

The role of pottery production in development: A case study of the Ankole region in Western Uganda

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Accepted 17 October, 2016

ABSTRACT

The study investigated pottery production activities in the Ankole region, Western Uganda, focusing on technical and socio-economic issues. The main objective was to investigate how pottery industry plays a role in curbing unemployment and mitigating poverty as well as its impact on the environment. The fieldwork component of the study involved qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. Firstly, questionnaires were administered to 148 respondents from a wide cross-section of Ankole region. Secondly, 40 potters were interviewed and 7 focus group discussions were conducted with potters from this region in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the experiences and opinions of both traditional and contemporary potters something a questionnaire alone could not yield. The findings indicate that traditional pottery is primarily in the hands (role) of women, while men are engaged mainly in innovations and commercial pottery production. Undeniably, brick and tile making have become a lucrative business, especially for the male youths because of the high demand of the products by both the rural and urban communities. However, pottery activities have had a devastating effect on the environment. In some places, these activities have created pools of stagnant water which have become breeding grounds for mosquitoes, which spread malaria in many parts of the region.

Keywords: Pottery production, pottery use, attitude, motivation, perception, socio-economic issues.

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INTRODUCTION

The study investigated the role of pottery production activities in the Ankole region of Western Uganda, focusing on technical and socio-economic issues. The area under study is called Ankole which stands astride the equator in south western Uganda. The people of Ankole are called Banyankore, and are identified by two main groups, the Bairu (cultivators), who mostly live in hilly lands of the west and south; and their main economic occupation is farming. The second group is the Bahima, who live in the eastern grassland plateaus of Ankole who are pastoralists, herding the famed Ankole long-horned cattle. "The distinction between the two groups still exists. However, although the Bairu and Bahima presently dominate in agriculture and pastoralism respectively, their occupations are no longer as exclusive as they used to be in pre-colonial day, although the Bairu

have maintained their pottery craft," (Mwambutsya, 1991:1). Beyond the main agricultural and cattle herding activities is pottery making.

Pottery, the making of earthenware or baked vessels, is a well-known global practice and the most widespread practice of the indigenous people around the world. It is the oldest art of representation and is still an unbroken tradition among the people of Africa, in general, and Uganda, in particular. In terms of gender, Speight and Toki (1995:83) observe that, in Africa, pottery making is mainly the work of women. This statement is supported by Freestone and Gaimster (1997:18), who argue that potting - the creation of objects from clay - is associated with child-birth and has been restricted to women. Indeed, there are a few communities where potting is carried out by both women and men. Although highly

mechanized elsewhere, traditional practices of pottery production have survived in Ankole. It has always had a special place in the Ankole society since time immemorial, starting from the unbaked clay pots, the unglazed terracotta pottery to the glazed pottery used in modern homes (Kayamba 2012:1). A large percentage of this pottery has been produced by the informal sector, at family level, employing very rudimentary technology. As a result, production costs are comparatively low, quality with likelihood of pollution (Kayamba, 2012:1). Several aspects of pottery production have particularly stayed at a very traditional level, including prospecting for clay, forming and decorating methods, and the firing technology.

For centuries, the pot has been a major utensil in Ugandan homes, and Ankole in particular, used for various functions, including cooking, storage, administering medicine, and used in ritual ceremonies among others. With the introduction of Christianity in Uganda in the second half of the 19th Century, which ushered in Western education, the pottery craft and the use of pottery in homes, other than for cooking, was despised and associated with paganism. When Uganda was a British protectorate, and after her independence from the British in 1962, many Ugandans acquired western education (Kwesiga, 2005; Kwesiga, 2013); which had been reserved for the privileged class, who were mainly sons and daughters of chiefs. The education inherited from colonial masters retained western orientation and hence, most of the educated were influenced by the western cultural values, nonetheless, although they, in many ways, kept their African traditions.

Kayamba (2001:18-22) states that potting has played a fundamental part in the rural subsistence economy and social relations of country-side communities. He further argues that the turning point in Ankole pottery came in the 1950s with the establishment of Kahaya Memorial School (the present day Uganda Technical College, Bushenyi), when men realised the commercial prospects of pots, especially as demand for thrown pots increased with the rising costs of the imported Chinese ceramic table ware. Indeed men also started training as potters from the newly established college. As a spin off, the potters' wheel and an up draught kiln to fire pots were introduced in the Ankole region. With the ability to save and control the heat distribution in the firing chamber, the potters were able to do both biscuit and gloss firing. Since then, many contemporary potters and ceramicists, who graduate from technical institutions and universities, have been actively engaged in pottery production.

In eastern Uganda, the Gisu communities, have different sizes of pots used when brewing and for serving beer. Pots are used on different occasions, which include large gatherings of people, weddings, funerals, and during communal labour. Small pots are used in small family groups and small gatherings (Gombe 2002:46). Similarly, Phillips (1999:141) grounds this observation when he notes that beer drinking was, and still is, an

important aspect of social life, where especially large drinking vessels and finely plaited drinking-straws with filter ends are used. It has been noted that "in many African societies, beer is a highly desirable luxury which binds people socially and serves to reinforce social hospitality and communality during ceremonial and everyday activities. It represents a common cultural marker of wealth and status; it is a commodity of reciprocity, hospitality and communality" (Arthur 2003:516). However, Goody (1982:38) explains that the variety of pottery vessels in a community suggests diversity in the foods and in their storage and cuisine.

In Ankole, like in many parts of Africa, pottery is carried out during the dry season for particular and symbolic reasons. The weather is conducive to dry the products; the pots need to be dry enough before firing to avoid cracking. However, most people use the rainy season for working in the fields for food production (Mack, 2000:1).

As mentioned earlier, Uganda's cultural and customs diversity are threatened by modernity, where the once largely rural populations are being drained to urban centres (Kwesiga and Kayamba, 2014); they encounter changes brought about by Western influence (Otiso, 2006). Such influence affects pottery in the country. It has been argued that in traditional societies world over, that the production of ceramics is threatened by new materials and lifestyle. Although these techniques have survived successfully until the present day in all continents, it seems unlikely that this will continue for much longer (Vincentelli 2000:53). However, in urban homes, it may seem that traditional pots are, in all ways, being replaced by modern vessels of aluminum, enamel-ware and plastics or more informal containers scavenged from the western-style industrial packaging (Barley 1994:9). Pottery is seen as dramatically endangered. Uganda is not an exception, pottery craft is at the cross-roads; it is challenged by modern vessels. The demand for local pots is dwindling rapidly, and the result is growing unemployment among the pottery producing families and a breakdown of the social fabric.

METHODOLOGY

Study population

The study sample population included 4 studio potters, 36 local potters and 105 selected consumers of pottery products in Ankole. It also included three (3) lecturers from Makerere University who teach ceramics because of their familiarity with Ugandan pottery, their knowledge and experience on the subject. The research also considered their understanding of the pottery situation in Uganda and looked at them as agents of change from traditional to contemporary pottery.

Methods

While conducting this research, the study used quantitative and qualitative research methods. 148 questionnaires were administered to assess responses from respondents from the

Table 1. Questionnaire investigating pottery production and pottery use.

Qns	Response item	Response	Count	Percentage	Total
1	Locally made Ugandan pots are central in my home.	1	133	89.9	148
		2	15	10.1	
2	Pottery is very useful in cooking food.	1	121	81.8	148
		2	27	18.2	
3	We make pots in our family for domestic and economic reasons.	1	75	50.7	148
		2	73	49.3	
4	Young males below the age of 17 years in my community are interested in making pots.	1	79	53.4	148
		2	69	46.6	
5	Young girls below the age of 17 years in my community are interested in making pots.	1	100	67.6	148
		2	48	32.4	
6	Majority of people in my community use locally produced Ugandan pots.	1	138	93.2	148
		2	10	6.8	
7	There are special pots used in your community.	1	119	80.4	148
		2	29	19.6	
8	Particular age group / particular people have pots.	1	106	71.6	148
		2	42	28.4	
9	Potters in my community decorate their pots.	1	127	85.8	148
		2	21	14.2	
10	Decorations on pots have social meaning in my community.	1	99	66.9	148
		2	49	33.1	

Key: 1 = Agreed; 2 = Disagree.

sampled group (Table 1). The second phase of the study involved conducting interviews with 40 potters from Ankole. Structured and semi-structured questions were used during the study. In designing questions, cognizance was taken on the type of information the researcher required. To test experience or behavioral responses and opinions or values, follow up questions were necessary for greater depth of inquiry. In all circumstances, data analysis followed as a systematic pattern where data was collected and analyzed. Through this process, my understanding grew and began creating models of the relationships in the data and the literature (Mayan, 2001:11-21).

During the study, the researcher visited some craft centres within Ankole region to assess the responses from the population towards the local pottery products. In addition to questionnaires, individual interviews were conducted with 40 potters from twelve sites, from the three districts, and with three lecturers from Makerere University. Interviews were conducted with individuals to respond to a set of questions in a moderated setting, which created an opportunity for the investigator to understand the participants' view of pottery practices as described in their own words. Formal and conversational techniques were employed to obtain more information regarding pottery practices and innovations in the Ankole region, which could not be provided in the questionnaires.

The individual respondents were later grouped according to their experiences and interests to form 7 focus group discussions (FGD). By using these groups the author hoped to get more in-depth understanding of the issues that had been raised during individual interviews (Amin, 2005:187). During the discussions, the author used a discussion guide which had structured and semi-structured questions. This created an opportunity to get a deeper understanding of the participants' views and free expression about pottery practices described in their own words. The target group for the FGDs shared similar backgrounds and levels of understanding, which enhanced and generated debate on the issues under study. However, there were some limitations during the course of data collection, especially during interviews. Some potters were not willing to give accurate information because the idea of sharing information is not common among them. Traditionally, some techniques are guarded carefully. All research findings from the data analyses were clearly described.

The researcher also made site visits in order to observe and document innovative processes in pottery production at different sites. Sarantakos (1998:207) argues that observation is one of the oldest methods of data collection. It is a method that employs vision as its main means of data collection and is open to all observable social phenomena.

The research was conducted in three districts out of six that form Ankole region, because of their diversity in pottery practices and proximity to each other which made the research activities to be easily carried out. These were Bushenyi, Mbarara and Ntungamo. While conducting this research, the importance and understanding of ethical considerations was quite vital and some fundamental considerations had to be acknowledged. This is because the conduct of ethically informed research should be a goal to all social researchers. These agreements were covered with the parties involved (Goddard and Melville, 2001:109; Blaxter et al., 2003:158).

FINDINGS

Presented here are findings regarding the role of pottery in a developing society focusing on social and economic issues in the Ankole region. The premise is that the pottery craft, which has been a source of livelihood for many craft potters and contemporary ceramicists, is now challenged by modern conveniences as a viable occupation for future generations. The introduction of plastics and metal containers forced pottery communities to re-evaluate the need for and the importance of hand-made clay products for daily use. The change in lifestyle

of many Ugandans has caused the modification of pottery to suit the changing circumstances or even to maintain the same pottery shape but used differently within a modern setting.

Analysis of the data

The study assessed views and opinions about locally produced pots in Uganda. According to research findings, 89.9% respondents indicated that people in their communities use locally produced Ugandan pots because food prepared from pots is believed to be more delicious, especially millet; pots can keep food warm for a longer period compared to metallic pans (Figure 1). Christensen (2011) explained that when clay interacts with acidity in the food, it neutralizing the pH balance. Something that is naturally very acidic, like a tomato sauce, will take on some natural sweetness when cooked in a clay pot. However, those people living in towns (10.1%) considered cooking in pots a backward practice; they use aluminium saucepans for cooking.

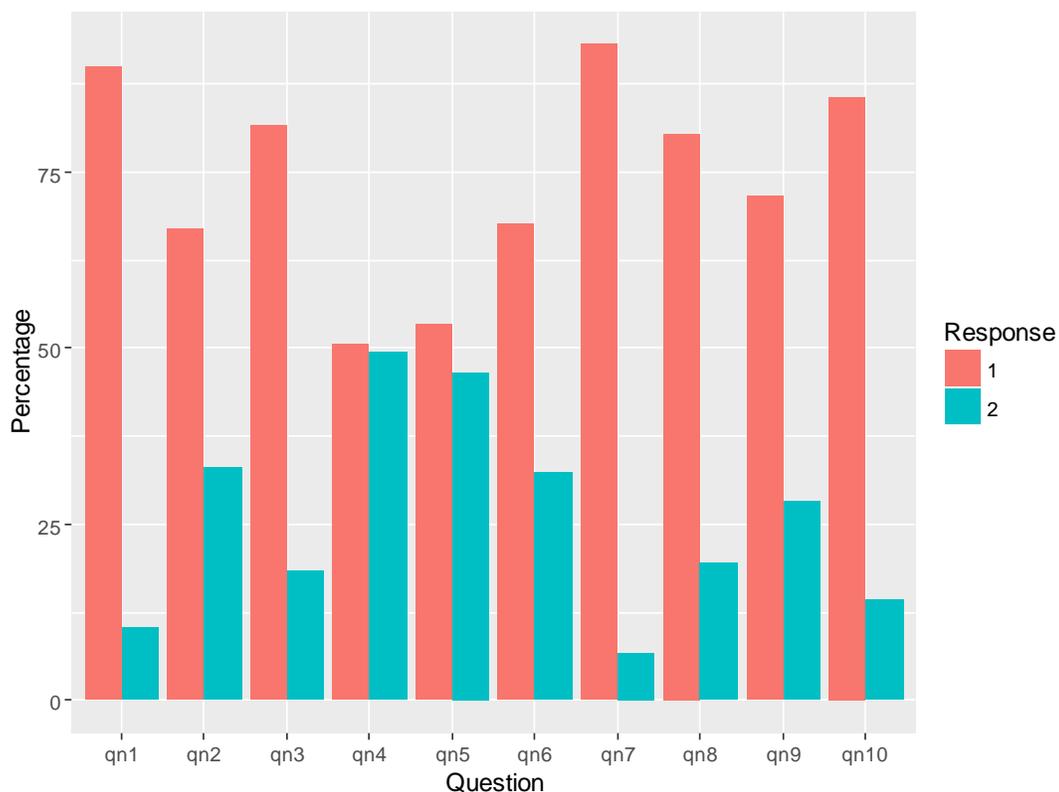


Figure 1. Graph indication pottery production and pottery use.

The research went further to investigate those who make pots in their families for domestic and economic reasons. The findings indicated that 50.7% agreed while 49.3%

disagreed. Appau et al. (2013) asserts that while some women opt for pottery as a complete occupation, others take it as an extension of domestic activity where money

accrued from proceeds go into the provision of household necessities.

The study went further to investigate whether young males and females below the age of 17 years were interested in making pots in the various communities. Research findings indicated mixed feelings. Whereas the research indicated that 46.6% of young boys regarded pottery as worthless, 53.4% treasured the activity. Many youths have realised the importance of pottery making, especially school drop-outs who are engaged in making building materials like bricks and tiles. On the other hand, findings indicate that 67.6%, of female youths have been positive about pottery making, and 32.4%, especially those who go to school, feel that pottery is for the low class and it is a dirty job. In addition, men who make pots are considered poor and are accorded little respect among fellow men, although they are hailed among women. For that matter, this has resulted into diversity in technology, from making traditional pots to roofing tiles and other building materials. This sector is attracting many young boys because they see it as a new technology which is not feminine, compared to pot making.

The research went further to investigate whether the majority people in the Ankole communities use locally produced Ugandan pots. Research findings indicated that 93.2% of the Ankole community use locally produced Ugandan pots while 6.8% do not. This is an indication that the Ankole community is still a rural community living on subsistence economy. Gombe (2002:45) states that up to 85% of Uganda's population live in rural areas where people derive all or part of their livelihood through farming, but many homesteads need supplementary sources of income. These homesteads make use of their environmental resources to produce various kinds of indigenous crafts, pottery being one of them, to earn additional income for a basic standard of living or for improved quality of life.

The research investigated whether there are special pots used in the community. 80.4% of the respondents indicated that they had special pots they used while 19.4% said that they did not have them. In addition, 71.6% indicated that particular age group had pots while 28.4% did not have any. Responses indicated that there were special vases used by the newly wedded brides for keeping hot water and perfume pots. In addition, smoking pipes are used by elderly people

The research went further to investigate whether potters in the Ankole community decorated their pots. 85.8% of the respondents agreed, while 14.2% did not agree. In addition, the researcher tried to investigate whether those decorations on pots had social meaning in their communities. According to research findings 66.9% respondents agreed that they had social meanings while 33.1% did not agree. According to Gosselain (1999:14) and Tite (1999:187) pottery vessels were subjected to a range of surface treatment; this treatment served as decoration and, to reduce the permeability of the vessel

to liquids. Barley (1994:116) argues that pots on the other hand, enter largely into the exchange of meaning that constituted everyday life and defines relationships and events. Differences of form and decoration help create categories of vessels that would be easily related to categories of time and persons. However, some decorations are purely aesthetic to add beauty and commercial value to the pot.

POTTERY AS EMPLOYMENT

Any discussion of pottery production must begin with the establishment of the materials used; the prospecting of clay and its preparation, followed by forming, surface treatment and how pots are fired. During the course of the study, the author documented potters using hoes to extract clay from the swamp. The potters worked in small groups, mainly at household level. As they extracted the clay, they kept checking it to ensure its quality. A potter who extracted clay removed vegetable matter and sand, leaving what she considered to be quality clay (Figure 2). She tested it between her fingers to check its plasticity, a primary requirement for forming (Tite, 1994:184).

The potter who was extracting clay informed this research that clay colour changes with seasons. During dark nights, the clay becomes dark-grey but during moonlight periods it turns to light-grey. During the full moon, when a red colour is visible at moon rise, they usually get clay with red strips. This also affects the colour of pots after firing; red strips are evident on the pots' surfaces. Similarly, she informed the researcher that when a woman under menstruation extracts clay, her pots fire with red strips. This was emphasised by saying that there are taboos which must be observed. Most frequent prohibitions concern sexual intercourse, menstruation and pregnancy. According to Gosselain (1999:209) breaching a taboo may affect three stages of the manufacturing process. These are clay extraction, it may suddenly disappear, loses its workability; during drying pots may crack; and pots may explode during the firing process. For that matter, old women who no longer experience menstruation periods usually extract clay from the pits in this region. Appau et al. (2013) further emphasises that women in their menstrual periods are not allowed to engage in clay winning process. Women who break this rule may suffer premature menopause which implies a break in fertility. In addition men are traditionally forbidden to participate in the winning of the clay. Failure to abide by this may render them impotent. However, with many people turning to Christianity in Uganda, such taboos are no longer respected.

Whereas clay is a major raw material for pottery, temper is another basic raw material potters consider to improve the quality of clay. It is added to clay in order to reduce rapid shrinkage and expansion during the firing process. Temper allows for an even distribution of heat through the ceramic paste during firing, (Blandino, 2003:



Figure 2. Checking the quality of clay.



Figure 3. Making clay stoves using coils.

25). Many potters in the Ankole region use grog as the major source of temper, mainly obtained from old potsherds that are no longer of any use. However, some potters who make pots on large scale find themselves without enough grog to mix in their clay; they obtained their temper from granite rocks and other soft stones.

Most of the pots made by women potters were of different sizes, and for domestic use including harvesting rain water and clay cooking stoves. The men made perfume pots (*rukomyo*) and fumigators (*ebicunga*). Unlike cooking pots, perfume pots and fumigators were burnished using pebbles (*enkurungu*) and a handle of a spoon to give a glossy surface.

The study indicated that potters made clay stoves and water pots which has become a full-time employment venture especially for women and young girls (Figure 3). This is in response to high demand for clay stoves because they are energy efficient. Nevertheless, there are a few men who have joined the pottery industry on a full-time basis. Production was specialized one to person making clay slabs (Figure 4), as another person making coils while the third person building the stove. Children were involved in almost all activities of pottery production, beginning with clay preparation, but more especially, making coils, which did not need a lot of energy. This indicated that pottery production in Ankole was becoming more organized with division of labour compared to the past, although it is still done at household level, involving members of the family. In contrast 4 potters in Bushenyi district used a potters' wheel to make pots (Figure 5). These were trained from established institutions and others trained on the job. The potters made different items which included cups, teapots, drinking water pots, soup bowls planters and cook stoves. They glazed their pots using local glazes made from granite powder mixed with clay and borax obtained largely from stone quarries, particularly stone dust. They fired their kiln to about 1050°C, which was sufficient to melt the glaze powder. The glazed pots looked brownish, ranging from dark to



Figure 4. Making a slab using a pebble.



Figure 5. Throwing on a potter's wheel.

honey brown (Figure 6).

A roulette woven from grass was the main decorating tool to create some textured pattern around the neck of the pot (Figure 7). In contrast, some of the pots,



Figure 6. Glazed pots with granite powder.



Figure 8. Burnished and smoked pot.



Figure 7. Decorating a pot with roulette.

especially fumigators and perfume pots, were burnished using a pebble or a folk handle. Burnishing makes pots waterproof by sealing pores on the pot's surface, and the areas which were decorated with roulette keeps the pores of the pot open. The rouletted parts make the pot slip resistant while in use and they cool the water for drinking at room temperature (Figure 8).

Social dimension

The study investigated why pottery has survived for so long in spite of stiff competition from cheap industrial products like plastic containers. One respondent said that some items used in their culture cannot be imported because of their unique nature. Some shapes or types of pots cannot be produced by western manufacturers because they do not have those cultural attachments. Such pots are used at functions like "give-away" ceremonies (*Okuhingira*), and are meant to create an aroma, or for appeasing the supernatural, which is a cultural function. Some pots are used for keeping warm water, while others are for providing fragrance to a room

and the woman's body. The researcher was honoured to document a "give-away" marriage ceremony. Although the ceremony was conducted in a modern western religious manner, in the presence of Bishops, the Ankole culture was not forgotten. The *Omugamba* had a water pot and perfume pot, among other objects, as symbols of fertility (Figure 9). At the same function, they served food from special bowls to the guests because it is strongly believed bowls are meant to serve special guests at such functions because they signify hospitality, high respect for the guests, and other social relationship one has with them. Haaland (2007) argues that food items are not food for the body but they are also food for the thought about relations to others in the world of living people, and the cosmology forces. It is the strong symbolism that many Banyankore attach to the pots that has enabled Ankole pottery to survive in spite of stiff competition from imported ceramic and metallic wares.

The researcher further documented a woman harvesting water using a pot during a heavy downpour (Figure 10). This is a common practice among the people of Ankole, especially those who do not have water tanks. It was this rudimentary practice that called for construction of water tanks to harvest enough water. However, before many families constructed iron roofed houses, they used to harvest rain water from trees using banana leaves and pots. Harvesting the rain water and storing it in household water tanks has improved water access in rural areas. Lack of clean water can contribute to a high level of diarrheal diseases, malaria, and fever. The provision of adequate and safe water is a necessity for healthful living and the well-being of individuals. It saves women's time, and enables them to devote more time to food production and preparation, with consequent nutritional benefit to their children.

Further studies indicated that pots were used as music instruments in this region. At a cultural festival, pots of different sizes were played to produce varied sound, to accompany drums during the dance (Figure 11). The study also found out that in this region, pots are still used



Figure 9. Omugamba containing bridal items.



Figure 10. Harvesting rainwater.



Figure 11. A cultural dance using pots as music instruments.

as musical instruments in many churches during worship, to accompany the western instruments although the number of churches using pots as instruments is declining, especially in urban places, because the pots are very delicate to handle and to keep, because they are not properly fired.

Research findings indicated that most potters did not have the skills to market their products. Pots were sold in weekly markets, although at times, potters got orders

from direct consumers for particular items. Following the orders from a customer, the potter carried the pots on the head or got help from a family member to push them on the bicycle. To date, most traditional potters sell their products in weekly markets where they display their products on the ground (Figure 12). Contrary to studio potters who run a small-scale crafts business, although, sometimes, it represents a professional identity as much as a family income. They display their pottery products from their workshops and sell them to visitors and customers because their studios are, usually, strategically positioned near towns and by the roadside. In addition, they sell their products at craft centres.



Figure 12. Displaying pottery in a weekly market.

Pottery Innovations

Although pots are not used on a daily basis, there are special pots which are still valued highly because of the cultural meaning attached to them. With the changes in lifestyle, particularly among the educated, there has been an increase in alternative uses of pottery products, in addition to the traditional ones. This has called for innovative activities in pottery production in response to changes in demand associated with urban market. These innovations have improved the income levels of the potters, especially women, who are involved in the pottery craft. The new developments in pottery use have also helped to improve the firing technology to attain higher temperatures than the traditional pottery practices.

Traditionally, pots have always been used for cooking and safe keeping of liquids. However, due to political stability in the country, there has been a boom in the construction industry. The construction of storied flat houses has become a fashion to cater for the ever increasing number of people in big towns. In addition,

many people desire to have some plants but do not have where to plant them. Besides, some medicinal plants are on the verge of extinction. As such, there is a growing demand for planters in urban centres. Some pots are needed by urban dwellers to grow flowers and other plants. These plants are mostly placed on verandas or in homes for decorative purposes, to create a beautiful living environment. Other are for plants which are grown in pots are for medicinal purposes, especially herbs for children. Many herbal plants are on the verge of extinction because many people have cleared land for farming. Similarly, many forests are threatened with agricultural activities and other human commercial activities, which have caused many plant species to face extinction. Therefore, parents have resorted to planting herbs for children in plant pots. Similarly, some people grow vegetables for food in planters. This innovation has helped many town dwellers improve on their nutrition and as well as cut on their food expenses, especially on vegetables.

In a related development, the pot which had been confined to the kitchen as a cooking utensil, has graduated from this role to becoming a building and decorative item in architecture. With the development of the tourism industry in Uganda, some Ugandans have gone back to the tradition of roofing restaurants with grass, a fashionable trend in urban centres. Also, because of the high pitch of the roof, a pot is used to hold the grass to prevent it from falling off and causing the roof to leak during the rainy season (Figure 13). The pots do not only stop the grass from falling but also add beauty to the structure. Both the pot and the grass thatched huts and houses are commonly found in rural parts of Uganda. This practice has tried to bridge the gap between old tradition and modernity, by bringing such architectural designs in urban centers. By so doing, there is a continuity of the traditional culture in a modern society, which is confronted by the western influence. In addition, pots were used for interior decoration in hotels and public places (Figure 14).

Modern roles of pots

Blum (2005) warns that a vast majority of women in developing countries, especially in densely populated areas, are experiencing an ever increasing shortage of firewood. They find that meeting the daily needs for fuel to cook meals for the family is often a struggle for women. As more and more land is cleared for agriculture, the problem worsens because few trees remain. This has called for an intervention to find a solution to this problem. In relation with this, potters in this region have engaged themselves in making clay stoves which has become a full-time employment venture, especially women and young girls (Figure 15). This is in response to high demand for clay stoves because they are energy efficient, portable and easy to handle in an urban setting.



Figure 13. Architectural structures decorated with pots on the roof.



Figure 14. Pots used as interior decors.



Figure 15. Energy saving stove with a ceramic insert.

Nevertheless, there are a few men who have joined the pottery industry on a full-time basis. It is believed that the production of clay cook stoves would reduce wood fuel consumption, thereby minimizing the number of trees cut down for fuel. Thus slowing down or possibly reversing deforestation and desertification.

The group above was also involved in making modified clay pots for drinking water. In many Ugandan homes,

clay pots are used for storing drinking water. Although this is a preferred method for storing water, the repeated hand contact contaminates it quickly, which is a great disadvantage. This has called for the development of new improved pot designs fitted with taps, which are ideal for rural communities. The production of modified pots has benefited the rural poor by selling the pottery products to urban centres (Kwesiga and Kayamba, 2014). According to Dinh (2009), the modified pots have become popular among the local people, because they keep the water cool and are palatable. It is also convenient to use, even for children, when getting water for drinking. On top of that they prevent the spread of diseases (Figure 16).



Figure 16. Traditional water pot fitted with tap.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research found that pottery making is still in the hands of women although some men have joined the pottery industry due to the economic potential that has been identified with it. Further findings indicate that pottery activities have contributed positively towards various communities. The women who are engaged in the pottery industry are able to earn themselves a daily income, rather than depending on their husbands. They are able to raise fees for their children, hospital bills and needs. The use of modified pots for keeping boiled water for drinking has improved the hygiene of many homes in the area. The improved cooking stoves have contributed to a safe cooking environment, energy saving, cost effective and economical, in terms of fuel, and safety for children. However, there is still need to improve on the marketing strategy for potters if the pottery industry is to develop which will eventually help to create employment for various groups, especially women and the youth (The World Bank report, 2001:61).

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Citation: Kayamba, W. K., and Kwesiga, P. (2016). The role of pottery production in development: A case study of the Ankole region in Western Uganda. *Net Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(4): 81-90.
