is best seen in the model of living organism as working systems. For example, a biological organism is made of organs of different kinds which are its constituent parts, such as the eye, the feet, the intestines, etc. in the case of an animal. Each organ has its specific activity – the eyes see, the ears catch sound, intestines digest food, etc. but the activity of each organ combines with those of all the other organs in harmony so as to serve to sustain the animal in existence as a living unit. The activities of all the various organs combine together into one system; each contributes some specific function to the system.

According to Radcliffe-Brown (1935) sees functional unity as follows;

“We may define it as a condition in which all parts of the social system work together with a sufficient degree of harmony or internal consistency i.e. without producing persistent conflicts which can neither be resolved nor regulated.” Radcliffe-Brown in

Okeibunor and Anugwom (2005:36) systematically applied the notion of social structure to the study of the society. Therefore, in relating this theory to this research work as thus;

Traditional crafts and industries are units in the society and perform useful functions for the up-keeping and social interpretation in Awka and Nsukka Areas. The products of these industries are functional to the society in the following ways;

Blacksmithing section has helped in the production of agricultural implements like machetes, hoes, diggers, cutlass etc.

Wood carving has helped in carving of objects of religious value, decorative staff of office used by “ozo” title holders in the society, house hold objects like mortar, pestles, etc

Local thatch has helped in the roofing of our various local houses and thereby creating shelter to the people of the study areas.

Basketry and Broom industries made products useful to every household. Women uphold this industry much because the rural unemployed ones engage themselves in the industry.

The industries aids in the income generation. The income generated from the sales or selling of products is used to buy some house stuffs or stocks. All these substructures perform different functions for the betterment of the entire system and the human beings used to actualize their aims.

Finally, all these traditional crafts if not produced in any given will definitely cause malfunctioning in such a society. And anyone being affected by any internal or external factors will automatically influence the entire society directly or indirectly.

Modernization Theory

Modernization has been defined as “the process by which an underdeveloped region changes in response to inputs (ideologies, behavioral codes, commodities and institutional modes), from already established industrial centuries...” (Schnider et al. 1972:340). Modernization theory consists of a variety of perspectives, namely economic, psychological and technological considerations. Modernization theories draw heavily from the “tradition-modernity” as Webster put it, with “traditional primitive values being displaced by modern ones” (Webster, 1984:50). Everything “traditional” is seen as archaic, out of tune and unhelpful and to belong to the third world, while everything “modern” is the in-thing and said to belong to the west, (Foster-Carter 1986:22).

The blacksmiths in Awka and Nsukka were therefore advised to imbibe the modern way of smithing and add it to their own way of production for appropriate technology. This, however will make their blacksmithing industry more effective, and efficiently. As Nkom, (1995:23) aptly summarized: modernization theory takes off from the premise that

traditional blacksmithing derives essentially from the primitive, unproductive and change resistant values, institutional inertia, which tend to act as obstacles to national development... The solution to this problem is for blacksmiths in Awka and Nsukka to lie in the adoption of modern technologies, institutions, managerial systems.

Furthermore, the theory tends to explain blacksmithing in its contexts. It tries to point out that iron working in Awka and Nsukka can be understood from the point of view of different smiths. It seeks the recognition for the smiths involved in the social system as conscious human being that is capable of constructing their world by using their symbols and initiative.

The theory proves that the traditional way of smithing is characterized by inefficiency and low productivity. But it pointed out solution in which the traditional smith should adopt to make it more efficiently. The theories pointed out that, it is better for the traditional smith to adopt the modern way of smithing and add it to their own way for appropriate technologies.

This theory does not only infringe on the blacksmithing industry but cut across all the other industries under study.

Diffusionism

However, diffusionism in this context is used in attempt to understand the cultures of Nsukka and Awka people as the two sub-cultural groups have lived and interacted with each other for centuries. It is therefore not impossible that there have been frequencies of cultural hybridism between the two groups. It is not impossible that the blacksmithing tradition, carving art, broom making, thatching and basketry originated from the Nsukka Igbo and diffused to their neighbours through bilateral cross-cultural interactions. Since society is never separable from the individuals of which it is composed and does not exist in isolation of the people surrounding it, effort is made to trace the origin of crafts industries in Awka and Nsukka and the process through which it adopted and advanced in Awka more than in Nsukka or vice versa. Consequently,

factors such as war, inter-marriage, migration, trade etc might bring about un-existing culture in a society through the people involved.

However, comparative analysis is conducted to determine the various differences and similarities that have existed in the crafts industries of the people under study and also tries to point out the factors that led to the sudden change or differences in the industries when compared with the past culture of the people.

CHAPTER THREE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Geographical Location

❖ Geographical Location of Old Nsukka Division

The research was conducted in three different towns in Nsukka plateau. These areas were formally grouped under old Nsukka division which according to Afigbo, (1981) occupies the northern most portion of that section of Igboland, which ethnographers have traditionally described as '*Elugu*' sub-cultural group of the northern Igbo. They lie between latitudes $6^{\circ}18'$ and $7^{\circ}06'$ north and longitude $6^{\circ}52'$ and $7^{\circ}34'$ east of the Greenwich-meridian (Ofomata, 1978). Nsukka division covers a local surface area of approximately 3,961 sq kilometers.

My research areas in Nsukka are within a politically demarcated zone in Enugu State called Nsukka Zone; they may not be easily umbrella under one cultural zone as they have diverse and different cultural traits that can differentiate one from the other.

Meanwhile, Nsukka area has an area of 1,810km² and a population of 270,257 at the 2006 census. The local government headquarter is located in the hilly and green sites which Nsukka is known for close to colonial quarters of the pre-independence years' Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette (15 May 2006). However, it is located in the North of Enugu; the administrative headquarter of the state. The land surface area lies between latitude $6^{\circ}52'E$ and $7^{\circ}54'E$. Nsukka local government area consists of Nsukka, Obukpa, Opi, Eha-Ndiagu, Lejja, Obimo, Ede Oballa, Edem, Alor-Uno, Ibagwa-Ani, Okpaligbo-Ogu, Okpuje, Okutu and. (Ofomata, 1976:3). Owerre-Enu is one of the villages that made up Nsukka main town.

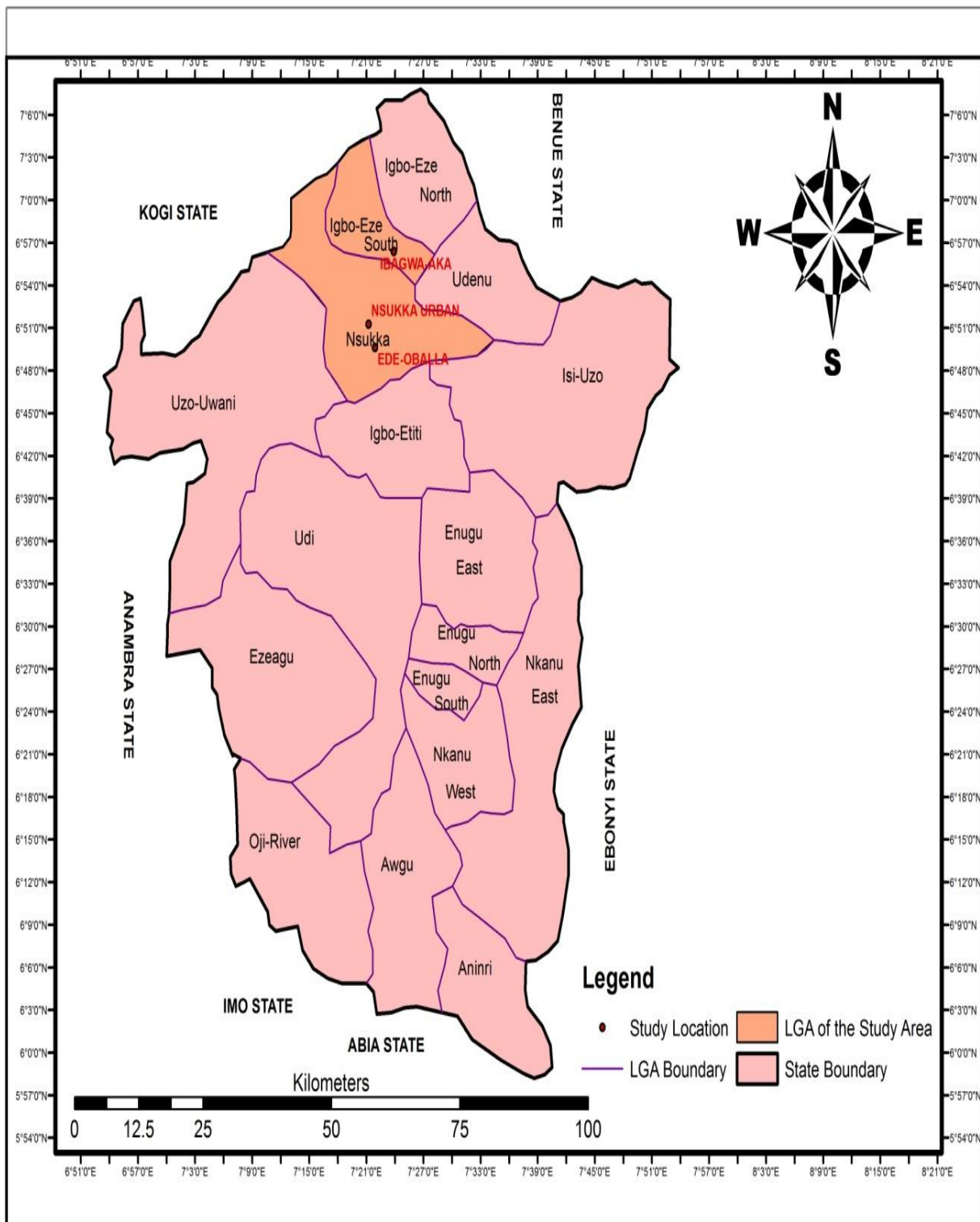


Fig 1: Map of Enugu State showing the Study Areas. Source: Enugu State Town Planning Authority 2000.

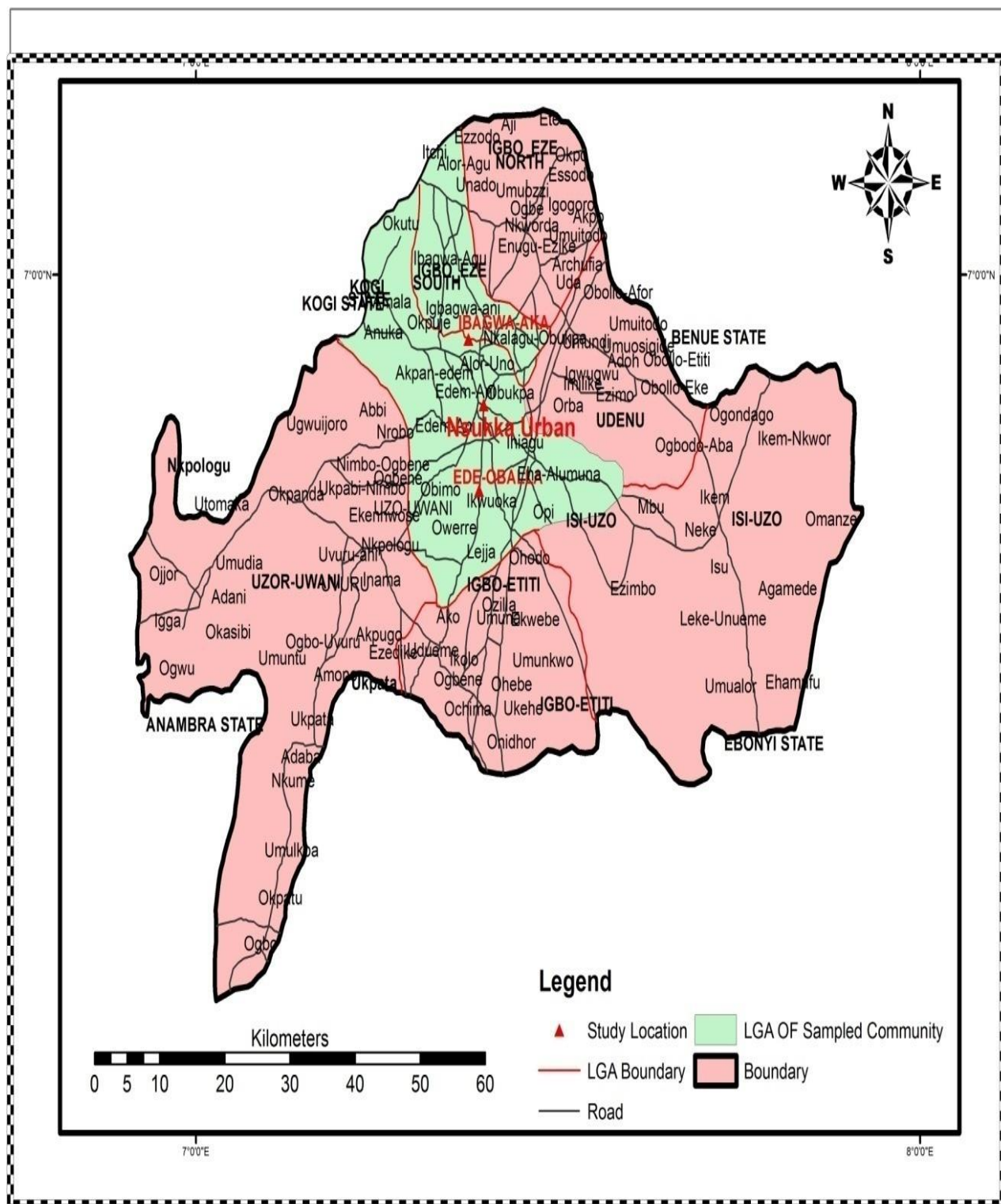


Fig 2: Map of Nsukka Area Showing the Study Locations. Source: Itanyi, E.I (2013).

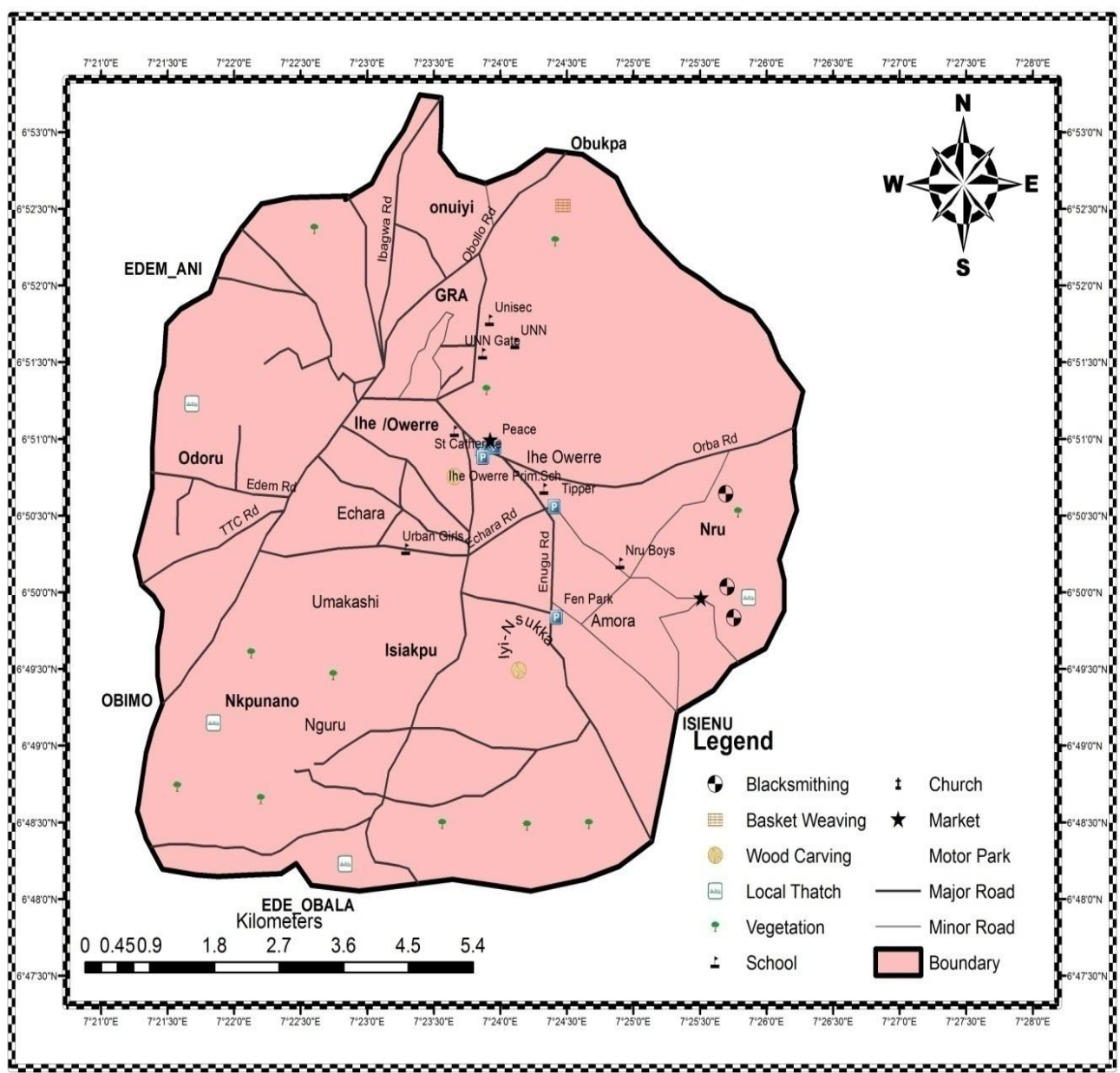


Fig 3: Map of Nsukka Town Showing the Distributions of Crafts in the Area. Source: Global Positioning System (GPS).

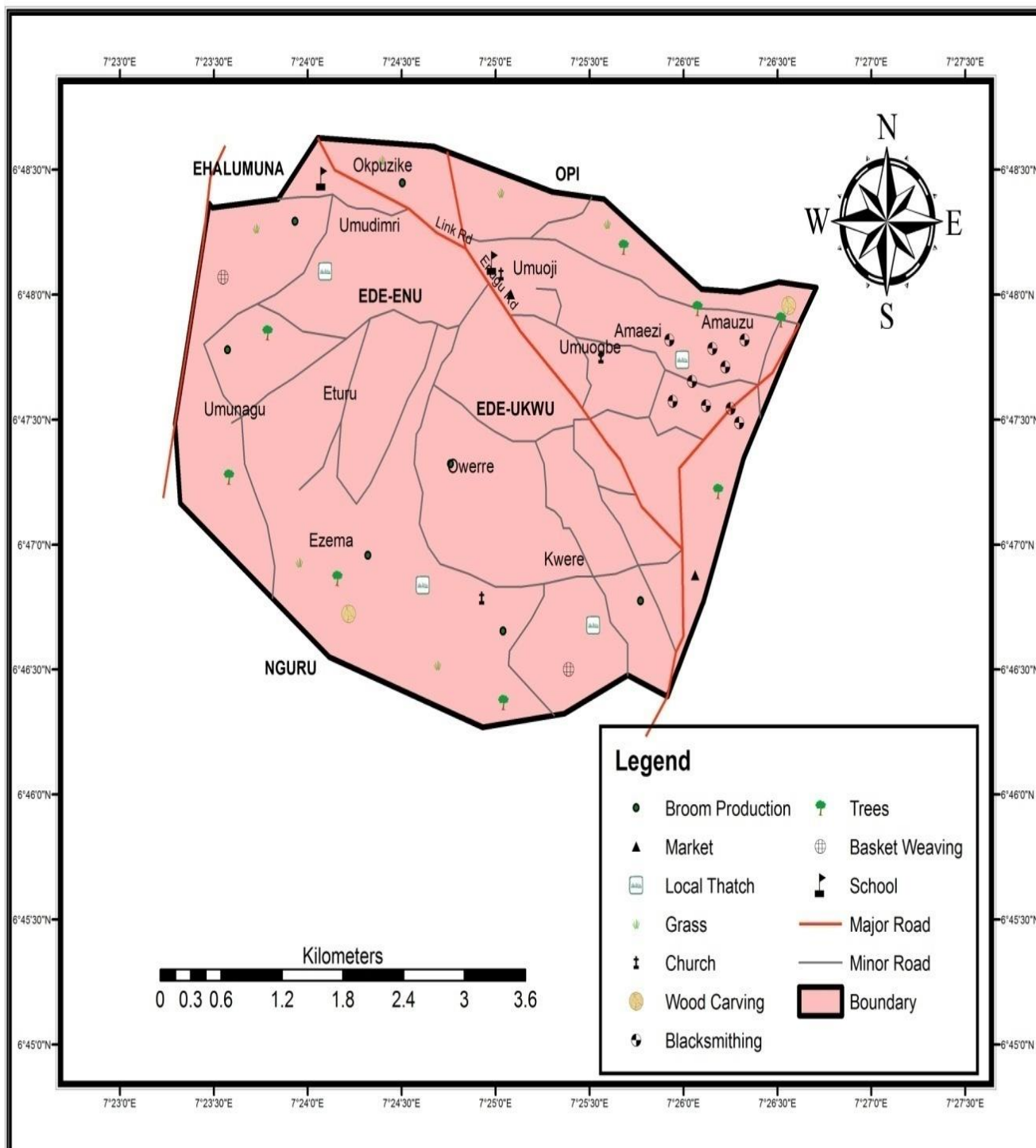


Fig 4: Map of Ede-oballa Area Showing the Distributions of Crafts in the Area. Source: Global Positioning System (GPS).

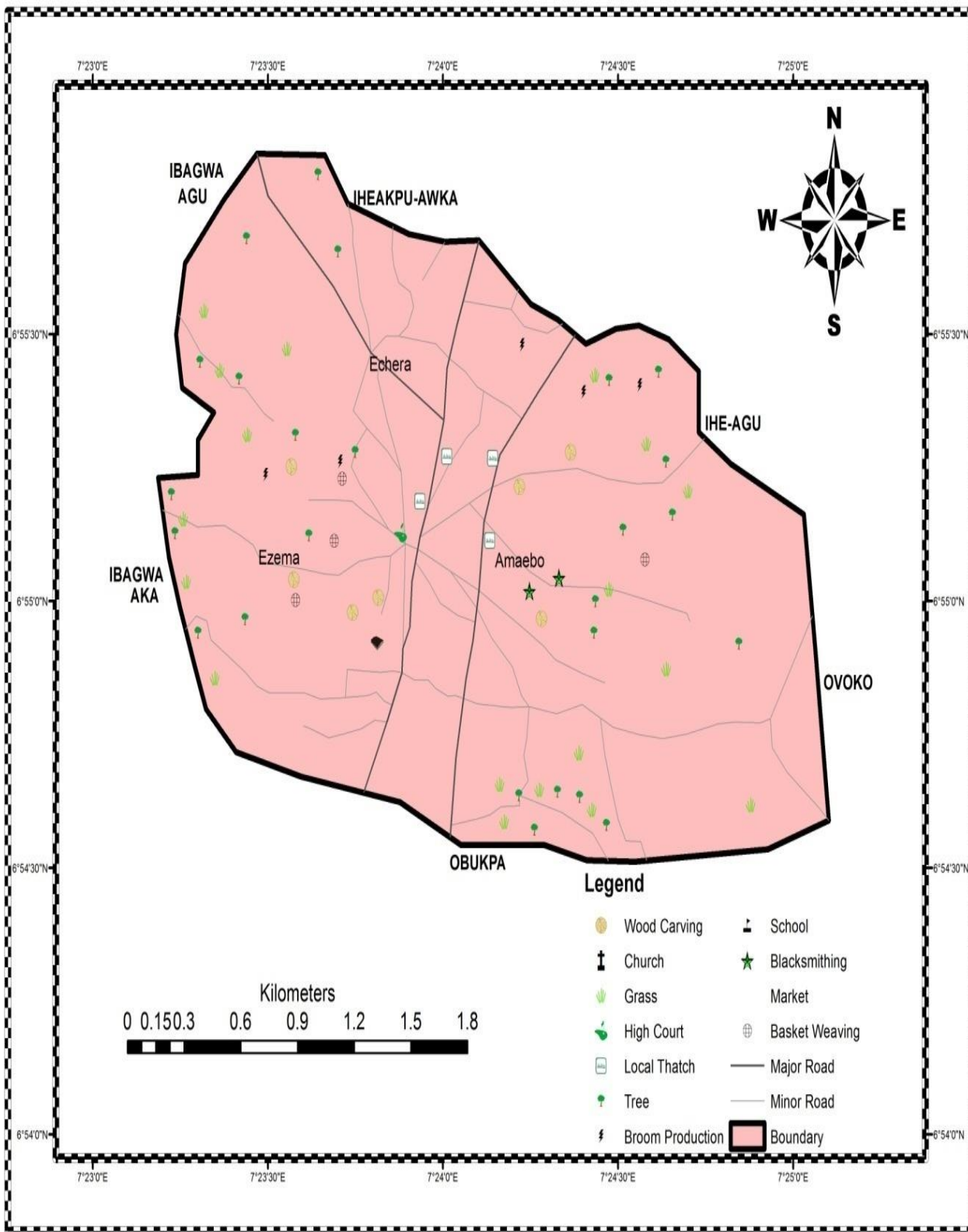


Fig 5: Map of Ibagwa-Aka Area Showing the Distributions of Crafts in the Area. Source: Global Positioning System (GPS).

❖ Geographical Location of Awka

Awka, the capital of Anambra State of Nigeria is situated 72 kilometres south-west of Enugu, the capital of Enugu State. It is also located about 35 kilometres North-East of Onitsha, the commercial nerve centre of South-Eastern Nigeria. Awka is roughly enclosed by longitudes $7^{\circ}1'4''$ and $7^{\circ}8'4''$ and $6^{\circ}1'5''$ North, Anagbogu (2002).

The town has high temperature ranging from 78°F (25.6°C) TO 82°F (27.8°C) and high humidity. The annual precipitation recorded is 241.1cm - 96.6 but the figure fluctuates, (Dike, 1985).

Awka town is bounded on the North by Amansea, on the West by Okpuno, on the East by Isiagu, on the Southeast by Nibo, and on the South by Nawfia. It is on an elevation of 153metres (513feet) above sea level.

According to the National Population Census of 2006, the town had a population of 481,725, (Anagbogu, 2002).

Awka lies within the Awka-Orlu uplands which forms part of the main scarp land of Southeastern Nigeria. The major rock groups include sandstone and shales which have been carved differentially by erosion giving rise to an undulating landscape and many gullies. The North and Southeastern parts of Awka are of a higher elevation than the South. The Southeastern portion of Awka slopes into the low land region. The undulating landscape encloses stretches of extensive marshy lands utilized by the natives, for agriculture. The most important river is river Obibia which flows from the Southwest to the Northeast. The town is made of thirty-three (33) villages.

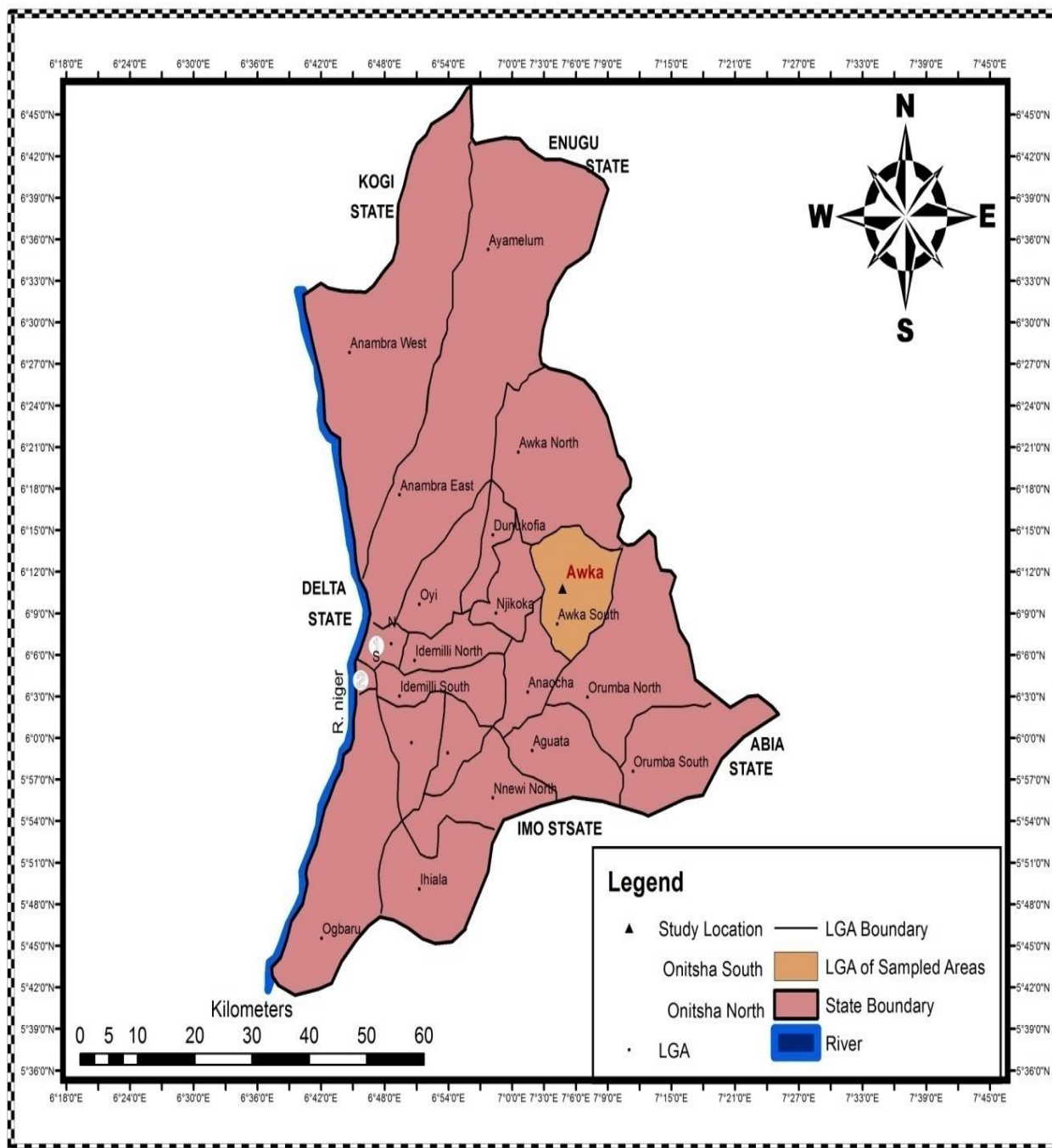


Fig 6: Map of Anambra State Showing the Study Area. Source: Amalumilo (2006).

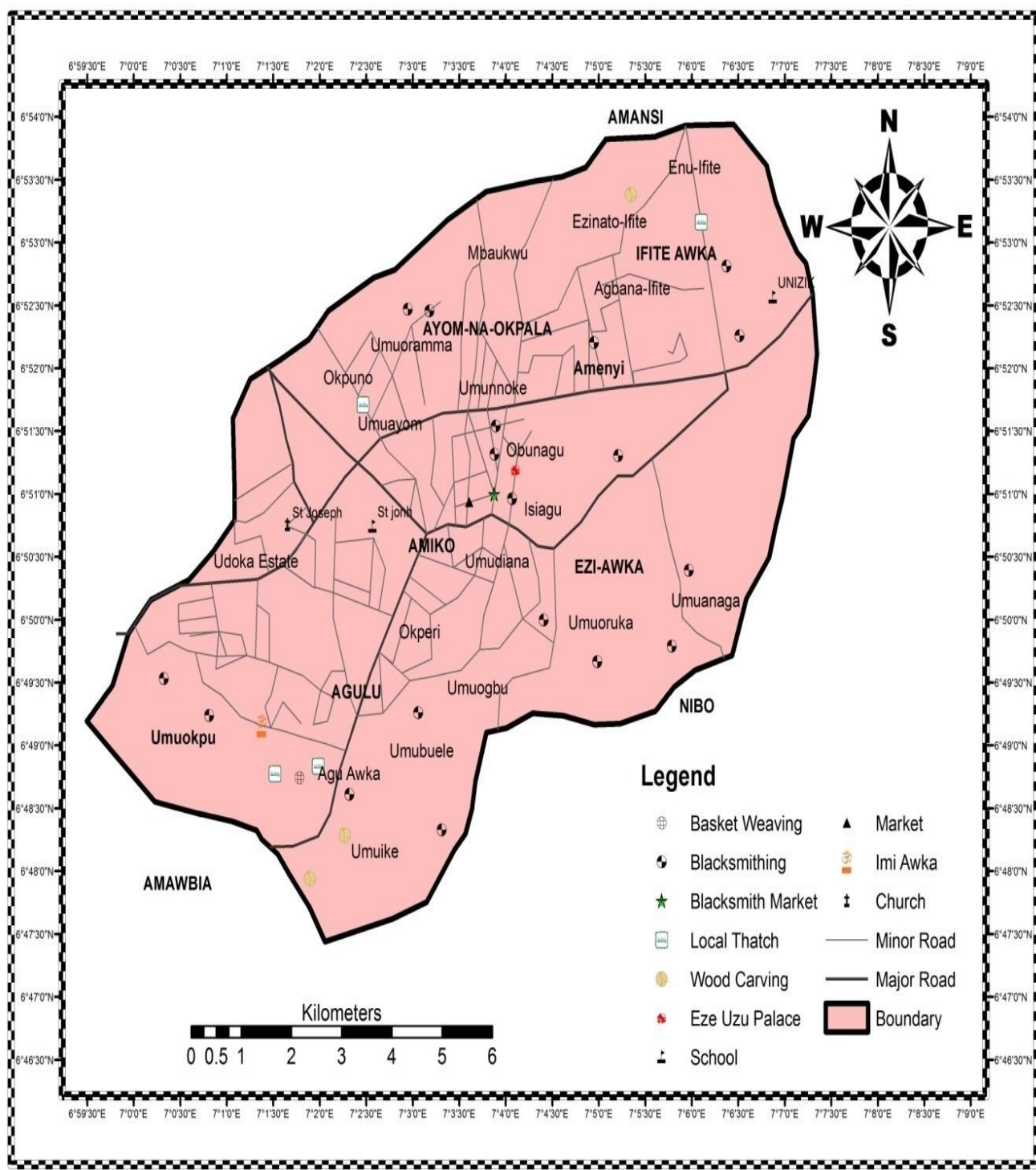


Fig 7: Map of Akwa Town Showing the Distributions of Crafts in the Area. Source: Amalumilo (2006).

3.2 Climate and Vegetation

❖ Climate and Vegetation of Nsukka

Nsukka area is in tropics and characteristically has major seasons in the year. The rainy season spans the period between April and September while the dry season begins around October and ends in March which is the planting season. About 89% of the annual rainfall of about 1650mm falls within this period. The August break normally comes around September and sometimes exceed (Eze-Uzomaka, 1996).

The annual rainfall on the average for Nsukka area varies from 989mm to 2,098m. Rainfall is very significant in the area but the pattern of rainfall, controlled by the movement of the sun has not been consistent through the years (Oguagha and Okpoko, 1984:19). The highest amount of rainfall in the town between June and July, the end of rainy season is accompanied by heavy thunderstorms and lightening, the dry season which lasts from October to February/March is accompanied by harmattan - a cold dry dusty weather, which is brought by the Northeast trade winds from the desert. Characteristically, the temperature of Nsukka in general is high, ranging from 27°C to 37°C in the months of January, October, and November (Ofomata in Asogwa, 2001:32).

The vegetation was formally thick forest but now it is derived savanna. The change in the ecosystem was as a result of human activities like migration, cultivation and bush burning. The original thick forest can only be presently obtained in grooves, ritual sites/forests, a long river/water courses and old gully erosion tracks, which could not be brought into tillage for agricultural purposes. As a result of rampant burning, the vegetation of these towns have a grass cover of about 60-70% with the dominant ones being elephant grass (*Pennisetum purrpurum*) with height of up to 2-3m. Some of the trees which form the plant cover of the area are: oil palm trees (*Elaeisis guineensis*) oil bean trees (*pentaelethra macrophylla*) Iroko trees (*chlorophora excels*).

African pea trees (*Carnarium schereinfurthi*) kola-nut (*Kola acuminata*) African Bread fruit (*Treculis africana*) etc and some other types of grasses like spear grass (*Imperata cylindrica*, *Andropogon gayanus*) etc.

The vegetation cover has made the area suitable for the practice of agriculture.



Plate One: The Land Area Vegetation of Nsukka.

❖ **Climate and Vegetation of Awka**

The climate of Awka, like that of most Eastern Nigerian towns is equatorial type. There are two seasons – dry and wet season. The dry season lasts from October to March and wet season last from August to September. The temperature sometimes rises as much as 98⁰F at the peak of the dry season and falls to about 78⁰F in the rainy season (Hatch 1971). From April to May, the South-west wind blows steadily from Atlantic Ocean. The sky is often overcast and the air chilly. It often rains this time and sometimes there are such continuous downpour that the inhabitants are constrained to remain indoors. From November to February, the Northeast trade wind blows. This harmattan wind

carries along with its dust. It is usually very dry at the peak, which falls around December, drying up both plants and human flesh. However there are a number of streams and springs that supply water for household chores to the inhabitants. The streams are Ofiachi, Obiabia and Ogba, (Iloanya, 2008).

The most important river is the river “obibia” which flows from the Southwest to the Northeast where it joins the river “Mamu” which is a tributary of the Anambra River. This river also helps the inhabitant in the agricultural cultivation. During the period of dry season, they used it in cultivating vegetable through the use of irrigation. The entire Awka was once located in the rainforest belt of the north equatorial region of West Africa, but the rain forest has virtually disappeared owing to past over cultivation, bush burning and clearing for constructions of new structures like houses and roads, Amalumilo, (2006).



Plate Two: The Land Area Vegetation of Awka.

3.3 Historical Background

❖ Historical Background of Nsukka

The origin of Nsukka people like that of many pre-colonial Igbo societies is rather a puzzle. The old Nsukka Division was made up of four county councils namely, Igbo-Etiti, Igbo-Eze, Isi-Uzo, and Uzo-Uwani. Presently, the area has been split into seven Local Government Areas. They are Igboe-Etiti, Igbo-Eze North, Igbo-Eze South, Isi Uzo, Nsukka Urban, Uzo-Uwani and Udenu (Itanyi, 2013).

Their tradition of origin appears to be full of speculations owing to the fact that the people of Nsukka had not developed the art of writing before the advent of the Europeans. Their account of origin and migration are drawn mainly from oral traditions. There are two major claims of origin and other minor versions of traditions of origin in Nsukka.

The first version of origin is that of Igala origin. According to this tradition of origin, Asadu Attah of Igala had four sons the first son settled at a place known as Okpuje. The second settled at a place called Obukpa and third son settled at Eha-Alumona, while the fourth son known as Ideke Asadu settled at Nsukka.

Ideke was formally the name of Nsukka, Okpuje, Obukpa, Eha-Alumona, Nsukka, Edem Ani, Uzo Uwani, Ukehe, Aku, Ekwegbe, Diogbe, Ogbede, Igboeze North, Ibagwa, Itchi, Nkalagu, Iheakpu-Awka, Iheaka, Obollo Afor, Ezimo, Orba, Imilike, Umundu, Ogboduaba, Neke, Eha-Ndiagu, Imilike-Agu, Eha Amufu, Aguemde, Obollo Eke, Obollo Etit, Amala, Lejja, Ede Oballa, Opi, Ozalla, Ohodo, Ohebe Dim, Umuna, and so are presently towns in the old Nsukka Division. It is because of the above myth of origin that Nsukka claims relationship with the above named towns. This tradition of origin from Igala had influenced the names of Nsukka, Okpuje, Eha-Alumona and Obukpa people to a reasonable extent.

The second major version of tradition of origin traced the origin of Nsukka people to Nri in Aniocha Local Government Area of Anambra State. According to this tradition,

Ezeoguda the son of Eze Nri migrated from Nri and settled at Umuezeoguda in Nkpunano Nsukka. He came with his younger brother Eze Obukpa Nweze Nshi, the founder and father of a section of Eha-Alumona.

To support this tradition of origin from Nri, Attamah Ezeoguda once stated that during Onunu feast held annually in Nsukka; the people of Eha-Alumona usually sent to him the dried liver of antelope's hares, cows, and bush cows. They consumed part of the offering and sent the remaining part to Nri through Eze Obimo, the Onyishi Nkpologu and Onyishi Ugbene.

In the same development, Igala and Nri tradition of origin spread to Nsukka. Some clans in Nsukka still claim tradition of origin from elsewhere they includes Umuoyo, Isiakpu, and the smithing village of Umuibogwa and Umuse claims tradition of origin from elsewhere. Umuoyo clan in Nru claims that they migrated from Nimbo in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area. They are called *Umuoyo Nrobu na Akpu Ite* (Umuoyo the pot makers). According to tradition, the first man that migrated from Nrobu to Umuoyo was "Oyo" and this is the reason why the name is Umuoyo (the sons of Oyo).

Still another clan that claims independent tradition of origin in Nsukka is Isiakpu in Nkpunano. According to this tradition, Isiakpu migrated from Okpuje Asadu the only link they have with Okpuje Asadu presently is that they attend the annual feast celebrated in honour of Ugwu Okpuje and have right to collect some of the yams contributed to Attamah Ugwu of Okpuje Asadu during the festival.

Moreover, Umuibogwa and Umuse in Ihe-Owerre are also Blacksmiths who claim that they originated from nowhere and that God created them where they are living now. They also claim the act of smithing was given to them by God.

Furthermore, another version about the history of Nsukka is from D.Hartle. the excavation he carried out at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka agricultural farm yielded evidence of human occupation when further analysis of the findings were carried out on the material artifacts of Nsukka people today. According to Professor Hartle, the

materials include “Unfired vessels, potsherd” that are much like those once used in the area (Nsukka today).

The University of Nigeria agricultural farm site yielded dates of 2,555BC± 130 and 1,460BC± 115. These were the earliest known pottery; both fired and unfired pottery continued to a depth of more than 0.9 meters. Most importantly, charcoal was discovered which yielded radiocarbon dates of 4885±140 B.P and 3410±115B.P (Hartle, 1967:143)

In the early days, the people practiced typical traditional religion but in recent years there has been a shift from traditional religion to Christianity. Traditionally, the people practice their religion without shame. Within every community will be seen shrines dedicated to various goods and deities. The people believe in the supreme God called Chineke and other lesser gods/shrines which includes – Ohe Nsukka, Nkwo Nsukka, Uroko, Nwadialoke, Aboshi, Omabe, Ataba, Ajaa, Obodoike, and so on.

In other words, most of the history of Nsukka from earliest times depends a lot on oral tradition and archaeological reconnaissance and excavations. The colonial administrations started the collection of these traditions but they were grossly limited in their approach due to lack of understanding of the people and their ways as well as language and cultural barriers. Ethnographic materials that have been uncovered do help in reconstruction of our history.

The Nsukka people do not have many oral traditions, which support migrations from far places many actually believe that their existence started with the existence of the soil. This may explain our constant reference to the earth “Ala” in most cases. In a report written by a political officer he claims that no two villages claim a common ancestor and in all cases, the founder is assumed to have risen from the earth (*si n’la puta*) (Afigbo, 1981).

Whatever the case may be, the situation in this part of Igbo land is quite exceptional. The vegetation is much more drastically reduced than elsewhere in Igbo land and the

soil in some cases much exhausted. The inhabitants have in the course of centuries turned from dependence on Agriculture to other professions, which they have developed to a high degree (Eze-Uzomaka, 1996). The soil has in many places undergone such extensive deterioration that it cannot support the dense population and in these areas textile wearing, oil palm tending and processing of palm produce, blacksmithing and other specialized economic activities supplemented farming. We are specialist traders, medicine men, smiths, potters and weavers.

Be that as it may, archaeology has yielded a lot of materials for the reconstruction of Nsukka past. In 1973 – 74, a number of sites were extensively surveyed including Udunedum, Nsukka, Obikpa, Ovoko, Ibagwa, Itchi, Unadu, Ukpuje, Orba, Obimo and Okpologwu. Isiugwu Obukpa rock shelter which is north of Nsukka was excavated in 1964. About 369 artifacts were discovered including fourteen crudely worked stone tools. The stone tools resembled that which was discovered at Eziukwu ukpa rock shelter in Afikpo, which has been dated about 3000BC. Some potsherds were also discovered. These dates from excavations in 1964 are so helpful to the history of the Nsukka people and suggest a village/farming way of life at least 5000 years ago. This goes to support Isichei's claim that Nsukka was populated about 4500years ago. The discovery of forts and tobacco smoking pipes also suggest early trade probably with Igala and Idoma people (Hartle, 1967:143).

On the other hand, Enugu – Ezike has attracted a lot of attention in the attempt to account for the people of the Nsukka area. In 1953, its population was put at 61,000 with an average density of more than 800 persons per square mile (Afigbo, 1976). It is considered the most densely populated rural village group in Western Africa. For this reason, ethnographers have been inclined to regard it as an area of early and probably independent settlement.

By the third millennium B.C, Nsukka seems to have attained the Neolithic stage of development (Eze-Uzomaka, 1996). Hartle (1967:143) postulates that the cultural

assemblages began sometime during the early Neolithic at a time when the Neolithic cultural inventory is simply added to a late stage of Sangoan development. The farm site at Nsukka, which was dated 2555BC, is obviously a well developed Neolithic. Afigbo (1981:78) believes, however, that Nsukka people had attained such a level of social and economic stability as would enable them to perpetuate their kind over the area and around unless brought under overwhelming pressure and either driven out or exterminated (Eze-Uzomaka, 1996:38).

To clarify a point here, a lot of work needs to be carried out on the history of Nsukka people. We can only reach a reasonable conclusions when more evidence is turned up by researchers both linguistic, ethnographic archaeological research.

Historical Background of Awka

The origin of Awka like that of most Igbo towns is purely legendry but there is a core of truth in these legends. There are many versions of these legends which are handed down from generation, by word of mouth. Such facts are likely to be victim of mutilation-addition, speculation and conjecture.

According to Awka mythology, a man called Nneoshi migrated from the Northeastern part of what is now Anambra State. He was a farmer who had wandered for long and had survived many hard times and wars (Dike, 1985). Nneoshi settled in the thick forest of Ugwuoba whose virgin land was fertile for agriculture and whose numerous streams, rivers, hills and valleys provided protection against enemies. It was said that he married two wives who were always quarreling with other. The names of the wives are Okuata (first wife) and Ekedu (second wife). The two wives were pregnant almost at the same time but the younger wife Ekedu was the first to have baby boy who, according to Igbo custom, was destined to inherit the 'OBU' of his father. Soon after, the elder wife also had a baby boy. But the latter was constantly taunted by the second wife who felt that in spite of everything, her son was the first to arrive. The first wife named her son Oka-ga Aka meaning that one destined to be great must be great. Oka left his brother

Ugwuoba and settled down at the site of the present Awka. The original name of Oka was changed to Awka by the British colonial masters.

There are series of waves of migrations into Awka but one of the earliest was that of a master blacksmith called Nnebuzo. He was a native of Agulu-Umana in what is now Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State. He traveled to many neighbouring towns and wherever he went, he engaged himself as a blacksmith and a hunter. He first settled among the Nawgu people but he later left when they did not allow him to take Amanwulu title on the ground that he was a stranger (Dike, 1985).

Finally, he settled at Amikwo village in Awka, after carrying out his work as a blacksmith during the day, he went out for hunting in the evening. During one of such hunting expeditions, he reached the beautiful stream now known as Obibia and was attracted by its rich valleys and fertile land around. He finally pitched his camp for blacksmithing at the square now known as Ezi-Nwafor. This was the centre of a thick forest, which has not been inhabited before. To offset obvious dangers, which wild animals and mischievous men could cause to his safety, he employed renowned medicine men possibly from his home town to protect his habitation with potent medicine and fetish powers (Amalumilo, 2006)

CULTURAL VALUE OF EZI-NWAFOR IN AWKA TOWN

Ezi-Nwafor is a village square located in Umubela village of Awka town. The cultural value of this square in Awka today is that it is used by the people of the town to display their cultural dances (Ipafuta Egwu) (Dike, 1985),

According to Amalumilo (2006), Nnebuzo married a lady from Amikwo who bore him many male children. To establish his opulence, Nnebuzo initiated all his children into '*Ichi*' (facial scarification) society. *Ichi* was a painful operation which served to establish the manhood of the initiated and it took many weeks and even months to heal completely. While Nnebuzo's children were under the pains of this painful operation, enemies over-ran his compound and slaughtered all the children of Nnebuzo except one

named Agulu, who became the only survivor. Agulu outlived his father and inherited both his profession and his *obu*. He married one wife who bore him seven sons. His seven sons were the pedigree of the seven quarters of Agulu village in Awka. These seven quarters are Umuogbu, Umubele, Umuonaga, Umuenechi, Umujagwo, Umuike and Umuoruka. The next to come to Awka was Ezeanyakpodolu who was also a craft man from Umudioka near Ogidi. He came to Awka to practice his trade. Before long, fighting broke out between Awka and Nibo. Ezeanyakpodolu was said to have been instrumental in the victory which Awka recorded against Nibo. After the fight, he was given full citizenship as an Awka man. Like the others, he married and begot five sons – Ezemajna, Ezechiodo, Udeke, Ezeuno and Chide. The sons of Ezeanyakpodolu later became the founders of the present five maximal lineages that make up Umudioka.

The second version is the opposite of the aforementioned legend. According to the propounders, Nneoshi was the founding father of Awka. He inhabited an area of land stretching from the present Agulu Lake to Oji River. He had only one son named – Eziemuifite and Diaku. All the sons of Akam were of different occupation. Diaku was a blacksmith and went to Agulu Umana to smelt raw iron. Diaku had two sons Ikwodiaku and Agulu who took to Umuna in Udi to smelt raw iron to the people of the area. This version agrees that there was a migration into Awka but argues that by the time this took place, Awka was already a settlement. Eziemu was a wood carver and the present Ezioka clan in Awka is ascribed to him. Ifite has several sons – Amenyi, Nkelle, Achalla. There was rapport among the different propounders on immigration of people into Awka. According to Awka mythology, Umumokpu was and still is a part of Amenyi village. They were forced to move to their present site between Amawbia and Nawfia to act as a buffer settlement and defined Amawbia people who were suffering from the oppression of the Ugbo people. According to Jones (1981), the travel of Awka blacksmiths and Nri rituals specialists led to the foundation of some new town or quarters of towns.

We have seen the different views on the early history of Awka town. In the two versions above, there is the general agreement that Nneoshi was the ancestral father of Awka. The only point of disagreement is the origin of Nneoshi. The first ascribes Nneoshi to Ugwoba while the other to an area stretching from Oji River to Agulu Lake. One thing is certain from this, both areas are within the core of Ibo settlement from where the other settlements dispersed. According to Isichei (1977) Awka-Orlu-Owerri complex is the core of Igbo settlement from where the rest of Igbo people spread.

Again, when we look at these stories from the economic point of view, we are bound to see some basic truths for instance the inhabitants of Agulu quarters are blacksmiths and their traditions portray strong resemblance with that of the ancestral home at Umana. The people of Umudioka village are good medicine men as well as craftsmen and the only people of Awka that performs such specialized acts as “*Iwa-eze*” and “*Igbuchi*”. These were the principal occupations of their ancestral home which is Umudioka Ogidi. Amenyi village people are good farmers and this was handed down to them by their elder brother – Ugwuoba. Ugwuoba people were usually invited to any festival organized by the Amaenyi Quarter of Awka. The presence of *Akputakpu* deity (god of smithing) in Agulu goes straight to confirm that there are some relationships between the Agulu Umana of Udi. This deity was taken from Agulu Umana to Awka to serve as the protector of the blacksmiths. However, one cannot actually say for sure whether Agulu came from Umana or vice-versa considering the confusions that stands on the origin of the two settlements (Dike, 1985).

3.4 SOCIO - POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

❖ Socio - Political Organization of Nsukka

The man is the head of the family and manages the affairs of his household with the help of his wife(s) and children. After the household comes the kinsmen (Umu-Nna) that is the partrilinage that are made up of the nuclear families, who trace are common descendent to a partrilineal ancestors.

The kinsmen of different families come together to form a village. Age grades features, prominently in Nsukka and membership of the age grade organization is mandatory for all the grown-ups especially the male members of the community and it is a sign of manhood. The age grade is known as Ogba-Egu in Nsukka dialect. Lands are shared according to the age of the sons in the family (normally the first son) or among the numerous wives and their children. Also, some of the festivals celebrated in Nsukka make for socio-political and cultural interactions. Also, many households whose male head claim descent from a common male ancestor constitutes a minimal patrilineage kindred and its head is the eldest male in the village ('Nkpuru'), while the eldest male in the village is called 'Onyishi'. There is a village square called 'Otobo' in every village or town where socio and political activities such as dancing, marriage ceremonies, masquerade festivals and villages meeting etc take place. Every town in Nsukka area is governed by a warrant chief known as 'Igwe' called tradition ruler and, with a group of men called 'Oha'. Religiously, the people of Nsukka adopt the Africa traditional religion (ATR). In other words, religion is firmly embedded in the culture of the people. A complete Nsukka man does not see himself as the master of his life. He recognizes and believes in the existence of a supernatural and superior power. Every family have a personal family shrine that they worship and believe it is guiding and protecting them. They also believe in the existence of the most Supreme Being who they regard as the most superior of all supernatural powers. The Supreme Being is known and referred to as "Ezechukwu Okike Abiama". To the people, it is believed to be their creator and sustained of all things on earth.

❖ **Socio - Political Organization of Awka**

From time immemorial, Awka people never had a traditional ruler, rather they have a republican community guided by the Ozo society and by the tradition of the ancients. Ozo title were the fully accredited rulers of Awka town, inspite of this, Awka people give

more respect to age than wealth, no matter how many title a man has. Awka maintain that seniority in age is a gift from God and no man should trample on it (Offodile, 1998). However, there were five titles generally known in Awka. These titles were taken one after the other, and they could not be jumped. These are Amanwulu, Chi, Avbajioku, Ajaghija and Ozo title. The most prestigious of the titles, after Ozo, was Ajaghija. It has special regalia, consisting of a red cap with one eagle feather stuck upright on the left side of it, an iron staff and a fan; also an ivory trumped etc.

Ajaghija was very useful in the governance of Awka town, they helped in making law and also implementing all the laws as well (Okafor, 1992).

Finally, Ozo title is the most expensive, prestigious and elaborate of all titles one may take in Awka. It is therefore a rarity for one to take it as a young man. *Ozo* title holder was beyond reproach of any ignoble conduct. He has the symbol of wisdom and courage. He presided and mediated disputes and passed judgment without bias Offodile (1998). The *Ozo* society held both executive and judicial powers in Awka and was accredited rulers of people of Awka. Howbeit, "Eze-Uzu" which is known as among the chief is selected withing the *Ozo* society. Every issue concerning Awka people and the environments were expected to be discussed in the Eze-Uzu's cabinet, (Okafor, 1992:113).

The most important thing that distinguished a title-holder from a non-title holder was that a title holder had greeting names, that is, names taken on conferment of a title. They were praise name or greeting names and were very carefully chosen, to reflect the celebrant's struggles to take the title or his struggles in life.

3.5 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

❖ Socio-Economic Activities of Nsukka Peopla

Economically, farming was the dominant occupation of the Nsukka people. It is an important aspect of their culture and their way of life. Division of labour within the family was strongly observed in the farm. They also engaged in blacksmithing. During

the periods of harvest, both men and women participate actively. The women carry some of the things harvested to the village market to sell. The people of Nsukka that engage in such activities include Opi, Lejja etc. They produced a wide variety of articles for domestic use, other implements for hunting and farming such products, include knives, hoes, digger axe, guns, arrows and sickles etc. others include, decorative bracelets, iron staff and armaments worn by the chiefs and men of title at ceremonies and occasions. In Nsukka Local Government Area, Opi and Lejja practiced smelting as their full time occupation. Carvers were mostly found in Lejja and Ibagwa- Ani. They produce various domestic utensils from wood. Apart from the carving of household utensils such as mortar, pestles, ladles, wooden spoon (Eku), traditional objects of social and ceremonial importance such as wooden gongs, doors, masks, flutes, and images of idols used in the shrine were also made of these objects and are also produced from iron, copper and ivory, most of these objects produced are displayed in the shrines are not displayed in the market place since, it is forbidden for women to see such product. Among the notable markets within Nsukka Local Government Area are Ogige daily market located in Nsukka main town, Eke Ede Oballa, Afor Opi, Nkwo Ibagwa-Aka, Orié Okpuje, Nkwo Okwutu, Afor and Nkwo Lejja.

❖ **Socio-Economic Activities of Awka People**

According to Okafor, (1992), until the introduction of iron and iron working techniques, the economy of Awka, had remained largely agrarian. The craft of blacksmithing therefore brought about occupational specialization within Awka itself. The products of these smiths soon made their influence felt on such professions as body scarifications, wood and ivory carving and farming. People in these professions came to depend more on the smiths for the supply of their tools (Njoku, 2001).

The smithing industry was a very profitable industry to Awka people. The money the smiths earned them to live a more luxurious life in comparison to the general standard prevalent in most areas at that time.

Owing largely to the need for new markets outside Awka in the nature of the occupation, it became necessary for the smiths to itinerate. As a result, they learnt from the cultural and social life of the people with whom they had lived. Thus, these smiths produced remarkable changes in Awka – culture out of their accultured experience. Some of these great additions to the people culture included some agricultural products that were formerly unknown to Awka, strange ideas, new deities with some modification of existing ones, and infact to some degree, new breed of people. All these came about through importation from the diverse places where they adjourned.

The itinerant blacksmiths added to the growth and importance of the various traditional titles in Awka, particularly the *Ozo* title. We can appreciate the significance of such a contribution which the smiths had made to Awka only when we realize the places of titles in traditional Igbo society and in other African societies. The taking of the highest title in Awka has from early times been a life desire of most of her citizens. Therefore, her smiths usually went out to distant land to acquire enough wealth with which to ascend to this highest peak of social hierarchy. Such an ideal was seen to be passed to other members of the community and so the smiths had infused the idea of healthy competition among the people of Awka. This in turn was capable of engendering remarkable progress in the community.

Furthermore, the products of these smiths and certain trade items they carried while returning from their occupational tours, gave variety to the type of goods generally on sale in Awka market. Besides, traditional Awka society had to depend a great deal on the products of the smiths which ranged from domestic and articles of general utility like knives, tripod stand, needles, metal containers, spoon, farming implements like hoes, sickles to articles of adornment such as brass ankle plates and legs coils, bracelets, native guitar (*ụbọ*) religious objects and staffs of religious.

Moreover, there was no compound in Awka where one would not see a blacksmith's forge that had been abandoned next to other occupations (Offodile, 1998). It is likely

that when the blacksmithing trade saturated, that people abandoned it to seek opportunities in farming and other trades. Many blacksmiths moved out of Awka to a new and less competitive market as mentioned above, some, on the other hand, remained in Awka and tended the land more seriously.

Amachalla, Amudo and Umuzocha people were predominantly blacksmiths and traders. The trade routes of Amachalla blacksmiths was mostly Idoma in Benue State. However, the greater concentration of blacksmiths is Umuzocha. The Umuzocha smiths acquired some apprentices in the course of their trade who travelled with them to their trading centers in Nsukka, Igala and Akpoto. The four principal families – Umunkili, Umungbute, Umuobu, and Umuaru of Umuzocha had two major trade routes. While Umunkili and Umungbute families concentrated their trading activities towards the Cross-River cities of Bansara and Ikom, the Umuobu and Umuaru families gravitated towards Igala, Nsukka and in Benue State (Offodile, 1998). However, neither of the villages nor families in Umuzocha had exclusive rights to their trade or trade routes, and they can change their profession from one trading centre to another.

3.6 SOCIO - CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

❖ Socio- Cultural Activities Of Nsukka People

Every community and town has their own ways of life that are peculiar to them. The people of Nsukka, like every other community in traditional Igbo setting have their various ways of living, Nsukka people had settlement that can be described as a unit or organized group of men, women and children, making a living out of their environment. They had a plan according to which houses, shelters, fields, markets, temples, foot and centers are distributed across the landscape. However, the titled men in Nsukka Local Government Area are given such title like Olu- Oha, Asadu, Ishiwu, Ozioko, Attah, Anuma etc. the people lived in thatch houses built of grasses called "*Izua*" (*Imperata cylindrica*). With mud clay before the introduction of corrugated iron roofing sheet. They also engaged in pottery marking (clay pots), palm wine tapping, production of palm oil

etc. they worshipped deities which may be in sacred trees, forests and stream. Each deity has latent super natural powers it uses in inflicting punishment on culprits in the town. They also have festivals through which they interact with one another. Such festivals include Omabe and Odo which are celebrated in Lejja. Other festivals that are celebrated include Onwu-Ise, Nkwo Onunu, Onu Okachi. During Omabe festival, (Onwa Asaa) etc, most of these festivals are celebrated in almost all the towns that make up the Nsukka Local Government. Omabe for instance is a masqueraded festival and also a means of social control which regulates the conducts of children and adults. The Nkwo-Onunu festival is regarded as women festival when the people give honour and pay homage to their ancestral mother known as Nkwo Nsukka. Finally, the people of Nsukka engaged in hunting. According to an oral tradition, hunting causes war between Nsukka people and the Igala people. The story goes that, there was a dispute regarding the rightful owner of an animal that was found dying by the Nsukka people but it ran to the Igala area where it was killed.

❖ **Socio-Cultural Activities Of Awka People**

In Awka town, the various cultural activities include the following:-

- a. *Igba Agu* Ceremony
- b. *Iru Nkpu* Ceremony
- c. *Ike Ikpo* Wrestling Ceremony
- d. *Emume Inye Nwa Afva* (Birth and Naming Ceremony)
- e. *Okike ana* (Distribution of Estate)
- f. *Egbu Uta Di Mmo*
- g. *Anumu Nwanyi* (Awka Traditional Marriages).

a) *Igba Agu Ceremony*

According to Emmanuel (2015:Pers. Comm), *Igba Agu* is a ceremony fathers used to determine who reincarnated (*onye nolu*) their children. That is, who among his or his wife's deceased relatives has been reincarnated in the child as a guardian spirit.

During the *Igba Agu* ceremony, a father invites a diviner to determine who reincarnated in his child. News about divination often spread like a wild fire. Soon the villagers gathered in the house. While some of them gathered out of curiosity others, especially children, did so in anticipation of what usually come after the ceremony; a good meal. The ubiquitous *akuofve* and *ukpaka* salad was often served together with other types of food and palm wine. The curiosity seekers on their part were mostly interested in knowing which spirit will reincarnate the child.

When the diviner arrives, he is welcomed with *kolanuts*. As a stranger, or a young man, he would not break the nuts but acknowledge his welcome and pass on the responsibility of breaking the nut to his host. "*Oji eze di eze Na aka*", he might say. The host then breaks the kola nut or pass that responsibility to any other person around, any older man in attendance. The kola nut is a very important symbol of Awka culture. It is the prelude to any ceremony, formal gathering, and/or a welcome. Indeed, the best way to know that you are not welcomed in someone's home is if the person did not offer you a kola nut. Even if he did not have it, the least he could do was to apologize for it and offer an alternative. The kola nut was eaten as a symbol of friendship and unity and not for nutritional or satisfying values little of which it has. Thus, no matter how small it is, a kola nut must be shared among everyone present. As it is said in Awka, "*mbvo aka ojel nne, oji ji wel ezughi nmadu?*" (So long as people have nails, and there is kola nut, the nut will be enough.

After the welcoming pleasantries, the host presented the diviner with as many broomsticks as he had children to be investigated. He also have him the names of his deceased relatives and those of his wife. As everyone turned their attention to the issue

at hand, the diviner reached into his haversack and brought out his instrument of divination. These were usually a turtle shell, a wooden rod, *nzu* (clay chalk) and four lines of rope of about eight inches long on each of the ropes was tied four shells of *ogbono* fruit. He made some incantations, praying and invoking the spirits to come to assist him in the arduous work he had come to do. He took the rod and knocked on the empty turtle shell. He daubed his eyes with chalk and laid the strings of *ogbono* shells on the ground in four columns. Then he picked the strings, two at a time, and draws them towards himself and throws them back to the ground. As he does this, he murmurs and calls on the spirits to rally around and come on to duty. The host added two or more sticks to those he presented to the guest. The guest continues to pull the shells to himself and tossed them back to the ground (Emmanuel 2015:Pers. Comm).

After several minutes of pulling the strings of *ogbono* shells and tossing them back to the ground, the diviner picks up one of the broomsticks. He grinned, took another broomstick and called out one of the names he had been given. "Look up", he ordered it, "do not hide your face". He called out the names of the rest of the deceased relatives and ordered them to reveal themselves to him. Then he tapped the rod on the turtle shell. He took a piece of kola nut, chewed it and reclined on a wall. For some odd reasons, diviners always took their positions near a wall. He threw the shells again and called another name. Then he asked for a cup of wine. He threw the shells again, pulled them towards himself and began to interpret the names of the deceased relatives by the sticks he had in his hands,

In this particular *Agu*, the father of the children had earlier identified all but one of the sticks by the names of his deceased relatives. As the diviner went about his business, he stood there and watched intently to see whether he would mix up the names. The diviner picks the sticks and named the deceased relatives he had been told of earlier. But then, he noticed that there were more sticks than the names of the relatives he had been given and the number of children to be investigated. Feeling that his host was

tempting him, he threatened blackmail, picked up the broomsticks and called out the names at random. The boy's father noticed that the diviner failed to identify the names at the diviner's expertise. The case of a woman reincarnating a boy they explained as one of those situations when a woman became a living spirit.

After the investigation, the mother of the children was often the first to congratulate them. She often did so with chunks of dried fish tossed in palm oil and salt. As was always the case in such gathering of people, drinks, food and akofve and ukpaka salad were provided. By now the father of the children had carried their tutelary deities- *Okpenshi* with *ogilishi (Newbouldia laevis)*, logs. These represented the spirits the children would sacrifice cocks to during every *otite* festival when they become adults.

For each of the guardian spirits announced during reincarnation, a cock was killed to welcome it. The ward (the child) of each spirit was given the head of the cock killed for his guardian spirit. This served as a special recognition and approval that he now indeed had a guardian spirit. Furthermore, each child was entitled to the ribcage and the intestine of cock, which were always the share of children when a chicken was killed.

From the day of the *agu* onwards, each boy took special note of interest in *Okpenshi*, which represented his spirit idol. Whenever there was any ceremony in the family, requiring sacrifice to the ancestors, he made sure that the blood of any animals killed was spilled on his *Okpenshi*. When the boy grew to adulthood, it became his responsibility to sacrifice cocks to his spirit guardian, especially during the *otite* festival. In recent past, this practice has been regarded as idolatrous and has waned in popularity. There are signs of *Okpenshi* Awka today only in the palace of *Eze-uzu* of Awka and other title holders (Emmanuel 2015:Pers. Comm).

b) Iru Nkpu Festival

According to Emmanuel (2015:Pers. Comm), this is a fattening room used to mark a girl's entry into womanhood and it is for anticipated period of about five months of seclusion. During the *nkpu* period, the girl is not allowed to go to the farm or stream.

The cultural significance of *Iru Nkpu* cultural activity is that some rites are performed during the activity and from these rites takes place, one can be able to interpret the culture of the people and also their belief system.

c) *Ike Ikpo and Wrestling*

Ikpo is a mini vacation for adolescent males. It is held annually after the planting season to help the men unwind and gain relief from the rigors of farm work or hazards of blacksmithing. *Ikpo* was the only meaningful period of time they had for rest from their jobs. In Awka, every young man looked forward to *ikpo* with delight. To them, the *ikpo* period was equivalent to the *nkpu* period for the girls. It is done every year until they passed the age of adolescence. It is a social activity that attracts and interests people (Emmanuel 2015:Pers. Comm).

d) *Emume Inye Nwa Afva (Birth and Naming Ceremony)*

According to Emmanuel (2015:Pers. Comm), when a girl married, the expectation was that by ninth month the invitees to the marriage would come back to celebrate the birth of a child.

There is this natural instinct about parenting which every living thing has. In Awka, the expectant mother prepared for the eventual delivery of her child. She was directed to a herbalist by the mother-in-law. The herbalist collected herbs and prepared them for her to be drinking for her health and that of the unborn child. When she was about to deliver her baby, a ceremony was performed for her in the palace of the father-in-law. Foods were prepared for the gods, once these ceremonies have been completed, the woman then started to prepare for the birth of the child in earnest.

At the onset of labour, the itinerant midwife was sent for. She came with her long raffia bag in which she packed her gear-razor blade and sterilized piece of cloth. The midwife helps in the delivery of the child.

Thirteen days after the birth of the baby, which was three weeks in Awka lunar calendar, the iroko bed was dismantled. The mud bed was now cushioned with more

mats to provide a more comfortable bed. The woman could now sleep in the bed, usually on her side, minimizes the chances of crushing the child under her weight. She was now allowed to prepare some of her own food if she wished, especially if her mother had not arrived. She was allowed to practice how to bath the child. As part of the 13th day festivities, *afvulu* or bitter leaf soup was prepared for a yam lunch, together with other foods. There was a small internal party for the inner circle. The child's umbilical cord which had been preserved since it fell off at about 8th day was placed between the trunk and a frond of a select palm tree in the family lot outside the living compound and that palm tree becomes the property of the child.

The birth confinement officially ended on the 29th day. The parents - in - law were informed together with the Umunna or extended families. The entire village was also invited. *Afvulu* soup, which was a sine qua non was prepared for a yam lunch and *egwushi* soup was prepared for the supper. Several gallons of palm wine were prepared for the supper. Several gallons of palm wine were booked and reserved for the occasion. *Ukpaka abubo* (fermented oil bean seed stew) was prepared for the roasted yam which was to be eaten at the gate when the women returned from the stream. At about 10.00am of the 39th day after birth, the woman was accompanied by a step wife to a local spring water to bath and fetch some water.

Later that evening, all the invitees gathered at the *obu* or palace. There were usually the parents-in-law, grandparents and extended families, the villagers, and other invitees each at their own little compartments in the compound. A goat was slaughtered for this evening meal. The food was served to the elders, parents-in-law, grandparents or extended families, and other invitees. They were also served drinks according to their number and mix of age levels. The villagers were also served drinks but were seldom in the budget for the evening dinner, unless the host had enough means to provide for them also.

After the meal, the child was brought out for the naming ceremony. The baby's grandparents-in-laws were also invited to name the child. Each person took turns naming the child according to his or her own personal experiences. Thus, the baby ends up having several names. However, only but one or two of these stands out and are recognized as the child's given names. Often, these are those given by the parents. When no particular name stands out, the baby was called by the name of the market day in which it was born, (Emmanuel, 2015:Pers. Comm).

e) *Okike Ana* (Distribution Of Estates)

According to Emmanuel (2015:Pers. Comm), in a monogamous family, a man's property is shared per capita among his male children while it is shared per *ogbolodo*, with a living male child, in a polygamous family. The *ogbolodo* that has no male child will not take part in sharing the property. *Ogbolodo* is a term used to describe the family sub-unit of the man. i.e *mkpuke*.

According to Emmanuel (2015:Pers. Comm), each family sub-unit is led by each of the man's wives until her male children become of age. The *diokpala* is entitled to occupy his father's *obu* or living house and his *uno nga* or private house. He is also entitled to his father's *ana iru ezi*, or the piece of landed property that lead to his house.

f) *Eghu Uta Di Mmuo*

It was the custom in Awka that when a man died his brother could *kuchie* or remarry his widow. However, before a man remarried his brother's widow, he was required to perform *Eghu Uta Di Mmuo* and it is known as levirate marriage. Levirate marriage is no longer widely practiced in Awka. During this ceremony, some rites are performed and this is what is important to the archaeologist because it can be used to interpret the people's way of life (Emmanuel, 2015:Pers. Comm).

g) *Anumu Nwanyi* (Awka Traditional Marriage)

Marriage in Awka is a union of two families and not just the union of the bride and groom. After all the necessary arrangements, there are some rites that are performed in

Awka marriage before the woman becomes fully married to the man and they include (a) *Iku aka/iju ase* (inquiring) (b) bride prize (*ime ego*) (c) *isenete ifve mmia* (returning of the wine guard) (d) *immedo ifve nwanyi* (e) *Igbu okuko onye uwa* (f) *idunye nwanyi* (handover) (Emmanuel, 2015:Pers. Comm).

Traditional marriage as the name implies involves the tradition of the people and this is part of the culture of the people in a given area. Archaeologist takes into consideration the culture of the people and this will tell the archaeologist some of the way of life of the people in that area, (Iloanya, 2008).

Also, there could be no understanding of the Awka people without an understanding of their religion. Awka religion was called “*Ovburbe*” (Awka pronunciation of the word “*Ofufe*”). It meant worship. For every Awka man to do anything, he will always recognize his gods. Although the Awka people had many gods, but they recognized one who is supreme. They called Him *Chi-Ukwu* (Chukwu). He was the creator of all things, and the most powerful of all gods. They called him by many names: *Chikwu-Okike*, God the creator; *Olisebuluwa*, He from whom all blessings flow; *Amashiamashi*, the unknowable, (Okafor, 1992:80).

Each of the gods was given responsibility for overseeing particular aspects of life on earth. For example, *Ajana* goddess oversaw the laws of cohesion *nso* and *alu*; *udo* oversaw the purity of life; the goddess *Ovbuvbe* had general superintendence, and so on. *Ngene* saw to it that all drinking waters were not polluted. *Ajoka* – god of the territory of Awka, he was a male, he watched over the territorial integrity of Awka town. *Imoka* – the avenger, whenever an Awka man was embarking on a journey, he took a piece of chalk from the shrine of *Imoka*, and wrapped it in a piece of cloth, and put it in his luggage. At his destination, he hung this wrapped-up piece of chalk in his workshop or place of residence, as a protection against evil and hostile people. *Imoka* was known as “*Ogbachi Obodo*”, the avenger, and any person who harmed an *Oka* man had himself and his whole family wiped out by *Imoka*.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS:

Traditional crafts and industries are special activities in the lives of the people under study. In the areas, there are so many traditional crafts and industries which can be of interest to tourists who intend visiting the area. Also, these crafts reveal an understanding of the harmonious utilization of natural resources. Such traditional crafts and industries are as follows;

4.1.1 BLACKSMITHING INDUSTRY IN THE STUDY AREAS

Blacksmithing in its simplest connotation encompasses the utilization of bloom, which serves as the end product of iron smelting, to forge tools or objects. This art flourishes more than iron smelting because iron smelting depends solely on very scarce raw material-iron ore. This is as a result of the abundant iron scrap and availability of discarded iron sheet that are recovered. They are the most skillful in the practicalization of crafts. Blacksmiths produce farm implements, kitchen utensils etc, which are on a high demands.

Blacksmith are greatly found in Nsukka and Awka just like in many other parts of Igbo land.

Ethnographic Survey of blacksmithing at Nsukka

The origin of blacksmithing in Nsukka is controversial. Some people claimed that the art developed independently while others believed that it came into being through the process of diffusion. The later believed that the knowledge of iron working in Nsukka diffused from Awka, Anambra State. It is asserted that the Awka blacksmith influenced the development of blacksmithing in Nsukka. The Awka introduced innovation to the existing iron working technology in Nsukka dated to 750BC.

Eze Kenneth (2015:Pers. Comm.), pointed out that Awka blacksmiths in search of hardwood for charcoals settled in Amora – Nru a village in Nsukka. The village had

abundance of trees like *Ukpaka (Pentecletra mycrophylla) inyi (Afromonia specie) and okpeye (Ricinus communis)*.

The blacksmiths settled and got married to the women of the village who bore children for them that grew and took up the art from their father in succession. Meanwhile, in the village of Amora, the Umu-Ngwoke kindred only, does the art of blacksmithing in Nru, why? Because, they are the only people that welcomed the strangers (the Awka blacksmiths) in the village. The blacksmiths in return while going back to Awka taught some men of Amora Nru and provided for them all the tools of blacksmithing. And, the art till present became monopolized by the Amora people.

Furthermore, at Ede-oballa Nsukka, Asogwa Sunday (2015: Pers. Comm.), stated that blacksmithing is as old as man itself and, the origin is unknown to him. According to Sunday, two villages Amuzu and Amaezi are known for blacksmithing in Ede-Oballa. Although, the art is about going to extinction at Amaezi unlike Amazu where virtually the families in the village are blacksmiths. Thus, Sunday affirmed that the art of blacksmithing diffused to Amaezi through marriage. Probably, a lady from Amuzu was married to Amaezi and happened to have her child who visited the maiden home and on the process learnt blacksmithing and went back to Amaezi to practice. Though, certain ceremony was done before the art was instituted at Amaezi. Today, most youths from the kindred that have the exclusive right for blacksmithing are not interested in the art and this proves the possibility of the art going into extinction in the nearest future.

In addition, a similar account presented by Asogwa Godwin (2015:Pers. Comm), the knowledge of iron working in Umuegiri– Ibagwa, Nsukka, could have diffused from Amora Nru Nsukka. This is as a result of the intermarriage that existed between Umuegiri and Amora people. It was learnt that in the past a lady from Amora was married to an Umuegiri man whom through the children brought the art in the village after a several visit to their maiden home. To him, he never disputed the historical fact

due to the high level of similarities in production techniques and certain taboos that govern the profession between the products of Umuegiri and Amora Nsukka.

This concurred with what Eze Kenneth (2015:Pers. Comm) said regarding apprenticeship. He said the art is not open to outsiders to learn. That the highest they can do is teaching somebody whose mother hails from Amora. But, with certain ceremony to accompany the institution of the art in the place of origin of the person. This process has enabled the art to spread to diverse areas of Nsukka. Among the places it diffused to be are Ede-oballa, Ibagwa, Edem etc.

Sources of raw materials

According to Asogwa Sunday (2015:Pers. Comm.), the raw materials are basically gotten from mechanical workshops, electrical workshops as well as from the market where they buy discarded motor parts like the motor spring. They arrange with the mechanics at the mechanic village to keep metal scraps for them which they do collect on regular basis.

However, another raw material is *icheku (Velvet tamarind)*, which smiths normally cut and use as charcoal for heating of metals. According to Eze Sunday (2015:Pers. Comm.), not all charcoals are good for smithing. Reason being that there are some types of wood that burn and produce lots of ashes like mango, cashew etc. But woods like *okpeye (Ricinus communis)*, *aji wood (Antiaris Africana)*, and *akpaka (Pentecletra mycophyila)* are recommendable for blacksmithing. They are good producers of charcoal which are capable of heating metals.

Mr. Asogwa Godwin (2015:Pers. Comm.), added that his source of charcoal is from the abattoir.

Tools used for blacksmithing in Nsukka:

The various common tools used for blacksmithing in Nsukka are:

- a) *Ihu ama* (anvil): This serves as a table for the blacksmith. It serves as a life wire on which all metals are placed on before hammering or shaping is done. Blacksmiths

usually make use of two main types of hammers – the sledge and flattening hammers (in some cases the flattening hammers are two – one bigger than the other). The sledge hammer is used to beat the red hot iron to the desired shape and thickness while the flattening hammers give smooth surface finish to the object produced (Okpoko and Ibeanu, 1999).

- b) *Otutu* (heavy hammer): This is a metal object used for hitting and cutting of thick irons.
- c) *Ojebe*: *Ojebe* serves as a shaft. It is of two types the big and small size. The big size is referred to as *ojebe* while the small size is referred to as *obere*. The both were used for hitting and cutting of irons.
- d) *Mkpa* (big thong): This is used in holding and getting off the hot iron before forging.
- e) *Mma* (small steel cutlass): This is used for bending burnt iron especially in the construction of traps. Also, it helps to set charcoals burning astray in order.
- f) *Eko* (bellows): This is used to pump air into the blacksmith's fire. It is mainly made of rubber tied on a pot-like metal with a long wooden handle attached to the rubber. Thus, we have electrified bellows. This uses energy either from electricity or car battery. Its components are Peugeot car coolant, refrigerator fan, ceiling fan regulator and a plug.
- g) *Okwuka* (Chisel): This is a sharp iron tool with an attached handle made of wood or rubber and it is used for cold cutting of thin bits.
- h) *Ntuishi* (aluminum marker): According to Ugwuja Elias, this serves as a marker while cutting out a pattern.
- i) *Aha* (Punch): This is a round metal rod of various sizes used for creating hole on a flat metal sheet.
- j) *Ekwu oku* (mini oven): This is where iron is burnt before reshaping it.

All these tools are used as machines and help the blacksmiths' productions to be easy.

Apprenticeship in Nsukka Blacksmithing Industry

Apprenticeship is strictly prohibited from non members of the villages/kindred that the art is indigenous to. According to Eze Kenneth (2015:Pers. Comm.), blacksmithing is sacred and bestowed to certain villages and kindred in the areas of Nsukka. Though, a male that his mother hails from Amora can learn the art if interested but, will not practice in his father place or elsewhere without certain ceremonies to appease the god of *Uzu*.

However, the learning process can take duration of 3 - 4 years depending on how fast the person is in learning and understanding of the profession.

Thus, on the graduation day, the families of the apprentice and the blacksmith as well as some other smiths around will come together to witness the occasion. The master gives an anvil and hammer to the apprentice as the initial tools for his start up. Finally, prayers and blessing are made in honor of the apprentice who is officially welcomed into the profession.

Ethnographic Survey of blacksmithing at Awka

The origin of blacksmithing in Awka is not clear. Many theories have been put forward by many scholars. According to Isichei (1976), the art of smithing in Awka was taught by God. Another version claims that blacksmithing started in a village called Umuzocha. Also, according to Onyeibor (2015: Pers. Comm.), noted that blacksmithing was introduced into Awka by one Nnebuzo, from Agulu Umana in Agbaja (Old Udi Division). It is believed that Agulu village in Awka originated from Agulu Umana. It was assumed that Nnebuzo introduced blacksmithing in Awka from Agulu Umana. Awka has seven quarters which are Umuogbu, Umubele, Umuonaga, Umuike, Umugagwo, Umuenechi and Umuoruka. Michael Okpara (2015:Pers. Comm.), stated that Men from these seven quarters have been from time immemorial noted as blacksmiths. They have, in addition, been noted for undertaking extensive tours to diverse places in Nigeria in pursuit of their trade. The blacksmiths produced mainly agricultural tools like sickles, machetes,

locally made guns, hoe and other metallic products. Though, apart from these seven villages, other villages also engaged themselves in the blacksmithing industry.

However, Okey Omenyi (2015:Pers. Comm.), added that blacksmiths in Awka were divided into two groups the itinerant group (*ipu-ije*) and (*iche-uno*) home guard. The *ipu-ije* group was permitted to travel to various places where they were free to engage in smithing. This group of itinerant blacksmiths were only allowed to stay away for a year, and were expected back home during the *Onwa-asaa* the seven lunar month of Awka. The other group known as *iche-uno* remained to guard the homes in Awka. They cannot travel for long protracted journey. But they can do their travel when the first group returned to Awka. The home guards could undertake short-lived journey lasting for about a month or two. This is called *ojije onwa* in Awka.

But Obiora Chigbata (2015:Pers. Comm.), stated clearly that the days of travelling to different parts of the country has gone though they have a working guild that formed their union with the aim of protecting the interest of their members and promoting their arts and craft culture.

Moreover Micheal Okpara (2015:Pers. Comm.), contributed that *Akputakpu* is the god of iron in Awka. It is believed that this god was brought to Awka by Nnebuza. The *Akputakpu* shrine is located in Agulu Awka where people come to make sacrifices to the gods. Sacrifice to the *Akputakpu* are usually done twice in a year; the *Akputakpu Udu Mmili* (sacrifice conducted during the rainy season) and *Akputakpu-okochi* sacrifice done in the dry season. Usually, before any Awka blacksmith embark on a journey or itinerancy, he would make some sacrifices to the shrine of *Akputakpu*. Significantly on *Akputakpu* day, every Awka smiths and men would take a yam and a white cock or any other thing he can afford to the shrine.

Onyeibor (2015:Pers. Comm.), added that in Umuenechi in Agulu village, is responsible for producing the chief priest of *Akputakpu*. But during the period of celebration, every

village must be part of the celebration. The pincers and hammer used by Agulu Awka were placed in a giant pot in the shrine.

Tools used for blacksmithing in Awka

Ndubuisi Chigbata (2015:Pers. Comm.), pointed out that all the tools used by Awka blacksmiths were of their own making. Among the tools are

- a) *Osiama* (anvil): The *osiama* is usually knocked into a strong wood which is built into the floor of the workshop. It serves as a table for the blacksmith and as a life wire on which all metals are placed on before hammering or shaping is done.
- b) *Anyunka* (Hammer): this is used for forging the metals into required and desired shapes. It can also be used for smoothening of rough iron sheet.
- c) *Otutu* (heavy hammer): This is a metal object used for hitting and cutting of thick irons.
- d) *Mkpa* (big thong): This is used in holding and getting off the hot iron before forging.
- e) *Imbiri-igwe* (pliers): This is just like a small thong used in holding or cutting a pieces of iron.
- f) *Mma* (small steel cutlass): This is used for bending burnt iron especially in the construction of traps. Also, it helps to set charcoals burning astray in order.
- g) *Eko* (bellow): This is used to pump air into the blacksmith's fire. It is mainly made of rubber tied on a pot-like metal with a long wooden handle attached to the rubber. Thus, we have electrified bellow. This uses energy either from electricity or car battery. Its components are Peugeot car coolant, refrigerator fan, ceiling fan regulator and a plug.
- h) *Akuko oyighoyi* (Chisel): This is a sharp iron tool with an attached handle made of wood or rubber and it is used for cold cutting of thin bits.
- i) *Ntu* (aluminum marker): this serves as a marker while cutting out a pattern.
- j) *Arala* (drilling nails): This is a round metal rod of various sizes used for creating hole on a flat metal sheet.

k) *Ulo eko* (tuyere clay nuzzle): This is a medium through air is blown into the smithing chamber.

Sources of raw materials

The early blacksmiths in Awka were known to have secured iron (bloom) for smithing from the local smelting area which Basden (1966) argued to be in Agulu Umana (old Udi Division), a town very close to Awka. However, the present day blacksmiths secure iron scraps from either Nkpor or Onitsha markets.

Apprenticeship in Awka Blacksmithing Industry

The system of apprenticeship in the Awka blacksmithing took many shapes. According to Obiora Chigbata (2015:Pers. Comm.), in some cases a master-smith could secure the services of an apprenticeship whose work comprised chiefly on the blowing of bellows. The apprentice in most cases would be a small boy of about ten to thirteen years old. He will be taught the craft in stages. After the period of apprenticeship, he pays his master in kind by putting in some years of services in the workshop of the master, which could be four months. Master smiths offer a hammer and an anvil which served as certificate to the young smith.

Furthermore, twelve to eighteen years could practice or pertain in the blacksmithing industry as an apprentice. The requirement for apprentice is kola nut (*Cola acuminata*) and hot drink only. And the duration of the apprenticeship is one year for trying and testing and three years to become a full-fledge practitioner.

Okey Omenyi (2015:Pers. Comm.), stated that ceremonies for completion of blacksmithing programme is usually the freedom ceremony. It is a big party, relations, friends and well wishers gather and enjoy with the apprentice for becoming a full-fledged practitioner.

Techniques Used in blacksmithing industry in Nsukka and Awka

There are two major techniques used by the blacksmiths in my study areas in the production and reconstructing of works, such techniques are the forging and casting methods.

a) Forging:

This entails hammering or pressing of metals into desired shape. It is vital to point out that forging can be viewed or discussed under forge welding, drawing out, upset forging and drill forging.

According to Asogwa Sunday (2015:Pers. Comm.), blacksmiths fuse pieces of metals together through a forging technique known as forge welding. In this process, a particular temperature is reached when the metal scraps to be forged turn red and soft. The blacksmith then sticks the scraps together with a few light hammering, this process continues until the fusion is achieved. This type of forging technique is called drawing out and is basically used in manipulating implements from metals.

Therefore, five basic operations or techniques are common under forging technique. They are drawing, shrinking, bending, upsetting and beating.

These operations generally employ hammer and anvil at a minimum, but smiths will also make use of other tools and techniques to accommodate odd-sized or repetitive jobs.

b) Casting:

This involves the thrusting of molten metal into an extremely hot mold by centrifugal force pressure or vacuum so that it immediately freezes or solidifies into a form that reflects in metal, every detail of the wax model. This casting in this sense is the repair of implements, making of ornaments and other objects so that it solidifies when cool.

The products of the blacksmiths in the Study Areas:

Among the product of the blacksmith prior to the coming of the white man in my study areas are: tools for agricultural, domestic and defensive purposes. Some of these tools

according to Okpoko (1987) served also social, religious and ritual functions. The products are as follows:

1. Agricultural purposes: these include machetes (*mma-oru*), hoe (*ogu*), kitchen knives (*mma ekwu*), dibble (*ngwu-ala*), axe (*anyu ike*) etc.
2. Socio-cultural and religious purposes include: iron staff – *Ngwu ozo*, charming hook – *Aba*, ritual sticks, gong (*ogene*) for music, canon (*egba ala*), rings – *Ola*, *mgba aka* etc
3. War and defense purposes: this includes: spear (*ube*), bow (*uta*), trap (*onya igwe*), pins, rifle gun – *Egbe ntu*, etc.

Marketing and Distribution of the Blacksmiths' products in my study areas

The products (*ogu*, *anyu ike*, *mma*, *onya*, *eka*, *iga*, *ngwu* etc) of Nsukka blacksmiths are favorably sold at Ogige Market, Orié Orba, Nkwo Ibagwa, Onitsha main market, Abakaliki Market, and people from Benue State come to buy from them in large quantity.

However, in Awka, the blacksmithing products are usually sold in different places like Eke Awka market, to musicians, farmers and people from Abakaliki town and others. Onitsha main market is also another place the blacksmithing products are more favourably sold just like Nsukka blacksmiths do. Also, Otuocha and Nsukka are among the places they distribute their products.

Taboos and Sanctions associated to Blacksmithing Industry in Nsukka and Awka

According to Asogwa Godwin (2015: Pers Comm.), the following are the taboos associated with blacksmithing industry.

- Women are prohibited from undertaking the profession.
- Nobody tells a blacksmith that fire will burn him or that his iron will break.
- Any woman on her menstruation does not enter a blacksmith's workshop.

When asked if there is any sanction taken or placed on the offender, he replied yes! That the person involved would bring six (6) kola nuts (*Cola acuminata*) and a cock which will be used to appease the god of iron.

Ugwuja Elias added that it is a taboo for anybody to walk pass behind a blacksmith in a workshop. Also, it is a taboo for somebody who is not a blacksmith to hit on the anvil. And finally, nobody (be it a blacksmith) blows the *ekwu oku* with his mouth otherwise the person's cheek swells.

Challenges Associated with Blacksmithing Industry in Nsukka and Awka

Among the challenges of blacksmithing industry in the study areas are inadequate of raw materials, lack of fund, the seasonality of the business, preference of foreign products to local materials, lack of interest by the youth of this generation etc.



Plate Three: Showing some tools for blacksmithing.



Plate Four: Showing the blacksmithing hearth.



Plate Five: Showing the Researcher observing the smith



Plate Six: Showing some axes with wooden axes.



in the act.

Plate Seven: Showing metal traps made by Mr. Asogwa Godwin.



Plate Eight: Showing the bellow.



Plate Ten: Showing the Researcher with Mr. Asogwa Sunday and Mr. Ugwuja Elias.

Plate Nine: Showing Mr. Ugwuja Elias in his workshop.



Plate Eleven: Showing *Nkpo ana* (canon gun).



Plate Twelve: Showing Mr. Onyeibor Isaac drawing a pattern on a metal sheet.



Plate Fourteen: Showing Mr. Ndubuisi Chigbata forging *Nkpo ana* (canon gun).



Plate Thirteen: Showing few *ogene* (musical instrument) made by Mr. Michael Okpara.



Plate Fifteen: Showing *eka* (ritual objects) made by Eze Kenneth.



Plate Sixteen: Showing Mr. Michael Okpara's Workshop at Mbaukwu, Awka.

Plate Seventeen: Showing Mr. Eze Kenneth's Workshop at Amora-Nru Nsukka.



Plate Eighteen: Showing Mr. Emmanuel Odinaka and the Researcher in front of Eze-Uzu's Palace.

4.1.2 WOODCARVING INDUSTRY IN THE STUDY AREAS

Woodcarving Industry in Nsukka

Carving is considered an art which has its origin in the past. It was noted that Nsukka carving originally started with the representation of deities. It is also believed that individual traditional carvers existed far back.

According to Ugwu Umoro (2015: Pers. Comm.), carving is a sacred tradition that entails the art of assemblage of ideas, having desire the determination to put these ideas into visualization of an object.

However, it is important to state that the practice of woodcarving among Nsukka people is as old as the existence of man. All my informants continued to point to one that the origin of wood carving in Nsukka cannot be explained by anyone.

This is because their ancestors had also engaged in this crafts which serve both economic, aesthetic, socio-cultural and religious purposes and functions till date without reference to anyone.

Wood Carving Industry in Awka

The art of wood carving in Awka is an old practice whose origin cannot be evidently traced now by the contemporary society. Eke Sunday (2015:Pers. Comm.), states that the art runs in a particular family and is usually transferred from father to son in succession. Though, due to the nature of the art, it has become an open tradition or trade that one can easily learn and practice.

However, as a result of modernization, the craft of carving has actually reduced to carpentry work in Awka as most of the carvers merge their artistic skills with carpentry which keeps them alternating from one work to another. It is believed that in the past ten years carpentry work has been their major reliance in the workshop as carving products are not regular or in high demand.

Tools used for Carving in Nsukka and Awka

The following tools are highly needed in the process of wood carving:

- a) *Nkpu/Nkpucha* (Chisel): This is a steel tool with a very sharp edge at the end of the rod, with an attached handle usually made of wood at the top. It is used during finishing touches.
- b) *Anyunka* (Adze): This is used to perform the initial task on the wood which involves roughing the wood for easy operation. According to Eze Ebuka (2015: Pers. Comm.), the carvers do nearly all his work with it.
- c) *Anyuike* (Axe): According to Ugwu Umoro (2015: Pers. Comm.), the axe is used at the initial process of cutting down trees, splitting and chopping the logs. The carvers also use it to cut the size of wood needed for the job.
- d) Mallet: This is a hammer-like tool used by the carvers for striking the handle of the chisel. It is usually employed during the preliminary roughening out stages.
- e) Machete and Kitchen Knife: The former is used for cutting the trees into logs of wood while the later is used for cutting smaller pieces of wood and fashioning out different kinds of objects from the wood.
- f) Top Gum: This is a sticky substance that holds two pieces of wood together. Ugwoke Thomas in an interview stated that top gum can be used for filling of unwanted hole in a wood.
- g) *Amuma* and *Nkicha* (big and small hand axe): They are used for carving the back of mortar and pestle.
- h) Sand Papers: Here, there is soft and rough sand papers. The former is used to beautify the already smoothed pieces of the wood by the carver while the later is used for careful and systematical smoothing of the wooden surface of the object in order to give it a fine finishing.
- i) Tape: This is used for measuring the size of wood that would be needed by the carver in order to produce desired objects.

j) Saw: This is a tool used for cutting of wood.

Sources of Raw Materials

Wood plays a major role in the production or carving exercise in my study areas. The traditional carvers use wood very extensively because it possesses vital natural qualities suitable for carving production and also economical. Therefore, this type of craft is practiced greatly in areas within the forest vegetation region. Thus, it is an important occupation in Nsukka and Awka. The deciduous and evergreen forest of the areas produces soft and hard woods.

Materials used by wood carvers are mostly hardwoods such as *okpeye (Ricinus communis)*, *inyi (Afromonia specie)*, *akpaka (Pentecletra mycrophylla)*, *iroko* etc. Although, the above mentioned hardwoods are in short supply in Awka unlike Nsukka. It is believed that carvers in Awka transports hardwood from Nsukka and parts of Kogi and Benue State. But most times they make use of *Ogilisi (Newbouldia laevis)*, *Agba*, and *Abosi* woods which are abundant in the area.

Among the attributes of hard wood are; heavy in weight, reddish in colour, brownish and/or dark brown in colour. In addition, hard wood is more durable than soft wood.

According to Ugwu Umoro (2015: Pers. Comm.), Nsukka carvers are fortunate with the abundance of hard woods in Nsukka area. Wood such as *okpeye (Ricinus communis)*, *inyi (Afromonia specie)*, *akpaka (Pentecletra mycrophylla)*, *iroko (Milicia excels)*, are found in almost part of Nsukka.

Process and techniques used in wood carving Industry in Nsukka and Awka:

Carving is exclusively preserved for the male genders in Nsukka and Awka. The restriction may be due to the fact that the profession is energy sapping, requires a lot of stamina, and time consuming. Consequently, the women are mostly engaged in the less labourious aspect of craft production especially in the areas of palm oil production.

The wood carver begins his work by deciding on the type of wood that is suitable for the form he has in mind to carve out of the log of wood but he knows the best wood that

would be suitable for a particular job either soft or hard. For instance, mortars and doors are carved using hard wood so that they can be durable. Drums, flute etc are carved out of softwood so they can be portable.

According to Eze Ebuka (2015: Pers. Comm.), the following are the processes for carving:

- Chopping, cutting, slicing or the utilization of sand paper (rough sand paper) to smoothen the parts of the wood gotten from the fallen tree.
- Then, the carver uses his tools to cut the wood into desired size and shape based on the nature and type of the object to be carved.
- He then uses his tape to take the measurements.
- This also involves chipping and cutting of undesired edges until a desired shape and size is achieved.
- Chisel and mallet are now used by the carver to remove the splinter and rough edges and the adze or plain jack is used to smoothen the form.
- Now, a white chalk, charcoal, or pencil is used to outline the exact areas to be cut also, to draw out the styles or decorations on the object. This is done in order to avoid making mistakes during the incision process.

Subsequently, the carver will then use the small knife to cut out the decorations. Adze is also used for smoothening the surface, while the chisel is used to smoothen rough edges. Finally, sand, paper is used to put the finer finishing.

However, after the use of the above tools, the carving is polished coated with either one or a combination of the followings. Wood dyes (used in most cases to fake the identity of the wood used for the carving), polishes and waxes. This is to enhance the beauty, quality, value, and the life span of the carved objects.

At this stage, the carving is ready for the desired use.

Some Objects Produced By Carvers and Their Uses

The carvers in my study areas produce objects of different kinds with the utilization of hard wood and soft wood. These objects play major roles in my study areas. The following are some of the objects and their uses:

Ikwe (Big Mortar)

Here, in Nsukka and Awka, mortar plays a crucial role as a typical kitchen equipment. It is in it that yam, cassava, and even garri are contained before pounding takes place. It is in it that the pestle hits directly to actualize one's aim during pounding exercise.

Odo (Pestle)

This is a long stick which is well articulately measured and carved. It is used for pounding yam, cassava, garri etc. There is also the smaller pestle used for pounding pepper, crayfish etc. It is indeed a kitchen tool.

Okwa (small mortar)

This is used for grinding or pounding of pepper, crayfish etc during the preparation of food of different kinds like jollof rice, yam porridge, fried rice etc. It almost serves equivalent functions as the big mortar.

Oche (Chair)

This is used for sitting at homes and even at the market places. It is also used in the shrines.

Ikwe Ekwu or Akwu (horizontal big mortar)

This is horizontal in shape used for the processing of palm oil. The boiled palm fruits are matched in it in order to extract the useful elements.

Ihu Mma or Mmanwu (Masquerade Mask)

The production of mask is indeed a prominent business among the carvers in Nsukka and Awka. They carve the masks for both the indigenous and the outsiders to buy. The carved masks are worn by different masquerades especially during festivals.

***Oja* (Notched Flute)**

This is a musical instrument used to add sweet lyrical sound in traditional songs and traditional dances. These dances include; *igba omabe, oji onu, uraga* etc. This is mainly made out of a soft wood with a narrowly hollowed cavity which is cylindrically bored from the top to the bottom. Its length is usually about 13 to 16cm. The mouth piece has 'V' or 'U' shaped. There are two finger holes created at the bottom for another finger position. *Ojo* adds grace and tempo to dances/songs and brings out the music's melodious nature. It is an indispensable object in the traditional entertainment industry.

***Ekú Nri* (Wooden Spoon)**

This is a large cooking spoon that has a long handle and then a shallow bowl at the end. It is used for cooking big pots of jollof rice, stew, soups etc.

***Azi* (Wooden Pillar)**

This is a long wooden pillar with a 'U' shaped mouth use for holding or suspending some part of a roof from resting so much on the wall.

Marketing and Distribution of the carvers' products in my study areas

The carvers' products were in high demand both by consumers and local retailers who take them to surrounding markets and neighboring towns. At times, the materials are sold direct to local users and customers who come straight to the workshop to place orders and prescription. There were also the Awka itinerant smiths who travelled farther with some of these wares which they sold to their host communities (Onwudufor, 2006). Surrounding towns also come to carvers' workshop to make special request both as individuals and groups especially during festivals when special orders are placed such as new masquerades, musical instruments and chieftaincy paraphernalia.

Also, according to Omenyi (2015: Pers. Comm.), they equally sell their wares at Eke Awka and Onitsha just like the Nsukka Carvers that sell their ware at Nkwo Ibagwa, Orié Igbo Eze, Ogige Market and Orié Orba Market.

Training and apprenticeship in the wood carving industries

Then, for the woodcarving industry, according to Ugwu Umoro (2015: Pers. Comm.), in enlisting apprentice, the person involved must have reached the age of reasoning. Again, in carving, there is gender bias. This means that carving is merely done by male folks. But according to Ugwoke Thomas (2015: Pers. Comm.), before one is enlisted as an apprentice he must bring four (4) kola nuts (*Cola acuminata*), a keg of palm wine and a chisel. He further stressed that the person should possess the following qualities; humility, creativity, hardworking, physically and mindfully strong to be able to carry out the carving tasks.

When asked of the duration of apprenticeship, Mamah Bernard (2015: Pers. Comm.), replied that there are no specific days, months, or years for one to be trained because it depends on the apprentice's ability to "catch up" with what is happening in carving industry. According to him, there is no ceremony that accompanies the completion of training.

Taboos and Sanctions associated with wood carving Industry in Nsukka and Awka

According to Ugwu Umoru (2015: Pers. Comm.), it is a taboo for anyone to say to a carver that pieces of wood shall enter his eye during carving activities. It is also a taboo for a woman to carve objects especially ritualistic objects like *Ishi mma or isi mmonwu*.

On the other hand, according to Ugwoke Thomas (2015: Pers. Comm.), any offender of these taboos should bring a keg of palm wine, a white cock and eight (8) kola nuts for the carver to use them to appease the gods.

In addition, quoting Agwu (2006) in Onwudufor (2006), carvers were also very ritualistic and endeavored to keep themselves from defilement and immorality. They made it a point of duty to be law abiding as trouble-makers among them was sanctioned by the guild to which many of them belonged. They observed a lot of rituals to keep the door of inspiration open. It was believed that failure to do so would offend the spirits and could result in unexplainable and sudden injuries in the workshop. He hinted that in

business trips, they never looked at anybody's wife or risk being poisoned when one comes on another trip. Nnoruka Patrick (2015: Pers. Comm.), revealed that he does not drink alcohol or go to condolence on Eke and Afor market days, he admitted that illiteracy actually hindered and restricted their horizon and innovativeness and effectively limited their ingenuity. He was however quick to add that those who were naturally endowed were able to overcome such hindrances and met all kinds of requests and challenges.

The Problems That Affect Wood Carving Industries are:

According to Ugwu Umoro (2015: Pers. Comm.), one of the factors that influences woodcarving art is bush burning. This according to him has destroyed a lot of trees suitable for the carving exercise. He also pointed out that jealousy among the carvers is indeed a great factor that impedes the growth of the industry. How? He said that some carvers often feel jealous when they noticed that one's work is finer than that of his. But, Eze Ebuka (2015: Pers. Comm.), said that deforestation is also a major problem they encounter because most of the trees suitable for carving work have been illegally cut down by different people who claimed to be officials from the Local Government. He further expressed that even lack of funds and modernity influences them directly and indirectly.



Plate Nineteen: Some of the tools of woodcarving



Plate Twenty: Showing Mr. Ogugua Okey working.



Plate Twenty Two: Showing some pestles ready for sell.



Plate Twenty Four: Showing Woodcarving Raw Materials.



Plate Twenty One: Showing Some Awka Style of Mortars.

Plate Twenty Three: Showing Azi (wooden pillars).

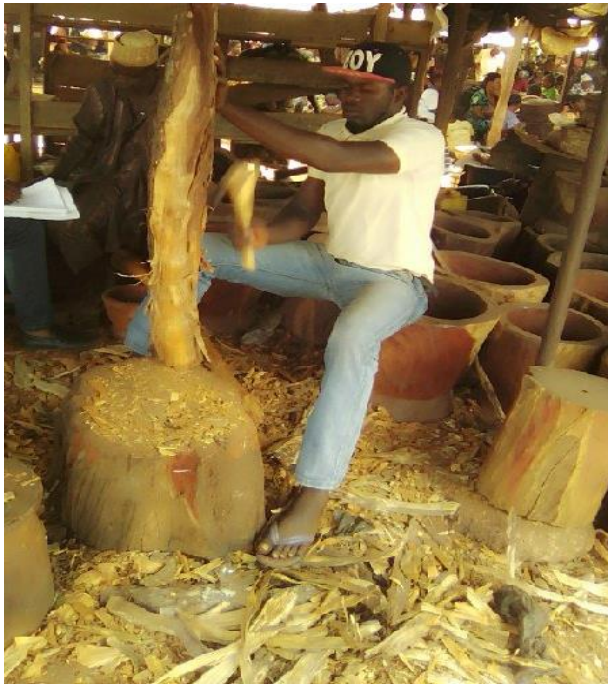


Plate Twenty Six: Showing Mr. Umoro Ugwu with the Researcher.

Plate Twenty Five: Showing Mr. Eze Carving a pestle.



Plate Twenty Eight: Showing logs of wood.

Plate Twenty Seven: Showing the Researcher and Mr. Nnoruka Carving a Pestle.

4.1.3 BASKET WEAVING INDUSTRY IN THE STUDY AREAS

This is one of the most common arts in Igbo land. It is predominantly found in the remotest part of a town, which gives the craftsmen and women the avenue to express their individual creativity Okonkwo and Itanyi (2011). The historical account of the origin of basket weaving in my study areas proved it hard to say how old the craft is and how it started. This is because the art is indigenous to the people and natural materials like wood, grass, and animal remains decay naturally and constantly. So without proper preservation, much of the history of basket making has been lost and is simply speculated upon.

According to Ezea Okwudili (2015: Pers. Comm.), basket weaving mostly thrives well during long vacations as their children especially the male folks help their parents in the art. In a similar account from a different perspective presented by Ikeakor Chukwuka (2015: Pers. Comm.), stated that basket weaving is mostly done when farming activities are at a minimum and particularly after harvests. This suggests how seasonal the craft seems to be as the craftsmen and women take up the profession as a part time business.

However, basket weaving in my study areas entails a complete but easy intertwining of fibrous materials derived from *ihe nkwu* (palm frond strands) to form shapes and objects that serve domestic purposes at home.

Process of Basket Weaving in my Study Areas

Steps

Palm fronds are where all materials needed for basket weaving are found. However, with the provision of palm fronds the following steps follows systematically.

The palm frond leafstalk is skinned both ventrally and dorsally for its fibre. Meanwhile, the fibres are left for two days after cutting and grouping to enhance elasticity during

usage. Then, laying out of the wefts arranged diagonally follows systematically. The wafts are four strands of palm frond in group, placed side by side with one another to form the base of the basket. They are arranged in four and placed diagonally on each other with intertwining process. This is followed with bending process that takes place gently and weaving continues until it gets to the rim Okpara Sunday (2015: Pers. Comm.).

Thus, the fibre from the dorsal surface is used for forming the base which normally determines the size of the basket. The fibre from the ventral side is used in the intertwining process to produce a strong sizeable basket. At the end of the intertwining, the excess protruding fibrous materials are cut off and the end of the basket are consolidated with fibre for durability.

Tools for basket making:

Among the tools for basket making are:

- Knife (*mma*): for shaping, cutting and trimming of leafstalks.
- Cutlass: for cutting the branches down and scrapping off thorns.
- Rope: for stitching the rim of the basket together.

Products of Basket Weavers in the Study Areas

Among the products of basket craftsmen and women in Nsukka and Awka includes; boat shaped basket called *abo* or *ukpam nkata*, *aga-ghele* (tray like), *nwa-abo otipiri* (for cooking), *Nkata ukwa*, *ngiga*, etc.

The basket can be used in carrying goods to market and farm lands. For example the boat shaped basket called *abo* or *ukpam*, *nkata*, *aga-ghele* (tray like), *nwa-abo otipiri* (for cooking), the *nyo* for sieving while the *ngiga* is used in preserving condiments like vegetables, fish, *ogiri*, pepper etc.

Marketing and Distribution of the Basket Weavers' products in the Study Areas

With the above mentioned products of the basket weavers, the Awka basket weavers supply their products to Eke Awka and Onitsha Main Market just like Nsukka basket

Weavers that supplies their wares to Nkwo Ibagwa, Orié Igbo Eze, Ogige Market and Orié Orba Market.



Plate Twenty Nine: Showing Mr. Ezea Okwudili weaving the basement of the basket.

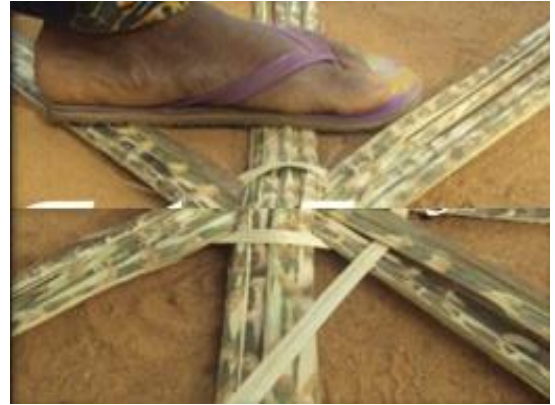


Plate Thirty: Showing the placements of wefts.

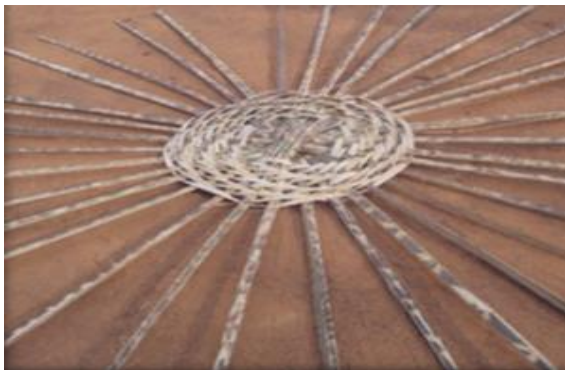


Plate Thirty One: Showing when the first round of weaving is completed.



Plate Thirty Two: Showing the weft shaped to have arrow head.



Plate Thirty Three: Showing the strands of the basket.



Plate Thirty Four: Showing the strands of the basket.



Plate Thirty Five: Showing *Ishi*, a type of basket.



Plate Thirty Six: Showing *Nkata*, a type of basket.



Plate Thirty Seven: Showing *Owuru-egbe*, a type of basket.



Plate Thirty Eight: Showing *Agaghele*, a type of basket. Plate Thirty Nine: Showing *Nwa-abo echicha* type of basket



Plate Forty: Showing *Abo/Ukpam*, a type of basket. Plate Forty One: Showing a big *Agaghele*, a type of basket.



Plate Forty Two: Showing large *Ngiga*, a type of basket.

4.1.4 BROOM MAKING INDUSTRY IN THE STUDY AREAS

Broom making is one of the crafts of the ancient Nigeria that is still being practiced in most parts of the country today. It is Nigeria's most cultural material that has lived to the present. Broom making has been described as one of the cheapest arts being practiced in Nsukka and Awka and heavily dominated by women and children.

The reason is not far-fetched. The raw material used in making broom is palm frond leafstalk. It is common as well as found throughout the length and breadth of the country. According to Ezeasor Felicia (2015: Pers. Comm.), it is not a scarce commodity, and machines are not used in its production. Ugwu Rosemary (2015: Pers. Comm.), equally added that they use coconut leafstalk to make broom just that it is very scarce unlike the palm frond.

Thus, broom making is ubiquitously practiced in virtually all the ethnic groups of Nigeria including Ibo, Yoruba, Hausa, etc.

Broom making is the act of making a brush-like object using palm fronds leafstalks for the sole purpose of sweeping indoors and outdoors. It is widely used by all means in industrial as well as domestic. According to Nkechi Onah (2015: Pers. Comm.), broom can be used in the sweeping and cob webbing of house and environment. The broom is called *eziza* in Nsukka and *aziza* in Awka.

However, the origin of broom making in Nsukka and Awka is not clear. The absence of records made none of my informants to pin down the exact period when the craft actually began in the study areas.

Finally, brooms are formed in various types and sizes. Some brooms are with a head of twigs or bristles attached to a long thin handle.

Process of Broom Making

The broom, which is a homogenous collection of mid ribs derived from palm leaves commences its process from climbing of the palm tree, the threshing of the palm leaves

to the scrapping of the leave blades or lamina from mid-rib make up of a palm frond and finally, bringing together to tie firmly with rubber.

Marketing and Distribution of Brooms in the Study Areas

The sole demand of broom for sweeping in my study areas makes it always available in the market and at the various homes of the craftsmen and women, as the retailers go to their homes to buy in large quantity. Among the markets they supply brooms are Eke Awka, Onitsha Main Market, Nkwo Ibagwa, Orie Igbo Eze, Ogige Market and Orie Orba Market.



Plate Forty Three: Fresh Palm Fronds.



Plate Forty Four: Mrs. Oguagha threshing the leaves.



Plate Forty Five: Mrs. Ezeaso threshing the leaves.



Plate Forty Six: Mrs. Ezeaso tying the brooms.



Plate Forty Seven: Showing Brooms Ready for Use.



Plate Forty Eight: Showing brooms in the making. Plate Forty Nine: Showing brooms display for sale.



Plate Fifty: Showing bundles of brooms for exportation.



Plate Fifty One: Showing the researcher and Mrs. Ugwu Rose.



Plate Fifty Two: Showing Ogbu Chekwube And the Researcher in her work shop.

4.1.5 LOCAL THATCH MAKING INDUSTRY IN THE STUDY AREAS

Local Thatch Making in Nsukka

The art of thatch making is a traditional craft that Nsukka people practice in a great number especially in the villages. According to Ezema John (2015: Pers. Comm.), thatch making or production in his town Ede-oballa has been in existence prior Europeans coming. Though, there are lots of stories behind the origin of the craft in the town, like he said in a village called Amuzu in Ede-oballa, the Chief Priest of their deity's shrine was the first person to attempt the craft. The Chief Priest used materials like *igu* (palm fronds), *akpara* (palm frond stick), bamboo stick, *ngige/lzue* (dry leaves or straws) (*Imperata cylindrical*), etc in the art.

In essence, the Chief Priest, who out of his creative ingenuity fixed all these materials together to shelter the shrine against rainfall and sun burn. From this, people started getting interested on how useful and classic the roof was and this triggered off questions to the Chief Priest on how he did it. Subsequently, the art spread and was transferred from generation to another till present.

Meaning of *Evirivi* (Local Thatch)

Evirivi (local thatch) according to Ugwuanyi Peter (2015: Pers. Comm.), simply means those dry leaves collected from a wide plant which are arranged sequentially and placed on a long measured stick called *akpara* and stitched with a white flexible twine called *eriri uti* (twine) in order to have a desired size suitable for the tasks ahead.

Local Thatch Making In Awka

The traditional Awka craftsmen engaged in the art of weaving of raffia palm thatch which was the only roofing material available to them in the ancient times. Onyeanusi Michael (2015: Pers. Comm.), my informant pointed out that this craft is indigenous to the people. He claimed that the people have been familiar with the craft ever since they

were known and have never secured their local roofing sheet called *Akirika* or *Akanye* from outside.

Sources of raw materials

According to the information gathered, the palm tree and *ngige/izue* (dry straw) (*Imperata cylindrical*) are the most popularly used raw materials for local thatch and this has been part of Nsukka and Awka cultural life. Other raw materials include; *akpara* (palm frond stick), wet palm fibre, bamboo sticks etc.

The Processing

According to Eze Uchenna (2015: Pers. Comm.), when one has gotten the *izue* (*Imperata cylindrical*), bamboo sticks, *akpara* (palm frond stick), and *eriri-uti* (twine), then, the first stage in the processing of the local thatch is to measure the *akpara* to about 4ft length and place them on the *izue* (*Imperata cylindrical*). This is done to avoid contamination with sand.

During this process, the *izue* (*Imperata cylindrical*) is spread on the ground in a horizontal line, then, bamboo is carefully placed on top of the *izue* (*Imperata cylindrical*), while the flexible twine is used to stitched them line by line from the beginning to the end until a full thatch is produced.

Importance of the Local Thatch

According to Ezema John (2015: Pers. Comm.), the benefits of local thatch include roofing of houses mainly mud houses, decoration of shrines, roofing of goat pens, roofing of bush bars, fencing of seedling beds etc.

Taboos and Sanctions:

According to Ezema John (2015: Pers. Comm.), there is no taboo or sanction governing the art itself but however, women are not allowed to climb palm trees for any reason or else she will be banished from the land or pay a certain fine.

Training and apprenticeship in the local thatch making industries

Finally, according to Ezema John (2015: Pers.Comm.), under local thatch art, there is also gender bias. It is specifically made for men alone and not women. But, ordinarily, for any interested male, the requirement is not generally fixed. It depends on individuals. Some may require fowl, kola nuts (*Cola acuminata*) and a keg of palm wine etc. It is also important to point out that the duration of apprenticeship may be three (3) weeks depending on the ability of the apprentice towards the programme.

The Problems Affecting Local Thatch Making Industry in the Study Areas

Finally, according to Ezema John, the major problems affecting the progress of local thatch are; body disfiguration, civilization, lack of interest, etc. He stressed that people no longer have positive taste for local thatch instead modern roofing materials are used. Though, the solution to these problems should be to decolonize the minds of the people so that they will have regard in our traditional crafts and industries which will bring promotion and continuity in the art.



Plate Fifty Three: Showing bundles of dry leaves (*Imperata cylindrica*)



Plate Fifty Four: Showing a thatch roof under construction with (*Imperata cylindrica*).



Plate Fifty Five: Showing a fine thatch roof constructed with (*Imperata cylindrica*).



Plate Fifty Six: Showing Mr. Ezema and the Researcher.



Plate Fifty Seven: Showing a fence made with (*Imperata cylindrica*).



Plate Fifty Eight: Showing a seedling bed covered with (*Imperata cylindrica*).

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Okpoko and Ezeh (2005), data analysis entails the sorting, grouping and re-grouping of field evidence that relate to the study objectives.

Also, it consists of examining, shifting, categorizing, tabulating, combining, fracturing, and recombining of the evidence to address the initial objectives of the study (Obikeze, 1990:771). Therefore, owing to these definitions above it is relevant to begin as thus:

The Meaning of Iron Smelting

According to Uzuegbu (2009 in Anichebe, 2009:170), "iron smithing is basically the reheating of bloom and fashioning it into various iron tools such as knives, hoes, cutlasses, spears, axes and other iron implements." Iron smithing probably dates as early as iron smelting in Nigeria (Okpoko and Ibeanu, 1999).

A visit to a blacksmith shop shows a typical scenario of indigenous iron smiting process; this involves a hearth (fire place) for re-heating of the bloom. This is connected to a bellow that supplies and controls the movement of air into the hearth in order to maintain the heat until the bloom becomes red hot. Bellow is made of animal skin or latex rubber with two wooden long handles for the blacksmith to supply air to the hearth. An iron fork is used to bring out red hot bloom from the hearth before placing it on an anvil (hammering plat-form) to forge or fashion a desired implement.

Many towns in Igbo land like Nsukka and Awka are known for their wonderful skills in the act of blacksmithing.

Process of Blacksmithing

Here, the techniques used can be forging and casting in an ordinary sense. Based on the technological attributes, the characteristics of the raw materials are as follows:

- Ore is a stone with high iron content and which their colours range from brown to dark red. Examples include laterite, limonite and haematite.

- *Icheku (Velvet tamarind)* is another core raw material used in making iron works. It is a tree from which the blacksmiths get charcoals.
- The charcoal is used to set on fire for heating and its colour is black.
- *Aja mmuo* is a clay soil used to mould the place where fire is being set on for heating, and its colour is red.
- *Mgboigwe* are those metallic objects usually found at the mechanic's workshop. It may be metal scraps and sheets within mechanical environment which the blacksmith gathers and uses for production (heating and hammering).

Based on stylistic attributes, it includes

- Dark-ash colour of most of the blacksmith's products.
- Products have a motif of smooth and lines beneath or at their handle.

The form attributes of blacksmithing

Objects such as needle, knives, cutlass, and spear have different lengths

- The needle has a length of 6inches to 6.2inches when measured with a ruler.
- *Ogene* has a length of 12inches but it depends on the type of *ogene* and its width is about 4inches.
- *Akuko* which is used for weeding has a length of 8inches and width of about 3.4inches, the thickness is about 0.9inches.

The Functions of the Finished Products:

In Nsukka and Awka areas, the various iron objects produced by the blacksmiths perform different functions which include the following:

- Some objects such as hoes, machetes are used for farming.
- Traps and net are often used for hunting animals.
- It is a truism that some are used as a defensive mechanism in time of war.
- Some are used for religious purposes.
- Those ones usually used by masquerades serve socio-cultural functions.

- Most of these objects perform historical functions. They are used to tell stories of what happened in the past and from it foretell or showcase the similarities between the present and the past.

The Salient Aspects of Blacksmithing

The residues of blacksmithing especially iron slag are source of information for the archaeologist. They can be used to elicit information through qualitative analysis. The process of heating the iron billet in the furnace and hitting it with the hammer thereafter also deserves careful studies (Olalekan, 2004).

Also, blacksmith industry serves as a healing center to people stung by millipede and those breadfruit-head falls on. It is believed that it is a taboo for a breadfruit-head (*Treculia Africana*) to fall on human and if it does, it will actually disturb the person for years especially if not treated by the blacksmiths. Finally, Native Doctors use *nshi uzu or ahuru uzu* (residues) in carrying out some of their activities

Woodcarving Industry

Wood carving has flourished all over southern Nigeria. Since time immemorial, making figures for shrines, portraits, masks, representations of the spirits of the forest stream, thunder water, fire etc. The works of old carvers remain in many villages where they provide the villages with their shrines, utensils and ornament to this day.

The Process of Wood carving

Archaeologically, the techniques used in processing wood carving include:

- Incision
- Excision
- Burnishing
- Impression

Based on the technological attributes, it includes;

- Having known that the core source of raw material in this aspect is wood. Therefore, in order to know the characteristics of this raw material the two types

of wood should be considered. The soft wood has feature feasibility when carrying out incision and excision.

- It cannot be used to produce objects like mortar and pestle.
- It can be used to produce object like *oja* (notched flute).
- The hardwood is very tedious when carrying out excision.
- It can be used to produce objects like mortar and pestle.
- Its durability is guaranteed.

Based on the stylistic attributes, it involves:

- Those objects that are not sprayed with chemical. They maintained their milkfish colour while those ones that are fumigated changes their milkish colour to chocolate colour.
- Object like the pestle is given a zig zag motif at the handle.
- The motif of mortar is mainly smooth.
- There are some motif on the various ritualistic objects in form of lines and even snake-like designs signifying an aspect of belief system of the owner.

The Form Attributes of Wood Carving

- Here, the length of the small pestle used for grinding or pounding food ingredients such as crayfish, pepper, onions and so on is about 24 inches.
- The big pestle has a length of 36inches but it depends on the size one needs. There are those that exceed 36inches.
- The thickness of the small and big pestle varies and differs accordingly. Some are about 1.2inches and others are 1.4inches.

The functions of the wooden objects

Objects such as the small pestle (*okwa*) and big pestle (*odo*) are used for pounding edibles. Examples are pepper, crayfish, garri, foo-foo etc. Some of the objects play socio-cultural functions e.g masks used by different masquerades during festivals.

Finally, it is also vital to note that some of the wooden objects serve historical functions.

Local Thatch Industry

Thatch is the use of straw or grasses as a building material. The study of materials used in thatch buildings can get pretty obscure, but basically, people used whatever was available locally. Thatching is the craft of building a roof with dry vegetation such as straw, water reed, sedge (*caladium mariscus*), rushes, or heather, layering the vegetation so as to shed water away from the inner roof. It is a very old roofing method and has been used in both tropical and temperate climates. (www.britainexpress.com/history/thatching.htm).

Thatching like many rural crafts has suffered from the encroachment of civilization. Thatching methods have traditionally been passed down from generation to generation and numerous descriptions of the materials and methods used.

Thatching is becoming popular again because of the renewed interest in preserving historic buildings and using more sustainable building materials.

The lifespan of a thatched roof also depends on the skill of the Thatcher, but other factors must be considered such as climate, quality of materials and the roof pitch.

In areas where palms are abundant palm leaves are used to thatch walls and roofs.

Thatch has some natural properties that are advantageous to its performance. It is naturally weather resistant, and when properly maintained does not absorb a lot of water. There should not be a significant increase to roof weight due to water retention.

Thatch is also a natural insulator and air pockets within straw thatch insulate a building in both warm and cold weather. A thatched roof ensures that a building is cool in dry season and warm in cold weather.

However, the disadvantage of thatched roof is that birds can damage a roof while they are foraging for grubs, and rodents are attracted by residual grain in straw. Thatch has fallen out of favor in much of the industrialized world not because of fire but because thatching has become obsolete.

The Process of Local Thatch Making

First, the thatch is tied in bundles then laid in an underlayer on the roof beams and pegged in place with rods made of hazel or withy.

The series of operations used in making local thatch include

- Incision techniques
- Excision techniques
- Tenacious stitching methods or techniques.

Based on the technological attributes it include

- Dry *izue (Imperata cylindrica)* leaves
- Flexible twine for stitching the leaves
- Long measured stick (*akpara*)
- Long bamboo stick

Based on the stylistic attributes, it includes

- It has a greenish colour when wet and brown-like when dry.
- The leaves are properly arranged to bring out its decorative nature.
- The twine is carefully and systematically pinned to the leaves accordingly to avoid fall out.
- It has a thorny-like structure.

The form attributes of local thatch

This includes measurable dimensions such as length, width, height or thickness. The form attributes of this local thatch are as follows;

- It has two dimensional forms, the vertical and horizontal point.
- Its length is about 60inches
- Its width is about 13inches
- Its thickness is about 0.6 or 0.8inches.

The functions of Local Thatch

In Nsukka and Awka areas, local thatch plays vital roles in the development of the area.

These functions include;

- It is used for roofing of houses.
- It is used for construction of traditional relaxation centres.
- It serves an economic purpose when sold off to customers.
- It can be used for traditional fencing.

Basket Making Industry

Archaeologically, basket making can be viewed as an artifactual object exposing man's ingenuity and creativity used for farming activities and other domestic purposes.

The parts of a basket are the base, the side walls, and the rim. A basket may also have a lid, handle, or embellishment.

Most baskets begin with a base. The base can either be woven with fibres or wooden. A wooden base can come in many shapes to make a wide variety of shapes of baskets.

A wide variety of patterns can be made by changing the size, colour, or placement of a certain style of weave.

The process of basket making

Based on the techniques applied in the making of this local craft, the followings are involved.

- Incision techniques
- Excision techniques
- Weaving techniques

On the technological attributes, it include

- The flexibility and elastic nature of the fibre used during the weaving of mat.
- Palm frond fibre cut and allowed to gain elasticity.
- The *mma nkata* (knife) has a metallic sharp edge at both sides and a pointed or spear-like mouth

Based on the stylistic attributes, it includes;

- It has an ash colour.
- It is arranged and weaved in a net-like also, rounding in the form of cycle.
- Its texture is rough.

The form Attributes of basket weaving

- The length of basket normally depends on the type of basket the weaver is making. As we have baskets of various sizes. That is why some baskets have length of 72inches, 84inches, 10inches etc. and the width may be 20inches, 23inches etc.
- It has a circular shape through which the circumference can be measured.
- Also, the weight of baskets differs. Some can be weighed for 4kg, 6kg etc.
- The various components of baskets are highly organized and artistically placed.

Uses

Baskets serve utilitarian as well as aesthetic purposes. Some baskets are ceremonial, which is religious in nature. While baskets are typically used for storage. Specialized baskets are used as sieves, for cooking, for processing fish traps etc.

Baskets were originally designed as multi-purpose baskets to carry and store and to keep stray items about the home.

Broom Production Industry

Brooms have been used for centuries to sweep up in, and around the home and work place. It is a cleaning tool consisting of usually stiff fibers attached to and roughly parallel to, a cylindrical handle.

Palm tree frond and coconut tree frond are the source of materials for broom production.

The process of Broom Production

Based on the techniques applied in the making of this local craft, the followings are involved.

- Scraping techniques
- Trimming techniques

On the technological attributes, it include

- The flexibility and elastic nature of the stiff palm frond used during the broom trimming.
- Palm fronds are best used when still green and fresh.
- The *mma nkata* (knife) has a metallic sharp edge at both sides for trimming and scraping

Based on the stylistic attributes, it includes;

- Brooms have a broom colour and green when newly made.
- It is arranged and tied at one end that forms the handle.
- Its texture is smooth.

The form Attributes of broom production

- The length of brooms normally depends on the type of broom the weaver is making. As we have brooms of various sizes. That is why some brooms have length of 15inches, 30inches, 10inches etc. and the width may be 4inches, 6inches etc.
- It has a circular shape at the handle through which the circumference can be measured.
- Also, the weight of brooms differs. Some can be weighed for 1kg, 2kg etc.
- The various components of brooms are highly organized and artistically placed.

Salient Aspects of Brooms

In the both study areas, brooms were not just for sweeping and cleaning of rooms, rather they were significantly used for some other purposes. Like in Awka, brooms played a pivotal role in marriage tradition. Here, bundles of broom sticks are brought for the groom to select the much he can pay for and each selected broom sticks worth the amount of #1000. This served as bride price for them.

Also, in Nsukka, brooms served as a kitchen utensil. They were used as a “stirring spoon.” It was observed that the women made and used this special type of broom in their kitchens which was used mainly while cooking draw soup *ofe obobo*.

4.2.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF INTER SITE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NSUKKA AND AWKA PEOPLE

- **The comparative analysis of the traditional crafts and industries in the study areas**

Awka blacksmith in the past were itinerant traders. The demand for their skills as blacksmiths had them travelling throughout Nigeria making farming implements, household tools, dane guns, ceremonial items such as *oji* (staff of mystical power) and *ngwuagilija* (staff of titled men).

No wonder Neaher (1979) proposed a pattern of geographical mobility of blacksmith in Igboland in an attempt to explain the mechanism whereby knowledge was dispersed and forms of goods introduced to the various metal working societies at different stages of their history by the Awka smiths.

Below are some of the wards in Awka and their spheres of influence (i.e, places where they operated) culled from Dike (1985): The Resilience of Igbo Culture, A case study of Awka Town.

1. Umuike – operated in Ikwerreland and northeastwards into Ngwaland.
2. Umuanaga – operated in the creeks of the Western and the Central Delta (called Okwali in Awka, home of the Izon.
3. Umujagwo – operated among the Ekpeye people (called Ekpafia by Awka) and neighbouring peoples.
4. Umuenechi – operated among the Urhobo, the Isoko, and the peoples of Ukwani and Ndosumili.
5. Umuoruka – operated in the Annang-Efik-Ibibio area, and beyond the Cross River in the area around Ikom (called Azu-Anyim in Awka, i.e, back of the Cross River)

6. Umuogbu – operated in Uji Ukali. The location of Uji Ukpali is difficult to ascertain from the surviving accounts. One account says it is an unspecified region north of Nsukka; another account says it is somewhere in the old Midwest and the eastern reaches of the Western Region. According Isichei, (1976) Umuogbu smiths later went through Yoruba and beyond.
7. Umumbele – operated in the riverain area lying between Onitsha and the Niger-Benue confluence, including the floodplains north of Awka, known as Adagbe country.
8. Umukwa – operated in Enuani, west of the Niger (they were particularly active in Issele Uku) and among the Bini. Umukwa people were impressed by the agricultural prowess of the Isseles and made a song about it, part of which goes thus: *Isele-e, isele-e gboji/ndu ji abana akpochi uzo oba/eghu eme ta ji ocha du n'im'ye*. Rough translation: 'issele, yam producers/ who build their yam barns with yams of the *abana* variety/ As a distraction for the goats, lest they go into the barn and eat the superior white yams.' Umukwa tradition claims that it was an Umukwa smith who forged the sword used by the legendary Bini warrior.
9. Umuzocha – operated in the Igala land. They were at Ankpa, Ejure and Idah.
10. Umudioka – operated in Nkanu, the eastern part of present day Enugu State. There are known cases where Umudioka men operated outside their sphere of influence.

It is believed that the act of Awka itineracy promoted trade contact with their immediate neighborhood and outsiders. As metal hoes, and other implements proved extremely useful to agricultural societies and also to herding peoples. This encouraged greater trade because blacksmiths were hard to find, therefore it became a motivation for extensive development in the specialized local economy of Awka people due to artisans concentrated on metal production, exchanging wares for food and other useful commodities.

Intinerant trading was not recorded in the history of Nsukka Blacksmithing instead it was one of the areas where Awka artisans settled and introduced the tradition of blacksmithing to the people probably through apprenticeship.

Notably, blacksmithing in Nsukka unlike Awka is not open for everybody. It is reserved for smithing families. Now, they operate what is called Guild system, where non-smithing families cannot get into the business. In essence, it is done to protect the integrity of blacksmithing because; one does not venture into it freely like other trade. Thus, blacksmithing is a highly respected profession and spiritually inclined. And that is why it is protected from the non-smithing families.

Also, in similar account from a different perspective, the products of Awka blacksmith are more attractive than the products of Nsukka blacksmith. Awka blacksmith handles a particular work with an extra ordinary ingenuity. In fact, one can mistakenly in hurry take the products of Awka blacksmith to be imported simply because of the fine touches their work possess.

But when comparing the durability of Nsukka and Awka blacksmith products, one tend to conclude that the both are durable owing to the fact that they apply the same technique in the production of goods and make use of the same iron scrap as raw materials.

Thus, the durability of their products cannot be compared with most of the Europeans articles that have expiry dates. The knives and hoes that we used in our villages, if you compare them with what we have now, some of them cannot even cut ordinary orange, but that of the blacksmith lasts for ages. So, in terms of quality, the Nsukka and Awka blacksmith produce reliable products.

Generally, in terms of technological advancement, Awka was known for that. Awka blacksmiths were local gun makers. Records have it that they made local barrels called "Awka Made." This was being demanded for by the hunters but unfortunately, some people who hid under the disguise of hunters were supplied gun which they used for

criminal acts. Consequently, for the past 15 years, the production of local guns in Awka is banned. This is an attempt made to curb the high rate of criminal activities rampant in the area and traced to be aided with the local guns of Awka blacksmith Odinaka Emmanuel (2015:Pers. Comm).

In essence, the Awka blacksmithing industry is more sophisticated and advanced in nature unlike the blacksmithing industry of Nsukka. The Nsukka blacksmithing industry, have no record of local gun production probably because of lack of the knowledge or not fully equipped to do such. According to Asogwa Gowin (2015:Pers. Comm), gun making is not attributed to us in this part of the country. Instead, call us for agricultural tools, domestic items, hunting tools like *onya* (traps of all kind), musical instrument and some ritual objects like *iga, eka* etc.

Furthermore, while relating the major differences posed by the wood carvers, (Carving Industry) in the study areas. It will be nice to highlight the fact that Nsukka carving industry superseded the carving industry of Awka. Reason being that in Awka, few communities did carving very well. And as a matter of fact, the art is not common in the area unlike in Nsukka and the few people doing the art at present are combining it with carpentry which to them thrives well more than carving art.

Another reason to that could be lack of raw materials. It was observed that good hard woods for carving are scarcely found in Awka. They acquired hardwood mostly from Kogi State and Benue State unlike in Nsukka where few hard woods are found. On the alternative, softwoods were used by the Awka Carvers which limited their work to certain products.

Perhaps, the basket and broom making craft industries of Nsukka and Awka varied in terms of level of production. In Awka, there are indications that basket and broom making craftsmen and women are gradually abandoning the profession for other business like trading. Local thatch makers in the area are not exempted to that. There is this realization that soon all living memory of local craft technology or knowledge in the

area (Awka) will vanish as the people have embraced modernization with its quality living standard and thereby turning away from the indigenous crafts industries that was their source of economy. At present, the area (Awka) depends greatly on the importation of brooms, local thatch and baskets from Nsukka area since, the few aged craftsmen and women still engaged in the local crafts in the area (Awka) are not capable of producing a reasonable quantity that can serve the people in the area.

- **Common features of the traditional crafts and industries in the study areas**

There are indications that smithing had been in existence in Nsukka and Awka prior to the advent of the Europeans.

In the both study areas, the blacksmiths played a very important role to Igbo economic, political and social life. First of all, you cannot talk about the Igbo society without the blacksmith. Politically, the royal families respect them; same with village heads because they made most of their weapon of warfare, their arrows, their bars and staff of office. Again, there is this respect people have for the 'god of iron' which is believed to be the god that gives the blacksmith that special spiritual respect that they have. Because of that, the blacksmith industry is given a very special place in Igbo land.

Also, before the contact with the Europeans, the blacksmith were important to the farmers in agriculture because the hoes, cutlasses, digger etc used for agriculture, were made by them. Religiously, they were very important: all these ritual articles, bangles worn by native doctors, their staff of office, the *oji* etc those things were the products of the blacksmith. So, the importance of the blacksmith cuts across every sphere of Igbo society. Culturally, socially, economically, agriculturally and spiritually. One cannot do without the blacksmith.

Furthermore, blacksmiths in Nsukka and Awka use metal scraps got or bought from the market. They employ the use of mild metal sheets for the production of tools. The metal sheet assumes its shape by heating to red-hot in the furnace so that it becomes easy to work on by using a heavy chisel and hammer. Olalekan (2004) pointed out that iron

scrap produced through mechanical means in Europe and America has replaced the iron blooms produced by the iron smelters. In the same vein, the bloomer iron smelting has been replaced by blacksmithing in which the main raw materials are iron scraps from railway line, wheels of vehicles and bicycles etc.

Also, in terms of support from government, the local industries in the both study areas lack total support from the government. It is unfortunate that our government does not realize the importance of these people in the society. The governments of the state have scarcely taken notice of them, giving them a sense that they are pretty much on their own. All entreaties to attract the attention of government have proved abortive.

Therefore, the state and federal government are urged to always remember these local industries in whatever programme they have at both the state and national level.

Finally, apart from lack of encouragement by the government the following factors are militating against the development and continuous survival of traditional crafts in the study areas. They are:

Prevalence of imported products.

Lack of Interest by the young ones in the business.

Inaccessible rural roads.

Inadequate raw materials

And quest for white collar job

All these have amounted in some of the indigenous industries being on the verge of extinction, which could be empowered to turn around the lives of rural people.

4.2.2 HARNESSING THE POTENTIALS OF LOCAL CRAFTS AND TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION

Local crafts and traditional industries in Nsukka and Awka are greatly dependent on natural resources within the towns. These in turn stands as an important factor in the local economies that helps in the promotion of the peoples' culture through expression of their individual creativity on one hand and on the other hand hold the potential to

develop tourism and creation of job opportunities for the host community of the study areas if, strengthened. As those crafts form an integral part of the peoples' culture depicting the towns' indigenous customs and traditions in a significant manner.

It is worthy to note that local crafts and traditional industries are another Nigerian industrial cluster project. However, the benefit of crafts is not quite derived from the present National Development Plan. Rather, emphasis on development is geared more to the exploitation of the crude oil and other mineral resources (Irivwieri, 2009).

This simply shows the level of negligence the government has put on the area of local industrialization like the craft industries. And this forms the basis of harnessing the potentials of local crafts and traditional industries in Nsukka and Awka through the following ways:

- Government support.

Okonkwo and Itanyi (2011), while writing on Ukpok community state that "the government in its three tier levels should give priority attention to the development of local crafts and traditional industries by creating the enabling environment for the growth of such; for instance, the training of artisans and provision of funds for the procurement of certain tools and equipment necessary for that." With this, it will encourage the host community by providing employment opportunities for them and boosting their revenue base (promoting the local economy).

- Secondly, diversification of economy with adequate implementation scheme. The government should not depend on crude oil alone, rather they should ensure that local industrialization is incorporated and promoted in the national plan. It is exerted from the information Department, 1971 that "in Nigeria, apart from the abundant agricultural resources, minerals potentials, the country is endowed with a lot of arts and crafts resources which when fully tapped and managed properly will provide job opportunities to the teeming masses." Here, the management of arts and crafts resources stimulates the conscious effort in the conservation of Nsukka and Awka environment for

sustainable tourism development. This can be achieved by maintaining an enabling environment for the production of arts and crafts in the rural communities thereby reducing rural-urban drift. Because, if the manufacturing and services sectors do not grow sufficiently to absorb the surge of labour to urban areas and if rural areas are not transformed to stem the growth in migration to urban areas, the rate of urban unemployment could become unmanageable. The implication for poverty and crime, conflict and the maintenance of democracy are grave.

Therefore, government should direct the relevant agencies to focus attention on the setting up of crafts and cultural industries that will not only compete favorably with imported goods but will attract tourists to the areas and boost the country's external earnings/reserves.

- Festivals such as Omaba festival in Nsukka, Imoka festival in Awka, Ofala festival in Awka, New Yam festivals etc celebrated annually should be harnessed along side with local crafts and traditional industries in the study areas as it will bring entertainment activities which are imminent tourism product. As rightly pointed out in Okonkwo and Itanyi (2011), that “entertainment on its own is one of the key tourism products and it plays a strategic role in defining the overall tourism offer to international, regional, and domestic tourists.” Among these entertainments that can enrich tourism in Nsukka and Awka when harnessed are traditional dancing with its distinctive style, colour and vitality which reflects the diversity and depth of Nsukka and Awka culture with many villages having their own individual dances. Such dances are *Ijele* dance, *Atilogwu* dance, *Akunechenyi* dance and *Igba ndi Eze* dance.

4.2.3 THE RELEVANCE OF TRADITIONAL CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES TO THE HOST COMMUNITY

The relevance of the traditional crafts and industries in Nsukka and Awka could be discussed as follows;

Economic Importance:

In the study areas, crafts serve a major avenue for profit maximization to the crafts makers. The craftsmen's products are sold out thereby enriching their pockets. This contributes immensely to the economic livelihood of Nsukka and Awka people.

The agricultural industries of Nsukka and Awka have benefitted so much from the crafts and local industries. This is as a result of the farm implements used by subsistence farmers which include hoes, digger, axe, cutlass, etc. are all produced by craftsmen (blacksmiths). These tools are used extensively in clearing of bushes, cultivation of land, farm weeding and other agricultural practices. The income generated from the sale of agricultural products like palm oil, maize, cassava, yam, etc aids in the betterment of the people's life.

Also, food production and hunting activities in the land of Nsukka and Awka have been supplemented by the utilization of some implements such as metal traps, spear, machet, knife etc are produced by the blacksmiths.

Brooms and baskets are constantly at high demand in the study areas due to its functions in our various homes. It has made the crafts men and women to be constantly supplying their products to the market with the aim of getting paid which will be used for their basic needs – food, clothing and shelter.

Carvers are not left in this, due to their products are found in every house hold. Meaning that they are paramount to the society through their works of art which, in turn, rob their palms with grease.

Importantly, most rural dwellers depend heavily on the local thatch which serves as roofing materials for them.

Religious Importance

The various wooden objects produced by the carvers and even some products of the blacksmiths are extensively used for worship. These objects include figures which are

used for initiation into cults, dance staff, apparatus of divination etc. most of which provides aspects of African life and religious genies.

In Nsukka and Awka community, there are many artworks which are made specially in honouring of different deities (god) called *arusi*. Due to the value attached to them, they are being regarded as a true representation of the Supreme Being.

Socio-cultural Importance

Objects such as *oja* (notched flute), drum, wooden gong (*ekwe*), masks, are typical musical instruments which are made by the carvers serve socio –cultural functions in the study areas.

The instruments are used during traditional festivals like traditional wrestling, traditional marriage ceremonies, burials, age grade meeting etc.

The carvers equally make mask object worn during traditional festivals such as masquerade festivals, new yam festivals etc.

Political Importance

In the political cycle of the people of Nsukka and Awka, wooden objects and some metal plays a vital function. For example, during *ozo* title taking, some wooden objects which include wooden staff, carved stools etc, are used to serve as emblems of political and ritual authority of the *ozo* institution. These precious objects are produced by the carvers in Nsukka and Awka.

Significantly, mask heads and masquerades are also used in the political institution of Nsukka and Awka, especially when resolving a land dispute between the two people. As rightly put by Oditia, 1970, "Igbo masks may assume authority of judgment, jury and met out punishment, including the death sentence. They may severely punish not only offences against the society itself but also deviants from the common rules and regulation.

4.2.4 THE RELEVANCE OF THESE TRADITIONAL CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES IN THE STUDY OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND TOURISM

- **Educational Role**

Here, the archaeologists are being taught on the meaning, process, form and function of traditional crafts and industries. With the knowledge, they establish their basis of reconstructing the past history through the material remains. This will enable them to make assumptions whether there are similarities or relationship between the past inhabitant of a given area and the present inhabitant of the same area.

Also, the traditional crafts and industries act as a database to the tourism experts by sensitizing them on the do's and don'ts associated in the production of any traditional crafts especially blacksmithing, wood carving etc.

- **Establishment of Art Galleries and Museums**

Craft objects should be exhibited, conserved and protected from destruction. And this could be done properly if the archaeologists rise from their slumber and face what is really facing them by mapping out strategic measures to attract the attention of the government into works of archaeology. When such is done, the government would remain indebted to the tone of the archaeology setting up buildings for preservation and protection of the crafts.

From this, archaeologist will be generating income from the visitors that will visits the museums and thereby enriching their pocket.

Finally, the relevant of the traditional crafts and industries in the study of archaeology cannot be overemphasized in the sense that they are the case ingredients in the actualization of successful archaeological study both within the horizon of the archaeologists and that of the ethnographers. They are indeed the mirror through which the archaeological studies are showcased to the public. This can be done properly through mass media.

On the other hand, these traditional crafts and industries play major roles in the study of tourism. These are;

- **Souvenirs to Tourists**

Tourism experience cannot be overlooked just like a dream because the souvenirs brought by a tourist continue to remind him of his destination. This assertion best describes the inseparable role played by traditional crafts in tourism development. The tourists through crafts souvenirs tend to appreciate the culture and ingenuity of the people.

- **Income Generation**

This deals with the provision of income to the various tourism industries. The industry that organizes tour serve as a medium through which hard earn money is generated through the various artistic objects exhibited to the visitors.

- **Development of the Tourism Market**

The tourist demand on the traditional crafts provides basis for the growth and diversification of artistic products and the creation of markets in any country that develops her tourism sector. It is tourism to state categorically that if there is one sector whose fate is intimately bound up with that of tourism, it is vividly that of the craft sector.

Tourism has tremendously developed into a new market for the handicrafts industry and the articulation of the tourism handicrafts mechanism is seen through creation of new products directed towards the domestic and foreign tourist demands (Toops, 1993:51). The bulk of present day tourism and that planned for the future in many of the developing countries is packaged tourism.

- **As an Attraction to the Tourists**

Attraction can be defined as that which has the qualities of enticing one. Okpoko and Okpoko (2002), defined cultural attractions as an indispensable component in tourism development schemes. They provide the foundation upon which our tourist trade

should be built. Therefore, traditional crafts of Nsukka and Awka people constitute an attraction to the visitors especially when they are packaged properly.

4.2.5 FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST THE PROGRESS OF THESE TRADITIONAL CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES IN THE STUDY AREAS

Among the factors that affects the growth of the traditional crafts and industries in the study areas are:

- **Christianity:**

The emergence of the European with their religious system adversely led to the destruction and declination of our numerous local crafts. When the missionary came and brainwashed our indigenous people, they automatically forgot and ignored the totality of our ways of life and failed to put into considerations the dangers associated in embracing an alien religion. They utilized various or all sorts of insulting, and abusive words on us which include, fetish, archaic, outdated, idol, devilish, naked gods, and crude to qualify our creativity and ingenuity.

Subsequently, there was a total reduction in the membership of craftsmen as they abandoned their work having been brainwashed by the missionaries whom on the other hand, catered away with our precious objects and carefully conserved them in the building called museum.

- **Modernity**

The introduction of western education has contributed immensely in the abandonment and neglect rendered on these local crafts. The youths are no longer interested in learning how to produce this precious and indigenous technology. They prefers going to school. In fact the level of declination posed by modernity on the indigenous people has contributed fervently to this ugly trend called declination of local crafts (Obikwelu, 2004).

Nsukka and Awka Community are not exempted in this aspect because it is observed that the most of the crafts are done by the aged people.

- **Preference of Foreign Materials or Products to our Local Made Products**

The preference of foreign products to our locally made products such as hoes, machetes, domestic objects, cooking utensils etc. by the people has led to the serious decline in the production of locally made crafts. This is because the people have been discouraged that foreign materials are better than the locally made materials and so prefer the former to the latter.

- **Poverty**

According to my informants, lack of funds has really contributed in the backwardness of the production exercise. This is based on their inability to purchase some raw materials needed in the making of these local crafts.

Prior to the introduction of foreign materials in Africa, our craftsmen carries out their production exercise without obstructions but today things have changed that the acquisition of raw materials for the manufacturing of these local crafts now posed a serious problem to them. Due to the level of poverty among the various craftsmen in the study areas, the decline of these local crafts continued to exist rapidly.

- **Massive Rural-Urban Drifts**

Here, emphases are geared towards the level of the quest for urbanization settlement. The people no longer deem it right to live at the rural area where these local crafts are produced. They systematically involved themselves in the quest for white collar jobs and well paid employment opportunities.

This has really caused havoc in the various traditional industries we have today. For example, the youths who are more energetic in assuring continuity of these local crafts are no longer willing to embark on the practice of these local crafts because they are searching for white collar jobs and comfortability in terms of living in an environment that is highly developed infrastructurally. By so doing creates room for rapid reduction in the production of these local crafts.

4.2.6 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THE MILITATING FACTORS OF TRADITIONAL CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES IN THE STUDY AREAS

Having seen the various factors that affects the growth of these traditional crafts and industries in the study areas, it is vital to look into the possible solutions to them. Among them are:

There should be a total decolonialization of our people's mind so that they will start to see our locally made products as more superior than that of the Europeans. This could be done by carrying out local programme in which our people will be sensitizing on the vitality of our local crafts.

Secondly, the craftsmen should endeavor to desist from all sorts of ritualistic attitude and spiritual attacks they render to each other and kindly see other as brothers searching for a way of survival.

Also, those craftsmen who specialized in blacksmithing should try to use local thatch to build sheltering house so that the heatness from the sun that affects them will be minimized.

Finally, there should be a communal exhibition by the various craftsmen in the study areas in order to use the medium to unite them and also know the problems facing each of them. Importantly, they should have a working guild in which they will use to interact well and solve common problems.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY

For both developing and developed countries, indigenous industries play important roles in the process of industrialization and economic growth. Indigenous industries create employment opportunities, enhanced regional economic balance through industrial dispersal and generally promote effective resource utilization considered critical to economic development and growth.

Crafts development in Nigeria takes on the peculiarities of the diverse culture and traditions that make up Nigeria. Each of these cultural entities had developed and sustained different techniques and crafts that informed part of their adaptation to their immediate environment. However, one common attribute of crafts development apart from their cultural relevance is their utilitarian value and economic significance.

In the contemporary sense, as needs become more eclectic and as external pressure weighs heavily on society's development and growth, Nigeria must as a necessity develop crafts beyond the scales that characterize her constraints. Some innovations have undoubtedly been made by individual craftsmen in Nigeria, but their output still falls short of the requisite standards for not only domestic patronage but international competition as well.

However, this research work which centered on the study of traditional crafts and industries in Nsukka and Awka areas, attempts to analyze comparatively the crafts industries in the study areas with special reference to the processes, the products, training apprenticeship, marketing, and their major relevance in their various area.

The training consists of observation, initiation and practice whereas the relevance of these traditional crafts and industries to the community includes; economic importance, religious importance, socio-cultural and political vitality. And their relevance in the study of Archaeology and Tourism.

However, some basic factors that impede these traditional crafts and industries were analyzed. They are as follows; Christianity, modernity, preference of foreign product to our locally made product and so on.

Importantly, it should be noted that other research works were equally reviewed and also the background study of the area under study discussion was also brought to the limelight, from all indications, the atmospheres are conducive and favorable for the traditional crafts and industries of Nsukka and Awka to survive and continue to serve as a link between the crafts of the past, the present and probably the future.

5.2 Recommendations

Following the steps in the researcher's view if properly applied would enhance the standard of traditional crafts and industries in the study areas and Nigeria as a whole.

- Change perception

It is important for the local and national governments to try and change the perception of traditional crafts as national culture and heritage. This can be done by showcasing traditional crafts in tourism crafts brochures and popular tourist destinations. As in the case of Nsukka and Awka are shown as among the tourist destination, which helps in increasing the public awareness and also motivates the local craftsmen.

- Including traditional crafts in schools as among the vocational education

We believe this is a crucial step in ensuring the knowledge spill-over to future generations. Considerable work has been done in some countries, particularly at an introductory level. This will generate an interest that will result in awareness and also provide the required local patrons of the projects. However, it is important to extend the school education to a technique-oriented vocational education. One of the challenges is to have teachers who are very well versed in handicrafts, and are able to extend their passion and interest to the coming generations. Also important is that the training and education gives rise to subsequent employment in the industry.

- Develop Socially Conscious Market for Traditional Crafts Products

While it is important to encourage local communities to continue their efforts in the development of traditional crafts, it is equally important to develop a market for these crafts where the goods could be sold at a considerable margin over their cost.

- Decolonization of our people's mind so that they would have the spirit of preserving and protecting our cultural materials rather than neglecting the producers and thereby abandoning their precious products.

- The government should try to support the craftsmen both financially and otherwise. This would motivate and encourage them in the practicalization of these traditional industries.

- Emphasize the added value of craftsmanship

As more and more developing countries move towards industrialization, it is important to encourage craftsmen not to automate the manufacturing process of traditional crafts, as it does not add value to the product. The traditional crafts have their roots laid in the fact that they are made by hand, thus, every product is distinct from the other. It is important for the craftsmen to realize that the market in this industry does not lie in volumes, but in the art and in the uniqueness of the goods.

- The non-governmental agencies should deem it right to organize an annual competition for the various craftsmen and women where they would be opportune to display their artistic works or local crafts. The best craftsman will go home smiling by the package he receives.

- There should be proper provision of social amenities such as good road networks, pipe borne water, electricity etc in order to mitigate or discourage the high rate of rural-urban migration.

- Finally, I suggest that the craftsmen should apply the concept of reformation, E – marketing and affordability as the three key points that will enhance the standard of traditional crafts and industries in Nsukka and Awka.

5.3 Conclusion

The major problem facing Nigeria in general is over dependence on oil trading. This has created room for the negligence and abandonment of our traditional crafts and industries by the government.

The traditional crafts and industries plays a major role in the development and enhancement of the people's economy; if properly harnessed and propagated by the local business and the government. Due to this, several factors will determine the sustainability of these crafts development projects. These include socio-economic considerations, the type of technology employed, economic considerations, as well as the nature and quality of finished products.

Government policies on subsidies, technology and development, as well as global factors such as trade, foreign exchange fluctuations and bilateral/multilateral agreements are equally very vital.

While we hope that government gets it right with the policies and enabling environment for crafts to thrive, it is also hoped that the private sector, especially the financial institutions, contribute to these effort at reviving crafts development in Nigeria, especially by increasing the local craftsmen access to micro-credit facilities and loans. It is important to keep in mind that the future for our traditional crafts can only be assured through sustained effort from both the government and private sectors in crafts development, thereby giving meaning to the lives of over 75% of the nation's rural population who are daily involved in one form of crafts production or the other and yet live at subsistence level.

From the genesis of this research work, the researcher meted it out that the study is typically based on the traditional crafts and industries of Nsukka and Awka in which their relevance to the host community and in the study of Archaeology and Tourism were vividly explained.

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LIST OF INFORMANTS

APPENDIX

S/N	NAME	VILLAGE/TOWN	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEX	DATE	SOURCE
1	Mr. Onyeibor Isaac	Umuogburu Awka	Blacksmith	73years	M	11/09/2015	Direct interview
2	Mr. Michael Okpara	Mbaukwu Awka	Blacksmith	75years	M	11/09/2015	Direct interview
3	Okey Omenyi	Umuogburu Awka	Blacksmith	36years	M	11/09/2015	Direct interview
4	Ndubuisi Chigbata	Umubuele Awka	Blacksmith	40years	M	11/09/2015	Direct interview
5	Obiora Chigbata	Umubuele Awka	Blacksmith	43years	M	11/09/2015	Direct interview
6	Emmanue I Odinaka	Umuokpu Awka	Eze-Uzu Palace Guard	55years	M	11/09/2015	Direct interview
7	Eke Sunday	Umuokpu Awka	Woodcarver/ carpenter	60years	M	12/09/2015	Direct interview

8	Omenyi Bernard	Umuogburu Awka	Woodcarver/ carpenter	62years	M	12/09/2015	Direct interview
9	Ogugua Okechukwu	Umubuele Awka	Woodcarver/ carpenter	40years	M	12/09/2015	Direct interview
10	Nnoruka Patrick	Umuike Awka	Woodcarver/ carpenter	59years	M	12/09/2015	Direct interview
11	Onyeibor Dennis	Umuogburu Awka	Thatcher	69years	M	12/09/2015	Direct interview
12	Onyeanus Micheal	Umuogburu Awka	Thatcher	71years	M	12/09/2015	Direct interview
13	Ikeakor Chukwuka	Umuokpu Awka	Basket weaver	65years	M	14/09/2015	Direct interview
14	Okpara Sunday	Mbaukwu Awka	Basket weaver	67years	M	14/09/2015	Direct interview
15	Ezeaso Felicia	Umuokpu Awka	Broom Maker	59years	F	14/09/2015	Direct interview
16	Oguagha Kate	Umuokpu Awka	Broom Maker	61years	F	14/09/2015	Direct interview
17	Eze Kenneth	Amora-Nru Nsukka	Blacksmith	28years	M	01/10/2015	Direct interview

18	Asogwa Sunday	Amauzu Edeoballa Nsukka	Blacksmith	28years	M	01/10/2015	Direct interview
19	Ugwuja Elias	Amauzu Edeoballa Nsukka	Blacksmith	44years	M	01/10/2015	Direct interview
20	Asogwa Godwin	Umuegiri Ibagwa Aka	Blacksmith	45years	M	01/10/2015	Direct interview
21	Ezea Okwudili	Umuegiri Ibagwa Aka	Basket Weaver	60years	M	01/10/2015	Direct interview
22	Ugwuja Peter	Umuobo Obukpa	Basket weaver	50years	M	01/10/2015	Direct interview
23	Umoro Ugwu	Owerre Ibagwa Aka	Woodcarver	70years	M	02/10/2015	Direct interview
24	Eze Ebuka	Umuobo Obukpa	Woodcarver	22years	M	02/10/2015	Direct interview
25	Ugwoke Thomas	Amebo Ibagwa	Woodcarver	64years	M	02/10/2015	Direct interview
26	Mamah Bernard	Okparigbo Ovoko	Woodcarver	60years	M	02/10/2015	Direct interview
27	Onah	Amebo Ibagwa	Broom Maker	40years	F	03/10/2015	Direct

	Nkechi	Aka					interview
28	Ugwu Rosemary	Amora Nru Nsukka	Broom Maker	45years	F	03/10/2015	Direct interview
29	Ogbu Chekwube	Amugwu Obukpa	Broom Maker	30years	F	03/10/2015	Direct interview
30	Ezema Edwin	Amaezi Edeoballa	Thatcher	58years	M	03/10/2015	Direct interview
31	Eze Uchenna	Amora Nru Nsukka	Thatcher	60years	M	03/10/2015	Direct interview